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JPRS Report

LATIN AMERICA

CUBA: Cuban Government Proceedings Against Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and Other Officials

June-July 1989

This reference volume is a compilation of the translated broadcasts of the Cuban Government proceedings against Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and other officials of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR) and the Cuban Interior Ministry (MININT).

This material first appeared in various issues of the FBIS DAILY REPORT: LATIN AMERICA and has been brought together as a logical reference unit. The broadcasts are in chronological order. No editorial changes or corrections have been made to the material originally published in the DAILY REPORT.

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First Hearing Begins

FL2606142089 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1120 GMT 26 Jun 89

[Text] The Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] honor tribunal began its session as scheduled yesterday, Sunday [25 June] at 1000 summoned to study the behavior of Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez. This first session of the tribunal began with a report by Army General Raul Castro Ruz, minister of the FAR and second secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] Central Committee.

Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro is presiding over the tribunal and Division Generals Jesus Bermudez Cutino and Ramon Pardo Guerra are acting as secretary and member, respectively. Forty-four other officers of the highest level of our FAR composed this tribunal, which is in charge of recommending the leadership of the party, state, and government the measures to follow in line with the seriousness of the acts in which General Ochoa carried out.

Following are moments of the development of this process which includes a summary of the report presented by Army General Raul Castro Ruz to the military honor tribunal.

[Begin recording] [Video shows room with Division Generals Jesus Bermudez Cutino, Ulises Rosales del Toro, and Ramon Pardo Guerra sitting at the presiding table facing the group of FAR officers. Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez is seated in front of the FAR officers facing the presiding table.]

[Rosales del Toro] In fulfilling FAR minister's Order No 016 of 1989, this hearing begins. The hearing will analyze the charges brought against Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez. This military honor tribunal is made up of Div Gen Ulises Rosales del Toro as president, Div Gen Jesus Bermudez Cutino as secretary, and Div Gen Ramon Pardo Guerra as member.

Comrade Secretary, report how many comrades should be present and how many are actually present.

[Bermudez Cutino] Comrade President: The 47 generals and admirals who should participate in this military honor tribunal hearing are all present. The eight witnesses who have to testify are also present.

[Rosales del Toro] The comrade members of the tribunal present during the hearing have the right to ask questions or make remarks. You will be given your turn at the appropriate time.

Comrade Secretary: Read the document which contains the charges which brought about the beginning of these proceedings.

[Bermudez Cutino] The charges brought against Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez which will be analyzed by this military honor tribunal today are the following: [medium-shot of Ochoa]

First, his independent participation and joint participation with Interior Ministry officers in contacts with international drug traffickers—planning, reaching agreements, and other events related to this activity, which were already reported in detail to the people—casting a slur on Cuba's moral and international prestige, and even endangering the safety of our country;

Second, dishonest management of economic resources, improper use, squandering, and waste of foreign currency by taking advantage of his high military hierarchy;

Third, his responsibility for the influence he exerted over officers who worked directly with him leading them to commit criminal acts;

Fourth, the grave faults of moral nature, dissipation, and corruption in which he incurred;

Fifth, the lack of compliance of orders and directions given by FAR minister and the lack of compliance with the reiterated warnings given for his inappropriate behavior.

[Rosales del Toro] Now, the minister of the FAR will present the necessary information so that those present and the tribunal will be able to count with all the elements that will allow the tribunal to come to a conclusion. [All present stand up as Raul Castro approaches the podium.]

[Raul Castro] You can be seated, comrades. [All present sit down.]

Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal and comrade generals:

I appear before this honor tribunal to help study the facts that led to the arrest of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez last 12 June, as well as other much more serious facts learned later, which we believe you must be aware of to reach a consensus and make the appropriate recommendations.

Of course, the members of the court will be able to carry out their duty fully after hearing testimony from the witnesses, the facts, and views each one of you may have to add, and the willingness of Gen Ochoa to assume his responsibilities.

In order to grant priority to those aspects of the case dealing with Div Gen Ochoa's conduct, which because of their nature cannot be aired publicly, I request the court president, Div Gen Ulises Rosales del Toro, to incorporate as official documents into this court proceeding the transcripts of the conversations held between Gen Ochoa and me on 29 May and 2 June, the content of which you all know, as well as the full text of the editorial published in the 22 June edition of the GRANMA newspaper.

In view of the lengthy expose outlined in that editorial regarding Gen Ochoa's personal participation in international drug trafficking, I will not dwell here on the details of this shameful aspect of Arnaldo Ochoa's conduct. This does not preclude any of you from referring to them should you deem it necessary.

Comrade generals: For all of us, this is a bitter duty. When not a single comrade of the rebel army and those with over 30 years in the FAR could even imagine that a combatant with the background and merits of Arnaldo Ochoa could, through his conduct, tarnish the work of the people, he already knew it was being done. If there is something that Ochoa cannot allege before this tribunal, it is ignorance of the gravity and consequences of his actions.

Step by step, not heeding any of the criticisms, warnings, or appeals, Ochoa set out on a path of no return that led him to degrade the revolutionary honor of a soldier in our socialist state. Thus, he betrayed himself above all. [medium-shot of Ochoa showing him with his head down]

I must admit in all sincerity that the evidence of the violations and irregularities Ochoa was committing in carrying out his duties as chief were mixed and confused with his temperament and some particular traits of his personality that made it difficult to distinguish his true way of thinking from his constant jokes. We later clearly established how Ochoa turned his blabbering and his habit of boasting about anything into a tool to try to justify to us—in between serious remarks and jokes—his absurd ideas. He tried to pass them off as jokes out of fear of the listener's reaction to his true thoughts, which he was seriously expressing.

We first called his attention to this behavior at a very early stage, around 1970, when we attributed this attitude to superficiality and immaturity.

It became necessary over time to remind him of this, but it was useless. Unfortunately, this is how, in a not-so-small circle of chiefs, his image was seriously damaged, because nobody should behave like this, much less a general, and think that anyone will take him seriously.

In view of the degradation and extremes of the current situation, we wonder if we might not have realized sooner, considering his verbosity, that Ochoa was developing customs, habits, and practices that were giving him a penchant for corruption.

Ochoa was certainty criticized more than other high-ranking Armed Forces officers for violations, which of course, were not sufficiently serious to warrant taking more severe measures against him or to prevent him from performing his important duties.

A key element in Arnaldo Ochoa's later behavior was his growing and obsessive desire in recent years to engage in commercial activities and the most unusual businesses, and his pathetic self-appraisal of his abilities in the field. He surely confused the opportunities and prerogatives that his rank and positions offered him with the talent for business he thought he had. This defect became evident during his last tour in Angola. [medium and close-up shot of Ochoa, with this head down, occasionally looking at his hand]

Only he can explain—that is, if he has already been able to explain it to himself—how his highest goal became to turn himself into a typical capitalist entrepreneur. His role models were no longer the most devoted cadres of the Revolution or the humble men of our country who have subordinated themselves under various circumstances and were examples of heroism and devotion.

Ochoa's behavior was concealed behind an apparent concern over the living conditions of the troops that actually served to disguise an unbridled desire to amass money and carry on business, even if these were illegal businesses that violated the norms, regulation, and laws, even of friendly nations, thus betraying the trust of their governments, as in the case of the confirmed contraband of ivory and diamonds.

Except for the infamous drug issue, which at the time we still did not know about, these were, basically, the topics of our first conversation with him, which lasted over 3 hours on 29 May. As you well know, Army Corps General Abelardo Colome Ibarra and Div Gen Ulises Rosales del Toro were present. At that time, we confirmed our belief that it was obvious that it was impossible to trust the command of the Western Army to Ochoa, who had been preparing himself for this job for several months after his return from Angola.

Even at that moment—and I say this with absolute sincerity—we had hopes that he would recognize his errors, keeping in mind his past accomplishments, by virtue of which we thought it might be possible to keep him with us.

In other words, we were still considering the possibility of giving him an opportunity. Of course, he would never have the same level of responsibility he had had until then, because we were already convinced that Ochoa was

no longer the rebel soldier, the invader of Camilo's column, the internationalist in Venezuela, the commander of our troops in Ethiopia. On the contrary, we had before us someone who had participated in a vast array of irregular activities, deceits, and other errors. At the time, those actions were not yet classified as grave criminal acts, but as faults from which we still thought he could recover with help, as we have done with other comrades. We believed that we should do everything possible so that the Revolution and the Armed Forces would not lose a comrade with this background and accomplishments.

I want to stress that at that time we had signs, but no proof yet, of serious moral flaws in his personal behavior that could indicate—if they were true—an ethical degradation, which led us to fear that he might desert, although this seemed hard to believe of a man with his record. It became necessary, regardless of the outcome of the case, for the FAR to assign him to a task that would keep him under control.

The facts regarding his personal conduct were later fully proven and you are aware of them. However, we have decided not to mention these facts in this report so as to not adversely affect innocent persons who would have to carry the burden, the scandal of such unpleasant faults would bring.

Meanwhile, we were receiving reports of his unlimited popularity in recent months, though he had not yet assumed command of the Western Army. Ochoa was already making himself known, distributing gifts and valuables, mainly to officers, ignoring the established norms with a delirious self-indulgence and creating an image and debts of gratitude for himself with a total absence of principles or ethics, leaving behind him a trail of corruption. [medium-shot of Ochoa, with his head down]

In Angola, he combined this practice of giving gifts through misappropriation and manipulation of financial resources with a corrosive verbosity that disappointed when it did not confuse or demoralize.

Blinded by vanity during crucial moments of the war—when, fortunately, our General Staff was leading through the commander in chief and Division General Leopoldo Cintras Frias, who was in charge of the southern front—Ochoa, whose job was to strengthen the fighting morale of the officers and chiefs under his command, would speak at length to practically anyone. He would sometimes present himself as a victim, saying, and I quote, I quote his words [repeats]: "I have been sent to a lost war so that I will be blamed for the defeat." On other occasions, he posed as military and political strategist, a savior of the Republic, and became very critical by saying we were too honest and we were not taking advantage of business such as money laundering.

This improper and unworthy practice of a responsible leader would change at times when he became obsessed wit the idea of carrying out businesses, for which he did not stop before any legal or moral barrier, while establishing unauthorized ties with foreigners of very doubtful political integrity.

I will abstain from enumerating again the many specific cases of commercial operations that appear in the transcripts of the two conversations I had with Ochoa prior to his arrest, and I will refer the court to the testimony of the witnesses who will appear before you.

As it has been noted, Ochoa reserved his best time to map out and promote, through his aide, Captain Jorge Martinez Valdes, the delirious plan of becoming a drug czar, as was explained in great detail to our people in the newspaper editorial published in GRANMA on Thursday [22 June]. Martinez turned out to be the only FAR officer involved in that mad adventure.

Also, and although in no way it excuses them from responsibility, it is logical to imagine the impunity and morale boost that individuals already involved in drug trafficking, such as Colonel Tony la Guardia and his group of the MC [expansion unknown] Department of the Interior Ministry, must have felt when they learned that a man with the accomplishments and prestige of Ochoa, was on the same path and was asking for their cooperation.

We must, however, reflect seriously on the corrupt influence that he exerted on officers who worked directly under him. His evil influence transformed the role that each chief has toward his subordinates, to educate them and set an example, dragging them to crime and promoting their complicity. We will hear very eloquent testimonies in that respect during the sessions of this court.

When we learned of these facts—above all after the arrest of Ochoa and others who have been implicated—we were able to undertake a thorough investigation. Later our people went from a state of perplexity to disbelief, to dismay. These logical feelings, however, immediately gave way to a deeper indignation and the conviction that it is imperative to mete out an examplary punishment. [medium-shot of Ochoa, with his head down]

Arnaldo Ochoa's actions cannot tarnish the heroic internationalist contribution of our people in Angola, because it is the work of hundreds of thousands of men who carried out their duty and accomplished the mission entrusted to them by the Revolution. But it is truly shameful and outrageous to think that, during the very harsh days faced by our fighters in the Cuito Cuanavale epic, Ochoa frantically engaged in contacting and coordinating with the international drug traffickers, made improper use of the resources provided to him, and engaged in immoral and corrupt practices incompatible with the principles of the Revolution.

These are some of the most serious actions for which Arnaldo Ochoa must answer.

When we sat down with him to talk for the first time, we still harbored a small hope that he would understand the significance of that opportunity.

We kept that hope alive when he later asked to speak with me alone on 2 June. I was totally sincere with him when, after the first and long conversation with him, I hugged him—I repeat, I hugged him—and I told him that no matter what happened, we would be his brothers—today, tomorrow, and always. Today we are painfully convinced that our hopes were unfounded, that Arnaldo Ochoa could not be saved. [medium-shot of Ochoa, with his head down]

Ochoa did not have the moral quality that was needed to tell me at that time that he had amassed tens of thousands of dollars, most of which were already outside the country, including at least $50,000 obtained directly from drug trafficking, with which he stained his hands forever.

To confess these crimes, he would first have had to admit that he exposed our country's prestige, authority, and morale—which are the pillars of the strength and security of a state such as Cuba—to a provocation of catastrophic consequences when he converted a FAR captain into his envoy before one of the main and most famous drug lords in Colombia.

In sum, he should have admitted his betrayal to the Cuban people, to our party, to the FAR, and his unprecedented disloyalty to our commander in chief, Comrade Fidel.

However, Ochoa still has an opportunity today, not to repay his comrades and his people, because he does not have enough time in his lifetime to make up for this. There is no way to compensate his total disloyalty. He has, however, the possibility of leaving to his children a self-critical analysis and a reflection. This will help his children understand the unmistakable fairness of the decision of this tribunal and of the military tribunal that will judge him. In the future, this will allow them to face life not just with the pain and the heavy burden imposed on them, but also with the understanding of the significance of this gesture.

We are thinking of this possibility based on his attitude during a meeting he had on Father's Day with his noble and pure children while he was in prison.

If today he remains faithful to the statements he made—in the presence of the instructor and in a moment of honesty and emotion—to [his children] Yanina, Diana, and Alejandrito, and if he is capable of talking like that not only in the privacy of that meeting but also before this tribunal, helping us all understand the origin and development of this process of degradation, then his physical presence before this tribunal will have a true meaning.

For all those reasons, he must be judged by this honor tribunal.

We hope that each one of the 47 generals that make up this court will express his opinion regarding the charges filed against him and will make a decision according to the regulations of military honor courts.

This infamous list of grave crimes and disloyalties is in fact an outrage, a treacherous stab, and a slap in the face of the fatherland.

It will be this court's responsibility to decide if, in light of his conduct, he is still worthy of bearing the honorable title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and keeping the other orders, medals, and decorations bestowed on him, and if he should continue to hold the rank of division general and his position as a member of our glorious and heroic FAR.

It will also be your duty to submit to the party's leadership the court's opinion regarding his status as party member and his status as member of the party's Central Committee.

From Angola, our loyal internationalist fighters have sent us a combative and encouraging message under these bitter circumstances, part of which I wish to read to this court, and I quote: "The force of revolutionary law should fall upon Arnaldo Ochoa. His military record, far from diminishing his crimes, makes them worse, as he betrayed the honor and confidence bestowed upon him," end of quote.

Comrade generals, let us exemplarily wash away this outrage to which Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez has subjected the fatherland, the party, and the FAR.

Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, I have concluded my report.

[Rosales del Toro] Comrade Secretary, proceed to receive the document the minister is presenting. [end recording]

The first session of the military honor tribunal ended at 1830. The military honor tribunal was summoned in accordance with the rules governing the FAR to analyze the behavior of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez.

During its first session, the tribunal composed of 47 generals of the FAR and presided over by Div Gen Ulises Rosales del Toro, heard a report presented by FAR minister, Army General Raul Castro Ruz.

The following eight witnesses attended and responded to the questions posed by the tribunal: Colonel Rafael Morales Velazquez, Colonel (Teudis Trutie Matias), Colonel (Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan), Colonel (Omelio Perez Rivero), Lieutenant Colonel (Arnaldo Morejon Platt), Captain (Jose L. Yicas Papadedis), and Captain Jorge Martinez Valdes—all members of the FAR—as well as Brigade General Patricio de la Guardia Font, from the Interior Ministry.

During this first session, Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez made a statement and responded to questions. He accepted all charges and assumed the responsibilities for the charges of grave crimes and violations brought against him.

All the generals who compose the tribunal will participate today. The FAR Ministry reported that Division General Ramon Espinosa Martin and Julio Casas Regueiro originally appeared as members of the tribunal but are not part of it because they will be members of the military tribunal alter. Brigade General Filiberto Olivera Moya and Brigade General Rigoberto Sancho Valladares were appointed to replace them.

As it has been reported, the military honor tribunal will make the appropriate recommendations to the higher levels of the party, state, and government regarding the case of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez. The essential details of the case have been informed to our people and the international public opinion.

Officers Testify

PA2906134789 Havana Cubavision Television in Spanish 0030 GMT 28 Jun 89

["Excerpts" of witness testimony at the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) Military Honor Tribunal, presided over by Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro, Military Honor Tribunal president, and in which Division Generals Jesus Bermudez Cutino and Ramon Pardo Guerra are acting as secretary and member respectively, to adjudicate the case of Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Unidentified announcer] The Cuban television news department now presents excerpts of statements by witnesses who have been appearing before the FAR military court of honor analyzing the conduct of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez. Colonel Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan was aware of the illegal commercial activities being carried out by a group of officers in Angola and kept in contact with them. He was looking for an opportunity to engage in the purchase and sale of diamonds, and even had a portable kit for examining diamonds. Col Rodriguez Estupinan answered directly to Gen Ochoa.

[Rosales del Toro] Witness, you are in the Honor Tribunal that is analyzing the charges issued against Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez. Your testimony must adhere strictly to the truth, to clearly establish the facts being reviewed in this hearing. The first question we want to ask you is: What missions were entrusted to you by the chief of the military mission? What were your duties? Were the goals of your missions explained to you?

[Col Rodriguez Estupinan] Excuse me.

[Rosales del Toro] Come closer.

[Col Rodriguez Estupinan] During the first half of August [corrects himself] October 1988, Comrade Div Gen Ochoa entrusted me with a task, following an analysis with the comrades of UNECA [Union of Caribbean Construction Enterprises]. There were no kwanzas [Angolan currency] to build airports in Catumbela and Cabo Ledo, so it was necessary to get the kwanzas, about 500 million, that were needed to start the project.

Therefore, he told me to contact Comrade Captain Llicas [Jose Llicas Papadedis] and check the possibility of selling sugar and other products on the local market, meaning the black market [candonga]. I contacted Comrade Captain Llicas; the general gave me and Captain Llicas the mission of selling sugar on the local market of Luanda. Captain Llicas was supposed to turn over the results of the sale to me. The general also instructed me to tell General Julio Fernandez, chief of the mission's rear guard, to give the comrades of the MININT [Ministry of Interior] 100 tons of sugar.

The comrades [corrects himself] Comrade Gen Julio Fernandez made the delivery; the MININT comrades picked up the sugar in two trips to the mission's central warehouses; then the sugar was transferred to warehouses in Luanda. The sugar was put in two containers; Comrade Llicas had the keys to the containers. That is how the sugar sales began. Every night Captain Llicas would drive his Toyota van to the MININT warehouses and take 20 or 30 bags of sugar. After several days, after he had sold approximately 5 tons, about 100 bags, he would give me the money—$2,000, $3,000, sometimes more, because there were days when he would make two payments.

The money I received was put in a manila envelope, which was placed in one of the drawers of Comrade Gen Ochoa's dresser, where it was kept. Later on, when we had more or less $17,000, the comrade general took the first amount of money and changed it into kwanzas. In other words, someone was sent to change the money into kwanzas—approximately 25 million kwanzas. The official exchange rate was $32 [corrects himself] 32 kwanzas for $1 but, naturally, the going rate on the black market, was $2,500 [corrects himself] 2,500 kwanzas for $1. The 25 million kwanzas....[changes thought] Three or four days after the money was exchanged it was given to the Special Projects Contingent in (Gama). That was the first exchange we made.

One day Captain Llicas appeared with an uncut diamond. I asked him what it was. He said: It is a diamond. I replied: So what? He said: I know nothing about this, but the Angolan who offered it to me claims it is extremely valuable. He has 15 or 20 more, which he is willing in exchange for 70 or 100 bags of sugar. I cannot recall right now if it was 70 or 100 bags. He said I should take the stone to Comrade Div Gen Ochoa and consult with him. I took it and went to consult with Comrade Div Gen Ochoa. I explained what Comrade Llicas had told me. The general told me: Go ahead with the exchange. The loss, if any, will be minimal.

I told Llicas to make the exchange. He made the exchange. He gave me the diamonds and I delivered them to Comrade Div Gen Ochoa. Div Gen Ochoa gave the diamonds to Patricio—General Patricio—to have them checked to determine whether or not the stones were diamonds.

During one of the first visits by 1st Lt (Ferrin), Patricio gave him these stones so that he would take them to Colonel Tony [Antonio de La Guardia] to establish whether or not they were real diamonds. While the sugar was being sold and paid for with foreign exchange, Lt (Ferrin) went to Luanda with a diamond that had already been classified according to size and color. A jeweler saw the diamond, but still the value of the diamond was unknown. Gen Patricio first, then I, and finally Gen

Ochoa were informed that all the stones were real diamonds. None of the stones were fake. Lt (Ferrin) returned with the diamond and, as far as I know, he gave it to Tony. Tony sent the diamond to a European country.

Some time later, when Tony was in Angola, he was informed by the official to whom he had sent the diamond that it was worth between $40,000 and $140,000. Later, Tony returned to Havana and sent Gen Patricio a small device that resembles the remote control devices used for television and video equipment and that can determine if a stone is a diamond or not. It does not provide any other information. It does not classify them according to carats. It just determines whether or not a stone in question is a diamond.

Patricio told this to Gen Ochoa and Gen Ochoa told me to see Patricio to get the device. I went to Patricio's home and he explained to me how the device worked. It was simple. It worked with electricity. A stone was brought into contact with the device. If the device lit up, then we had a diamond; if it did not, then we did not have a diamond. I took the device to Gen Ochoa and explained to him how it worked. He told me to give it to Capt Llica. I went to Capt Llica's house and delivered the device to him. I explained to him how the device functioned in theory only, because that day there was no electricity in Luanda and there was no diamond available either.

Gen Ochoa had a cylindrical bottle he had brought from his home. One day he told Llica and me that, whenever we exchanged sugar for diamonds, to place the diamonds in that bottle. He had that bottle in his desk. Whenever we exchanged sugar for diamonds, Llica would bring me the diamonds and I would place them in the little bottle in the desk where the foreign exchange was kept.

Some time later, Gen Ochoa, either after speaking with Tony, or through Patricio, learned that the diamond was not worth what he had been told it was worth.

In other words, Tony had reported—from what he told me I do not know if he had personally reported this—that the diamonds were not really worth $40,000 or $140,000 but that at the most they were worth approximately $3,000. If they were to be worth more, first, work had to be done on the diamonds so that they would become jewels. Second, the origin of each diamond had to be stated, because a diamond's value and quality are also based on its place of origin. Third, these were very small stones and could not be worked on the way jewels could be worked on. In addition, they were contaminated; in other words, the diamonds contained other substances, because they came from an uncut rock that contained very small stones. Gen Ochoa told me that I should stop the exchange of sugar for diamonds and that I should continue the exchange of sugar for foreign currency. When he gave me this instruction, approximately six or seven purchases or exchanges had already taken place for a total of 130 or 140 small stones.

In the 1st half of November, Gen Ochoa met with the chief of staff of the rear guard and he told him of the authorization we had to obtain money for these airports. We would take some of the surplus products from our unit—products that were not going to be used or stored for emergency use—and trade them at the market. Among the surplus products was wheat flour. There is great demand for flour in Angola, and we had a surplus of approximately 40 tons. Several tons of flour were taken to the market and bartered along with the sugar. We determined, however, that trading flour was not a good idea, because it was exchanged at more or less the international market price. We stopped bartering flour and instead continued bartering sugar.

Another product that was and is greatly in demand in Angola is dried fish. In one of the visits to Benguela, the general proposed to General (Carrion) that he purchase dried fish in Benguela or in Lobito so as to exchange it for kwanzas. He explained the same thing about guaranteeing the construction of the two airports, that of Catumbela in Benguela and that of Cabo Ledo, south of Luanda. Gen (Carrion) took on that task and legally bought approximately 70 tons of dried fish. He sent 50 tons at the end of December 1988 and 20 tons at the beginning of January 1989. Of that amount, approximately 50 tons were actually used. They were exchanged mainly for kwanzas rather than for foreign exchange.

In addition, the comrades who worked for a store that Tony had in Luanda had received a big shipment of rum. We picked up 700 cases of rum to sell. This rum cost us between $12 and $16 a case and was sold at $24 a case. They had also received a large amount of electronic equipment that included different kinds of tape recorders, telephones, clocks, and radios. From these, we took approximately 140 tape recorders, 20 combination tape and record players, and 100 telephones. We also took some slacks they had. In the end, we had to return these things, the tape recorders, because we had received them close to the departure date—in other words, around 5 January—so we had not traded these things.

More or less in December—in December—he also received the money that had been accumulating. In other words, $17,000 had again accumulated. On 9 January, when Gen Colome [Army Corps General Abelardo Colome] arrived with the commission accompanying him, he brought a letter from the FAR minister in which Comrade Gen Ochoa said that he should return with Gen Colome and to leave Division General [Leopoldo] Cintras Frias in charge of the mission.

The general gave me the letter and told me to make arrangements to take with us, that is, to withdraw the comrades who had arrived with him and to get ready to return myself. As the comrades in the Military Honor

Tribunal know, the end-of-mission ceremony [enfunda] took place on the afternoon of 9 January. The mass event in Luanda was held on the 10th, and the first three flights departed after that. The president's operational meeting was held on the 11th, and some of the comrade members of the commission accompanying Army Corps Gen Colome as well as Comrade Gen Ochoa participated.

On the afternoon of the 11th, Gen Ochoa told me that I should stay there a few more days in order to liquidate the sugar business, that is, all pending business, such as the one I had involving the tape recorders, the rum, etc, and to see what assistance I could give to Division General (Pohl). There was, of course, going to be a change in command; I was executive assistant, and even though Comrade General (Sobile) was chief of general staff, there might be some things I could point out.

At this point, Gen Ochoa picked up the bottle containing the diamonds, and I gave him $14,190, which was all the money available at that time. I stayed several more days, of course; that is, until 20 January, when I returned. More or less on the 15th, I received from Gen Ochoa 20 color television sets, approximately 7 audio components [sistemas], and 20 fans on one of the flights. I also received a small note in which the comrade general told me that it was necessary to sell the television sets for at least $700 in order not to lose money. There was no indication as to the price of the fans. He said that I should not rush back because no senior officer was summoning me, only (Llanes).

At any rate, a telegram had been received on the 11th from the chief of the general staff stating that by order of the FAR minister I should present myself at the ministry no later than the 20th to receive new assignments. By the 19th, I had already liquidated the rum to Tony's people, to the people of MININT [Ministry of Interior] who had Tony's store. I had liquidated, delivered, or returned the tape recorders and all that we had been unable to sell, and I had in my possession 20 million kwanzas as well as $14,000. Between the 18th and the 19th, Comrade Llicas gave me an additional $9,000, which made a total of $23,000. I told Comrade Capt Llicas to stay, that I would return the next day, and that he should finish collecting the money for the television sets he himself had sent, the money for the fans, and part of the money for the rum as well as the kwanzas from the remaining fish.

On 20 January, that is, I, pardon me.... [changes thought] Before returning, since the diamond business had already been suspended, and since the general had told me this, I picked up, that is, Llicas brought me the small device, and I returned the diamond-testing device to General Patricio.

I returned on the 20th, and around 22 January, I went to Gen Ochoa's residence and explained to him how the problems had been resolved, how I had delivered 20 million kwanzas and how I had left Llicas in charge of putting up the remaining 10 million for a total of 30 million kwanzas, selling the television sets—which were sold to (Casa Tri)—and picking up the money.

I went to Gen Ochoa's residence and gave him the $23,000 that I had. I left his residence afterward. Capt Llicas arrived on 31 January. I met him at the airport. There he gave me $24,300 or $24,400; I do not remember exactly how much. On either 3 or 4 February, I went to Gen Ochoa's residence, explained to him what I have just said and what Comrade Llicas had told me, and delivered approximately $24,000 to him. Gen Ochoa gave this money to Captain Martinez, who was at the general's residence that day. A noncommissioned officer, (Paparios), was also at the residence.

I asked him [not further identified] about the trip to Oriente. We talked about the trip to Oriente, about them not reaching Oriente and only getting as far as Camaguey, I believe, and he asked about the health of my daughter who, at that time, had been admitted to the Tropical Medicine Institute. We had coffee and then I left. This is what I can state.

[Rosales del Toro] Colonel, based on the duties you were assigned prior to becoming an aide to Gen Ochoa, on the knowledge you have of FAR procedures, specifically about how money and foreign exchange are managed, and on your knowledge that the Armed Forces have channels through which financial operations are managed, didn't you ever find these irregular activities strange?

[Rodriguez Estupinan] Not really, chief. I never found these activities strange because all this happened after Gen Ochoa had left. The money was being changed, was being used for what it had been allotted. It never crossed my mind, I could never have imagined that a comrade like Gen Ochoa could have been involved in those activities without authorization.

[Rosales del Toro] Why, if you visited the FAR on several occasions and had contacts with the secretariat and the minister, why, if you know Cuban working principles, did you never report a thing about diamonds, dollars, and personal activities?

[Rodriguez Estupinan] With your permission, my visits did not begin until October 1988, and things happened before October. I came in December, but I had no contact with the secretariat.

[Rosales del Toro] But you had contact with [words indistinct] in Luanda.

[Rodriguez Estupinan] Yes.

[Rosales del Toro] Why did you never comment on this? Does anyone here have any questions for Col Antonio Rodriguez?

[Division General Gustavo Chui] As you said earlier, with the work experience that Col Antonio has with the 10th division, he knows that those deals were not and are not authorized. In the event that Gen Ochoa had been authorized to act, Col Antonio's duty was to clear up the situation and either advise Gen Ochoa or find out from him what the situation was. The questions you have asked him [2-second break in reception] regarding those deals, because it is impossible that we could be making this kind of deal in Angola, selling things on the black market—sugar, diamonds—and carrying out improper activities. I want to know what advice Antonio gave to Gen Ochoa, what he should have discussed with Gen Ochoa, because this is an improper situation.

[Rodriguez Estupinan] I did not give him any advice. He gave me a task and I felt motivated to tackle it.

[Rosales del Toro] I understand that you were called on by the minister and that he asked you to cooperate. Let us suppose you believed that what you had been doing was legal. I ask you to explain why if the minister called you and asked you to cooperate, to speak up, you still failed to say a word about what we are now discussing?

[Rodriguez Estupinan] Yes, comrade general. The FAR minister called me and told me about this, as you have said. He told me that he was not interested in ordering an investigation. I told him that I would report everything. I was very confused, because I could not imagine something like this, so I hid the truth; I hid what I knew. I provided some facts, however.

Far more serious than this—and I must state it here for the knowledge of this Military Honor Tribunal's comrades—is that I sent a short note to Col Trutie asking him to cover up the truth after Gen Ochoa asked me if I had been called and I denied it, saying I had not been called. Honestly, this is how I acted.

[Unidentified officer] Did you receive any benefits from participating in these transactions?

[Rodriguez Estupinan] No, chief, I did not. I did not receive any benefit.

[Officer] General Lino [Carreras Rodriguez].

[Carreras Rodriguez] I am General Lino. If I understood you correctly, Colonel, you stated that you sent a note to Col Trutie asking him to cover up or to lie if he were asked. What were Trutie's links to the business of [words indistinct]? I want to know—if you did not inform MINFAR [Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces], if you were not clear when you reported to the minister, and you were not clear with Ochoa either—why did you send a note to Comrade Col Trutie asking him not to say anything if he were questioned? [Words indistinct].

[Rodriguez Estupinan] The note was not sent because he was going to be questioned. I sent a note to Col Trutie explaining the situation. I, more or less, stated in my note that Comrade Gen Ochoa had been called but did not add that I had been called and expected to be recalled. I said everything was out in the open and everything we did was known; I also asked him to cover up the truth. What I say now is the truth and I acknowledge it.

[Garcia Fernandez] I am Division General Rigoberto Garcia Fernandez. How is it that you did not tell the truth when you met with the minister, who asked you to tell the whole truth? Why did you hide it if, according to what you have stated here, all you did was quite normal and apparently in order? Why did you not tell the minister all this?

[Rodriguez Estupinan] I, Comrade General, truly cannot even explain it to myself.

[Garcia Fernandez] Why did you write Trutie a note asking him to hide or cover up the truth if all your actions, as you have stated them here, were totally correct and normal?

[Rosales del Toro] Comrade Secretary, please withdraw this witness and call the second witness.

[Announcer] Under Gen Ochoa Sanchez's orders, Colonel Rafael Morales Velasquez headed a group of officers for a while in Luanda. The mission given to these officers was to obtain freely, convertible currency through illegal business transactions.

[Rosales del Toro] Col Rafael Morales Velasquez, you are a witness in the Military Honor Tribunal. The tribunal is studying the charges presented against Division Gen Ochoa Sanchez to establish the facts that occurred. During this hearing, your statements must adhere strictly to the truth. As president of the Military Honor Tribunal, I am going to ask you a number of questions. First, tell us who gave the instructions and the plan to start and develop business transactions. What were the measures that had to be taken to initiate the business and what were the functions and tasks of each comrade during your stay in Angola?

[Morales Velasquez] During the last week of April 1988, approximately between 23 and 30 April...

[Rosales del Toro, interrupting] Speak a little louder so the comrades can hear you.

[Morales Velasquez] Some time around 23-30 April 1988, Gen Ochoa called me to his office and told me a work group tasked with obtaining freely, convertible foreign exchange for Cuba had encountered some problems. The group had sold trucks, coffee, etc, directly in the streets, which had created problems with the Angolan police and people. Because of this problem, Gen Ochoa

decided to disband the group and give me the responsibility of obtaining foreign exchange for Cuba. The following are the approximate guidelines I was to follow in my mission:

We should not get into any retail business, because of the previous experience, and only dedicate ourselves to wholesale business. My task did not include obtaining the merchandise—mostly foodstuffs—to be sold.

He was going to personally take care of it in the rear guard, adding that he was already trying to obtain a shipment of sugar from Cuba. He said the merchandise was mostly food, sugar, salt, etc. Thus, our mission was to organize a group of comrades to explore the market and check its prices to sell our products. The results of our studies were to be brought to him, and he would decide what to do after that and whether or not we would proceed to sell the products.

His third directive was to have me continue in my post as the mission's deputy chief of staff. I was subordinate to the chief of staff commander and had to comply with all the obligations of my position. However, he stated that for this particular task, I was going to be directly under him.

Through an Angolan construction worker who has been providing the mission with ceilings for a long time, Lt Col Morejon arranged for us—himself and me—to meet three or four times with two or three Angolans to try to sell sugar, salt, and some other food products.

Some time around June, Gen Ochoa asked me to look into the possibility of selling oil and sugar in Punta Negra, basically. He told me that Comrade Iglesias, the mission's official purchaser in Punta Negra, could help me with that task.

I talked with Comrade Iglesias. I told him about the task I had been assigned. He knew about it already. He told me that a Frenchman whose last name is Baurou had done business with him. He had bought electric appliances such as record players and others. He told me that I could establish contact with this man if someone in Punta Negra wanted to buy oil or sugar. He brought me a reply later on. He told me I could talk with a Frenchman whose last name is (MacBocosa) through (Garan) [not further identified] and that I could meet with the Frenchman in approximately a week.

I passed the information on to Gen Ochoa. He told me it was fine. I asked him how I should proceed from that point. He told me I should tell the Frenchman that the merchandise we were selling was a surplus that our mission had in Angola and that we were interested in recovering the money, because our country needed it.

I went to Punta Negra. I met with (MacBocosa) and told him what Gen Ochoa had told me. He said he had no money for that. He said his headquarters was in France and was headed by a Frenchman with the surname (Bauru). He told me he would speak with (Bauru), who was the wholesaler, that (Bauru) was scheduled to go to Punta Negra in 1 or 2 weeks, and that I could either meet with him or talk to him on the phone about the deal then.

Upon my return to the mission, I informed Gen Ochoa of my conversation with (MacBocosa). I then waited for Comrade Iglesias to get in touch with me again.

Approximately 1 or 2 weeks later, (MacBocosa) called us. I went t Punta Negra and talked with (Bauru) over the telephone. He knew all about the business. We discussed prices, possibilities, etc. He told us he had no resources in Punta Negra to get involved in such a venture but that he had large businesses throughout Togo and Benin and that we could settle the deal there. He said the venture could be settled there. (Bauru) added that if for some reason the transaction could not be settled in Togo and Benin, it would be done at sea.

I returned and informed Gen Ochoa. He told me to wait. He waited some time. We waited for 1 or 2 weeks. There was no response. During those weeks, the mission's purchaser told us there was an opportunity to sell the sugar and oil to the niece of a Congolese oil minister. I informed Gen Ochoa about that and told Comrade Iglesias to let us know about any new developments. I told him we would not go there. I told him to let us know whenever he was sure there were possibilities for that sale. That opportunity fell through. The Frenchman had not responded either. I informed Gen Ochoa, who told me to forget the venture and stop making any efforts in that regard.

Some time around July, Gen Ochoa told me to go to Punta Negra and find out about selling wholesale cuts of beef. I told our purchaser to check into the possibility of selling meat in Punta Negra. One or two week later, he gave me the owner of a cold-storage plant, whose name I cannot remember, who was interested in the venture. I informed Gen Ochoa of this. I traveled to Punta Negra. I went to the cold-storage plant and met with this Frenchman. We toured the plant, and he showed me that he had too much meat there and that the deal was not profitable for him at the time. He said we could do business officially if we reached an agreement with customs. He said that he could get all the legal documents that were needed. He was aware that the meat was from Cuba.

To this effect, he told me that although he had an ample supply, he wanted me to send him some samples of the meat—forequarters and hindquarters—so that he could determine if it was advisable for him to do some business with us. I reported this to the general, and we sent him the samples. We did not conduct any business, because this man said that it was not a good business deal for him, for he already had an ample supply and the meat was not of good quality.

At about that time, he also talked to me about the possibility of selling dried fish. We sent him some samples, I asked (Eumelio) to prepare a sample of dried fish and send it over there, or rather the buyer took the sample. As of that time, he apparently went through some negotiations, and he sent me a response, saying that there was no chance of making a deal, because the dried fish was of low quality and that there was better quality fish in Punta Negra.

[Rosales del Toro] Colonel, how did the diamonds and ivory business get started?

[Morales Velasquez] I do not remember exactly. I do not know if it was Llicas who came up with the idea of dealing with diamonds, or if it was Gen Ochoa who brought it up. I do not remember exactly how, but I do remember that I told him that there were possibilities for [word indistinct], as Llicas told me, through a Luanda merchant, trading diamonds for beer cans, or something like that. Llicas later said that we had to go in a military plane, and so forth. I reported this to Gen Ochoa, and it was decided that nothing should be done.

About the ivory, I did not learn anything directly about this. If you wish, I will tell you all that I know. On one trip, when I went to Punta Negra to do another type of work—having to do with my regular mission—Colonel Trutie and I arrived at the same time. I saw him load some boxes on the plane, but he did not tell me anything. We disembarked that night in Luanda, and we went together in the same vehicle to the chief of mission's office. I reported to the general on the matters I had to discuss with him, and before I left, Ochoa asked him about the ivory. Col Trutie told him that he had brought a certain amount—I recall there were from six to eight boxes—and he explained how he had purchased it, that is, in the Congo through some businessmen; I think that is what he said.

They discussed prices and mentioned that carved ivory was more expensive than uncarved ivory; they mentioned where the carving was best, whether in India, the Congo, if it was more fine or less fine, and the prices per kilogram; but I did not learn about this in-depth, so therefore that is the only thing that I can tell you about this.

[Rosales del Toro] During all of these negotiations, there were visits by foreigners who became involved in the mission and used our houses. Can you tell us about this?

[Morales Velasquez] On one occasion, Gen Ochoa told me that there was a Bedouin, as he called him, but I think he was Jewish. I do not recall his name. He never talked about what this man did, but he did say that he was a very important businessman, and that he might come to Angola—that he would come a few days later.

In view of my responsibilities as deputy chief of the general staff, I took care of the temporary quarters. He told me that he and a group of comrades would stay in those houses for a certain length of time. I sent the chief of the administrative staff to check over the house, to set them up there, and to provide them with everything they needed to enable them to stay in house number two. About a week later, I went there with the chief of the administrative staff to check the condition of that house. When I arrived, I found that there were still people staying there. I asked the comrade in charge of the house how many comrades were staying there, and he told me that there were five, but that two were unaccounted for. Those two were not there, the house was dirty, there were a lot of cigarette ashes, and so forth. We used to take good care of those houses. I asked him who had been in the main bedroom, and he told me that it had been a man named Tony.

I concluded that it was Tony La Guardia. I also concluded that the aforementioned Jewish man had therefore never been at the house. I believe that I took some steps—I do not remember exactly what—with other comrades to tell them that the Cuban comrades who were there were not the same people Gen Ochoa had told me should be taken out and relocated elsewhere. If they were to stay longer [words indistinct]. That is what I know about this.

[Rosales del Toro] Was there any procedure to handle these finances? Do you know anything about this?

[Morales Velasquez] A procedure had been organized a long time ago by the finance section. It was located at the store and the cafeteria in house number three. The group that had dissolved had taken care of that activity. Comrade Milvia and the accountant working in that group continued to take care of this economic activity and withdrew the money using the same procedures. Once I reached an agreement with the mission's financial officer to use the same procedures established in the mission for all financial activities, since this was a normal business operation. The financial officer, Comrade Milvia, and the accountant for that group organized the work so that the business would be run like a store because, in sum, the conditions existed to do this.

Considering what Capt Llica did, it did not seem to us.... [changes thought] Moreover, Gen Ochoa and I once had a conversation in which he proposed something to which I agreed. Llica's case was very difficult. Therefore, we had to trust the comrades. We actually did not know Llica very well, but we knew that he was a comrade who had been sent down by the chief of staff to fulfill his mission. I therefore agreed that it was not necessary to set controls to monitor his work. In addition, it would have been impossible to have implemented some kind of control because.... [changes thought] He is actually very good at making purchases on the Angolan retail market, such as buying products for the plane, for the house, exchanging currency, buying in kwanzas, exchanging currency into dollars. In other words, it was not feasible in the least at that time. This is what I understand from what Gen Ochoa told me. I agreed that in this case the

procedure was as follows: Capt Llica handed the money over to me; we prepared a voucher, which we both signed. Milvia also handed the money over to me; we also prepared a voucher, which we both signed. At the beginning, Gen Ochoa told me that the money should have been delivered directly to the secretary in his office, a comrade named Marta. I handed the money over to Marta and prepared vouchers for both our signatures. Then Gen Ochoa told me that we should hand the money over to the finance section. We handed the money over to the finance section and also signed vouchers. That means that there were two ways to receive and to withdraw money.

I was in charge of collecting and delivering the money. In July, Comrade Ochoa told me that another comrade was coming, a comrade he had requested a long time ago, who should be a reliable comrade with some knowledge of accounting. She could therefore keep the accounting records. My conclusion is that perhaps he was not thinking about retail businesses but about wholesale businesses. The comrade arrived, and the command assigned her as my secretary and in charge of these controls. Therefore, during this part of July, before I traveled to Cuba on vacation, the money was handed over to the secretary in my presence; she was the one who counted the money and prepared the vouchers. The vouchers actually exist.

[Rosales del Toro] Morales, is there any information on the money being kept at the house for a certain period of time?

[Morales Velasquez] Well, before this comrade was assigned to be my secretary, Capt Llica handed the money over to me, at night and at my house, in three installments. I always took the money to the mission the next day and handed it over to any one of the two comrades.

[Rosales del Toro] What about other people in the group, such as Llica? Did they keep the money?

[Morales Velasquez] Of course. I think he kept the money in the house because he was alone. When he had collected some 2,000 or 3,000 [currency not specified], he handed the money over to me.

[Rosales del Toro] What did the Angolans think of this?

[Morales Velasquez] I actually did not have relations with Angolans, except concerning work. I only had relations with three Angolans whom I met at the beginning to discuss business prospects. I cannot give you further information on that.

[Announcer] On orders from Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez, Col Teudis Trutie Mantilla made contacts in and traveled from Angola and other African countries to carry out commercial activities involving ivory, wood, and cement.

[Rosales del Toro] Col Trutie Matias: As a witness of the Honor Tribunal, which is studying charges leveled against Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez to better clarify the events that are being aired at the hearing, you must strictly adhere to the truth. I will pose several questions to you. The first: When did you become involved in commercial operations and what did Div Gen Ochoa tell you about your duties and objectives?

[Trutie] Around March, Ochoa told me that in view of the country's economic problems, there was a need to obtain money to upgrade living conditions. That was in March 1988.

[Rosales del Toro] Who did you contact to obtain ivory and where?

[Trutie] In the Congo, with a UNECA [Caribbean Construction Enterprises Union] comrade, Eliodoro Rodriguez, who represented a company in the Congo for approximately 2 years; I also contacted a Congo native named Pablo, who studied here and earned his agricultural engineering degree.

[Rosales del Toro] How many ivory shipments were made as a result of these purchases and what were the destinations?

[Trutie] About three shipments were sent to Luanda.

[Rosales del Toro] How much is that?

[Trutie] I remember about 10 or 12 carvings and other unfinished pieces. I do not recall exactly how many kilograms that was. It could have been 200 or 300 kg.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you know what the objective of this business transaction was?

[Trutie] I understood the objective to be to obtain money or foreign currency to upgrade our mission's living conditions; that is what I thought.

[Rosales del Toro] Who told you that?

[Trutie] Gen Ochoa did.

[Rosales del Toro] Were you involved in the business to purchase high-quality lumber?

[Trutie] Yes.

[Rosales del Toro] What did that business consist of?

[Trutie] In June, I believe, the Cuban ambassador in the Congo said that a new, joint Cuban-Angolan enterprise had emerged following the failure of the Cuban-Angolan lumber enterprise. He said that it could supply the lumber needed by the military mission. This is how this

started. We bought lumber for construction work at the military airport and for certain UNECA projects that were suspended because of a lack of lumber.

[Rosales del Toro] Do you know whether any amount of lumber of this kind was sent to Cuba and why?

[Trutie] We sent 18 cubic meters of sawed mahogany to the Western Army.

[Rosales del Toro] What for?

[Trutie] The objective was to upgrade the living conditions of the Western Army; that is what I was told.

[Rosales del Toro] Who told you that?

[Trutie] Gen Ochoa did. That lumber came aboard a ship that also brought other lumber whose purchase, I understand, was ordered by the commander in chief. He purchased 6,000 cubic meters of lumber that came aboard that same ship that anchored in Punta Negra.

[Rosales del Toro] Did foreign currency change hands in these transactions? Were you aware of this?

[Trutie] Part was paid with Congolese currency and part with some products.

[Rosales del Toro] Does anyone here have any questions for Comrade Trutie Matias?

[Div Gen Ramon Pardo Guerra] Could you tell us whether you knew if other products—besides wood and radio equipment—were sent to the Western Army?

[Trutie] Yes. Let me explain it to you. Some resources, I believe, were sent to the Western Army. However, I am not sure whether they arrived there. With the help of the military mission and Gen Ochoa himself, a small motel for the personnel of the 10th [not further identified] in transit through Luanda was being built. In other words, a motel for the personnel who were going to Mozambique, the Congo, Sao Tome, and other places was being built. Agreements for the construction of the motel were signed. Some furniture had already been ordered for the motel. I told Gen Ochoa that if we were going to leave Angola for good, then there was no point in building that motel, that we could continue lodging people as we had been doing until then, and that the furniture could be sent to Cuba.

[Rosales del Toro] Do you know whether that furniture was sent to Cuba? I also asked you what you knew about other resources besides wood being sent to the Western Army.

[Trutie] I could not say for sure whether those resources were sent to Cuba.

[Rosales del Toro] To whom did you deliver that ivory?

[Trutie] Well, I sent the ivory to house number one.

[Rosales del Toro] To whom did you deliver it?

[Trutie] I did not deliver the ivory to anybody in person. I sent it to the chief of that house.

[Rosales del Toro] Who was the chief of house number one? Did you not deliver documents for that ivory?

[Trutie] No. That ivory came in a box and was sent to house number one.

[Rosales del Toro] Colonel, you know FAR administrative procedures. You are talking about valuable goods. It is logical, we all know that such a delivery goes against the established rules. How is it possible that the ivory was delivered without [word indistinct], without any document accounting for that material?

[Trutie] Comrade General, ivory was usually sent in a sealed box. That box was sent to house number one in a military vehicle.

[Rosales del Toro] General Lezcano.

[Lezcano] I am Brigadier General Carlos Lezcano Perez. Col Trutie, we know that you were sent a note with Col (Antonio) in which you were told to handle matters related to the business conducted in Angola, and you were aware of the ongoing investigation. What was the actual content of the note you received? What were your instructions and what was your attitude in view of the situation?

[Trutie] When I received those orders, I simply.... [changes thought] Let us not forget that at that time I had nothing to do with those businesses anymore. Ochoa had already returned to Cuba. I did nothing else.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you consider the note a normal message?

[Trutie] No, I did not think that the note was normal. I thought that there was no longer any interest in conducting any kind of...

[Rosales del Toro, interrupting] What did the note say exactly?

[Trutie] The note said that from that time on I was not to participate in any type of business activity; you know—the wood business, the cement business, UNECA cement that had been sold, and all that. However, in any case, all those ventures were already settled. Ochoa had returned to Cuba, so all that was over with.

[Rosales del Toro] Did he tell you anything about the discovery of those activities?

[Trutie] I do not recall.

[Rosales del Toro] How aware are you of the fact that irregularities took place?

[Trutie] Right now I am certainly aware that I was doing something wrong. I must be honest and admit that in the past I thought that I was doing something to improve the conditions of our mission in Angola and the national economy.

[Rosales del Toro] Does any other comrade wish to ask something else? All right, you can step down now.

[Announcer] Lieutenant Colonel Arnaldo Morejon Plat, assigned by Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez to the group that conducted illegal business activities. He visited an African country to negotiate the sale of oil and gas for automobiles and aircraft.

[Div Gen Jesus Bermudez Cutino] I call on witness Lt Col Arnaldo Morejon Plat.

[Rosales del Toro] Lt Col Arnaldo Morejon Plat, as a witness of the Honor Tribunal, which is studying charges leveled against Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez to better clarify the events that are being aired at this hearing, you must strictly adhere to the truth. I will pose several questions to you; I ask you to be specific. The first one is: What was the objective of and under whose orders did you contact foreigners of capitalist countries?

[Morejon] To sell products and to obtain money to help the country's economy.

[Rosales del Toro] Who gave you orders?

[Morejon] I personally received instructions from Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez.

[Rosales del Toro] What did he specifically say to you?

[Morejon] He told me in almost these words that these operations had been authorized by the FAR minister and the commander in chief, that nobody would take anything home, and that all the money collected would be used to help resolve our country's economic problems.

[Rosales del Toro] What foreigners were contacted and from which countries?

[Morejon] Some French citizens in the Punta Negra area, Angolans doing business in Luanda, and Swedes.

[Rosales del Toro] What kinds of transactions were made?

[Morejon] Actually, we began some transactions, but none was ever completed.

[Rosales del Toro] What transactions were made?

[Morejon] In Punta Negra, the objective was to sell fish and meat; in Luanda we dealt with some Angolan businessmen and Swedes to sell these and other food products and certain beverages.

[Rosales del Toro] Were you aware of other contacts with capitalist foreigners for this kind of business venture, even if you were not directly involved?

[Morejon] No.

[Rosales del Toro] How many houses were you ordered to remodel or build and who issued the orders?

[Morejon] I was ordered to remodel, build onto, and furnish four houses: two in Luanda, one in Luangue, one in Namibe, and four other houses in the (Musulu) Pensinsula. [numbers as heard] We asked Angola for permission to build the (Musulu) Peninsula houses to provide pilots with a place to rest.

As for the houses—not the (Musulu) houses, but the other houses—they were completely repaired and refurbished with furniture purchased in Punta Negra. We spent between $80,000 and $100,000 to furnish those houses and some $20,000 to furnish the (Musulu) houses. All that money came from an allotment given by the Congo to the Punta Negra tactical group.

[Rosales del Toro] Do you know what those houses were really used for?

[Morejon] I believe that they were underused after being repaired; those houses were completely underused. That was an unnecessary expenditure.

[Rosales del Toro] What kind of repair work was done to the Los Cocos house?

[Morejon] The Los Cocos house contains a small primary school for Angolan children. Colonel Bueno was assigned to ask the municipal police inspector to get the school out of there. After this step had been taken, one of our construction brigades repaired almost the entire house, which was in very poor condition. Afterward, we completely furnished it with top-quality furniture and equipment, that is, expensive things.

[Rosales del Toro] What was that house used for?

[Morejon] That house was among those that were completely underused.

[Rosales del Toro] You never saw it occupied?

[Morejon] No, because we withdrew our personnel from those houses once we finished repairing and furnishing them.

[Rosales del Toro] Repeat the costs you mentioned related to the repair work.

[Morejon] Over $80,000 was paid to repair the houses, not the houses at (Musulu). The houses at (Musulu) are beach houses, and repairs were less expensive—approximately $20,000. I believe that approximately $100,000 was used for repairing all of the houses.

[Rosales del Toro] Do you know of any investments made for buying recreational boats or something like that?

[Morejon] Yes, there were two boats in house number one.

[Rosales del Toro] Where did they come from?

[Morejon] I have some information on that, although I did not participate directly. However, I was told that they were purchased in Punta Negra.

[Rosales del Toro] What do you think of these expenditures?

[Morejon] I think that such purchases were unnecessarily extravagant. There was really no need to do all that. We were told that the houses were going to be used by many delegations visiting from Cuba and traveling to Luanda and other places in Angola in light of the troop withdrawal. We were told that the purpose of those houses was to house the commissions and delegations that would come from Cuba to work on the troop withdrawal.

[Rosales del Toro] Do you have any questions to ask the colonel, the lieutenant colonel? Division General Fernandez Gondin, go ahead.

[Fernandez Gondin] Lt Col Morejon, tell us about the type of relations you had with the Angolan of Zairian origin known as (Bayin).

[Morejon] There was an Angolan who had been trading for many years with the Cuban military mission in Angola. He is a merchant who sells quite a variety of products, such as construction material. He owns a company in Luanda that builds roofs. He was widely used by the section in charge of constructing housing for the troops, as well as by other institutions and mission sections involved in such projects. He was also used for the purchase of equipment, such as air conditioning and so forth. He continuously made sales to the Cuban military mission in Angola—that is, he had business with us throughout the years, not just in the past 2 or 3 years, but years ago. This Angolan kept in close contact with the military mission, carrying out projects for them and selling goods to them.

[Unidentified speaker] General Gondin.

[Fernandez Gondin] Morejon, explain to us what you received from him, how you distributed goods that you received from this Angolan. Expand on your relations with this citizen.

[Morejon] This citizen gave me musical equipment. When he gave me the equipment, I reported this and asked what I should do with the equipment. I was told to receive and to keep the equipment. That was first. Later on, that citizen gave me 2 million kwanzas, which were used to buy two video recorders. One of them was given to Morales, to Col Morales. I kept the second one. The relevant authorities were not told about this.

[Unidentified speaker] Why?

[Morejon] It was negligence. They were not told about this.

[Unidentified speaker] Just negligence? What is your idea of negligence?

[Morejon] I believe that this was a serious weakness on our part.

[Unidentified speaker] Brigadier General Filiberto Olivera.

[Olivera] Through whom and why, Morejon, did this man give you 2 million kwanzas? He must have had some basis for doing this, something [words indistinct] about you to give you the 2 million kwanzas.

[Morejon] Regarding this, I can tell you that this is a citizen who, as a result of his business deals—in other words, as a result of the business transactions he has with the mission—earns huge sums of money. He simply gave me those 2 million kwanzas. He is a citizen, a man who actually makes millions of kwanzas from his work at the diplomatic mission.

[Unidentified speaker] Was he among those who benefited from the investments made in the houses?

[Morejon] No. No, because the houses were repaired by one of our brigades and all of the equipment and furniture was bought in Punta Negra.

[Rosales del Toro] What was the reason for that close relationship, in which one of the persons involved even gave away large sums of money?

[Morejon] The reason is precisely what I said before: He obtained large profits from the work he did at the mission.

[Rosales del Toro] Why did he give those gifts to you and not to others?

[Morejon] Well, because one of the persons who needed his services the most was precisely the construction area. [sentence as heard].

[Rosales del Toro] In other words, you handled the mission's basic contracts?

[Morejon] Yes, we handled them.

[Rosales del Toro] General Schueg.

[Schueg] General Schueg Colas. Morejon, you said the money was used to buy two video machines. You kept one and the other you gave to [name indistinct]. Why this, let us say, exchange of gifts between you two?

[Morejon] Because it was through Morales that we bought those video machines.

[Rosales del Toro] Was Morales your boss?

[Morejon] Yes, he was.

[Unidentified officer] General Pujols.

[Pujols] There are several things I do not understand. Colonel, you said you received 2 million kwanzas, and now you just told Gen Mesa that this equipment was not bought there but in Cuba. Into what currency did you convert the kwanzas? Into Cuban currency, into dollars, or into those little video machines?

[Morejon] The 2 million kwanzas were converted into dollars. The money was sent to Col Morales, and Morales bought the video machines.

[Rosales del Toro] How did you exchange the kwanzas for dollars?

[Morejon] There in Luanda.

[Rosales del Toro] But how, how?

[Morejon] In the market, in the black market.

[Rosales del Toro] How did you exchange the money?

[Morejon] You can change kwanzas for dollars there.

[Rosales del Toro] But through whom? What connections do you have there?

[Morejon] We exchanged that money through middlemen.

[Rosales del Toro] Who were those middlemen?

[Morejon] Angolan citizens

[Rosales del Toro] So the money exchange was conducted directly between you and Angolan citizens?

[Morejon] Yes.

[Rosales del Toro] Not through the man who gave you the 2 million kwanzas?

[Morejon] No.

[Rosales del Toro] How much did you get for the 2 million kwanzas?

[Morejon] They gave me $800.

[Rosales del Toro] General Gondin.

[Fernandez Gondin] Div Gen Fernandez Gondin. Lt Colonel Morejon, what did you know about Gen Ochoa's intention to set up a business in Angola along with a Panamanian of Jewish origin?

[Morejon] Yes, I knew about that. In fact that was discussed during one of the meetings we held periodically in the mission with the mission chief to check on the work that was being done. We were instructed to find a few houses or storefronts in Luanda to set up that business. That project was not realized because we could not find any houses or storefronts.

[Rosales del Toro] Did he talk specifically about what kind of business he was planning to set up?

[Morejon] Well, it was a business to sell clothes, beverages, and food products. The idea was to have a Panamanian business as a front.

[Announcer] Lt Col Onelio Perez Rivera. On instructions from Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez, Perez led a group of officers who conducted illegal business activities.

[Rosales del Toro] I am going to ask you a few questions on behalf of the tribunal. I ask you to be as thorough as possible in your answers. Here is the first question. When and on whose instructions did you become involved in business activities?

[Perez] I began approximately between 15 and 20 February and on instructions from Gen Ochoa.

[Rosales del Toro] What were the specific orders you received?

[Perez] I was instructed to organize a group that we called the special group. The mission of that group was to organize supplies for Cubana de Aviacion, to organize commercial activities and food supplies for house No 3, to open a small store in (Beznozol), to promote the sale of sugar in the local market, and to try to investigate the possibility of opening stores in several major Angolan cities.

[Rosales del Toro] How much time did you invest in the organization of those activities, and how often did you and Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez send out shipments?

[Perez] I worked full-time in the organization of these activities. Gen Ochoa and I sent out approximately four or five shipments every week.

[Rosales del Toro] What was the prevailing military situation at the time in the Peoples Republic of Angola?

[Perez] When I started the business activities, I recall that the South African troops and the puppet UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] troops had broken the defense of the 21st and 50th Brigades in the south. There were large numbers of troops deployed and great tension. There was fighting almost every day in the south.

[Rosales del Toro] How long were your meetings with Gen Ochoa?

[Perez] Between 1 and 2 hours.

[Rosales del Toro] You stated previously that the meetings were held 3 to 4 times a week?

[Perez] Yes.

[Rosales del Toro] Why did you go to Havana in April?

[Perez] I came to Havana in April to meet with Col Tony de la Guardia and to buy merchandise from him to supply the stores we had in Luanda: the (Beznozol Store) and house No 3.

[Rosales del Toro] What was the result of your meeting with him?

[Perez] Well, I bought approximately $90,000 worth of merchandise that was sent to the stores and sold.

[Rosales del Toro] What sort of items did you purchase?

[Perez] I bought industrial products mostly and some beverages.

[Rosales del Toro] After meeting with Tony, what else did you do and who else—Cubans or foreigners—did you contact during your stay in Havana?

[Perez] The first contact I had was with a Cuban, Col Tony de La Guardia, who assigned two advisers or officials from his staff to me. One of them was named Tito and the other was called Heriberto. Together with these men, I visited different places and basically we met with a Panamanian merchant who was in Havana. His name was Victor Azrak and most of our operations were conducted with him. We bought most of our merchandise from this Jew.

[Rosales del Toro] How did you plan to ship the merchandise to Angola?

[Perez] First, we thought the merchandise would be shipped in the military ship—the military provisions ship. However, Tony de La Guardia and his group took care of this matter since we did not have the authorization to send it in the ship. A partial shipment was sent in a ship called La Perla, and the rest was sent via air freight, including a shipment made in an IL-76 aircraft that made a flight to Angola.

[Rosales del Toro] Do you recall the date you traveled in the IL-76?

[Perez] It was close to August. It was very late in the month.

[Rosales del Toro] Well, does anybody here have any more questions for Lt Col Perez Rivera?

[Brigadier General Lorente Leon] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, could you tell us where this merchandise ended up? Do you know?

[Perez] This merchandise was sold in an orderly manner through the proper economic controls at the house No 3 stores. All sales were tallied through the mission's account, handled through an organized accounting system.

[Rosales del Toro] What was Tony de La Guardia's business in this deal?

[Perez] Tony de La Guardia worked as a middleman. In other words, he financed the purchases and earned a small profit. He made my purchases from the Panamanian businessman. I was given the merchandise on consignment for 90 days. For this work, Tony de La Guardia earned a small percentage on these purchases.

[Rosales del Toro] How did you make contact with Tony?

[Perez] I was told to contact Gen Patricio as soon as I arrived here. Gen Patricio then took me to Tony's office.

[Rosales del Toro] Did Patricio take part in the Angola operations?

[Perez] Not with me. In these business deals, I never saw him. He did help out with the contacts, but he had no part in the business at that time.

[Fernandez Gondin] It would be good if you explained Antonio's sale of some of the articles to the shop and then the claim letter you wrote in which you mentioned an unusual sale and the reply you received.

[Perez] I came to Cuba on vacation on 25 December 1988 and, when I returned there, I found that comrade Llicas had gone to the store. He told the comrade who stayed in may place that the chief of the mission had ordered the purchase of 20 JVC television sets valued in $720 each, 19 table fans valued in $60 each, and 678 cases of Santa Cruz rum valued at $1.40 per bottle. This totaled $26,900, or $26,740, something like that.

I wrote a letter because this brought difficulties from the economic point of view, from the point of view of the costs, of the organization and commercial logistics of house No 3. I returned and wrote the letter—it was answered—because a small number of rum bottles were missing, four of the fans were broken, and the television sets had a system that was not used in Angola and more investments had to be made to adapt an audio crystal so that the sound could be heard. This brought me serious financial problems in the accounting area. I sent the letter, received a response from Col Antonio in which he said he would answer me later but to handle the situation in the mean time.

[Rosales del Toro] Specifically, how much was the difference in money? Could you expand a little on what Antonio told you?

[Perez] Well, Antonio didn't talk about money in the little letter he sent me. My problem was the broken equipment and the high price of the equipment. Some $1,600 was involved in the broken equipment that could not be sold and 48 cases of rum valued at $16.80 per case were missing. If I remember correctly, all that involved some $1,660. He told me he would answer me later and for me to handle the situation in the mean time. That was the response I got.

[Rosales del Toro] Did he mention Ochoa in that letter?

[Perez] He said the chief was touring the interior and that upon his return they would meet to analyze the situation and answer me. I suppose that when he said chief he was referring to General Ochoa.

[Rosales del Toro] General Fernandez Godin.

[Fernandez Godin] Omelio, did you receive instructions from Gen Ochoa to deposit money in a Panamanian bank as a result of the sale of oil to foreign vessels?

[Perez] For Cuban vessels, that is, managed by Cubans. That was a Cuban vessel, that is, operated by Cubans; its captain was Cuban and the crew was Cuban. The ship is called ("Sechil"). It had difficulties because the Angolans did not supply the [word indistinct] it needed for the cold chambers and was going to stay for a long period of time—over a month—and asked the mission—I understand it asked the rear guard—to supply some fuel and some food for the crew.

I believe they were supplied with 20 tons. The operation amounted to a total of $4,267. I was coming to Cuba on vacation and I was given an account number in Panama so that the enterprise, the owner of the ship here, would deposit in the account in Panama the money for that operation.

[Unidentified speaker] Where was the flag from?

[Rosales del Toro] What flag did the ship carry?

[Perez] I don't know that detail. I know the ship belongs to a Cuban enterprise based here on 5th Avenue and has three ships and it deals with the transportation of meat products because the ship has been adapted for it.

[Rosales del Toro] On 5th Avenue?

[Perez] 5th Avenue.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you ever go there?

[Perez] I went there. I met with the engineer who went there asking for fuel and with, I believe he was, the commercial deputy director.

[Rosales del Toro] General Quinta.

[Quinta] Why was the money deposited in Panama?

[Perez] That is what I was instructed to do because it could not be done in Angola. The enterprise could not deposit it there because Angolans have many obstacles to withdrawing money from the bank and did not have a name to deposit it under other than Mambisa. Mambisa has to go by certain rules; it has to withdraw the money gradually over a long period of time, basically in German marks. This is why I was asked to deposit it there.

[Unidentified speaker] Couldn't that money have been deposited in our fatherland, in Cuba?

[Perez] I believe so.

[Rosales del Toro] Didn't you find anything unusual about the instructions you received?

[Perez] I didn't at first because I thought it had to do with the operations related to Tony La Guardia and that one of their accounts was being used to carry out the operation and later transfer it to Angola. This is what I thought at first.

[Rosales del Toro] General Baranda.

[Baranda] You say that an IL-76 was used to take the cargo there in August. A flight to Angola on this type of plane would cost $80,000 or $90,000. Who paid for that?

[Perez] That was purely a Menca [expansion unknown] staff operation, that is, a MININT mission, and it went on them.

[Baranda] I ask this question because those television sets should be extremely expensive there after the air fare is added.

[Rosales del Toro] Was the entire cargo a MININT cargo?

[Perez] I believe it was for MININT. I didn't see the plane. I was not there but it went to the warehouses that the MININT had already organized there for its commercial activities.

[Rosales del Toro] What warehouse do you know they had there?

[Perez] They have a warehouse at the Viana Road exit. It operates as a wholesaler to sell to Angolans. There is also a very small retail store.

[Rosales del Toro] Is this specifically from the organs Tony represented?

[Perez] That is right.

[Rosales del Toro] Pardo.

[Pardo Guerra] You mentioned that new stores were going to be opened in various cities. Why were they going to be opened and how were those stores going to be operated there?

[Perez] At the beginning it was said that those stores were going to be opened to be operated by foreign personnel, probably Latins. This idea later was under the complete control of Tony La Guardia's group. It was considered as part of the possible task of the group I was assigned to—the so-called special group—for a short period of time. It later was under the interests of Tony La Guardia. I do not know why he did not open them. They were regular stores.

[Pardo Guerra] Those were stores that had nothing to do with military activities, of course.

[Perez] No, nothing. Absolutely nothing.

[Pardo Guerra] And you were going to operate them.

[Perez] At the beginning. It was said that the group could organize them but that idea lasted a short period of time. It quickly went to Tony La Guardia.

[Pardo Guerra] If your group did not have those tasks, why did you get involved in it?

[Perez] Because those were the orders given to us. This was the reason the group was created. All these activities fell under the tasks assigned to us.

[Rosales del Toro] General Pujol.

[Pujol] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, you say these stores were going to be directed by you and operated by Latin personnel. What do you mean by Latin personnel?

[Perez] The idea was to consider the possibility of taking there some personnel that Tony La Guardia's people would find—either Panamanians, or people from other countries but not Cubans, or at least people who did not appear to be Cuban.

[Pujol] Why was this?

[Perez] I believe it would be so that there wouldn't be legal problems in Angola, in Luanda. This is what I believe because...

[Rosales del Toro] Didn't this get your attention?

[Perez] Yes, of course.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you show some disagreement with this or did you make some observations on these matters?

[Perez] Well, I did not make any observations to Gen Ochoa.

[Rosales del Toro] What about to other comrades?

[Perez] Yes, I did comment on this with some comrades.

[Rosales del Toro] Is there any other matter? We have finished with the witness, Secretary of the Presidency.

[Unidentified announcer] Captain Jose L. LLicas Papadedis, appointed by Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez to the group of officers involved in carrying out illegal commercial activities.

[Rosales del Toro] When did you first begin working in the special foreign exchange group and when did you learn of its functions?

[Llicas] I learned of the group's functions and began to work in that group in March 1988.

[Rosales del Toro] Who told you of your duties?

[LLicas] Lt Col Onelio told me of my duties and Col Antonio also spoke to me of my duties.

[Rosales del Toro] What were your duties or activities in the group?

[Llicas] Supplying house No 3—which serves as a hotel for the Cubana de Aviacion crew—the Cubana de Aviacion commissary in Luanda, and a store located in (Beznozol) on the 11th floor.

[Rosales del Toro] What kind of business did this store handle?

[Llicas] That store sold articles and food to the Cuban personnel who worked in Luanda, Angola, and to some citizens from socialist countries.

[Rosales del Toro] What resources were you given to carry out this activity?

[Llicas] We had been given a new Toyota bus or truck. The four-door truck enabled us to transport the products discreetly and safely in Luanda. The products were placed inside the patrol truck. In this way, I supplied house No 3, the commissary, and that store. In addition, there was a supply plan which had been drawn up and signed by Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa. Through the rear guard food and clothing section, this plan allowed me to request products in order to supply those places. I was issued delivery orders, the products were chosen at the base, and then I would supply them to those places.

[Rosales del Toro] Explain to us with whom you carried out the exchange of products? Refer specifically to the contraband with the Angolans and the foreigners.

[Llicas] As for with whom I exchanged the products, it was with the merchants who operate in the Angolan black markets or candongas, as they call them. I exchanged the products through those places and I acquired the products that the base could not supply and did not have. For example, I would obtain plantains, salad greens, fruits, and vegetables that we did not have at the base and exchange them for other products. Sometimes I would get kwanzas for the products included in the plan. I was given kwanzas to exchange them for products.

When this happened, a record was kept on the amount of kwanzas needed for the products that were required, and I would buy the products with kwanzas. Sometimes I bought several products from several dealers. In other words, I kept two separate accounts: one for recording transactions in kwanzas for products and vice versa, and the other for recording products that I brought from the base and kept in the storehouse. It is all recorded in the books I left behind when I came here.

[Rosales del Toro] What did you seek to accomplish by exchanging products?

[Llicas] The main purpose was to obtain dollars for those products. For example, I would buy a box of sardines and convert it into foreign exchange. How? I would exchange the box of sardines for plantains, which I would take to house No 3, where it would be sold as fried plantains to crew members, who paid in dollars. The plantains were also taken to (Beznozol) and sold to Cuban personnel there, who also paid in dollars. In other words, the whole idea was to get dollars.

[Rosales del Toro] Apart from this trade or contraband, what other types of deals did you make in order to obtain foreign exchange?

[Llicas] I was instructed by Col Antonio and directly from Div Gen Ochoa to sell sugar for dollars. Through the contacts I normally made through my job, I came to know businessmen or black market dealers who bought the sugar and paid $30, $35, up to $40 per sack for it. When this happened, I would immediately report that I had received an offer to purchase more sugar. I was then given authorization, I would sell the sugar, and turn the money over.

[Rosales del Toro] Can you tell us how many of these transactions you made?

[Llicas] I cannot give you details on the number of bags, but, according to my own figures, I sold approximately 990 sacks of sugar between November and December at $35 per bag, which amounted to approximately $34,000. I prepared invoices after each sale, which I turned over to Col Antonio. He would tally the figures and I would give him the invoices and the money.

[Rosales del Toro] How was this connected to the diamond trade?

[Llicas] When one is buying such products and dealing with the so-called black market dealers, they offer you all sorts of things. I would like to say briefly that the entire operation was black market and everything bought was contraband. If I had gone to the market to purchase a bottle of wine, that wine would have been introduced at the border as contraband from somewhere else; the same would apply if I were to buy plantains. They sell Cuban, Soviet, Chinese, all sorts of products on that market. Everything that is purchased there is contraband. The black market dealers approach you and ask if you care to purchase this or that. They offered me mercury, diamonds, ivory, everything. They would see you doing business and they would approach you. Through those contacts they offered me diamonds on several occasions.

On one occasion Col Antonio [corrects himself] excuse me, I mean Col Rafael Morales asked me if someone had approached me to sell any product that might ultimately yield foreign exchange for Cuba—because all this was to get foreign exchange for Cuba because of the country's situation, etc, etc. I told him that I had been offered many things such as mercury, ivory, and diamonds. He said: We are interested in diamonds and need ivory. I said [to Col Morales] you, not I, should make the decision. However, I never made a transaction of this type with Comrade Col Rafael [Morales].

However, between November and December, Col Antonio came to me and told me that he had looked for me all over Luanda. He told me that I must find at least one diamond and determine if that business would be profitable. I asked him who had ordered him to look into this business and he said that Ochoa himself had ordered that I check this matter out. He also wanted to talk to me about something else. I therefore proceeded to do as ordered and went to find people in the diamond business. It took me a couple of days to find them, but I was able to talk to a dealer who loaned me a diamond that was the size of a pea. I did not have anything with which

to pay for the diamond. I took the diamond to Col Antonio and said: Look, this is what I have managed to get. They [not further identified] kept the diamond for a couple of days and then returned it to me. Incidentally, the man who loaned me the diamond was after me and would have beaten me if he had found me because he thought that I had stolen it from him. When they returned the diamond, they said that this kind of business was not profitable and that we had to continue selling sugar. I said that it was all right with me and returned the diamond to the dealer.

However, not even 15 days later Antonio de La Guardia looked for me again and said: Hey, look, we want to get more diamonds because it is a profitable business. They [not further identified] returned to me and said that it is a reliable business venture and that a large amount of foreign exchange can be obtained for Cuba through that business and that it could definitely be the solution, replacing the system whereby we get meager amounts for sugar. Well, I said, if you wish, I will contact people in (Lacandonga) who are always willing to buy sugar with diamonds and make other such offers. I did so and contacted a person who said that he had seven [diamonds].

I asked them if they could show the diamonds to me. They did not want to give them to me. Since I had earned the trust of the businessmen at the market, I would go to the market everyday so everyone knew me; they finally gave them to me. So I gave them seven. They held on to them for a few days and then told me to go ahead and pay for them. I believe that I gave them about 80 sacks of sugar. After that, I made two or three more deliveries; I do not remember exactly how many. I delivered approximately 30 of those little diamonds. Each of them cost me between 250 and 300 sacks of sugar. In the end I was told that this was not going to work; that it was too small-scale; that there were too many losses and that the corporation had said that we should not continue with that business. So I said: Well, I will do as you say. If this is not profitable for Cuba or for the company, then we will discontinue it. That was the way it all ended.

On two or three occasions I gave the diamonds to Col Antonio. On one occasion Gen Ochoa walked in while I was delivering the diamonds and I personally gave Gen Ochoa seven diamonds at house No 1. I gave Gen Ochoa the first seven diamonds in person. That is all I have to say about this.

[Rosales del Toro] At house No 1?

[Llicas] Yes, at house No 1.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you meet another foreigner who was living there?

[Llicas] At house No 1?

[Rosales del Toro] At house No 1.

[Llicas] No.

[Rosales del Toro] No?

[Llicas] I cannot say that I did [meet another foreigner].

[Rosales del Toro] How many dollars did you bring into Cuba? Who did you give them to?

[Llicas] The dollars I brought back were from the sale of 20 television sets at $720 each. These television sets were sent to house No 3. They paid for them. I also sold 19 fans at $60 each. That would add up to approximately 15,400 pesos, plus 9,000 pesos that I got from selling flour—more than 900 sacks of flour were sold. The flour was not that good, but it sold well. In all, I gave Col Antonio approximately 24,000 pesos.

[Rosales del Toro] Why did you make those sales?

[Llicas] Why? They ordered that those sales be made.

[Rosales del Toro] Antonio ordered the sales?

[Llicas] For example, when I was coming back, Pepe Rios showed up with the television sets and the fans and Antonio found me and told me that they had to be sold.

[Rosales del Toro] Pepe Rios, in Angola?

[Llicas] In Angola. He had left, but came back. He told me that the television sets had to be sold. He said: The boss says to sell them at least for 700 pesos each. I said: I am already leaving, I am just closing up the flour business, and now I have to go all around Luanda selling television sets. I said that I would never get done. So he told me to go to house No 3, sell them the television sets, pick up the money, and give it to me in Cuba. That is just what I did. I sold the television sets and the flour I was given to sell. All the sales were in dollars. That is exactly what I did. All the accounts are there, the paperwork is there.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you get paid for all your sales? Were there sales that were not completed?

[Llicas] Yes. We did not get paid for some of the dry fish we sold. I did not have time to receive the money. That was for approximately 5 million kwanzas, approximately $2,000. The people over there hide a lot. You give them the fish and they get lost. You have to be chasing them all over. I did this often, but I did not have enough time before I left. I also reported on this. I told them of the pending business. Later it was said I would return to Angola, but I never did.

[Rosales del Toro] Who did you give the dollars to when you returned to Cuba?

[Llicas] To Col Antonio. He was waiting for me at the airport, the military airport. He arrived and I gave him the money.

[Rosales del Toro] Was that your only meeting with Antonio after you returned?

[Llicas] No. He came to my house about 20 days after my arrival. He came to my house with his wife and his daughter, who had hepatitis. He was at the house for a while, and I invited him to go fishing down at the river near the house. We went fishing; we threw the net and caught a few small fish and headed back home.

He returned to my house about 15 or 20 days ago. He brought a letter from Lt Col Onelio, who was asking about the sale of the television sets. He was complaining that he had been left with television sets, there was no market for them, the frequency in Angola was not the same as in Cuba, a special piece of equipment was necessary to use them, and some cases were missing from a sale of rum. He was just complaining. Onelio was complaining to Antonio.

Antonio then asked me: Have you seen Ochoa lately? I replied: He has been by here two or three times, but I do not know where he is. Antonio said: Give him this letter, because Onelio is complaining about this. So I said: If I see him, I will give it to him; otherwise, I will return it to you. I had to give it back to Antonio, because I never saw the general again.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you know about some houses that were going to be repaired, and were you asked to participate?

[Llicas] Where? Here in Cuba?

[Rosales del Toro] Here in Cuba?

[Llicas] Yes I do.

[Rosales del Toro] Can you tell us about this?

[Llicas] It is not really a house; it is a barn [nave], a sort of barn in a small farm the Army has. We call it Pena farm. There were three barns, but two were torn down, and I was told to turn the one that was still standing into a warehouse.

[Rosales del Toro] Was that the only house they were thinking about?

[Llicas] No. First they thought of repairing a house located in San Francisco de Padua. It is buried out there in San Francisco de Padua. It is an old house that has been destroyed. What they have done to that house is a crime. They had planned to fix up that refuge, put a fence around it, and repair the house.

[Rosales del Toro] For what purpose? To turn it into a warehouse?

[Llicas] I do not know the purpose. We were told it would be restored to the way it looked before. It is much too pretty to turn into a warehouse.

[Rosales del Toro] It is a house?

[LLicas] It is a house with a swimming pool.

[Rosales del Toro] In your dealings, did you ever hear of any business relations with Tony de La Guardia?

[Llicas] Yes.

[Rosales del Toro] What did you hear?

[Llicas] Yes, of course. I heard about the diamonds that were going to be sent to the corporation [not further identified] for them to study the deal. De La Guardia was supposed to meet with the corporation members to see whether the venture would work out or not.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you ever have a chance to see him visiting those people?

[Llicas] No, I did not see him.

[Rosales del Toro] Comrades, do you have any questions?

[Gondin] Div Gen Llicas, what did Ochoa promise you regarding your job and your wife's job outside Cuba? And what kind of contacts with foreigners did he suggest you make?

[Llicas] When I arrived here, he told me: Now you are going to work in the farming section. However, for the time being and until the farming industry is created, I want you to undertake a few tasks. That was when I went to San Francisco de Paula farm for the first time. For some reason, the business at that farm fell through, although I do not know why. He told me: Let us not do anything here; let us do business somewhere else. We will do a [word indistinct]. He never told me about building a house for him. If he had said something about that, I would say it here just as I have said other things. It would not harm me to say it—at least I think not.

In any case, he told me: You are going to be here in this [word indistinct] for the time being, because I have other plans for you. I plan to send you to Panama for some businesses I have there. I then told him: If you send me to Panama I would like my honey bun, my wife, to go with me, because my two children are in the Soviet Union, and she would have to stay here all by herself. My children are studying there.

Ochoa then told me: No problem. You can take Silvia [Llicas' wife] along with you. You will stay 1 or 1 and ½ years there. Everything will go well. After that period, if you want to continue working with me, it will be all right;

if not, you can then find somthing else to do [desmobilizarte]. He told me that, but he never told me about the kind of job I was supposed to perform. He never told me what I was going to do in Panama or anything like that. He never told me that.

[Rosales del Toro] Go ahead Gen Gondin.

[Fernandez] Llicas, what gift did you give Tony?

[Llicas] I decided to give him a gift that a smuggler gave me. I used to receive all kinds of gifts. Honestly speaking, they gave me anything I asked for, because I was the one who had the sugar. They would give me anything as long as I did not sell the sugar to somebody else. They gave me television sets, record players, and other things.

A smuggler gave me a small, but beautiful diamond. I took it. I honestly wanted to bring it back with me, because it was a gift somebody gave me. I wanted to bring it back to Cuba with me. I told Silvia I wanted to bring it back. I told her: What should we do with this? Then I told here: Let us turn this diamond in. What are we going to do with it, anyway. We do not have a way to sell this or anything. What are we going to do with a diamond? We do not need anything else. We have a beautiful house and everything we need. All that has been given to us by the Revolution. My only two children are studying in the Soviet Union. I did not need that diamond.

Thus, I told Tony: I was given this small diamond, among other things. He took it and said: All right, and he put it aside. I was a bit disappointed, because I gave it to him with so much enthusiasm, and he took the little diamond and put it aside without paying the least bit of attention to it. That diamond was given to me by an Angolan citizen. I do not know what happened to that diamond after that. I do not know whether he put that diamond with the others or what. I have no way of knowing.

In addition, I was also given $300 once. I turned in that money, and I told them: This money is coming from the businesses. Once I was given $100, and another time I received $12. I turned all that money in, because carrying $1 here in Cuba is like participating in counterrevolutionary activities. I am, indeed, aware of that. I am not used to carrying dollars. When the Revolution began, I was 13 years old. The first time I saw a dollar bill was in Angola. I had never seen one before, and much less diamonds. When I saw a diamond for the first time, I could not believe that small stone had cost me 30 bags of sugar.

[Unidentified officer] I have been listening to our comrade's statements. For him, even the exchange with the (cangonga) was very normal. The black market presented the problem that everything was done for Cuba, that economic problems could be solved that way. He received orders. I recall—although I am not sure whether things have changed now—that all the Cubans who went to Angola had to read a sign written by the FAR minister that stated: The day we leave from Angola, we will only take with us our dead comrades.

Thus, I do not know how you received those orders with so much enthusiasm and desire to solve the problems, while reading the sign with the minister's words on it. I am not sure whether they took that sign down, though; it had always been in the same place.

[Rosales del Toro] Gen Gondin.

[Gondin] Llicas, did you use any equipment to determine whether the stones you were given were diamonds or not?

[Llicas] Yes.

[Fernandez] Who gave that equipment to you?

[Llicas] Col Antonio took that equipment to the MININT, to AMENC [not further identified]. He told me: Come with me; I am going to give you a little machine that can help you check that stuff, because Patricio bought four, and two of them were fake. He told me that. We went there and he brought me a small machine from MININT. I had it for a few days and then they took it away from me. I could hardly work with the equipment, because it was a little complicated. The machine has a scale on the side. Once you applied the machine to the diamond, the scale changed colors. If it reached a bright green color, it meant the diamond was good. Everytime I used the machine with the very small diamonds, the machine made a special sound [Llica makes a noise] and a light turned on. Col Antonio, in collaboration with MININT, gave me that machine. I say in collaboration with MININT, because while I waited downstairs, he went up to MININT and brought down the machine. In other words, he did not give me the machine before he went in the MININT building, but after he had gone in. That is why I say with the collaboration of MININT.

[Rosales del Toro] Gen (Orfa).

[(Orfa)] [Words indistinct] the question [words indistinct].

[Rosales del Toro] Any other comrade.

[Chui] I am Brigidier General Gustavo Chui. Gen Llicas, without wishing to cast doubts on your word and your efforts, because you are a comrade worker, I would like to ask you one question: All that work you carried out in Angola and that enthusiasm with which you obtained and sold sugar and exchanged diamonds—did you not wonder why the remaining mission's officers and soldiers could not do that work, that business, that exchange, that sly venture [candongueo] in Luanda and yet you could? Did you not wonder?

[Llicas] Yes, yes. I...

[Chui, interrupting] Did it never hit you that maybe there was something wrong when at party meetings people discussed the mission's soldiers' and officers' deals on the black market while you were involved in those deals without being punished at all? Did you ever wonder about that?

[Llicas] No, can I answer? No, because that was my job: to make deals on the black market [candonguear]. That was my job, my duty; I was authorized to obtain anything that was not available on base. I was given a written plan containing a list of products, including sugar and sardines, which I was to barter or obtain on the black market every 3 months. This plan, which was signed by Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa himself, officially authorized me to make deals on the black market. For me, this was a regular job.

[Rosales del Toro] It did not bother you to be able to do this while others could not?

[Llicas] What bothered me was that they disliked my doing this in civilian clothes, but not what I had to do, because I was doing my job. I did it with pleasure, because it would represent dollars for Cuba. That is how I worked. I already gave you an example: If they asked me for serpent poison, that is what I would bring them.

[Announcer] Captain Jorge Martinez Valdes, Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez's personal aide and liaison with one of Colombia's main drug-trafficking bosses.

[Rosales del Toro] Captain Jorge Martinez Valdes, as witness of the Tribunal, which is studying charges leveled against Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez to better clarify the events that are being aired in this hearing, you must strictly adhere to the truth. We will pose several questions to you; we want you to be as specific as possible. The first question is: How and when did you first become involved in business deals with foreign capitalists?

[Martinez] The business deals began in 1985 and 1986, and involved capitalists from Panama.

[Rosales del Toro] When were you introduced to the drug-trafficking business and what motivated you to make contacts?

[Martinez] The first experience with drug trafficking was money laundering, which involved a Panamanian named Jaime Tejada, who proposed money-laundering deals to us through an Italian-American named Frank Morfa. That was my first experience.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you meet again with these individuals?

[Martinez] No.

[Rosales del Toro] With other individuals?

[Martinez] Yes, Panamanian Ciro Moscoso and Colombian Fabel Pareja.

[Rosales del Toro] What were the operations like? How were they conceived?

[Martinez] These operations were initially negotiated through Colombian Fabel Pareja and involved money laundering and helping to transport military equipment. He proposed a trip to Colombia; this involved providing me with a Colombian passport to get there and meet with his boss.

[Rosales del Toro] Detail your trips to Colombia; who did you meet and what for?

[Martinez] The trip to Colombia took place when I was already in Angola. Div Gen Ochoa ordered me to travel to Cuba to contact Col Antonio de La Guardia, who had received an invitation from drug trafficker Pablo Escobar to visit his farm in Colombia to discuss certain business deals. Div Gen Ochoa sent me to attend that meeting on behalf of Col Antonio de La Guardia. Should I continue?

[Rosales del Toro] Continue.

[Martinez] That trip took place through.... [changes thought] When I returned to Cuba, there were three meetings with four Colombian representatives whom the drug trafficker Pablo Escobar had sent to Cuba. Three meetings were held; the first with them, the second with some Mexicans, and the third with some Mexicans and the Colombians.

[Rosales del Toro] Where did the meetings take place?

[Martinez] Those meetings took place in a house of CUBALSE [expansion unknown], which De La Guardia's group rented to them.

[Rosales del Toro] All three meetings?

[Martinez] All three. Another meeting took place at the Hemingway Marina. This meeting involved two U.S. and two Mexican citizens. The U.S. citizens proposed money-laundering deals in the United States, and the Mexicans proposed to the Colombians drug-trafficking deals between Colombia and Mexico.

[Rosales del Toro] After that one, were there any more trips to Colombia?

[Martinez] No. After those three meetings they agreed, the Colombians agreed, on several things. They suggested obtaining special paper for printing counterfeit dollars; they had a machine but needed special paper for it. They also suggested setting up a cocaine processing laboratory here in Cuba. They also discussed the possibility of some sort of transshipment from a vessel using a ship coming from Colombia bound for the United

States and to transfer the cocaine through Cuba. I cannot recall the other idea they proposed. Well, the other idea was to transfer the drugs from Colombia to Mexico.

[Rosales del Toro] What deal did you make?

[Martinez] The Cuban group only agreed to get them the special type of paper and to help them get the ship through from Colombia to the United States via Cuba.

[Rosales del Toro] What were the next steps?

[Martinez] I traveled to Panama and picked up a passport for which I had made arrangements some months before through a Colombian named Fabel Pareja. They paid my fare and I traveled with a false passport to Colombia. Once there, I first went to speak with Pablo Escobar's brother; then I was taken to Pablo Escobar's farm, which is some distance from Medellin and has heavy security. That is where the meeting was held. The meeting was with drug trafficker Pablo Escobar to discuss money laundering. They were not interested in laundering money in the United States.

They mentioned obtaining some surface-to-air missiles for Escobar's personal protection, because there had been several attempts to arrest him, and helicopters had always been used. They also suggested the idea of using a ship called Jennifer, and we also discussed general policies. Afterward, it was decided to go ahead and arrange things to use the ship Jennifer registered in Panama. I then returned to Panama from Colombia, and, once in Panama, I traveled with Panamanian Ciro Moscoso. They instructed Ciro Moscoso to form a company that was to legally represent the ship and to handle all the legal documentation.

From Panama, I returned to Cuba to wait for the password that would mean the ship's departure. The password consisted of a telephone call informing me that the bank remittance would be made on a certain date, and giving me the date of the ship's departure. We waited for the call, but it never was received. We returned to Panama to find out why the ship had not left and were told that the ship had not sailed because it was still under repair, that the ship's captain had been murdered, and that it was becoming very difficult to get the ship seaworthy. We then discussed the possibility of sending the shipment by air instead of by ship. I returned to Cuba to investigate this possibility and consulted with Col Antonio de La Guardia, who instructed me to go ahead. He said that this operation would be disguised as a sale of Cuban tobacco so as to gain authorization for the airplane to land here in Cuba. Shall I continue?

[Rosales del Toro] Go ahead.

[Martinez] This operation was prepared and carried out. I traveled to Panama, where I met again with Fabel Parejas. We made some adjustments with the pilots, because they did not know exactly where they should drop the merchandise— we had always dropped the merchandise from ships or planes outside Cuban territorial waters. They were asked to drop it southwest of Key Sal, but they disagreed. I made a second clandestine trip in a private plane to a place I believe was somewhere in Colombia. There I met with Garcia, Pablo Escobar's brother, who told me that there was some disagreement concerning the spot where the merchandise was to be dropped, and that there were problems with the pilots, who were reluctant to do the job.

However, there was finally an agreement to use that spot at a third meeting attended by a Cuban-U.S. citizen, who was to receive the merchandise and who tried to convince Fabel to drop the merchandise south of Key Sal. After that meeting, we were supposed to receive a phone call advising us of the plane's departure. However, the call was never made, because apparently an agreement was never reached to drop the merchandise in Key Sal.

[Rosales del Toro] I would like you to tell us with as much detail as possible how Ochoa was informed about these matters and what instructions were received from him to carry out these operations.

[Martinez] Since the first time money laundering was mentioned, Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa asked us to investigate what this was all about, how it was done, and what was really behind it. We continued our investigations and always kept him informed of all the phases of the investigation, initially carried out with Morfa and later on when we met with Fabel Parejas, the Colombian, who told us that he was interested in money laundering and that he was going to help us. We always informed Div Gen Ochoa of those conversations to the very last moment at which time, in Angola, at the beginning of 1988, we showed him the Colombian passports that the Colombians had given us to travel there to make the arrangments.

We [corrects himself] I personally believe that this was an investigative phase authorized by Gen Ochoa with the goal of carrying out those activities. From then on, we went from an investigative to an active phase, when it was decided to operate, work, and coordinate with groups run by Col Antonio de La Guardia to send shipments on the ship Jennifer and by plane. Gen Ochoa was also informed of this; we personally told him at his home about the ship; and, when it was decided to make the change from the ship to a plane, he was informed in a phone call he initiated from Angola to our home here in Havana. We informed him that the transportation means would be by air instead of by sea.

[Rosales del Toro] Would you explain, as detailed as possible, what links you had with Tony de La Guardia and his group's work?

[Martinez] I did not have any links with them. I got together with them for the first time when Gen Ochoa ordered me to see Tony to substitute for him at a

meeting. Tony had supposedly been invited by Escobar to travel and attend a meeting. From then on, we worked together to prepare the ship Jennifer and later to prepare the air coordination. We did not work together after that transaction that ended in 1988. Div Gen Ochoa decided in 1989 not to continue working with this group, because they have proved to be [words indistinct] and inefficient in all their activities.

[Rosales del Toro] We would like you to tell us everything you know about the money matters; we want the whole story.

[Martinez] The money in the account or the one from the drug trafficking?

[Rosales del Toro] Money matters in general. Those related to your job. When was the bank account in Panama opened?

[Martinez] In 1987.

[Rosales del Toro] Did Ochoa give any explanation about this account being opened?

[Martinez] No, he did not. He gave me money to increase the account and raise it to $200,000. This was the amount of money in the account when we closed it.

[Rosales del Toro] Let us take this piece by piece.

[Martinez] All right.

[Rosales del Toro] Tell us, what additional amounts were deposited in this account?

[Martinez] I deposited $40,000 at the beginning of March 1989 in that account. He personally handed me this amount. Later, he gave me $6,000 more; thus the account totaled $200,000. The account was then placed on a 6-month time deposit.

[Rosales del Toro] Did the amounts deposited in this account come from profits made in Angola?

[Martinez] Yes, from some of the business transactions there.

[Rosales del Toro] Why were these profits from Angola deposited?

[Martinez] What profits? I do not understand your question.

[Rosales del Toro] Why was the money gained in business transactions in Angola deposited in this account? What was the justification for this action?

[Martinez] I do not know why. I do not know the justification for this action. I was given the money and ordered to deposit it into that account.

[Rosales del Toro] You are talking about the $40,000 [words indistinct] $200,000?

[Martinez] Yes, $40,000 plus $6,000 to complete the $200,000.

[Rosales del Toro] From where exactly did those $40,000 come?

[Martinez] I really do not know; I suppose from business deals in Angola.

[Rosales del Toro] Why was the drug trafficking money that Tony de La Guardia handed to Ochoa on 28 April transferred to Panama?

[Martinez] A total of $50,000 was transferred, and the objective was to...

[Rosales del Toro, interrupting] I understand that Tony was asked to contribute more money, right?

[Martinez] Yes. Tony was asked to contribute $100,000, but he only contributed $50,000. That money was to operate a company in Panama that was created to register the Jennifer ship. Colombians paid for all expenses to establish that company.

[Rosales del Toro] We understand that Ochoa told you to forget about this account once it reached the $200,000 mark?

[Martinez] Yes, to forget about that account.

[Rosales del Toro] Give us details on this. When and where did he say this?

[Martinez] During a meeting at the Western Army parking lot he asked me to close the account at the $200,000 mark and to then forget about it.

[Rosales del Toro] What future plans did you have? What was on your mind? What did Ochoa tell you?

[Martinez] At all times, Ochoa, as I just said, told us that this was being done for the sake of Cuba's economic development. However, I personally believed that this was straying away from the guidelines of the Cuban Revolution, that this completely ran counter to what the commander in chief said and what the Cuban Revolution proclaimed. I also believed that drug trafficking was not the way to solve Cuba's economic problems. Now that we have a clearer picture, we understand much better, because this worried us very much at that time. In fact, on several occasions, we even voiced our concerns to Gen Ochoa.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you just say a while ago that you replaced Tony de La Guardia on a trip he had planned to meet with Escobar?

[Martinez] Yes, I said earlier that Gen Ochoa informed me that Tony de La Guardia had been invited by Pablo Escobar to visit his farm in Colombia, that because of his many responsibilities and heavy workload, Tony de La Guardia was unable to go there; I was therefore sent in Tony de La Guardia's place.

[Rosales del Toro] I would like you to make your best effort to tell us who you represented during your contacts with drug traffickers. How did you introduce yourself or whom did you say you represented?

[Martinez] At all times, the Colombians thought of us as official representives of the Cuban Government; they did not believe that we represented anyone in particular. It is [words indistinct] because when Pablo Escobar's delegation came here, it was assisted by groups run by Tony de La Guardia. The group was very well taken care of, because they were lodged in official housing and a Mercedes Benz was placed at their disposal. The delegation left here with a very good impression. That is, members of Pablo Escobar's delegation had a very good impression of their stay. That is why I believe that no importance was placed on who our boss was or whom we represented; we were thought of as Cuban Government officials. That is my assessment.

[Rosales del Toro] How did you introduce yourself?

[Martinez] As an official of that group.

[Rosales del Toro] Even during your visits in Colombia?

[Martinez] Yes, including our two visits. I was seen there as an official from Tony de La Guardia's group authorized to participate in certain activities.

[Rosales del Toro] We understand you have talked about your bosses.

[Martinez] We might have talked at one time or another about consulting with our boss, but not with our bosses. For example, when I met with Fabel Pareja and he handed me the passport and told me I could travel to Colombia to take care of the money laundering and the transport of the military equipment we had acquired, I replied that I must return to Cuba to consult with my boss; I said I could not go. Those were the exact words I used.

[Division General Jesus Bermudez Gutino] [Question indistinct]?

[Martinez] Div Gen Ochoa met with the Western Army communications chief or head of the communications section, asked him to draft a communications program based on his own ideas, and told him he could provide up to $200,000. I believe Div Gen Ochoa would have invested that money in social programs, but also in personal matters.

[Bermudez] In Cuba or abroad?

[Martinez] In Cuba. Regarding the sale of diamonds in Panama, Gen Ochoa handed me a small plastic container in early March 1989 containing 136 small diamonds. I took those stones to Panama; through Panamanian Ciro Moscoso, we arranged with a Panamanian jeweler to sell all 136 stones. Only 2 of them were fit for use in jewelry; the other 134 were fit for industrial use, because of their high carbon content. The total amount collected for the sale of these diamonds was $3,500, which we personally handed over to Div Gen Ochoa.

Final Day of Ochoa Military Honor Tribunal

FL2806175289 Havana Domestic Radio and Television Services in Spanish 0100 GMT 28 Jun 89

["Segments" of the "second and final session" of the Military Honor Tribunal of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, FAR, analyzing the conduct of Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, presided over by Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro; date and place not given; all speakers identified by caption—recorded. An identical recorded version of this speech was carried on Havana Cubavision Television in Spanish at 0030 on 30 June, providing fills and clarifications]

[Text] [Rosales del Toro] Comrade Secretary, Division General Jesus Bermudez Cutino, please bring forth the next witness.

[Bermudez Cutino] Bring forth the witness, Colonel Antonio de La Guardia Font.

[Rosales del Toro] Colonel La Guardia Font, you are present as a witness at the Honor Tribunal that is analyzing the charges formulated against Division General Ochoa Sanchez to further clarify the acts that are being revealed here. We request that you strictly adhere to the truth in your statement.

How did you manage to cover up all these drug activities so that other organs of the ministry were not aware of them?

[La Guardia Font] We used the enterprise to justify the handing over of money. It was perfect. I really had very little control over it. I did not have an accounting apparatus. I did not have an accounting system nor was I subject to administrative [corrects himself] accounting control. Neither my operations nor my budget were subject to accounting control. I had an annual budget of $70,000 to do all my work, which was truly a very small amount. The control that did exist, from an administrative point of view, was not clearly defined and the money would come from one source or another. I once reported a $100,000 fertilizer sale which I said was sold in Costa Rica and in reality there was no fertilizer.

[Rosales del Toro] How were other state institutions used in drug trafficking under the guise of activities conducted by your MC [not further identified] Department.

[La Guardia Font] For example, some business activities were arranged with an organization. The plane would come for the merchandise. The plane would make a drug run [bombardeaba] to the banks of Key Sal. He would land and collect the drugs, refuel, and leave.

[Rosales del Toro] Was this the only instrument used?

[La Guardia Font] No, this method was used in addition to another similar method where we used the merchandise sold by Cubalse, such as antique furniture. We used this method twice [corrects himself] three times.

[Rosales del Toro] On what day did you begin to take measures once you became aware that certain matters had come to light?

[La Guardia Font] This happened in April when the [pauses]—what do you call it?—the radio section of the ministry's counterintelligence picked up a communication on an operation, an outside operation. They detected the operation by radiotelemetry. I learned about this. I was informed about it and I ordered that all operations be suspended.

[Rosales del Toro] Aside from the operations, what other measures did you take here in the country which involved subordinates working under you?

[La Guardia Font] No, I told them to suspend everything. In truth, the only thing left to do was to tell the drivers of the boats not to come anymore, not to return again, not to come anymore. The money that they owed us from those operations was $1 million. I asked if they could transfer it to Europe and from there send it to us here in Cuba. I had been informed that we had a profit of $250,000 in coffee commissions from a coffee operation in Africa. This would be used to justify the money once we received it.

[Rosales del Toro] Why was so much money distributed to so many people when you were detained?

[La Guardia Font] Because, because I was not able to... [incomplete sentence as heard] Since there was so much money, if they gave me $500,000, what I would normally do, if there was no problem, is take it to a safe. I would put it in a safe and little by little, I would distribute the money and justify it. Otherwise it would be very difficult to quickly justify $500,000.

Not having where.... [changes thought] Since this problem came up, I left a briefcase with over $400,000 at a friend's house. I told him to keep it for me, to keep the briefcase for me, so that I could continue to gradually justify the money.

I then asked him for—I don't remember if it was $200,000 or $250,000 which I received at the office. I entered it as a contribution, earnings; I really don't remember. I later asked him for another $100,000 and I once again received it. I did not have time for the rest because it was a lot of money. During the first 5 months, we distributed $1.3 million. We couldn't justify so much money. I had planned to distribute it gradually to the officers. I was preparing to leave my job for another position. The same officers who were staying would justify the $250,000 that was coming from Europe. This was the money that I asked be transferred from Europe as earnings from coffee sales. Little by little, they would say this was money that came from whatever operations they could use to justify the sum.

[Rosales del Toro] Why did the operations accelerate as of April?

[La Guardia Font] This happened because, in reality, it was the action of one of my officers. I had told them not to conduct any more operations, not a single one. I told them I did not want any more operations. I later found out that they had conducted about four operations in 2 weeks. It was horrible. I wasn't even aware that this volume of operations was being conducted without my knowledge. I learned when.... [changes thought] I didn't even know.... [changes thought] He told me that he was going to conduct one operation but that it was not going to be a large amount. I didn't even know about the rest. I learned about it when the radio section of counterintelligence became aware of the operations after they were conducted.

He later told me that since no more operations were going to be conducted, he carried this one out to have a volume of money here for the rest of the year. That was the excuse he gave me. He wanted to guarantee funds for the rest of the year.

[Rosales del Toro] When and in what form did you and Ochoa discuss this matter?

[La Guardia Font] We discussed it in Angola in 1988....

[Rosales de Toro, interrupting] [Words indistinct]

[La Guardia Font] Yes, Gen Ochoa spoke vaguely about this to me. He mentioned the country's economic needs. Then the topic came up of using drugs to obtain large sums of money which could be used to help the country. He told me that there was a possibility of making $2 billion or $3 billion in 6 or 7 months.

Clearly, my level of operations would not allow me to make that amount of money. I would have to do this another way: by dealing with people who own the drugs, not the drug transporters, to guarantee the product from the laboratories, which involves a large sum of money or I would have to deal in very large, very large, very large [repeats himself] shipments, not shipments of 500, 400, or 600 kg which is what I think a small plane can carry.

The topic first emerged as a normal, mundane conversation. It was just a commentary. We discussed relations he had a year ago in Nicaragua with people from the drug world.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you at any time think that this would be discovered? Had you considered the consequences of everything you did?

[La Guardia Font] In reality, I never considered the consequences of everything I was doing. If I had thought more about this... [incomplete sentence as heard] I was motivated by the interest of bringing in money. I was given a double task: to break the blockade—this maritime route was a way of attaining different things that were sometimes urgently needed—and the second task was to support my organization with convertible currency. Then in my zeal to excel, to advance, and attain these goals, I did not stop and analyze what I was doing. I didn't consider the consequences of this.

[Rosales del Toro] You are a professional officer and you are aware of the risks this created for the country and the security of the nation and at no time did you analyze the consequences...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] I thought about it. I thought about it [repeats himself]. No, you can't say I didn't. I thought about it but I didn't.... [changes thought] First of all, I should never have done this. I later

thought about it. I should have decided against this and on several occasions I did decide not to do this. I told the officers not to conduct any more operations of this nature.

Three or four months would pass with nothing happening. We needed money and the officers would constantly come back to me. I also was being pressured by the officer who wanted to resolve this matter. He did not want to lose his ties, his method of attaining his goal. [clears his throat, coughs] They insisted and I would authorize the operation.

[Rosales del Toro] Tell us how the maritime installations were used. How did you arrange to use maritime or naval installations to secure this entire process?

[La Guardia Font] The boats would enter through Varadero and the officer would coordinate with the chief in Varadero. He would advise the chief that a boat would be arriving with a certain product and that the boat was authorized to enter at 1900, 2000, sometimes at 2100. The border guards would stay with the boat and the officer would take the material, the case to a house.

[Rosales del Toro] Why did the border guards accept this?

[La Guardia Font] They accepted it because it appeared to be a normal work contact. It seemed normal to the border guards. It seemed to be one of our operations. A boatman would come in. This had been going on for so many years, from 1981, 1982. This had been going on since 1981—1980 or 1981. It was normal for these boats to enter and to be kept here. The border guards would keep them in the canals and they did this with no concern.

[Rosales del Toro] How did the meetings take place in Cuba? What was your role in this and with the drug traffickers?

[La Guardia Font] During those meetings with drug traffickers in Cuba, I was only involved with the one that included Ramiro Lucio but it was not my intent to meet with any drug trafficker. I did not know he was a drug trafficker until he explained the situation to me and that was the only meeting I ever had with a drug trafficker in Cuba.

[Rosales del Toro] Comrade members of the tribunal: I ask you to authorize the comrades from the Interior Ministry [MININT] who have been hearing the case of the colonel to please come into the room and continue their interrogation of Comrade Colonel Antonio La Guardia Font. Do you agree? [tribunal answers: "Yes."] Please ask your questions from the podium.

[Division General Manuel Fernandez Crespo] I would like to ask a question, Comrade. What kind of instructions did you give Amado Padron to have Martinez [Captain Jorge Martinez Valdes, aide to Div Gen Ochoa] arrange a meeting with Colombian drug traffickers?

[La Guardia Font] Was that with Amado Padron's drug traffickers, the Colombians?

[Fernandez] Yes.

[La Guardia Font] I asked him to introduce his connection to Martinez.

[Fernandez] How did you coordinate this? How did the Colombians travel here to Cuba? Where was the meeting...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] No, I do not know how the meeting occurred or how they traveled. I told Martinez about it. He had asked me several times to find him some contacts. I told Amado Padron: Amado, introduce some of the people you know to Martinez. I did not even know about the meeting. It seems they made contact in Panama somewhere but I did not know about a meeting in Cuba. I don't remember who they met.

[Fernandez] You probably know more than we do.

[La Guardia Font] Well, it could be. The only Colombian that I know is Ramiro Lucio. If he was the contact, then they met in Cuba but if it was someone abroad, Amado Padron made the contacts and he did not tell me where they met. Ramiro Lucio is the only person it could have been. On several occasions, Martinez insisted on making contact with the Colombians and Mexicans. I said that it was OK but I did nothing to set up the meetings with the Colombians and the Mexicans. The Mexican was supposed to move drugs, but in reality, he didn't move anything. I told Willy Pineda that he should not pay attention to what Martinez asked him and the same applied to Amado Padron. I called him several times and said: Leave that alone now. Don't continue to give... [incomplete sentence as heard] What I really did not know is where the meetings were held with the Colombians here in Cuba. If it wasn't with Ramiro Lucio, I don't know of any other Colombian that came here.

[Fernandez] I think so. I think that the witness Amado Padron should be asked about this later.

Another question we wanted to ask you is why did you begin to distribute the money to the officers in April?

[La Guardia Font] I...

[Fernandez, interrupting] You later destroyed the documents of the MC Department.

[La Guardia Font] I did not distribute any money to any officers. I never received any money to distribute. The only money I got from Amado Padron, which was the only money I received, was never taken to the office. I distributed this money to the accountant so that the money could be given to the enterprise and I continued the contributions until they totaled a million dollars but I never distributed any money to any of the officers.

[Fernandez] Comrade President of the tribunal: I would like to point out that in accordance with the investigations we have conducted, the detainee confirms that the objective of these operations was to resolve Cuba's economic problems. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated that the fundamental objective of all the detainees has been to appropriate the money for their own personal profit. This has been demonstrated by the amount of money that was seized in homes and in various other locations where the money was hidden. It has also been demonstrated by the statements made by the detainees themselves. They cannot justify the possession of millions of dollars.

Because of this, we feel it has been clearly confirmed that the goal of these operations was primarily for their own personal profit. This has been demonstrated by the money, by the large quantity of equipment they have, the number of cars they have, and by a number of other things that have been seized.

Nevertheless, the detainee has said that these operations were conducted for the purpose of turning the money over to our country. We would like to have this put on the record at this tribunal.

I would like to ask the detainee another question. Explain why a number of measures were taken as of 24 April to destroy all evidence of these operations.

[La Guardia Font] In reality, I never had any documents pertaining to these operations. I never wrote any document or made any entry in a book or made an (?invoice). What I did was receive the money and justify it. I never wrote a report. Officers were not required to give me a report on their operations. They were not required to brief me on these or give me any type of document.

The only document I destroyed was a document on a debt incurred by a Mexican. We had given him some money, $600,000, to invest in a bank that buys and sells stock and to buy two airplanes; one was from a company selling Lear jets. We were charged $175,000 for a small cargo plane and $100,000 for the small Lear jet. All that money was lost. This was the only document written for the purpose of billing the Mexican and that was the only document I destroyed.

I never destroyed any other document because I never wrote any other document. I never knew about the money the officers had. I don't have any reason to lie. They never told me they had that money. I believed that the officers were honest and lived very simply. I bought four cars that were given to four officers who conducted that type of operation but I knew nothing about the money that was hidden in those houses. I did not know they had that money. I truly didn't know that. If they told you that I knew about it, they're lying. I never distributed that money. They always hid it from me. I never, never [repeats himself] knew of that money.

[Fernandez] Mr Tribunal President: What was written supposedly by shipping agents on trade matters that were authorized with the people who cooperated with them is the part that corresponds to their operations and these documents were all destroyed. Not a single operation is on record.

It has been demonstrated that the documents were shredded on 24 April and we want you to answer the question pertaining to the 24th. Why were measures taken to destroy all documents and shut down all operations after the 24th?

[La Guardia Font] I explained this. I learned on the 24th that these operations were being looked into. A yacht operation had been approved for us. We were going to purchase a yacht to sell to the INTUR [National Institute of Tourism] which was also a way to cover-up these operations.

I sent word to all the officers to suspend all operations, to conduct no further operations. This problem was now out in the open. There was evidence of these operations. I told them to conduct no further operations and to not allow anyone else to come to Cuba.

[Fernandez] Another question: How much did you charge in dollars for the drug trafficking operations?

[La Guardia Font] Of those that I was informed about, it was approximately—I can't be categorical; I can't cite a precise figure because this occurred in 1987 and I never recorded this—$2.5 million or $3 million. I think it was $2.5 million.

[Fernandez] It was about $2.5 million?

[La Guardia Font] Or it might have been $3 million.

[Fernandez] Mr President: I have concluded for the moment. I would like the other comrade to ask him some questions. When witness Amado Padron has the floor, I would like to question him.

[Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Alvarez Lugo] Lt Col Alvarez Lugo, with your permission, Mr President.

Detainee: Who directed the drug trafficking operations in the MC Department?

[La Guardia Font] I was the chief of the department.

[Alvarez Lugo] No, who directed the operations?

[La Guardia Font] I did. I was the one who authorized the operations. I never had direct participation. I was never able to have direct control over the operations because I never had ties with the boatmen, the traffickers. To truly direct this, I would have needed direct contact to find out what amount of drugs they were talking about, how and where this would take place, what the net profit would be. I always got this information from the officer, the two chiefs that directed the operations. One was Elmer and the other was Amado Padron. They were the ones who informed me of the operation and its result.

[Alvarez Lugo] Then you are implying that the fault was of the...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] No, no, no, no, no [repeats himself], the fault is mine. I assume all responsibility because I was the chief and I did not control it. I really never controlled the situation and I assume complete responsibility.

[Alvarez Lugo] We know from the number of years you have been in the ministry that you are an expert in different kinds of special operations. That is why you were sent there at that time because you were a comrade who had vast knowledge in all types of special operations.

Could such an expert get involved in the kind of situation you described which presents a danger to the country, to everyone, as has been demonstrated in these proceedings?

[La Guardia Font] Let me explain. I told them to conduct the operation in a certain way. First of all, do it like this or like that, I would say. I later learned from the things I have been told about the interrogation of the others that the operations were not conducted in the manner in which I instructed. In some cases, they did follow my instructions and other times they didn't.

I should have been in direct contact with the operations. Sometimes I found myself... [changes thought] I did not devote the amount of time that I should have to my work. I should have done this myself but I didn't.

[Alvarez Lugo] Comrade President: I am asking this question as a prelude to the next question. How many times did you find yourself involved in this type of activity.

[La Guardia Font] I found myself involved in this kind of activity four or five times, many times, many times [repeats himself].

[Alvarez Lugo] What was your degree of dishonesty in reference to our chiefs, to the division here in reference to this matter?

[La Guardia Font] It was total, total, total, total [repeats himself].

[Alvarez Lugo] Why did you do it?

[La Guardia Font] I did it because I wanted to bring in money. It was poorly handled. I know that I can't justify it whatsoever.

[Alvarez Lugo] Money was discussed here. You said you had not hidden any money.

[La Guardia Font] That was in the office. If at that time I had taken the $500,000 to the office with the problem that existed and an audit was conducted, there was no way I would be able to justify the money.

[Alvarez Lugo] Were you acting honestly?

[La Guardia Font] No, I [corrects himself] yes.

[Alvarez Lugo] You said you had nothing to hide and you...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] No, no, no, no [repeats himself]. I did hide it. To turn the money in, I had to falsify the origin of the money. I had to say it came from operations that really did not exist.

[Alvarez Lugo] Then you mean that you did take measures to hide the money?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, yes, yes [repeats himself]. Yes, completely, the operations were totally covered up.

[Alvarez Lugo] How much money did the accountant also hide for you hours before the arrest?

[La Guardia Font] The accountant had.... [changes thought] I returned to my house at night on Friday or Thursday and I learned from my wife that the accountant said she had an extra $40,000 in the safe that did not balance with her records. She said she would send it to Miguelito, who is the administrator of the (Melback), for safekeeping. I said fine. What I did not want was for anyone to find out that there was more money than what was actually registered...

[Alvarez Lugo, interrupting] Do we need more proof that the money was being hidden and handed over to others?

[La Guardia Font] No, I swear that I did not give any, I did not give a cent to any officer. The money the officers had was obtained...

[Alvarez Lugo, interrupting] Comrade President: I ask this question because, as the comrade division general who preceded me explained, during the investigation of all the officers that work under Col La Guardia, vast sums of money were found. The money was found in the door of a Frigidaire. Some money was found in a box

buried under fresh cement; the box had just been buried. Their actions have clearly shown that they were hiding money. The money was hidden. It wasn't hidden out of fear. The money was hidden because they planned to use it. They were going to use it. This was not simply a matter of being afraid. They did it progressively, methodically, and it happened in this case, too.

The detainee mentioned the officers' style of living. Do you really think that the style of living of the comrade officers directly involved in this activity was as humble and simple as you said?

[La Guardia Font] I did not really... [rephrases] I thought they had a simple life-style. I really was not familiar with their life-style. I had no idea of that.

[Alvarez Lugo] You also had no idea how your officers lived?

[La Guardia Font] No, I had no idea how my officers lived.

[Alvarez Lugo] Is that also the fault of...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] No, no, it is my fault. It is my fault. It is all my fault. It is my fault; not the fault of the officers.

[Alvarez Lugo] [Words indistinct] and Amado Padron? Did the officer that worked for you live simply?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, but I...

[Alvarez Lugo, interrupting] You were the chief who worked (?alongside) the accused. He had that and he had 17,000 other things. He had other things besides those things that any other person here can have and on top of that, he was arrogant. This group of comrades were characterized by their arrogance. They were people who, even in that same department, they were referred to as being arrogant because of their attitudes, the way they acted, the way they walked and dressed. The other group of comrades who had nothing to do directly with their activities described them as being arrogant.

That is why I asked this question because it is important to clarify that it wasn't the way the detainee described it. Money was used here. This money was used for their own personal benefit. They bought cars. Thousands of objects were seized. They had everything from a [words indistinct]. [Video shows jewelry, diamonds, and watches from Amado Padron's house; identified by caption.] These things were found among the items that were seized. That money was used for this. That is why I asked that question. I have concluded, Comrade President.

[Rosales del Toro] Thank you very much.

[Alvarez Lugo] I request your permission to leave.

[Rosales del Toro] Colonel, why and for what purpose did you give $50,000 to Ochoa?

[La Guardia Font] He asked me for it. I didn't know what he was going to use it for. I don't know. He asked me for the money.

[Rosales del Toro] How much did he ask you for?

[La Guardia Font] He asked me for $100,000. I didn't have that amount of money so I gave him $50,000 and I don't know what he used the money for.

[Rosales del Toro] To whom did you specifically give the money?

[La Guardia Font] I gave the money to Martinez [yawns].

[Rosales del Toro] Did Martinez say why...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] No, Martinez did not explain what the money was for. I gave it to him in an envelope and he...

[Rosales del Toro, interrupting] Where did that money come from?

[La Guardia Font] That money came from operations, from the last operation.

[Rosales del Toro] The one that occurred in Varadero?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, the operation that took place in Varadero.

[Rosales del Toro] Comrade members of the tribunal, you have the floor. General Quintas.

[Division General Joaquin Quintas Sola] Tony La Guardia, despite the questions and responses you have given, the following is not clear to me; perhaps you can clarify this. Who's idea was it to initiate operations with the drug traffickers?

[La Guardia Font] The idea emerged when I arrived at CIMEX [State Enterprise for Import Export]. A section already existed there to bring in merchandise from the United States. The purpose of sending me there was to indirectly and covertly bring electronic items, medicine, scientific-technical information, and other items into the country that were not available because of the U.S. embargo.

[Quintas Sola] That was authorized?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, that was authorized.

[Quintas Sola] The drug trafficking operations were authorized?

[La Guardia Font] No, no, no [repeats himself] that was not approved by anyone.

[Quintas Sola] Who's idea was it?

[La Guardia Font] The idea came from the officers. They described it to me and I authorized it. I told them yes. I took the initiative.

[Quintas Sola] It was your initiative?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, yes.

[Quintas Sola] Who was the exact officer who suggested this to you?

[La Guardia Font] The first one to make this proposal was Amado Padron. A month or 2 weeks later, he...

[Quintas Sola, interrupting] Another question: You explained the matters pertaining to the more than $1 million that was found dispersed among the officers. Can you tell us if you knew about this?

[La Guardia Font] I did not know about this.

[Quintas Sola] Colonel Patricio [corrects himself] Col La Guardia, this is a little illogical. I think you should give this a little more thought because it is practically impossible for you to not know that this money was in the hands of all these people.

[La Guardia Font] I honestly tell you that I have accepted all responsibility here. I accept all, all, all [repeats himself] the responsibility for this. There is no doubt about this. If I had known that they had that money, I would tell you. There is nothing left for me to hide. I have no reason to. I have already stated that the responsibility is mine. I did this at my initiative. I truly did not have any idea about the money. The true image that I had of these officers was that they did not live ostentatiously. [Camera freezes video frame and no audio is heard for 1 minute and 15 seconds, during which captioning over frozen picture reads: Authorities confiscated from Eduardo Ruiz Izquierdo—one of Tony de La Guardia's closest collaborators—in Santa Maria $159,090; in Reparto Guiteras, under a cement block, $108,000; in Santo Juarez $26,600; in Reparto California de San Miguel del Padron, hidden inside a refrigerator $166,020; in total $459,710 and 100,620 Cuban pesos. From Antonio Sanchez Lima $262,911; from Amado Padron $294,918.38 and 36,976.20 pesos; from Gabriel Prendes Gomez $35,150 and 133,160 pesos; and from Miguel Ramos Ruiz Po $21,120 and 55,705 pesos. Eight cars were confiscated from Amado Padron, his confidant]. I had to give them cars, I mean, I (?sold) a car to each of them last year, as none of them had one. Where they live... [changes thought] I did not have the same type of relations, the friendships that another person could have.

[Quintas Sola] What about the boats you bought which you would later sell here in the country? What did you do once the crew returned?

[La Guardia Font] The yacht was purchased.

[Quintas Sola] Was this a secret operation?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, yes, yes [repeats himself], the yacht would arrive with the crew. They would leave the yacht and depart. They would leave. Not all yacht operations were for drug trafficking purposes. There were normal yachts [corrects himself] yachts for normal purposes. However, those yachts that could be used were left here. When the boat came to pick us up.... [changes thought] When the crew returned to the United States, a plane would make a drop [bombardeaba] at a certain point and they would continue their trip with the drugs to the United States.

[Quintas Sola] Excuse me, what did you do with the yacht?

[La Guardia Font] The yacht was left here and sold to another organization. It was sold to the INTUR.

[Division General Ramon Pardo Guerra, title as identified by caption] When you transferred to the MC Department, your chief gave you a well-defined objective?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, correct.

[Pardo Guerra] It was well-defined.

[La Guardia Font] Yes.

[Pardo Guerra] And you learned through your officers of these drug trafficking contacts?

[La Guardia Font] No, look, it was like this: When I was transferred from the troops, they sent me to CIMEX. The task I was given at CIMEX was to create a structure to break the blockade, to bring in merchandise.

[Pardo Guerra] We know that. I want you to tell me that...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] When I moved into MC, intelligence, the officers suggested, very insistently, that some operations be conducted.

[Pardo Guerra] These were the officers who were your subordinates?

[La Guardia Font] They were my subordinates.

[Pardo Guerra] You at no time advised your superiors about this?

[La Guardia Font] Never, I never informed them.

[Pardo Guerra] Why didn't you do so?

[La Guardia Font] I did not do it...

[Pardo Guerra, interrupting] Why?

[La Guardia Font] Because...

[Pardo Guerra, interrupting] Weren't you aware that this was a serious error?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, of course, I...

[Pardo Guerra, interrupting] Weren't you aware of all the implications of this?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, I was completely aware that it was a serious error and I was aware of the implications.

[Pardo Guerra] You said that on several occasions you analyzed.... [changes thought] I remember the question the president of the tribunal asked you. He then said that this was an act of disloyalty to the MININT.

[La Guardia Font] Yes, yes, yes [repeats himself].

[Pardo Guerra] And you knew this?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, yes, yes [repeats himself].

[Pardo Guerra] And you continued with the operations?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, yes, yes [repeats himself], general.

[Pardo Guerra] Then you were aware of everything you were doing?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, of course, I was aware of everything I did.

[Pardo Guerra] You were completely aware of what you were doing and what your subordinates were doing?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, I was aware of what my subordinates did.

[Pardo Guerra] And you continued the expansion?

[La Guardia Font] I continued the expansion?

[Pardo Guerra] You continued expanding your business?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, the operations began in 1987 and I knew about the operations up to the present.

[Pardo Guerra] And you interrupted the operations because you had an indication they were being investigated.

[La Guardia Font] I was going to.... [changes thought] In 1988, I ordered that the operations be suspended. That was last year. Early this year, they suggested I once again resume the operations. I told them to go ahead and conduct two or three operations and end it there.

[Pardo Guerra] It seems your subordinates had great influence over you. You did not control them well.

[La Guardia Font] I did not control them well.

[Pardo Guerra] Why?

[La Guardia Font] Because of the volume of work, the volume of work [repeats himself] in the department. I did not have a way to exert any control.

[Pardo Guerra] I agree with the rear admiral that you, with your position of responsibility, your experience, should have been well-informed of all this and you should have planned all those operations well. One cannot simply admit that an action as serious as that could have happened as you say it did. No, no...

[La Guardia Font, interrupting] I am not trying to have you overlook anything.

[Pardo Guerra] I don't think it can be this way.

[La Guardia Font] I would like you to interview the officers so that you can see the degree of control that I had over the operations. I want you to see, so that you can believe me, how much control I had, how much I participated in the operations.

[Pardo Guerra] Then you are aware that you have committed an act of treason?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, I am aware...

[Pardo Guerra, interrupting] Are you aware of this?

[La Guardia Font] Yes, I am aware of this.

[Video now shows Major Amado Padron speaking as a witness. He is shown dressed in civilian clothing. Ochoa, La Guardia Font, and the tribunal members are all shown in uniform.]

[Rosales del Toro] Tell us a little about the money, the volume, the quantity, the process of how you saved it...

[Amado Padron, interrupting] The money was always directly handed over to Tony [Antonio de La Guardia Font] after an operation. I gave him the money. Sometimes I was accompanied by an officer; sometimes I would take it to his office. All the money was a product of this operation.

During the last operations, the final operation, we decided, because of all the events that were occurring—Tony was going to be replaced. He was replaced. They were saying he would be replaced there—that the money, according to Tony, would be distributed later after we handed it over to him. He would identify some trade operations to turn over [corrects himself] to justify the money which was being turned over to the leaders of the ministry.

Tony could not receive any money during the last operation because he could not justify it. We decided to save this money so that later, when possible, we could justify it.

[Rosales del Toro] How much money was involved?

[Amado Padron] It was about $300,000.

[Rosales del Toro] How was that money distributed? How was that money saved?

[Amado Padron] First of all, each officer received $25,000. The four...

[Rosales del Toro, interrupting] Give us examples of who received the money.

[Amado Padron] Willy, Miguel, Eduardo, and Joel received the money.

The rest of the money that was hidden in a refrigerator was left as is and it was given to Comrade Eduardo for safekeeping. Another amount of money was also placed in a refrigerator and then given to Comrade Carlos Pena for safekeeping.

[Rosales del Toro] How did you feel about Sanchez Dimas having $250,000?

[Amado Padron] I don't know him. He does not work with me; he works in another section.

[Rosales del Toro] What kind of relations did he have with you?

[Amado Padron] He had work relations with us. He worked in the same department but he really did not have any other kind of relations with us.

[Rosales del Toro] What do you think about his having that money?

[Amado Padron] I did not know about this; I found out about it here. If he had that money, then it was the result of an operation he conducted.

[Rosales del Toro] Do you think there may be other operations besides the ones you were involved in?

[Amado Padron] If that money exists, then, yes, I think so. Tony never said that other operations were being conducted but the ties that section had—the naval operations section—were ties that were practically identical to ours, drug trafficking ties. He spoke a lot to them by radio. They brought boats here to sell. That was one of their modi operandi. On several occasions I asked Tony if that kind of operation was being conducted with those people and he told me it wasn't but I think these types of operations did take place.

[Rosales del Toro] How much money do you think Eduardo Diaz had?

[Amado Padron] Eduardo Diaz? I think he had $25,000.

[Rosales del Toro] How can you explain the more than $150,000 that was confiscated from him?

[Amado Padron] I do not know.

[Rosales del Toro] Specifically, you gave him $25,000.

[Amado Padron] No, no, remember that the payment in one of the refrigerators was turned over to him for safekeeping.

[Rosales del Toro] How much money do you think Gabriel Prendes Gomez had?

[Padron] I don't know.

[Rosales del Toro] What ties did he have with you?

[Padron] He worked in the other section.

[Rosales del Toro] Did you give money to Miguel Ramon Ruiz?

[Padron] Yes.

[Rosales del Toro] How much money?

[Padron] We gave him $25,000?

[Rosales del Toro] You gave him $25,000.

[Padron] That is correct.

[Rosales del Toro] How much money did you give him in pesos?

[Padron] I don't know.

[Rosales del Toro] How do you explain the fact that he had more than $50,000?

[Padron] He must have converted the money...

[Rosales del Toro, interrupting] No, aside from the more than $21,000.

[Padron] More than $21,000?

[Rosales del Toro] He had $21,000 and besides that, he had 55,000 pesos. How can you explain this?

[Padron] I did not know he had that money. If he had exchanged the money, it would not have totaled that amount.

[Rosales del Toro] When you found out you had control [as heard] over U.S. naval operations from the information you received and also from what counterintelligence gave you, what did you do to keep from being detected? Tell us something about this.

[Padron] To keep from being detected?

[Rosales del Toro] Yes, how did you try to...

[Padron, interrupting] The first thing we did was to suspend all operations with these people and we tried to get all those already here out of the country immediately and we told them not to come back again until...

[Rosales del Toro, interrupting] Who was here then?

[Padron] A group of four boats, about six or eight boatmen were here. As soon as the operations were complete, we got them out of the country. We went along the coast to (Vayacay) and we got them out of the country there so that they would not run into the U.S. authorities who were probably out in front of Varadero.

[Rosales del Toro] Gondin.

[Division General Carlos Fernandez Gondin] What was your objective in these drug operations?

[Padron] General, although it may have been erroneous and dishonest, from the first operation, our intent was to help the country receive dollars. In reality, we never, never, never [repeats himself] expected this to reach this magnitude.

[Fernandez Gondin] How do you explain the fact that the money, the dollars, were exchanged for Cuban money here? Why did you do this?

[Padron] That was at the end of the operations. We exchanged some money because we needed it. We did not receive a single cent from the ministry. Besides the money for us, some of that money was used to cover office expenses in Cuban pesos.

[Fernandez Gondin] Padron, do you recall an invitation Tony La Guardia received from Pablo Escobar? Do you know anything about this?

[Padron] No, I don't.

[Fernandez Gondin] But you know that Martinez went...

[Padron, interrupting] Yes.

[Fernandez Gondin] He represented Tony.

[Padron] No, I did not know he was representing Tony.

[Fernandez Gondin] Martinez told you about everything he did there.

[Padron] It's that...

[Fernandez Gondin, interrupting] He told you about his conversations and plans.

[Padron] That's correct. That's correct. [repeats himself]

[Fernandez Gondin] How did Martinez manage to meet with Pablo Escobar?

[Padron] I earlier said here that it was arranged by the people who were here: the girl and the other two people. He left for Panama and from Panama he continued on to Colombia but we did not know he was going to Colombia. We found out after he returned and told us about it.

[Fernandez Gondin] Padron, do you know who is involved, has knowledge of, or has participated in drug trafficking?

[Padron] No one except Comrade Martinez.

[Fernandez Gondin] Only Martinez?

[Padron] That's correct.

[Fernandez Gondin] Who gave orders to Martinez?

[Padron] Gen Ochoa.

[Fernandez Gondin] Do you know if Ochoa knew of all this?

[Padron] I imagine he did but he didn't tell me so.

[Fernandez Gondin] Who do you know that was involved in these activities? Think about it and give us the names.

[Padron] All the comrades who worked with me.

[Fernandez Gondin] Can you give us the names?

[Padron] Yes. The names are Comrade Captain Miguel Ruiz, Comrade Captain.... [changes thought] First of all, there is Comrade Colonel Antonio de La Guardia, Comrade Captain Miguel Ruiz, Comrade Captain Joel Soto, Comrade Captain (Rosa Maria Bien), Comrade Deputy Lieutenant Eduardo Diaz, and me. [video frame freezes, no audio is heard for 30 seconds, during which captioning

reads: From Amado Padron, in addition to $294,918.38 authorities confiscated: 36,976.20 pesos, 156 kg of cocaine, 7 rifles, 6 shotguns, 11 pistols, and 8 revolvers]

[Announcer introduces opening statement by Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez.]

[Rosales del Toro] You may say whatever you consider necessary in reference to the accusations made here.

[Ochoa] Mr President, before remarking on the accusations against me, I feel it is my basic duty, because it has been my main concern during the past few days.... [changes thought] I have read everything in the press, seen the reports on television, and heard the reports on radio. I heard the minister's speech [speech by FAR Minister Raul Castro at 0053 GMT on 15 June]. I've listened to the opinions of the workers repudiating all this and I would like to add that I agree with what they think. I would never in my life in any way try to justify an act such as this.

My main concern in this has not been for me but for the Revolution. Why? Because the Revolution, throughout history has had a very clear, crystal clear policy in reference to everything related to drug trafficking. While the PCC was stating that it had nothing to do with this, we were involved in these activities. This without a doubt could cause or has caused the enemy to have great doubts on the veracity of what the Revolution was saying, specifically the commander in chief who has always had a very clear policy on all this.

I want to confirm in front of this tribunal—although I think you know this—that neither the commander in chief nor the minister, the party, the government, nor anyone in the Armed Forces ever had anything to do with this. All of this was my doing and I want to assume this responsibility before all of you. I think that one of the most serious responsibilities I have is the national and international notoriety this has received. I would like to state this before everyone. I repeat, nothing hurts me more personally than the indignation of the people; nothing can be worse than that..

I am the one responsible for this materially as well as morally. Those who followed me in this are not responsible; I am fully responsible.

I do not want to clarify my motives here, explain what motivated me. I think that is unimportant.

I am particularly aware of the hornet's nest I have thrown here among this body of generals and I have reflected on their indignation. I have thought: Treason is treason, no matter what shape it takes.

I can imagine what a lot of people say about our generals. They think: Yesterday that bandit Del Pino betrayed the country and today another one did the same. I profoundly regret having thrown that image on our corps of generals.

In reference to the accusations against me, I would also like to say that not only what is being said here today, but everything that has been carried by the press, television, everything that has been reported is based on the exact truth.

I think that the account of events that was recently given by the minister is much more explicit an account than I could give. I would not be able to give a chronology of the events as is listed in this document. That's the way it is.

Now I would like to say something else: The minister said something that is exactly as he said it. I've given it a lot of thought. I've been thinking what to say here today. One of the things I've considered is how to be as concise as possible and convey the idea of what our responsibility is. I will tell you it is not easy, because of the torment I have gone through and am going through from betraying the country, to focus on what the motives were that little by little brought me to this serious state.

I do believe that one does something like this for a reason and because of something in his life. I would say it starts to happen when one is given an order and ends up thinking that the higher command is a poor order, no? Once thinking along these lines, one begins to think independently and begins to believe that he is right and then he himself morally justifies the terrible things he commits, no? I can give you an example. The truth is here. Otherwise, how could I have justified this to myself at a certain time, no? Yes?

I did this in Angola, something I had never done before in my life. I brought a little bit of money back with me and I thought I would use it in the Western Army. Let's assume that it was [corrects himself] that it wasn't all so bad to use it for the Western Army; it needs all sorts of things. This shows that one can personally justify these actions on a moral basis, no? When one comes to a point like this, one does not know what to do. He loses his head; he loses his head [repeats himself] and I repeat, there are things that I cannot justify. One cannot explain it to himself. One cannot explain it to himself [repeats himself] and it is not a lack of bravery, but it's that he lacks the words.

It is not just you and the people who are indignant; I am also indignant with myself because if there is a single human being who had no reason to do this, it is me, no matter what the motivation.

One does isolated things and things and things [repeats himself] and now when I look at this, I see the great horror that has been committed, no? When it is happening, you don't see it this way, no? But there is no doubt

that this is where the degradation begins, the moral problems; problems of all types start here and I don't think it is necessary to repeat it.

However, I do want to tell the comrades that I think I betrayed the fatherland and I tell you with all honesty that one pays for treason with one's life. Unfortunately, I did become corrupted. I never in my life lacked any assistance. There is the assistance that the comrades know about and the assistance they don't know about.

I don't think that there is any better assistance than the kind that I never used, which is self-analysis, to self-analyze oneself, to see if one's own conduct is in conformance. I think that some people are more inclined to this type of thing because of their own nature; I'm one of these people. Other people are more disciplined. They are that way and they practice it. They are less inclined to this type of thing, no? I never used self-analysis as a weapon to defend my conscience. I don't think I ever used this method.

The terrible things that have occurred in all this have been exposed. The comrades will make their statements. However, I am aware, not of what is left of my life, but that even in 200 years of heroism, I would never be able to make it up to the Revolution and such a trite idea would never even cross my mind.

Today the one who speaks here, with everything that has happened, does not have the slightest doubt that he is a much cleaner revolutionary than he previously was. I don't have the slightest doubt. Modest as it may be, regardless of the decision taken against me, you may be certain that I will continue to be a revolutionary and clean and clean [repeats himself].

I cannot tell you anything else that.... [changes thought] What can a person say when he is despised by his people because of his own fault? I think that, today, the tribunal of my own conscience is harsher than any other.

Something that I have not finished is the topic of assistance. When the minister called me—I think that is when it began to happen. He called me twice—I should admit I lied to him and I wasn't brave enough to confront this, not confront the minister, but to confront the things that I had to tell him. When I decided to do so, there was no more time. I decided on this because I knew that the facts would become known. I didn't decide to do this to save myself, because I am sure that it would have been discovered whether I admitted it or not because the immorality of this was so great that it had to have the same consequences, regardless. There was no other alternative. There was no other alternative. [repeats himself]

Above all, the fatherland, the morale of the Revolution was involved. It seems—and I believe it—that the Cuban Revolution has known how to overcome this because of its prestige, morale, and stature. There was no other way out. There was no other way out [repeats himself]. Wherever I end up, for the remainder of my life, I will maintain this attitude and responsibility. Even though you may not believe me today, I am another person. I despise myself and I have no reason to live. I do not expect anything else.

This is the only thing I wanted to say. It is possible I may be able to continue later.

[Rosales del Toro] Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez, we had a number of questions for you but your statement admitting to the charges and the accusations made against you prevent us from asking you these questions so we want to concentrate on asking you only two questions.

The first question is the following: What kind of treatment have you received since your arrest?

[Ochoa] It has been perfect. I have received the treatment the Revolution gives to all detainees. In my case, I think I have not been treated like a prisoner. I have been treated normally.

[Rosales del Toro] Excuse me, would you please speak a little louder?

[Ochoa] In my case, I have been treated excellently. I have nothing to complain about.

[Rosales del Toro] My second question is: Some are saying that you were detained for opposing the policy of the Revolution. I'm referring to counterrevolutionary individuals. I'm referring to Del Pino, to (Wesmat), who made statements of this sort and also said that there is division in the heart of the FAR. What can you say about this?

[Ochoa] Well, in a case like this, it is logical to expect the enemy of the Revolution to take advantage of all this. There is no truth to their statements. I have never been opposed to the Revolution and I have nothing against the Revolution. On the contrary, everything is to the contrary.

In addition, I think that there exists now, more than ever, one of the largest revolutionary spirits and senses of brotherhood in the history of the country among the Revolution, Cuban people, and the FAR. I think that this is one of the reasons for the commotion this has created, no? There was no reason for this to happen, much less a political motive. That is even less likely.

I think one could expect the enemy to use all this for its purposes but it cannot be further from the truth that this happened for political reasons, that there are political differences among us. I think that has been made more than clear.

[Rosales del Toro] Do any members of the tribunal have any questions for Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez? Yes, do you have a question?

[Unidentified speaker] I have a question for Div Gen Ochoa. During the statement he gave on the charges presented against him at this tribunal, he also said that he had a conversation with his children. The other day you said this in the tribunal because this truly [words indistinct]. How is your family [words indistinct] to this matter?

[Ochoa] In the case.... [changes thought] I think you are asking me about my conversation with the minister, no?

[Speaker] No, with the children.

[Rosales del Toro] He's asking about your meeting with your children.

[Ochoa] Oh, with the children. I did nothing more with my children than state the truth, no? I took responsibility for the events. It was important to me that the children should not have to suffer at all for the mistakes of their father. I didn't want them to hear of this in a distorted way. There is no doubt that I have not passed this negative influence down to my children during their lifetimes. On the contrary, I have educated them within the principles of the Revolution and my children believe in me. It was important to me to clarify all the responsibility I have for these events.

This is what I told them. I perhaps did not tell them in such a crude way, but I did tell them that everything that has been published and everything that has happened has been the exact truth, no? I think they understood me, no? I repeat, this was an important step for me and I want to express my appreciation to you for allowing me to do this, no? That is what I told the children. To not extend this topic. It is known by the comrades who were present... [Ochoa is interrupted by announcer identifying following section as "portions of remarks made by the members of the Military Honor Tribunal."]

[Rosales del Toro] Comrade members of the tribunal, after having listened to the report presented by the FAR minister and the statements made by the infractor and the witnesses, we have the necessary elements to allow each one of us to present his views independently. We hope that each statement by each one of the tribunal members will be brief and concrete, stressing two principal things: your opinion on the guilt of Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez based on the serious charges against him and your recommendations in this matter so that we can take our proposals to the FAR minister.

The comrades should make their statements from the podium. Those who are ready may ask for the floor. Comrade General Senen Casas.

[Division General Senen Casas Regueiro] Comrade Tribunal President and the rest of the members:

As has been proved, in the opinion of this Honor Tribunal, Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez abandoned his principles, morals, and prestige, and he betrayed his people, his ideals, and our commander in chief. He accepted these principles when he joined the service. Gen Ochoa Sanchez is not worthy of being in our glorious party. He is not worthy of holding the title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba." He is not worthy of being a FAR general. He is not worthy of remaining in the ranks of the FAR. I have no doubt about this.

In my case, I call for him to be stripped of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," as well as the rest of his decorations and medals; that he be stripped of his rank of FAR general; that he be dishonorably discharged from the ranks of the party and the glorious FAR.

Comrades of the Honor Tribunal, I recommend that Gen Ochoa be tried by a military tribunal and in my case, if I was one of the members, I would have no doubt that I would impose the penalty of death by firing squad [fusilamiento] as the most just sanction.

Comrade President, I have concluded.

[Rosales del Toro] Gen Gondin.

[Division General Carlos Fernandez Gondin] Comrade President and members of the tribunal:

Allow me to take a few more moments due to the position I have in the ministry. Comrades:

Before anything else, I speak to the Honor Tribunal in my position as FAR general. I am aware that each one of us has been given the responsibility of analyzing the conduct of Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez within the range of principles and ethics a revolutionary military member should follow in our country. It would be in no way an exaggeration to say that our people have an expectation in reference to the deliberations and recommendations of this tribunal which is as great as the expectation that undoubtedly exists in the heart of our Armed Forces. It is hoped that we will be responsible and arrive at conclusions that will be exemplary, that will correspond to the seriousness of the acts attributed to Ochoa, and that will acknowledge the distress that this unexpected blow has caused among our people.

Because of this, I want to add my voice to the proposal to request the most severe sanction allowed by the laws of the country. I am certain that there is no other person who is more convinced of this need than Ochoa himself and I firmly believe that he is able to understand with what bitterness, as was stressed by the comrade minister in his report, we confront this case; but we have no other alternative.

Ochoa's conduct has not left us room for anything but to draw a lesson from this painful experience, as hard and as long-lasting as it may be, so that an ideological and

moral degradation and disloyalty, as described by the accusations for which he will have to answer to the military tribunal, are never again repeated by a comrade who wins the highest recognition and honors that our party and state can bestow.

I also speak here in my position as the one responsible for the organization within our FAR that conducted the investigation which, out of necessity, was conducted intensely. When the first signs and evidence of great transgressions led to Ochoa's arrest, we received the order to intensify the investigation to clarify as much as possible the events, as well as to verify the information received from different sources and, where possible, to provide some reflection on what caused this regrettable case of ideological involution and moral aberration.

I should say that from the very beginning, the magnitude of the errors and the overwhelming proof accumulated demonstrated the raw truth that Ochoa had renounced his ethical values and had broken ideological ethics in such a way that his conduct became incompatible with his position as FAR officer.

With the thoroughness with which the commander in chief and the minister have educated us, we have conducted the investigations and have developed, through witnesses, an image of Ochoa's personality, the virtues, and potential qualities of that humble youth who joined the Rebel Army and who ascended during the first years of the Revolution and we were progressively able to see gaps, defects, and deviations.

It is true that Ochoa's conduct has always heavily influenced the complexities of his personality. For several years, his charismatic appeal coexisted with traces of boastful pedantry. Regrettably, this last feature prevailed. But much more important than this, as we have been able to determine in evaluating the volume of information that we have obtained, is the image of him, from an ideological point of view, opening himself up at a certain point in his career to influence, which is described in detail in the minister's report.

From that moment, it became an obsession with Ochoa to behave or become a great businessman, which not even an economist would consider, must less during the process of constructing socialism. Only through illicit proceedings, only through deception, only by separating himself more and more from our codes of conduct was Ochoa able to get close to that absurd goal. That is why it is not unusual that he completely scorns political activities. The activities of the party were practically a nuisance to him.

At the proper time, we should also analyze those premises which in our society, in one way or another, have been created out of necessity for our economy but which have not always been well understood nor well guided and which tend to favor mercantilistic inclinations such as those that motivated Ochoa.

Internally in the FAR, we and the political organizations have been called upon to seriously examine the conditions that are created in extraordinary situations in missions abroad. Our work should be done at a level substantially different from the daily life of our units in Cuba. It was precisely these conditions that led to the maximum expression and development of the tendency that was already present in Ochoa's conduct.

In conclusion, I want to appeal to Ochoa to maintain the attitude he has assumed at this tribunal for its undoubtedly educational and prophylactic importance and thus provide a service to the Revolution, even though these circumstances are difficult and painful.

[Rosales del Toro] Pardo.

[Div Gen Ramon Pardo Guerra] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, allow me to begin my statement by reading a letter sent by the collective of the Western Army to the FAR minister.

Army General Raul Castro Ruz, minister of the FAR:

Comrade Minister:

The generals, officers, sergeants, soldiers, Camilitos [students of the Camilo Cienfuegos Military Vocational Schools], civilian workers of the Western Army, upon learning of the actions reported in reference to the immoral, dishonest, and treacherous attitude toward the principles of the Revolution on the part of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez—who was for the second time being considered for the position of chief of the Western Army because of his experience and image in the fulfillment of different internationalist missions and because of his revolutionary career—support the decision made by the Higher Cadre Commission, by you, and by the commander in chief. At the same time, we condemn and repudiate the attitude assumed by Ochoa which conspires against the revolutionary training acquired in the ranks of the Rebel Army and among the troops of our unforgettable Camilo Cienfuegos.

Ochoa forgot the concept of loyalty that Camilo had toward the commander in chief. When he learned he was promoted to the rank of commander of the Rebel Army in the plains of the Cauto, he wrote to Fidel: It would be easier for me to stop breathing than to stop being loyal to your confidence.

May he [Ochoa] and his group receive the strongest and harshest measures that the tribunal that tries them can impose, as well as the hatred and scorn of the working class, of the working and combative people.

We make these statements on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the Western Army assuring you that our command will each day be a shield of the Cuban Revolution's ideology and morale, of socialism and internationalism.

Fraternally,

Signed: Chief of the Western Army, Division General [title as heard] Ramon Pardo Guerra.

Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal:

When we learned of this, when the minister informed us that Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez was to assume the command of the Army, we immediately contacted him and embraced him. We embraced him as brothers, just as the minister did. It was the embrace of his true family, not the embrace of those people he linked himself to or the embrace of those people who spoke here today.

Recognizing the seriousness of the acts committed by Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez, I ask that he be stripped of his honorary titles, his decorations; that he be dismissed and expelled from the ranks of the party and that the harshest measures be imposed upon him by the tribunal that tries him and I am in complete agreement that he receive the maximum sanction, the death penalty.

[Rosales del Toro] Tomassevich

[Division General Raul Menendez Tomassevich] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, comrade generals:

I briefly want to express my feelings during this time which is traumatic for everyone, once the conduct of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa has been analyzed and once I have given my views on the serious nature of the acts proven here.

First of all, I want to say with all honesty and frankness that I felt a great admiration and respect for Ochoa. He joined the rebel army when he was very young to fight against the powerful and the exploiters in defense of his class, the humble, and the exploited. He bravely defended the cause of his people and that of other peoples who, as Che would say, required our modest efforts.

Today, I cannot in any way feel or think the same way because he did not know how to carry through to the end the just and noble cause that he defended yesterday. He thought himself powerful because of the merits and prestige he accumulated without stopping to think that those merits and that prestige existed because they were bestowed upon him by the Interior Ministry, the only truly meritorious and powerful body. These merits belonged to our FAR, which was created and guided by our beloved commander in chief, and which has been and will continue to be a worthy continuation of the Mambi Army and the rebel army, loyal to their founder and guide and loyal to our people.

Ochoa betrayed the Revolution, the FAR, our commander in chief, and the party. He betrayed his people and other brother peoples, his comrades in arms, and the comrades who, for more than 30 years, gave their brave lives for the fatherland.

Because of what has been previously presented, I propose to this tribunal that they recommend accordingly:

First of all, that he be stripped of the title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and any other orders and decorations that were bestowed upon him.

Second, that he be demoted [degradado] and dishonorably discharged from the FAR, that he be dishonorably expelled from the ranks of the party and its Central Committee, as well as from the National Assembly of the People's Government, and that an exemplary legal sanction be imposed upon him which will wipe away the affront of his treason to the fatherland. That is what I say.

[Rosales del Toro] Admiral Aldo Santamaria Cuadrado.

[Santamaria Cuadrado] Request permission to begin. The rebel army and the FAR have practically been Gen Ochoa's whole life. He grew and developed there; it was there that he had the chance to become what he became; it was there that his many merits were recognized. Gen Ochoa's motives and actions, studied throughout these proceedings, are irreconcilable with revolutionary principles. The FAR minister made timely remarks to Gen Ochoa concerning his character and actions. Yesterday we experienced the painful satisfaction of hearing Gen Ochoa himself admit his responsibility in each and every one of these serious and unacceptable actions. We even heard him say what punishment he felt he should get. The seriousness of his mistakes and actions are inconceivable and unacceptable in a revolutionary. Without wishing to repeat what others have said, we cannot keep from mentioning his disregard for the trust and respect placed in him by the commander in chief, by the FAR minister, by our people, by our party, by our revolution, by us, and what is even worse, by our dead. Gen Ochoa destroyed all this in a short time.

For all of the above, I ask that this Honor Tribunal recommend the strongest military and political punishment for Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez.

[Rosales del Toro] Rear Admiral Pedro M. Perez Betancourt.

[Perez Betancourt] Comrade President of this Honor Tribunal, comrade members of this tribunal: Admitting to the serious charges, including those of treason to the fatherland, makes us somewhat sensitive and as revolutionaries, we hope that he is being honest. However, this does not diminish the seriousness of what has been done. I propose that this Military Honor Tribunal propose the following measures to the FAR minister:

1. That he be tried by a court martial because the charges presented here have proved beyond a doubt that these are military crimes and that the maximum punishment be applied.

2. Strip him of the rank he holds.

3. Strip him of all decorations he has received, including the honorary title of Hero of the Republic of Cuba.

4. That the Central Committee be given all the necessary elements to remove him as a member of the Central Committee and party member.

I feel that the measures I have suggested are in accord with the seriousness of the crime. In this manner, comrades, we will begin to wash away this outrage. I have finished, Mr President.

[Rosales del Toro] Division General Rogelio Acevedo Gonzalez.

[Acevedo Gonzalez] Request permission to speak. Mr president, comrades of the Honor Tribunal: We have known Arnaldo Ochoa for more than 30 years. For years, ties of friendship and affection united us.

Like many of the people here, I knew that there were shortcomings in Ochoa's personality, but I was inclined to justify those shortcomings, attributing them to his character.

Moreover, I knew that on various occasions our minister had directly or indirectly admonished Ochoa as his mistakes became known. The minister admonished Ochoa in the usual manner; that is, in a firm, principled, timely, and comradely manner.

I also know that some comrades, directly or indirectly alerted Ochoa to isolated events, failures, and mistakes he had made. However, no one ever thought or knew what we have learned over the past few days from the investigation by the Military Honor Tribunal.

No one knew how much Ochoa had gradually changed from being the revolutionary he was some years ago. Ochoa's activities and attitudes as stated at this Military Honor Tribunal and as demonstrated by witness' statements, the evidence, and the events, show Ochoa to be another man. This is not the revolutionary Ochoa I admired, loved, and respected.

Ochoa's corrupt and disloyal conduct has betrayed the confidence that Fidel, Raul, his comrades in the FAR, the party, and the Cuban people placed in him. I believe that Arnaldo Ochoa, with his disloyal, shameful, and corrupt behavior, has done a great deal of damage to the Revolution, and he has affected the FAR's prestige. I also believe that yesterday, when Ochoa addressed this hearing following the minister's statements, he offered self-criticism and correctly assessed this hearing's fairness and cleanliness. In my judgment, his statements lived up to the FAR minister's appeal to him in his report. I urge Ochoa to continue along this proper path, which I believe would help the Revolution, his children, and himself.

In conclusion, comrades, I believe that with all that has been said and proved at this military honor tribunal, the full weight of the revolutionary laws, military regulations, and party regulations should be brought to bear against Ochoa. Therefore I propose, first, that he be stripped of his rank and his membership in the FAR be revoked; second, I propose that the State Council strip him of the honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," as well as other decorations and medals; third, that Ochoa be presented with all the evidence of the court martial and that he be given the maximum sentence; fourth, as a member of the Central Committee, his case should be taken to the Political Bureau so that this body can analyze the punishment that will be imposed on him, present the proposal to the Central Committee Plenum, and propose that his position as a deputy in the National Assembly be analyzed. That is all.

[Rosales del Toro] Division General Joaquin Quintas Sola.

[Quintas Sola] Comrade President, comrade generals: As a general in the FAR and as a member of this Military Honor Tribunal, I believe that Division General Ochoa's culpability has been clearly proven, by his own testimony, which I believe was self-critical, and by the witness' statements. I believe that for us, as the comrade minister said, this is a bitter, but necessary and essential duty. That is all Comrade President.

[Rosales del Toro] Division General Pedro M. Garcia Pelaez.

[Garcia Pelaez] Comrade President, comrades: We have known Gen Ochoa for more than 31 years. We worked together in Camaguey and in other places.

With Gen Tomas Ceviche, I have been an Army general in three armies in Cuba for several years and have admired Gen Ochoa very much. Very recently, however, I have learned that he has violated the law and offended our discipline, our love for our homeland, and our party in a number of instances. Gen Ochoa has hurt the friendship and sincerity of us all. We are convinced that it is absolutely necessary to strip Gen Ochoa of his rank, decorations, and his membership in the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC], the PCC Central Committee, and the National Assembly. He must be sent to a military court and given the stiffest sentence possible for all his crimes.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Guillermo Rodriguez del Pozo.

[Rodriguez del Pozo] Companeros of the Presidency and other members of the Military Honor Tribunal: I will not reiterate Gen Ochoa's activities because ample evidence of these activities has been provided and Gen Ochoa himself has admitted to them. Our revolution has profited from its setbacks since the attack on the Moncada garrison. This is why I am convinced that this embarrasing and shameful situation will strengthen the Revolution. Because of the

seriousness of his offenses, Gen Ochoa should be stripped of both his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and all medals and decorations he has received. He should be stripped of his rank and dishonorably discharged from the FAR. We recommend that Gen Ochoa be expelled from both the PCC Central Committee and the party. We recommend that the National Assembly cancel his membership and that he be tried by a military court and given the maximum sentence.

[Rosales del Toro] General Sergio del Valle Jimenez.

[Del Valle] I, Division General Sergio del Valle Jimenez, before this Military Honor Tribunal and full of unavoidable indignation, have this to say: The charges leveled at Gen Ochoa by companero and FAR Minister Raul Castro Ruz are evidently true. This has been confirmed by Ochoa's confession, statements by witnesses, and the inquiries that were conducted. With the sad, quiet bitterness caused by the certainty of the evidence gathered from the exhaustive inquiries carried out, I think it is my duty to recommend that Gen Ochoa be declared guilty of the charges presented against him at this Honor Tribunal; that his case be taken to a military court, according to the law and with the recommendation that he be given the stiffest penalty stipulated by our penal code for the crimes perpetrated; that the tremendous harm that Ochoa's activities—on the verge of treason or within its boundaries—have inflicted on the prestige, authority, and principles of the Revolution and, particularly because of Ochoa's disloyalty, our commander in chief; declare that, in view of the outrage that Ochoa's degrading conduct has inflicted on the homeland, it is essential to strip him of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and the other medals and decorations given to him, including his rank of Division General; declare in this tribunal that it is necessary and just to discharge Ochoa as a FAR member and strip him of his membership to the PCC Central Committee.

I want to express my sad concern that matters of this kind cannot be detected in time by the controls established for FAR, the Ministry of the Interior, or the PCC. This is an increasing concern of our people. Finally, I think Ochoa's followers are extremely dangerous because they are likely to carry out, with no scruples, any activity, including those against the Revolution, however base and immoral. Only by confronting this situation with dignity and being prepared to die, if necessary, can Ochoa wash away this offense against the homeland.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigidier General Samuel Rodiles Planas.

[Rodiles] Comrade President of the Military Honor Tribunal: I do not want to repeat the views my comrades have stated. I only want to state that I have carefully analyzed the conduct of Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez, which led him to thoroughly violate the principles of our socialist revolution, thus exposing our country to a catastrophic situation. He betrayed his people, the Communist Party of Cuba, our dear FAR, and our unforgettable and invincible commander in chief.

In his testimony yesterday, Ochoa recognized the enormous gravity of the violations he committed. Thus, I fully agree with the report presented to this tribunal by the FAR minister, and I propose that he be tried by a military court; that the full weight of our revolutionary law fall on him; that he be divested of his honor titles, orders, medals, and decorations; that he no longer continue as a member of our glorious FAR; and that the PCC directorate be notified that his membership in the ranks and the central committee is inadmissible. I have concluded.

[Rosales del Toro] Division General Romarico Sotomayor Garcia.

[Sotomayor] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal: During the hearing yesterday and today, I fully realized and understood the grave errors and crimes perpetrated by Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez. Comrade president, I propose that Gen Ochoa be stripped of his rank as division general; that he be dishonorably discharged from the FAR; that he be stripped of his decoration of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba;" that his membership in the PCC be analyzed and that he be expelled from the same; and that the Honor Tribunal, once it issues its final conclusion, decree that the maximum penalty be applied for the treason and errors he perpetrated. I have concluded.

[Rosales del Toro] Division General Rogoberto Garcia Fernandez.

[Garcia Fernandez] Comrades of the Presidency, comrade members: I have nothing prepared and, at a time like this, it is extremely difficult to improvise; it is a decision that we have to carefully meditate. Nevertheless, I will try to be careful and to control my nerves—my stage fright—in front of my comrades. My opinion is the following:

I have known Ochoa for more than 30 years. We were together in the Sierra [Maestra] and we were together in different activities later on in the country. I was also Ochoa's subordinate and I admired Ochoa throughout all those years. Everyone who is here worked with Ochoa in one way or another; we shared these moments with him; we felt happy about Venezuela—when the activities began and we thought they would succeed. We were also happy in Ethiopia, when he was successful, and we were happy when he was also entrusted with highly responsible positions in our homeland—we felt proud of Ochoa. On this occasion and the day of the editorial—I could not read it because I was not in Havana Province, but I heard it on the television—I despised Ochoa. May my comrades forgive me for this word, but I despised him. I felt he had betrayed us all; I felt he had betrayed our commander in chief and the FAR minister. The day we were informed of Ochoa's activities, without knowing

about his drug trafficking activities, I also felt ashamed of being Ochoa's comrade. He betrayed us all. He betrayed Camilo. He betrayed Che.

This is a very difficult time for all of us, but we must think about it. We must look at our responsibility for having allowed him to continue the way he did until he reached this end. This is the party's responsibility too, because he was a party activist. We must analyze this as an example for us and the young officers; we must analyze this as an example for all our leaders. Let this serve as an example, and may we extract from this tragedy that is afflicting our people whatever is necessary for the Revolution to grow even stronger—even after this harsh blow to our revolution. For this reason, I ask that Ochoa.... [changes thought] I endorse all our comrades' proposals that Ochoa be dishonorably stripped of all the recognitions and honors our country had accorded him and that he be dishonorably stripped of his ranks and discharged from our FAR. I ask that this proposal be sent up to the Military Court and that the harshest and most severe penalties instituted by our country be meted out in this case. I have finished speaking.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Raul Fernandez Marrero.

[Fernandez Marrero] Comrade Chairman, comrade generals: After a profound analysis, I fully agree with the proposals that have been made in this Military Honor Tribunal, at which Gen Ochoa Sanchez's dishonest attitude and grave crimes have been proved. I feel he deserves the repudiation of our FAR combatants, our party, and the people. I propose that this Military Honor Tribunal vote to refer the case to the highest party and state echelons; to strip him of his honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and of his military rank, medals, and decorations; to discharge him from the FAR; to expel him from the party; to remit him to the Military Tribunal; and that the latter sentence him to the maximum penalty after a trial.

[Brigadier General Irving Ruiz Brito] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, comrade generals: When one dishonors one's homeland and betrays the principles and ethics of the Cuban Revolution, there is room for only one thing—the maximum penalties. I consider Gen Ochoa Sanchez guilty of the serious crimes of high treason, violation of the Revolution's principles, and breach of the trust of the commander in chief, the FAR minister, and our whole people. Everything has been convincingly proven during this hearing. I feel Gen Ochoa Sanchez must be sentenced to the maximum penalties provided for by our revolutionary laws and military rules. I ask that he be deprived of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and other orders and decorations, that he be demoted and expelled from the FAR, that he be expelled from the party and removed from his position as member of the Central Committee, that he be expelled from the National Assembly, and that a recommendation be made to the court martial that tries him to sentence him to the maximum penalty of death by firing squad.

[Brigadier General Jose Milian Pino] Comrade President, comrade members of the Honor Tribunal: I do not wish to repeat what the comrades who have preceded us have outlined, because we fully adhere to their opinions and their ideas and proposals.

We feel we have an obligation—which we may describe as personal for ourselves and for a number of other comrades—to refer to or mention something that results from the conclusions we have reached regarding a comrade such as Comrade Ochoa. We can say without any remorse that at all times we were honest with him and gave him our full cooperation, admiration, affection, and respect.

I think we, the members of this tribunal, are being fair to him when we recommend that he be sent to the Miiitary Court; that he be deprived of his ranks, honorary titles, decorations, and status as member of the party and the PCC Central Committee; and that the tribunal that tries him will sentence him to the severe measures demanded by this case. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Jose Causse Perez.

[Causse] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, comrade generals: Just as most of the comrades have said, we loved Gen Ochoa and greatly admired his revolutionary achievements. Like our comrades before us, we have also been bitterly disillusioned by the moral, political, and ideological deterioration that led Gen Ochoa to carry out this act of treason against the Revolution. Therefore, I support the proposals that have been made and feel that he should be stripped of his honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and all his decorations and that he be ousted from the PCC and the National Assembly. I also wish to suggest that the Military Honor Tribunal impose the most severe punishment contemplated by our revolutionary laws. Comrade president, I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Hiraldo Mora Orozco.

[Mora] Comrade President, comrade generals: In the beginning when the minister addressed us, when we heard him say that he had embraced Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, many of us also felt the desire to embrace him and let him know that he was our comrade, our brother. We would have done anything to save and help him. However, throughout these proceedings, Gen Ochoa Sanchez proved to us that we are not his good friends; his good friends are crooks and thieves, those who lack morals. He was more their friend than the FAR's.

Taking into consideration that he has violated every law our country has, that every FAR rule has been broken, as a member of this tribunal I feel that Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez must receive the maximum sentence; and that he be stripped of his rank, his decorations, and the honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba." I recommend to the Central Committee that he be expelled from the PCC and the National Assembly and recommend to the Military Court that will try him that capital punishment be imposed. I fully agree with Div Gen Senen Casas who said: If I were a member of the court that is going to try him, I would ask that the maximum sentence be applied, that is, that he go before the firing squad. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Roberto Viera Estrada.

[Viera] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, comrades of the Honor Tribunal: We would like to be very specific. We are not going to talk about Ochoa's achievements or his faults, which have become very evident during these proceedings. All I wish to say is that if Ochoa assumed the right to betray his people, the FAR, the FAR minister, and the greatest commander in chief—not only in Cuba, but in our America—Ochoa has no right to hold military rank. Therefore, he must be discharged from the FAR.

He has no right to any rank or decoration. He has no right to live in this homeland. Ochoa, (?acting as a drug trafficker), dirtied this revolution and our victorious commander in chief. Let him wash away this big transgression with his blood, which he should shed as does a man who must do his duty. Thank you.

[Rosales del Toro] Lezcano [Brigadier General Sergio Perez Lezcano].

[Perez Lezcano] I am Brigadier General Sergio Perez Lezcano. Mr President, comrades of the tribunal, in the past 2 weeks, and particularly during these hearings, we have undergone bitter times of grief, shame, and indignation because of the serious mistakes made by Ochoa and the group of guards—mistakes presented during these hearings. The tribunal has heard evidence of treason against our homeland, the Revolution, the commander in chief, and the FAR minister. We had come to know a comrade with revolutionary principles willing to carry out any task entrusted to him by the Revolution. He had virtues as well as deficiencies and had liberal views. We are all aware of this. I saw the minister call Ochoa's attention in the usual way more than once. It never entered my mind, however, that Ochoa could be transformed as he was. I never imagined that a comrade with a background and attitude like his could mar our revolution and the Armed Forces.

Comrades, with great difficulty and before this Honor Tribunal, I propose that Ochoa be demoted. He should be stripped of his Armed Forces membership. The Council of State should strip him of his honor as "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and other decorations. Ochoa should be presented at a military court with all the evidence so that he can be given the maximum sentence. He must be expelled from the PCC, the PCC Central Committee, and the People's Assembly.

[Rosales del Toro] Carreras [Brigadier General Enrique Carreras Rolas].

[Carreras Rolas] Comrade president of the Honor Tribunal, comrade generals: I want to express the grief I have experienced at my age—76 years old. I have had to judge one of the leaders whom all of the Air Force comrades and I greatly admired. It is regrettable that Gen Ochoa has been so weak. I think we should become stronger every day so that we will never again have to judge a comrade at an Honor Tribunal. I hope we do not have to tell others what we must tell Ochoa, for he betrayed his people, fellow soldiers, commander in chief; he betrayed our Armed Forces and our party. Ochoa, you have dirtied us. We must remove this stain. However, to remove this stain, we must be fair toward our people and ask our tribunal to recommend to the Armed Forces minister that you be stripped of the worthy star of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" that you and even I bear, a star given to us by the people and the Council of State as proposed by our leader.

I am grieved to have to go through this difficult time, comrades. I never imagined that I would have to judge a man who is a hero, a man who had achieved great prestige in the Armed Forces. However, he surrendered this prestige for the despicable profits made from drug trafficking. Despite my grief, I recommend to this tribunal that he be demoted from his rank of division general, that he be dishonorably discharged from his post as Armed Forces minister, and expelled from the PCC. He should be tried by a military court and be given the maximum sentence for having betrayed his people.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Lino Carreras Rodriguez.

[Carreras] Comrade President, comrade members of the Military Honor Tribunal: Ochoa and I have been friends for a very long time; we have been like brothers, and I had a great deal of respect for him as my superior. I always thought of Ochoa as one of the FAR's best leaders.

With deep bitterness, however, I must say that—after all that we have seen here and after listening to comrade Ochoa's statements—it is evident that Ochoa betrayed our people. It is not that I am saying this or that—it has been published in the newspaper. We must go out into the streets and hear the people's opinions.

Ochoa betrayed the commander in chief, he failed to pay attention, and he betrayed the FAR minister; he betrayed all of us by disgracing us and by disgracing the

FAR and his party. Ochoa is guilty of all the charges leveled against him, as he has admitted them, and I am deeply convinced that he should be stripped of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," of all his titles and decorations, and of his rank as general; he should be dishonorably discharged from the FAR, dismissed from the Communist Party, and stripped of his membership in the Central Committee. Ochoa should be court martialed and made to respond for his disgraceful behavior with the maximum penalty. I believe anyone who makes the mistakes Ochoa has made should find relief in responding with the maximum penalty.

I also believe we should seek methods and systems to prevent a repetition of such a shameful situation in the future. That is all.

[Rosalez del Toro] Brigadier General Arnaldo Ferrer Martinez.

[Ferrer] Comrade President and comrade generals: During the verbal hearing by this Military Honor Tribunal, Gen Ochoa's guilt was proved, and he has admitted this. He clearly betrayed the commander in chief, the FAR minister, the party, our people, and the FAR. Therefore, I agree with the comrades who preceded me, that Ochoa should be stripped of the honor of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," his rank as general, and his membership in the FAR, because he is unworthy of such a prestigious institution. He should also be stripped of his membership in the Central Committee, and from the Cuban Communist Party. He should be court martialed and punished in accordance with the seriousness of the situation.

I must underscore that this Military Honor Tribunal should also bear in mind the final attitude adopted by the comrade general, who publicly acknowledged his culpability.

[Brigadier General Gustavo Fleitas Ramirez] Comrade President, comrade officers: As the other comrades have said, I never thought.... [changes thought] Gen Ochoa, Gen Polo, and I called each other brother. I never thought Ochoa could commit actions of this magnitude. I truly regret this because the Revolution has lost a great comrade. Ochoa no longer belongs to this family. I feel that the minister's words were very fair and we, like the other comrades who also spoke before me, feel that Gen Ochoa should be stripped of his rank of general, his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," and his decorations. I feel he must be removed from the party's Central Committee. I also hope that when Ochoa appears before the military court, he will do one last thing for the Revolution—that he will adopt a worthy attitude and help the Revolution. Whether or not the military court imposes the maximum sentence, Ochoa is no longer alive.

When I left the hearings yesterday I was talking to some comrades and told them how I had stopped at a traffic light and the people in the cars around me kept asking me if Ochoa had gone before the firing squad, whether he had been stripped of his rank. I told them that I knew nothing about this. I was asked these questions directly.

There is widespread indignation among the people. They loved him and now they despise him. Like Gen Ochoa himself said, treachery is paid with death and death would be the best thing for Ochoa because even though he is alive, he is already dead. We ask that he courageously accept, as we are sure he will, the maximum sentence that our courts give. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Carlos Lamas Rodriguez.

[Lamas] Comrade President of the tribunal, comrade generals members of the Honor Tribunal. I wish to express the following before this tribunal to which I have been appointed to hear the crimes committed by Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa:

I heard the report presented by the comrade FAR minister and read the GRANMA editorial and learned of Gen Ochoa's achievements. I heard and read about this soldier of the rebel army, the invading soldier who was part of Camilo's column, the rebel in Venezuela, the military chief who contributed to the creation of the Armed Forces and to its improvement, of his missions in Ethiopia and Angola. I also heard and read of the serious mistakes and crimes he committed; of his betrayal of our people, of our FAR minister, and of our commander in chief; of his disloyalty. I saw how he crumbled, demoralized, and how he dragged some of our officers into that kind of activity. I think that men like Ochoa deserve no respect from our society. However, we have said that these are difficult, painful and bitter moments.

I want to request to this Honor Tribunal that Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa be stripped of his rank, honorary title as "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," and all his orders and decorations; that he be expelled from the FAR ranks; that he be expelled from the PCC Central Committee and its ranks. I also want to request that this Honor Tribunal suggest to the military tribunal that he be given the maximum sentence for the errors he has committed.

Furthermore, Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, I request that the FAR, PCC, and Council of State leadership be asked to continue its exemplary work so it becomes an example for our current generation and, as documented, serve for future generations that will continue to build the socialist homeland. I have fulfilled my duty, comrade.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Nestor Lopez Lopez Cuba.

[Lopez Cuba] Comrade President, comrades of the Honor Tribunal: You are well aware that I, like many others who preceded me, was Ochoa's comrade in arms and subordinate. There is no need to tell you about the

affection and prestige he earned among us, and that this was accomplished throughout 30 years of work. Nonetheless, we were aware—as other comrades have stated—of his virtues and defects.

Following these 2 days—during which we heard the minister, heard everything that was said in the Honor Tribunal we witnessed, and ascertained all the charges issued against Comrade Ochoa—we cannot but recognize the seriousness of the crime and treason he has perpetrated against the homeland.

We must recall that in almost 26 years of internationalist actions—during which the first internationalist contingent departed in October 1963 to help Algeria when that country was threatened by its Moroccan neighbors; while tens of thousands of fighters are today in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and other corners of the world; while thousands upon thousands are doing there duty without involving their personal interests; and while hundreds of thousands [corrects himself] while thousands of comrades have given their most prized possession, their lives, for the cause of proletarian internationalism—no one, except Ochoa and a small group of comrades, thought about anything else but to honorably carry out the mission entrusted to them by the minister, our party, and our commander.

Thus, at this moment, we can only ask this Honor Tribunal to strip Ochoa of all his honorary titles as "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," his rank of general, his rank as member of the FAR, and all the rest of his decorations. He should also be turned over to a military court so, based on the crimes that have been analyzed here, he will be issued the maximum sentence established for these crimes.

Nevertheless, I want to ask the tribunal, and through it the FAR minister, that the appropriate measures be taken so all those who in one way or another handle material and financial resources in the FAR become more vigilant and demanding so the resources are used as they should be. I am also sure everyone who is here agrees with what I have to say: The generals of our glorious FAR will continue to be faithful to the homeland, in a natural manner with modesty and courage. We would rather die first than make the kind of mistakes that tarnish the dignity of the Revolution and our FAR. I have concluded.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Ladislao Baranda Columbie.

[Baranda] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, comrades: In the past 2 days it has been proved beyond a doubt that Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez has betrayed the fatherland. He has admitted to this; therefore, we can say that we are facing an extremely difficult and painful case. However, because of the person we are dealing with and because of the seriousness of these crimes, it is necessary to make justice exemplary. Therefore, as a member of this tribunal, I propose and suggest to the FAR minister that Gen Ochoa be stripped of his rank and receive a dishonorable discharge from the FAR; that he be stripped of his medals and decorations, including his honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba;" I suggest to the Central Committee that he be expelled from the party ranks and the Central Committee, that he be stripped of his status as National Assembly deputy. I ask the military court that will try him to give him the maximum sentence for his crimes against the fatherland—that is, the death sentence. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Leonardo Andollo Valdes.

[Andollo] Comrade President, members of the tribunal: As Gen Mesa said, I am a young general. Perhaps I am the youngest general in this tribunal. I have a reason for saying this. I was not a rebel army combatant. In addition to the revolutionary process itself and the leaders of our Revolution, an important group of military chiefs greatly influenced my revolutionary education. I must say that Div Gen Ochoa played an important role in my revolutionary education. I served under his orders in Ethiopia. His troops appreciated, admired, and respected him. Without overlooking his faults, we always respected and admired him.

When I recently heard about his arrest, I—like our comrade minister—was dismayed and puzzled. As we obtained more information about his case, after having had the honor of participating in this Military Honor Tribunal, after learning in detail of all the charges against Comrade Div Gen Ochoa, and after considering the elements of the case together, the only thing we can feel, the only thing that I feel is deep indignation for this clear demonstration of betrayal. Our people, government, Armed Forces, ministers, our commander in chief, and the young officers, who always saw Ochoa as an example worthy of emulation, have been betrayed. He even imparted a certain mysticism that is necessary in our revolutionary education. Ochoa betrayed that as well.

I am completely convinced, I do not have a single doubt that Ochoa's treason has been proved beyond a doubt. He himself admitted to his crime of treason. I therefore sincerely reiterate and recommend to this tribunal that Comrade Div Gen Ochoa be stripped of his rank, titles, decorations, and his status as FAR member. In addition, this tribunal should recommend to the PCC's high-ranking officials and the Central Committee that he be expelled from the party and its Central Committee.

He also should appear before a military court. He should be given the maximum punishment for the crimes that have been proved in this tribunal. Finally, I would like to tell Ochoa that, just as he said yesterday, he should uphold his position with dignity. It could be a significant contribution to our revolutionary process and could be an example set for future generations. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Efigenio Ameijeiras Delgado.

[Ameijeiras] Mr President, fellow generals: It is painful for me to come here to express my opinion when our own comrade has already accused himself. Based on all the principles of the Revolution, based on the Revolution's inability to abandon a comrade, based on the fact that the Revolution tries to help all comrades as much as possible, and based on all these things, I sincerely support the views of the large majority of comrades and ask that he be submitted to a military court and punished in an exemplary manner.

Comrade Ochoa should continue to meditate on all these things. During the course of this process, he will have time to recall all the things that contributed to this dramatic situation, the first of this type we have faced. He must realize the damage he was about to inflict. He must realize how irresponsible all those comrades behaved in those dealings. He must realize how the FBI and the CIA are aware of most of the activities of the drug traffickers and drug addicts. They are people without morals and principles. None of them know how to die like a revolutionary in a prison cell even if they are tortured. We have comrades who never spoke even when tortured. However none of those individuals.... [changes thought] There was a big danger and maybe in all this process.... [changes thought] How many things the enemy must know. They may have wanted this process to go on longer so as to conduct a much more serious operation against Cuba in another area, because they would have agents here.

Comrade Ochoa must responsibly meditate about all this. He should meditate about all the elements that contributed to this. He should think about his friends who hurt him. Always, behind all this, we find buddies and disloyal friends. A good, loyal friend helps you and gives you a hand. However, disloyal friends make the most damage, because behind their alleged friendship, they are the ones who corrupt you and make you follow the wrong path.

It is simply painful to stand here and say these words. I ask the tribunal to take all my views into account as part of what my comrades have already said. I have finished.

[Brigadier General Miguel Lorente Leon] Comrade President, dear comrades, our hearts beat strongly at times like these. However, please note the firm ideals that Fidel, Raul, our working people, our children, and our fatherland have given us. We have all experienced indignation, grief, and humiliation upon learning of the incidents recited by each of the witnesses before this Military Honor Tribunal. Imagine how much firmness and confidence we felt in Fidel and Raul when we watched the cassettes that were replayed here, when we saw how our minister embraced him and asked him to have confidence in his comrade-in-arms.

Arnaldo, you strayed from your comrades-in-arms; you joined the crooks and bandits who led you down the wrong path. You treated contemptuously those of us who took part in the invasion with you, those heroes who, under your command, were led into combat at Ogaden. You abandoned us, but only yesterday you gave us a bit of confidence when we saw how you stood there before us. Yesterday I saw you as a FAR general when you honestly accepted all the charges. Arnaldo, yesterday you were honest. In the name of all your comrades who are here with us and in the name of the honesty you displayed yesterday, I ask that you act the same way before the military tribunal.

As a FAR general, I agree with the opinions given here by all my comrades-in-arms and ask with them that you be stripped of your rank of division general, of the honors you received as "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," of your decorations, and that the Central Committee expel you from the party and from the Assembly. I hope that you maintain the same attitude that you had yesterday at the Military Honor Tribunal. Comrade president, I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Bermudez Cutino.

[Bermudez Cutino] Comrade President, comrades generals and admirals, members of the Military Honor Tribunal: I was Ochoa's subordinate three times during my military life: When he was chief of staff of the Eastern Army, when he was chief of the Havana Army, and in a certain way, when he was at the head of our troops in Ethiopia. He led the combat actions there, following the direct and precise orders of the commander in chief, and thus defeated the aggressor enemy from Somalia, pushing him beyond the border. We had great admiration and respect for Ochoa. After learning Ochoa is no longer the man we once knew and that there are denigratory charges against him that are incompatible with the behavior of a revolutionary man, I fully share the opinion of our people that the punishment must be severe and exemplary.

Ochoa must realize how far his relationship with the filthy De la Guardia and his group would take him. I must add that I have listened to Ochoa's sincere and courageous statements before this tribunal, which is composed of his brothers-in-arms, brothers in the cause, brothers in the Revolution, and legitimate brothers, because we are all Fidel's sons. Fidel made us revolutionaries, which is today our definite reason for living. As I listened to him, I became aware that Ochoa still had something left in him of the teachings of the commander in chief and of the FAR minister.

I agreed with Div Gen Ochoa when he said treason is paid with one's life. However, comrade members of the tribunal, before that, I propose he must be stripped of the honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," his other medals and decorations, his rank of division general, and his FAR membership. He also should be expelled from the

party and its central committee and be deprived of his post as National Assembly deputy. I also propose that his case be brought before a court martial and that he be tried and sentenced to capital punishment.

Comrades, let us do everything possible so our generation of generals and the future will not have to experience such bitter moments as these. But since this has happened, let us know how to wash the stain. In the end, the Revolution will be strengthened.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Julio Fernandez Perez.

[Fernandez Perez] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, comrade generals, members of this tribunal: During these days, we have learned a great deal of the faults that have been committed and that have brought about the anger, bitterness, and concern of our people and all of us. The degradation of Ochoa's moral behavior and his links with narcotics trafficking are just as he described: treason to the fatherland, which can only be paid for with death.

I agree that our most severe revolutionary legal sanctions should be applied against Ochoa. Furthermore, I believe that Div Gen Ochoa must be stripped of his rank as division general, as "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," and of all the other decorations and medals he has been awarded. He should also be removed from our glorious FAR, from our illustrious party in which he was a central committee member, and from his position as National Assembly deputy. I believe that the only thing that Ochoa can do for his children and his country is to continue to admit to his serious shortcomings, as he did yesterday. I believe that the only thing we can do is to derive the most benefit from such a painful case so that incidents of this kind are not repeated by any of us in the future. I am finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Gustavo Chui.

[Chui] Comrade generals, I have but a few words to say before this tribunal, but I do want Gen Ochoa to know that I bear no grudge against him for what happened in Angola, because it was his duty to act as he did toward me. All communists and internationalists know that they have but two roads to follow: one is to attain victory and the other is to die trying to do so. It is true—as Brigadier General Lino Carreras has already said—when we learned in Angola that the FAR minister, who is our commander in chief, had designated Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa as mission commander, we were all very happy. We all regarded Ochoa as an excellent man, a comrade, and a charismatic, decisive officer. We all admired him and held him in high regard.

I immediately placed myself at his disposal, through the departing chief of the general staff, Brig Gen Milian, and the incoming chief, Rodiles Planas. I asked him [Ochoa] to reassign me to any type of mission, preferrably a combat mission. I therefore left my position as deputy chief of the command staff. I performed the duties he assigned me with love, perseverance, and the knowledge that our work would help him accomplish the exalted task of winning the war against imperialism and the South African enemy. I unfortunately suffered an accident and was disabled for some time. I was, however, overjoyed to hear that we had won the war in Angola and defeated the South African Army in Cuito Canavale when I was recuperating from the accident. I was also filled with pride and admiration for our Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa, who had won the war. I was also very happy because I had made my small contribution toward achieving this victory. I really felt this way and was very happy and proud to work under him.

Therefore, when I heard the 0700 national newscast and learned that Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez had been arrested for corruption and the mismanagement of public resources and other moral crimes, I was truly sad. I felt dejected because I had been willing to give up my life to help him. I was overwhelmed. I felt depressed and continue to be very sad—just as many of our comrades here have said—because the task we have to accomplish here is a very difficult one for us, because we know the merits and prestige of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa.

I helped Gen Arnaldo Ochoa attain victory with my small contribution and I never criticized him, because it was not my duty to do so given his position as division general. He [Ochoa] will, however, recall that on 31 December 1987—after completing a mission he had assigned to me in Lobito, the 31st anniversary operation—he was kind enough to invite my wife and me to dine at his house. A group of comrades, headed by Patricio de la Guardia, arrived at the dinner party when we were there. If his memory does not fail him, he will recall that my wife told him at that time that Patricio de la Guardia's presence in his house made us uncomfortable. When he asked me about this, I said that it was not his presence but the presence of Patricio de la Guardia that displeased us.

That was actually an alert call. I am not sure whether he understood it or not. I thought he was angry, but he answered me with a smile. I thought his smile meant he had understood the message.

All these events, of which we are all aware, happened after that. We are truly puzzled, sad, and ashamed, because Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa betrayed and deceived us. The generals who are here today and the generals who, like me, were under Ochoa's command, are truly disappointed, because that is not the way Div Gen Ochoa should have repaid us. Therefore, I support the report presented by the FAR minister to this Military Honor Tribunal and the proposal to this tribunal that Ochoa be stripped of his rank of division general; be expelled from FAR, be deprived of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and his decorations; be expelled from the PCC, PCC Central Committee, and the

National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP]; and appear before a military tribunal, which should ask for the maximum sentence his crime entails.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Rafael Moracen.

[Moracen] Comrade President, comrade generals and admiral: When I heard the news Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez had been arrested and was being investigated, I felt sorry for Ochoa and told myself: If our commander in chief made that decision, it is because Ochoa's actions deserve it.

I have realized with surprise that Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez had become a traitor of the Revolution. We have fully proved in this tribunal Ochoa is a diamond and ivory smuggler and a dealer of all kinds of products. The worst part of all this, however, is that sometimes those activities were justified by saying they were carried out to improve the standard of living of our soldiers and officers. We all know our people, our ministers, and our commander in chief have always taken good care of FAR members, who have always had enough resources to fulfill their missions. That justification only makes the deals more shameful and condemnable.

In addition, Ochoa got too many officers involved in his deals, which is a repugnant action in the eyes of FAR. I propose that because of all the crimes Ochoa has committed, he be stripped of his rank of division general and expelled from the Armed Forces. He should also be stripped of his honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," all his decorations, medals, and distinctions. In addition, our glorious PCC must study the case and expel Ochoa from our party and from the PCC Central Committee, of course. The ANPP should also study Ochoa's status of deputy and strip him of that status. Finally, Ochoa must be judged by a military court for the crime of high treason against the fatherland and condemned to the maximum sentence. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigidier General Jose Morfa.

[Morfa] Excuse me, Mr President. To have appeared in this court has been a truly bitter experience for us. Arnaldo knows he has been an idol for us. We always saw him as a man worthy of imitation. We do not have words to describe this incident. In view of the seriousness of his actions, which he, himself, admitted yesterday, we believe he must be submitted to a military court, which must apply the revolutionary laws that the seriousness of Ochoa's actions entail. The Council of State must strip Ochoa of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and his remaining decorations. The PCC Central Committee must study Ochoa's expulsion from the party and the PCC Central Committee. Ochoa must be stripped of his rank and expelled from FAR. He must also be stripped of his status as ANPP deputy. I have concluded.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Juan Pujols Sanchez.

[Pujols] Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal: I will not repeat here what the comrades who preceded me have said about what Div Gen Ochoa has meant to each of us, especially those of us who have had the opportunity to participate in the rebel army.

In the past few days, most particularly as a member of this tribunal during this hearing, I have seen the degrading attitude—in every sense of the term—adopted by Div Gen Ochoa. He has revealed a complete lack of loyalty and a betrayal of our revolution's most sacred principles. Div Gen Ochoa has betrayed the purest feelings of our people, of his brothers of more than 30 years of struggle, of the FAR minister, and of our commander in chief.

In my position as a general and a member of this tribunal, I feel that Gen Ochoa is guilty of the five charges that have been brought against him, and I propose that he be stripped of his rank, dishonorably discharged, and deprived of the honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," and of all local and international decorations. I further propose that our party politburo review his status as a member of the Central Committee and of the PCC, that he be remanded to a court martial for summary trial, and that a recommendation of the maximum sentence of death by firing squad be made to the court. That is all.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Victor Schueg Colas.

[Schueg] Comrade President and other members of the Honor Tribunal: I believe that Gen Ochoa's personality has been clearly described by all the comrades who preceded me. It is no secret to anyone that Comrade Div Gen Ochoa has become a symbol to all of us, and to all our people, with very few exceptions. Today, after hearing all the charges and accusations leveled against Comrade Gen Ochoa—which have been irrefutably proved during the hearing—I, like the other comrades who preceded me, have not the slightest doubt of his betrayal in all areas. Therefore, I believe that people who conduct themselves in this way are incompatible with our honorable FAR, our party, our revolution, and our society as a whole. I adhere to the proposal made by all the comrades who preceded me.

Therefore, like them, I too consider and recommend that he be stripped of his rank of division general, his orders, his decorations, and his membership in our FAR; and that he be expelled from the party, the Central Committee, and from the ANPP. Likewise, I believe he should be brought before a court martial, which should recommend the most severe punishment.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Antonion Lusson Batlle.

[Lusson] Comrade President, member generals of this Honor Tribunal: First, we want to point out the recognition, the love, and the growing admiration we had for Gen Ochoa. This recognition and admiration was based on his revolutionary work, on his record, and his revolutionary behavior. With the true and detailed information that has been given to our people, to the FAR, and to its officers during these hearings, and with Ochoa fully recognizing his responsibility, it has been proven that the situation is very serious and Gen Ochoa is personally responsible for it. I believe that the merits, prestige, rank, recognition, honors, and so forth—especially for FAR members—are factors that worsen, rather than alleviate the situation.

I believe that the degradation of training, morality, and loyalty, and all the various violations that Gen Ochoa has committed make him unworthy of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," of his rank, medals, orders, and decorations. He is not worthy of being a member of the FAR, of the Central Committee, or of being a militant of the party. Gen Ochoa has admitted his full responsibiltity. Gen Ochoa has brought up, and that is the way it should be, that treason is paid with one's life. There was high treason, treason at various levels, treason to the Revolution, outrages against the revolutionary honor, treason to the FAR, treason to loyalty and principles, treason to the party, treason and disloyalty to Fidel and Raul, and treason to our beloved and sincere people.

In a firm revolutionary manner based on our principles and aware that we represent the FAR and our people, this Honor Tribunal should deliberate on this manner. I hereby request permission to leave.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigidier General Carlos Lezcano Perez.

[Lezcano] Comrade President of this Honor Tribunal, comrade members of the tribunal: Allow me first to read a letter that was sent to the FAR minister by the group of Cuban military experts in Nicaragua:

To Army Gen Raul Castro Ruz, minister of the FAR, Republic of Cuba:

Esteemed Minister:

It is with great indignation and repudiation that we follow the events of the Ochoa-de La Guardia case, and we want to express to the party, our Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, and you, our most firm support for the measures adopted in view of the actions that constitute treason to the morals, principles, laws, and prestige of our revolution, as well as to the fighters of our glorious and heroic FAR and the MININT. We will continue to raise our revolutionary ideals and consolidate among us the principle of due criticism in the face of the slightest lack of discipline or violation of established norms.

Finally, we want to reassert our absolute trust in and support for the fairness of the most severe and exemplary measures that will be applied to all those involved in this case and especially to those who were mainly responsible for these actions. We assure you that the prestige and authority of the Cuban Revolution will once again come out strengthened from these incidents.

[Signed] Group of Cuban military experts in Nicaragua

Comrades, we recalled when, in November 1987, the minister [not further identified] met with us in this same room to tell us that Div Gen Ochoa would be the new chief of our mission in Angola. We had the privilege of working with him. We were part of the group of generals and officers who worked with Ochoa at the early stage of his mission.

Over the past few days, however, we have learned about the illegal activities he conducted—especially his drug trafficking activities—all of which have been explained in detail by the GRANMA editorial, in the statements made by the FAR minister at the beginning of this hearing, and by the witnesses involved in this case. All the charges were admitted by Div Gen Ochoa himself. All of this proves the crime of high treason he committed against our revolutionary people, our party and government, our FAR, our FAR minister, and our dear commander in chief. In addition, Div Gen Ochoa has endangered our fatherland.

For all of the above, I personally think Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez is guilty of all the charges brought against him during this Military Honor Tribunal hearing. I request this tribunal demote and expel Div Gen Ochoa from the FAR. I request this tribunal strip Ochoa of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and of his decorations and medals. I request this tribunal propose to the PPC Central Committee expelling Ochoa from the party, from the Central Committee, and from the ANPP. In addition, I request that Div Gen Ochoa be judged by a military tribunal and I ask for the maximum sentence that his crime of high treason entails. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigidier General Manuel Lastre Pacheco.

[Lastre] Excuse me, comrade president of the Military Honor Tribunal. Comrade President of the Honor Tribunal, comrade generals and admirals: I believe that, in view of the statements made by Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez himself, in view of the statements made by the witnesses who appeared before this tribunal, and the report provided by our FAR minister, the crime of high treason committed by Div Gen Ochoa against all of us, against his people, his fatherland, and his commander in chief has been fully demonstrated.

We just said that Div Gen Ochoa has betrayed us, because we had the opportunity to share experiences and fight along with him first at Sierra Maestra during the

battle commanded by Commander Camilo Cienfuegos, then during our internationalist mission in Venezuela, and finally when we were all members of the Western Army.

We knew him. We appreciated him. We thought he was a true revolutionary. To be honest, his example helped me be a firmer and more determined revolutionary.

That is why today, after learning about the shameful actions of Div Gen Ochoa, I felt hurt and filled with indignation. I believe this tribunal must propose to the FAR minister stripping Ochoa of his title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," of all his decorations and medals, and of his rank. We ask this tribunal to request that Ochoa be expelled from FAR. Ochoa must submit to a military tribunal and that tribunal must ask the maximum sentence that a traitor of the fatherland deserves. Similarly, I believe this tribunal must propose to our party's politburo and Central Committee that Div Gen Ochoa be expelled from the PCC and its Central Committee.

Today we recall the words of our Commander in Chief Fidel Castro when Huber Matos betrayed us. Castro said and I quote: There may be men who are traitors, but there are no people who are traitors.

Comrades of this tribunal, allow me to say that we will get rid of the stain that Div Gen Ochoa's betrayal has placed on us. We can tell our people, the FAR minister, and Comrade Fidel Castro that there may be a general who is a traitor, but that the FAR generals will never betray the fatherland, our people, our minister, and our commander in chief. I have concluded.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigidier General Rolando Kindelan Bles.

[Kindelan] Comrade President of the Military Honor Tribunal, comrade generals: We have known Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez since he joined us at Sierra Maestra. We fought together. We both participated in the invasion commanded by Commander Camilo Cienfuegos.

We fully agree with the editorial published by the press and especially by GRANMA. We agree with the letter sent by the Cuban internationalist combatants who are fulfilling their mission in Angola. We agree with the letter sent by the experts who are fulfilling their mission in Nicaragua and with the letter read here by Div Gen Ramon Pardo Guerra signed by the Western Army's combatants and officers.

Today we propose, we propose [repeats himself] that Div Gen Ochoa be stripped of his rank and dishonorably discharged from the FAR. It is proposed, through the FAR minister, that Div Gen Ochoa be expelled from the PCC Politburo, the PCC Central Committee, and the PCC itself.

It is proposed that he be dismissed as a member of the National Assembly of the People's Government and that he be submitted to the military tribunal, which should in turn issue the punishment the case requires. As for Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa, we recommend he adopt the same attitude at the military tribunal he had yesterday when he admitted to his mistakes and admitted to having corrupted officers who worked with him. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Juan de Dios Garcia Arias.

[Garcia Arias] Mr President of the Honor Tribunal, fellow members of the Honor Tribunal: I will refer to the charges filed against Div Gen Ochoa or to his record because it has been widely discussed here and I believe it is well documented in the report. The charges have been widely proved here. Therefore, I suggest that this tribunal request or propose through the proper channels that he be dishonorably discharged from the Armed Forces; that he be stripped of the title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and other decorations; that he be expelled as member of the PCC and the Central Committee; and that he be dismissed as a deputy to the National Assembly of the People's Government. He should be submitted to a military tribunal, which should take into consideration the seriousness of the events, including Gen Ochoa's admission. He should be given the maximum punishment. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Feliberto Olivera Moya.

[Olivera] Mr President, fellow generals and admirals: This is not easy for us because we have always worked together with Comrade Ochoa. We saw him as an outstanding son, a man of tactics, a man who fulfilled all the duties that were ordered by our commander in chief. It is not easy to look at him today as a traitor to our fatherland, our people, and our commander in chief. We ask that he be dismissed from the Armed Forces, that he be stripped of his rank, that all decorations be revoked, and that the order of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" be taken away. Our people were very pleased when our commander in chief decorated him in Santiago de Cuba. He should remember the words pronounced by our chief. He should be judged by the military tribunal; may he receive the maximum punishment, the firing squad. I have finished.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Rigoberto Sancho Valladarez.

[Sancho] Mr President of the Honor Tribunal, fellow generals and admirals: We are attending a historic process in our country. We are here to judge, in an honor tribunal, a general who was well-liked by us and by our people. This event shows that our revolution does not tremble and that it allows no one, no matter what rank, to violate the sacred principles of our revolution. Therefore, fellow generals of the Honor Tribunal, I propose:

1. To strip Ochoa of his rank as division general;
2. To revoke the title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and other decorations given to him;
3. To expel him from the FAR;
4. To propose to the PCC Central Committee that it expel him from the committee and from the party;
5. To propose to the National Assembly that it expel him from his post as a deputy;
6. To remand Ochoa for trial by court martial and have him receive the maximum sentence: death.

Comrades of the Honor Tribunal, only by exemplary measures will we cleanse our honor and leave our people, our youths, and our future generation an example worthy of this present generation of FAR generals. Thank you very much.

[Rosales del Toro] Brigadier General Jose L. Mesa Delgado.

[Mesa] I am a young general. I was a guerrilla, but not a very active one, given the circumstances. I have always felt great affection for the older guerrillas, the invaders, and the internationalists. I must say that I felt great admiration for Comrade Gen Ochoa. When things were hot in Angola, I was sent there to be a member of the special forces. We worked hard, and I received assistance from Ochoa, based on his experience as a guerrilla, and above all, his experience in Venezuela. In other words, it is not just the generals present here who felt affection for him; so did many members of the Armed Forces. All acts of treason are based on deception. Yesterday, he himself said that treason has only one price—one's life. In view of all this, I believe that indeed I do agree with all the comrades who have said here that he should be stripped of his rank and the title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and other decorations, and that the Central Committee should be informed so that he does not remain a member of the committee, the party, or the assembly. I agree that he should be subjected to a court martial, which should demand the maximum sentence that exists in our country.

[Rosales del Toro] Comrade members of the Honor Tribunal: Over the past 2 days, we have seen proof, even from his own testimony, of Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez' treason. As a member of this tribunal, I am not going to repeat or dwell on Ochoa's merits, or our affectionate memories of or admiration for Ochoa. At one time or another, he had all of this, in great abundance.

I am not going to speak, either, of the sorrow and shame that I have felt on seeing this disgrace. I am not going to express the great indignation I have felt during these days, in the face of this act of treason against our people, the party, our commander in chief, all of us. Therefore, I reaffirm and subscribe to the statements made by all of you, and I request that he be stripped of the honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" and other awards, medals, and decorations bestowed upon him. Let him be stripped of the rank of general and be dishonorably discharged from the FAR. Let him be expelled from the party, from the Central Committee, and the National Assembly. Let him be remanded to a court martial and tried for high treason against the fatherland, and let the maximum sentence be handed down to him.

I wish to take advantage of this moment to reflect, along with you, on the fact that the case of Ochoa and his two assistants is bitter and harsh.

However, this is also an experience that has taught us a lesson and shows us that we must heighten our revolutionary alertness and firmness regarding everything that constitutes a violation of what is established in orders and regulations, and of everything that goes against the norms of moral behavior and habits of the revolutionary fighters.

This shows us that where there is something wrong, the generals of the FAR must be the example and act accordingly as communists of the fatherland of Marti, as our commander in chief has always taught us. We must remember that the only money and material means that the FAR generals need are those given to them by our people, with their hard work in organizing the defense of the fatherland.

Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez, rise. This tribunal requests that you state your opinion after having listened to all of your comrades.

[Ochoa] First, I want to tell all the members of the tribunal that I will uphold the attitude of a FAR general, to the ultimate consequences. Second, I want to tell them that I do not harbor any hard feelings over what has been said here. I agree with everything that has been said up to this moment. I believe that a just and clear evaluation of the truth has been made. As I myself said yesterday, I firmly and conscientiously believe I am guilty. If I can serve further, even as a bad example, I am at the service of the Revolution. The sentence, of course, can be execution. If this should be the case, at that moment, I do promise all of you that my last thoughts will be with Fidel and with the great revolution he has given our people. Thank you.

[Rosales del Toro] Decision of the Military Honor Tribunal:

This Military Honor Tribunal, which was constituted to learn of the grave violations in the behavior of Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, after hearing the statements by FAR Minister Army Gen Raul Castro Ruz, the statements by the accused, and the statements by the witnesses, investigators, and generals who have participated, has reached the following conclusions:

Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez has commited serious violations against the honor and dignity of a superior officer of the FAR by betraying the trust bestowed on

him by the people, the Revolution, the party, and his comrades. This constitutes a most contemptible act and therefore, the most severe disciplinary and legal measures must be adopted.

It has been proved that he participated, in a direct and intentional manner, in the serious charges that involved him, independently or together with MININT officials, in international drug trafficking.

As had been stated, these violations go against Cuba's principles and international prestige and, what is even more serious, threaten our country's security. [He has perpetrated] serious moral violations, corruption, dishonest management, the illegal use and squandering of economic resources, and obsessive persistence in illegal transactions in which he involved subordinate officers, and has not accepted orders and instructions that had been given to him by the FAR minister.

Therefore, this Military Honor Tribunal, using its legal and regulatory powers, resolves:

1. To propose that the FAR minister present before the State Council:

a. A request for the honorary title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba" to be removed from him [Div Gen Arnaldo Ochoa], as well as other titles, medals, and decorations that have been awarded to him;

b. That the minister request that the State Council president, the Government president, and the commander in chief strip Div Gen Ochoa of his rank and that he be dishonorably discharged from the FAR;

c. To place Div Gen Ochoa at the disposal of the Special Military Tribunal, as established in Article 5 of the Military Tribunal Law, to be judged for the crime of high treason and that the full weight of the law fall upon him as befits the extremely serious crimes he has committed.

2. To recommend to the political organizations and the National Assembly that, due to the seriousness of the facts, he be expelled from the party and its Central Committee, and that he be removed from his position as National Assembly deputy.

Comrade secretary, remove Gen Ochoa from the room. [pause] Rigoberto Garcia Fernandez, [name indistinct] Garcia Pelaez, Aldo Santamaria,...

[Announcer, interrupting] The generals are presently signing the tribunal's resolution.

[Rosales del Toro] ...Joaquin Quintas, Sergio Delvalle, Romarico Sotomayor, Ifiginio Amejeira, Leonardo Andollo, Ladislao Baranda, Lino Carreras, Causse Nivaldo, Enrique Carreras, Hernandez Marrero, Julio Fernandez,Ferrer Martinez, Fleitas, Juan de Dios, Kindelan Bles, Lamas Rodriguez, Lastre Pacheco, Lezcano Perez, Lopez Cuba, Lorente Leon, Lusson Batlle, Fernandez Gondin, Mesa Delgado, Iraldo Mora, Milian Pino, Morfa Gonzalez, Moracen Limonta, Perez Betancourt, Perez Lezcano, Pujols Sanchez, Guillermo Rodriguez del Pozo, Irving Ruiz, Schueg Colas, Viera Estrada, Rodiles Planas, Olivera Moya, Sancho Valladarez, Chui Beltran.

'Special Military Tribunal' Against Ochoa

PA0207043689 Havana Cubavision Television in Spanish 0030 GMT 2 Jul 89

[Report on the court-martial of Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and 13 other Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) and Interior Ministry commanders and officers in Havana on 30 June—recorded]

[Text] [Division General Ramon Espinosa Martin] You may sit. We will now open the oral hearing of the summary trial of case No 1 of 1989 of the special military tribunal against the accused: Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Jorge Martinez Valdes, Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amado Padron Trujillo, Antonio Sanchez Lima, Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo, Alexis Lago Arocha, Miguel Ruiz Poo, Rosa Maria Abierno Gobin, Luis Pineda Bermudez, Gabriel Prendes Gomez, Leonel Estevez Soto, and Patricio de la Guardia Font for the crimes of: abuse of authority and drug trafficking.

[Station announcer] [Espinosa continues, but fades into background while announcer speaks] The hearing began with a report by the president of the tribunal, who announced the charges against the 14 defendants: crimes against the fatherland, abuse of authority, and the trafficking of narcotic drugs. The trial is taking place with all legal guarantees and all the accused are represented by their defense lawyers.

[Espinosa continues] The tribunal is comprised of: Div Gen Ramon Espinosa Martin, president; Div Gen Julio Casas Regueiro, judge; Div Gen Fabian Escalante Font, judge; Brig Gen Juan Escalona Reguera, representative of the prosecutor; Col Alberto Ruben D. Toste Rodriguez, defense lawyer for Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and Jorge Martinez Valdes; Maj Julio A Gonzalez Cueto, defense lawyer for Patricio de la Guardia Font; Maj Juan Aramis Villalon Ona, defense lawyer for Antonio de la Guardia Font; Maj Aristides Rusignol de la Pena, defense lawyer for Amado Padron Trujillo; Maj Ramon Aymeriche Salas, defense lawyer for Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan; Maj Manuel Garcia Nicolas, defense lawyer for Alexis Lago Arocha and Gabriel Prendes Gomez; Maj Luis Raul Martinez Perez, defense lawyer for Miguel Ruiz Poo and Rosa Maria Abierno Gobin; Capt Roilan Hernandez Concepcion, defense lawyer for Antonio Sanchez Lima and Leonel Estevez Soto; and 1st Lt Estel Recio Zamora, defense lawyer for Luis Pineda Bermudez and Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo.

Defendants and defense lawyers, please stand. Do you have anything to say against the members of the tribunal and the prosecutor in this trial? Please sit.

[Station announcer] [Espinosa fades into background] The report covered the incidents that were disclosed to the public by the GRANMA editorial of 22 June. Some specific details of the most important drug trafficking operations were added to the document, which also talked about the dishonest, corrupt, disloyal, and traitorous conduct of the FAR and Interior Ministry officers.

[Espinosa continues] Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, stand before the tribunal.

Ochoa Sanchez, the law gives you the right to make your statement. Would you like to make a statement?
[Ochoa] Well...

[Espinosa, interrupting] Say yes or no.
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Espinosa] Answer the questions made to you by the prosecutor. You must always look toward the tribunal.

[Escalona] Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, in your first statements at the Honor Tribunal in the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, you said that your main concern was the situation that the Revolution will now have to face because throughout its history it has maintained a very clear, correct policy regarding all drug trafficking dealings. While the party was saying it had nothing to do with it, we were involved in these dealings. I end your quote. In your court appearance document you pointed out that you accepted the charges and stated that they have had a negative effect on the principles followed by the Revolution against drug trafficking.

In view of all this and in view of the fact that this is a court-martial session, it is necessary for you to answer some questions which are essential to explain your conduct.

Ochoa, can you tell us when you first conceived of the idea of getting involved in drug trafficking deals?
[Ochoa] Actually, getting involved in drug trafficking, that was [words indistinct] of 1987.

[Escalona] Ochoa, were you aware that there was a group headed by former Colonel Tony de la Guardia conducting drug trafficking operations in Cuba?
[Ochoa] I was not aware of that. Tony never told me he was engaged in drug trafficking operations. He told me about the tobacco operation, the art objects operation, and the most recent operation, which I think was 1 or 2 months ago, involving cockfighting. However, he never told me that he was involved in drug trafficking operations here. Moreover, I think it was in September—because Patricio [Brigadier General Patricio de la Guardia Font] was here and Patricio and I had discussed this in Angola—that we commented something about this. As is said in our statement, we, for our own purposes as I referred to it, sent Martinez from Angola to get in contact with Patricio, I mean with Antonio, because we were aware Antonio de la Guardia had many contacts abroad. In addition, regardless of the fact that

there were attempts to carry out two operations, my plan in this regard was never [rephrases] the main goal was never to traffic drugs through Cuba.

We thought we could get involved through the exisiting mechanisms, basically through Colombia and Mexico, not through Cuba.

[Escalona] Ochoa, how do you explain the contacts between your assistant Jorge Martinez Valdes and some members of the Tony de la Guardia group?
[Ochoa] On one occasion, as I previously explained, we sent a message to Antonio de la Guardia to help Martinez. This is how that began.

[Escalona] Excuse me. Did the assistance turn into a coordination of actions to [words indistinct]...
[Ochoa, interrupting] It was not exactly a coordination of actions. Rather, we requested assistance abroad, basically Panama, with some business contacts he had there.

[Escalona] However, this meeting did take place. Did Martinez report this to you?
[Ochoa] Yes. He told me later on. We...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did he tell you about the nature of the business related to [words indistinct]?
[Ochoa] Of course, of course. All this is stated in my statement.

[Escalona] Were you opposed to that?
[Ochoa] No, I did not object. I have admitted to all the charges.

[Escalona] Did you allow him to [words indistinct]?
[Ochoa] Yes, certainly.

[Escalona] Then the events regarding the Colombian passport and the Martinez trip did take place?
[Ochoa] Yes, I permitted all that.

[Escalona] Were you also aware of that?
[Ochoa] Yes, I was fully aware.

[Escalona] What about the boat, the failed boat mission?
[Ochoa] Well, concerning the boat mission, and the change for the [words indistinct]...

[Escalona, interrupting] What about the change, I mean, the transportation by plane?
[Ochoa] I was in Angola at that time. However, I was notified about it.

[Escalona] How did they notify you of this?
[Ochoa] I do not remember. I was notified, but I do not remember how. Perhaps it was on one of those trips I took when I came here, or perhaps he called me by phone. I was notified about all that.

[Escalona] The shipment, the operation was planned for April. When did you receive information on that?

[Ochoa] I cannot tell you the date. I know the boat plan existed, and I know that when the boat operation failed, the possibility of using planes was discussed. I was aware of that. However, I cannot specify the date.

[Escalona] Did you approve of that?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Right, because some trips were even made on the boat.
[Ochoa] Right, right. He thought about that. Yes.

[Escalona] Ochoa, what made you tell Martinez you were going to break relations with Tony de la Guardia? Because the business was too small? Was it because it was [words indistinct]?
[Ochoa] No, that was not the issue. When I said to Martinez: Let us separate from this, I was already thinking about something else. I was thinking about something else.

[Escalona] Were you thinking about big business?
[Ochoa] No, I always thought about big business, because I was aware that for our purposes, or at least for my own mind's illusions, that was not profitable. That is, it did not provide profits.

[Escalona] Ochoa, did you think about a big drug-trafficking business through Mexico and other ways without compromising Cuba, trying to preserve Cuba? However, the goal was to make huge sums of money. That is, big drug-trafficking operations, huge sums of money?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Was that money going to be invested in Cuba through a third person?
[Ochoa] Yes, Mr Prosecutor, but that same third person was going to carry out the business, not us.

[Escalona] Was he going to invest in Cuba?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] With money produced by drug trafficking?
[Ochoa] Yes, from drug trafficking.

[Escalona] Your idea was only to open the path?
[Ochoa] Yes. The last contact or trip Martinez was going to make to Panama was with this man to let him know who his contacts were. We even made plans. I told him: Make the contacts and see what you can do, because everything was...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did the Martinez-Escobar meeting follow that same (?intuitive) line?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] And latter conversations about...

[Ochoa, interrupting] Everything, absolute everything; that was the line from the very beginning. We strayed a little, and when we met with Tony's people we tried to carry out an operation like that, but that was not our objective. Our objective was to involve ourselves in big businesses, not small ones.

[Escalona] Ochoa, based on your perception, what is your opinion of the businesses of De la Guardia and his group?
[Ochoa] [Words indistinct] getting dirty for nothing.

[Escalona] There was no [word indistinct]?
[Ochoa] No.

[Escalona] What can happen in Cuba and what must Cuba face after discovering that small business?
[Ochoa] I will conscienciously tell you today: I want the audience here, especially the tribunal, to know—and in saying this, I do not want to deny any responsibility—I believe the involvement of a Cuban in drug trafficking is bad whether it is in Cuba or abroad, and more so if the person involved is a member of the Cuban Government, and even more if the person is a member of the Armed Forces.

[Escalona] Ochoa: However, they discussed the possibility of laundering money involving Martinez [words indistinct] investigate, maintain contacts, and so on. We need to investigate and find out what this was all about.
[Ochoa] Actually, since Martinez visited Escobar, we knew Escobar had no need to get involved in money laundering. He said that he wanted an airport, a laboratory, or something else. Martinez can explain these things much better than I can.

[Escalona] Correct, now...
[Ochoa, interrupting] I am only explaining what I think.

[Escalona] Ochoa, did Martinez tell you what was discussed at the meeting in Havana?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Did he tell you about the possibility of a cocaine laboratory in Africa?
[Ochoa] I believe the one who told me about the laboratory.... [changes thought] No, they were the ones who proposed the laboratory.

[Escalona] Who are they?
[Ochoa] The [word indistinct]; the ones who came here. I believe they were the ones who proposed it, because neither Antonio de la Guardia nor I wanted anything to do with the laboratory or entertain the thought of establishing a laboratory.

[Escalona] You did not think about...
[Ochoa, interrupting] Furthermore, that is illogical and impossible—madness.

[Escalona] Did Martinez tell you that even the possibility of obtaining paper to counterfeit money was discussed?
[Ochoa] Yes, he told me that. I heard that, not to counterfeit money but to obtain paper dollars to do that. [sentence as heard]

[Escalona] Ochoa, although that small business with De la Guardia was reportedly going to resolve the country's huge financial problems, had you ever thought that Cuba might be accused of trafficking foreign currency, of drug trafficking, of being the center of this activity in the Caribbean? When you learned Tony de la Guardia was involved in this business that could jeopardize the credibility of the Cuban Revolution, you never considered condemning this activity?
[Ochoa] No, I repeat, I never knew for sure they were involved in drug-trafficking operations.

[Escalona] There was $50,000 handed [words indistinct]?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] What were they from?
[Ochoa] Yes, that $50,000.... [changes thought] I asked Tony for it, because I had some money in Panama but could not touch it. I asked him for $100,000 for this company in Panama to deal with other countries.

[Escalona] Why could you not touch the money in Panama?
[Ochoa] Because part of that money belonged to the Nicaraguans and another part to Cuba.

[Escalona] Part belonged to the Nicaraguans and another part belonged to Cuba?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Why had that money not been returned to the Nicaraguans?
[Ochoa] That money had been left there; I cannot recall for how long. Martinez traveled several times to try to undertake the operation [not further identified], but the money remained there. At that time, I was not here for long. I went to Nicaragua and then to Angola. The money was earning interest in a long-term account.

[Escalona] It was earning interest for Martinez?
[Ochoa] No, but Martinez was not going to touch that money and, of course, neither was I. Also, what was I going to do with 200,000 pesos?

[Escalona] The account was not 200,000 pesos, right? I believe it was 115,000 pesos, but the account reached 200,000 pesos?
[Ochoa] Yes, because we made a purchase operation later, which was revealed here, involving a certain amount of money, and the account increased from the revenue we received. Later, I added over $40,000 to that

account from the money I brought from Angola; the idea was not to leave it there but to use it here in the Army. In other words, the money I brought from Angola is totally accounted for, cent by cent.

[Escalona] Ochoa, then it is not true—as Martinez has stated—that you gave orders to place the money in a numbered account and to forget about that account?
[Ochoa] Yes.... [changes thought] No, no. We spoke of forgetting about it when we thought about taking that money and using it for [words indistinct]. That was when I said: Forget about that account.

[Escalona] You meant to forget about using that money, because it is to be used for another purpose?
[Ochoa] Yes, that was the reason for my words.

[Escalona] Then, what was that money to be used for?
[Ochoa] We had already told one of our business comrades in Angola that from the Panama account we had to return $70,000 to Cuba. This amount was approximately the profit made by the operation; the rest of the money did not belong to Cuba. I intended to use the money I sent to Panama for the Army. That I must have already stated [words indistinct].

[Escalona] Ochoa, then that account had money from three different places: Money that belonged to Nicaragua,...
[Ochoa, interrupting] Yes.

[Escalona] ...money from Angola, and...
[Ochoa, interrupting] Yes.

[Escalona] ...and money that resulted from the deposits that you [words indistinct]?
[Ochoa] Yes, that is correct.

[Escalona] The $200,000 that you ordered to be placed in numbered account...
[Ochoa, interrupting] No, no.

[Escalona] [Words indistinct] objective to gain interests?
[Ochoa] No, that was done previously. I really do not know why.

[Escalona] You do not know why the account was numbered or you do not know why you had the account?
[Ochoa] No, I am referring to the amount. The account was numbered to hide its existence from the Panamanians so that they would not know to whom it belonged. That was the reason for placing it in a numbered account.

[Escalona] [Words indistinct] it was going to gain interest?
[Ochoa] Of course, [words indistinct].

[Escalona] What was going to happen to that account at the end, Ochoa?

[Ochoa] Like I just told you. I was going to return to Cuba its portion, return the portion that belonged to the Nicaraguans, and the portion that I sent there [not further identified]. I had already learned the Army's needs and was going to buy a complete system and some electronic equipment...

[Escalona, interrupting] The Angolan money that was placed into that account is the (?profit) made in radio equipment purchases?
[Ochoa] Yes, but I do not know how much that amounted to. I do not remember.

[Escalona] Now, was all the radio equipment delivered to Angola?
[Ochoa] We left 10 sets of equipment here for training the special troops that were going to be sent to Angola.

[Escalona] Ochoa, was this type of negotiation authorized?
[Ochoa] No, it was not authorized.

[Escalona] Was Angola authorized...
[Ochoa, interrupting] The truth is...

[Escalona, continues] ...was [authorization given for] the account, Angola, Nicaragua, the equipment...
[Ochoa, interrupting] The Angolan transaction had been authorized...

[Escalona, continues] ...the equipment that remained to be used by the Army's special troops. Had it been authorized by somebody?
[Ochoa] Yes, of course, I authorized it.

[Escalona] Was that part of your duties as mission commander?
[Ochoa] Yes, I authorized it because it was money we had requested from the Angolan president to buy radios for our troops. The troops that we sent to Angola were the special troops. We left the radios here so that we could train the men here and when they went they were already trained.

[Escalona] I ask you again: Was it part of your duty as mission commander? Where you empowered to do this...
[Ochoa, interrupting] I authorized...

[Escalona, continues] ...without authorization from the command in Cuba?
[Ochoa] I did many things without authorization. I believe that in this case it was not illogical to do so.

[Escalona] Ochoa, tell us, what did Martinez propose to Escobar?
[Ochoa] What did Martinez propose to Escobar?

[Escalona] Yes.
[Ochoa] I do not know.

[Escalona] Why did Martinez go to see Escobar then? You authorized him to explore [possibilities].
[Ochoa] I wanted to see what Escobar wanted and what could be done.

[Escalona] What Escobar wanted?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Had Escobar sent a message?
[Ochoa] No, he [Martinez] did not make contact with Escobar's people in Panama, but they had invited him to go there.

[Escalona] What was the result of this exploration?
[Ochoa] I do not think anything came of it.

[Escalona] But, an operation involving the use of a ship did take place?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] But it was foiled.
[Ochoa] Yes, but it was an operation that was never going to take place. I believe they proposed the ship deal to see if we were really willing to go through with it or not.

[Escalona] But a proposal was made for a deal using a plane?
[Ochoa] Yes, we did talk about it, but in reality the plane never came.

[Escalona] However, even if this was a small operation, you do admit that you were in on it?
[Ochoa] I have already told you that I admit to all this, but I do not know the details of the operations. When I talk to you here about these events, I do so in a general manner and I tell you what I think about them. You know, it is like war; every person that goes to combat comes back with a different story of what they saw on their front.

[Escalona] Yes, Ochoa, but this is a story where the country has been risked...
[Ochoa, interrupting] No, no, it would not be necessary...

[Escalona, continues] ...and it has a different and more serious connotation, because of what you represented in the Armed Forces, the country, the party, and the government.
[Ochoa] But what I am telling you is that, although I have the basic information and from the beginning I have stated that I am responsible for all these events, I cannot give you details. I cannot do so because I did not participate directly in the operations.

[Escalona] You approved after the events had taken place?
[Ochoa] Yes, some times I approved beforehand and sometimes afterwards.

[Escalona] Ochoa, why did you trust Martinez so much?
[Ochoa] Well, he started to work with me in Ethiopia and then all that time in Nicaragua. He was the one sent from Ethiopia to Angola and then to Panama to buy the radios. He always took care of matters. He is a good technician and I placed a lot of trust in him. He was always in charge of those things, because he is a good technician. I trusted him very much.

[Escalona] Ochoa, as it has been said before, did you think about the consequences of Martinez' arrest in Colombia or the arrest of Martinez...
[Ochoa, interrupting] Yes...

[Escalona continues] ...by the DEA?
[Ochoa] No, no, no. I was just going to say it is not necessary to discuss that, because not only I, but the entire Cuban people, including children and youths, are aware of the consequences of this whole thing. The problem is that one does not always think things over on time.

[Escalona] Without having a captain available to them, the FAR minister and other Cuban leaders have been accused—through lies—of various things. Can you imagine how the situation would be if one has a Cuban captain available for use?
[Ochoa] Prosecutor, even before this whole thing was discovered here, I was always aware of all the outrages we committed; this one was the most serious. I do not have the least doubt about that.

[Escalona] Obviously.
[Ochoa] I do not have the least doubt. In other words, all the other things—please do not think I am playing down those other things—are secondary. In other words, if we [words indistinct] there is evidence that points to us anyway.

[Escalona] Ochoa, let us go back to the investment issue. Your idea was to open a path between Escobar and this other foreigner?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] You wanted to open a path to send drugs to the United States?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] You were not going to obtain any benefits for your participation in the deal at all?
[Ochoa] No. What benefits would I obtain from that?

[Escalona] In other words, Cuba would not obtain any benefits with those activities?
[Ochoa] Yes, Cuba would obtain all the benefits.

[Escalona] What do you mean all the benefits?
[Ochoa] Yes. He had to invest all that money in Cuba.

[Escalona] To invest it in Cuba?
[Ochoa] Yes. That is the company I was telling you about...

[Escalona, interrupting] Ochoa, are you telling me that a money-laundering operation was going to be carried out in Cuba?
[Ochoa] Yes, but the money was to be invested in buildings.

[Escalona] In buildings?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] What do you mean in buildings?
[Ochoa] In tourism. We were going to invest money in tourism activities. That is why we talked with CUBANACAN [expansion unknown; a Cuban enterprise to promote tourism]

[Escalona] Thus, that foreigner obtained all the benefits or all the money from the drug-trafficking activities?
[Ochoa] He had to.

[Escalona] What guarantee did you have that he was going to invest that money in Cuba?
[Ochoa] I trusted him because of the number of years I have known him.

[Escalona] For that reason alone?
[Ochoa] Yes. He could have kept part of...

[Escalona, interrupting] What benefits would Cuba obtain from those activities?
[Ochoa] Who?

[Escalona] Cuba, as a country.
[Ochoa] Cuba would obtain benefits if tourism were developed.

[Escalona] But Ochoa, you know foreign investors have made proposals for investment of clean money here in Cuba. Those investments can be seen in the various hotels we have. Spanish and Austrian investors have invested in Cuba. With the development of tourism, they have brought clean money into Cuba.

You had to think of something. What if in the future, authorities discover a foreigner had been investing drug-trafficking money in Cuba? It would seem as if Cuba lent its territory for money-laundering activities carried out by a foreign drug trafficker.
[Ochoa] Of course.

[Escalona] It would seem as if Cuba allowed that foreign drug trafficker to invest his money in Cuba.
[Ochoa] That is right.

[Escalona] Did you think of that?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] What benefits would Cuba obtain then from those activities? Those activities would discredit Cuba.
[Ochoa] No. I am saying that I see all that clearly now.

[Escalona] But you would agree that such a discovery would have discredited Cuba, right?
[Ochoa] Yes, of course.

[Escalona] The truth is that if Cuba can obtain clean money for investment, why did you think we have to launder a drug trafficker's money?
[Ochoa] You are right.

[Escalona] Do you, however, still sustain you had no other interest in these activities but to benefit Cuba?
[Ochoa] No, I had no other interest.

[Escalona] So that was your sole interest, yet you had no guarantees Cuba would obtain the benefits?
[Ochoa] You can be 100 percent sure that was my sole interest.

[Escalona] You are telling me your personal friendship with that person guaranteed he was going to invest the money in Cuba?
[Ochoa] That was our idea. In other words, he would develop tourism in Cuba with drug-trafficking money.

[Escalona] Did you plan to create mixed enterprises or something like that with that money?
[Ochoa] The idea was to create one.

[Escalona] But you did not complete any such arrangement?
[Ochoa] No, because there was still no money.

[Escalona] The money was not in the picture yet?
[Ochoa] We were still exploring the possibilities. He went to Key Largo and to that other key—I cannot remember the name—to assess the possibilities.

[Escalona] What about the guarantees? How could you be sure he would not take the profits [words indistinct]...
[Ochoa, interrupting] No, I trusted him. Who could I trust if I did not trust him...

[Escalona, interrupting] So his sole participation in the deal was enough to trust him?
[Ochoa] There was nobody I could trust besides him.

[Escalona] You could not trust anybody else. Do you realize that for FAR and for the Cuban Interior Ministry this trial unfortunately has historical value? In other words, these experiences and the things we have to face force us to try to find all the possible reasons that could have led you to such a situation.

As you know, a single group of Interior Ministry officers has created such a situation that the government has had to replace the interior minister. That group of officers has created a very difficult situation.

People in the streets wonder how it was possible for a division general, a hero, a member of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] Central Committee, and a deputy

of the National Assembly of the People's Government to act with such flippancy. Do you consider you acted with flippancy? What explanation can you give us to justify your actions?
[Ochoa] I must say that under the current circumstances it would be very difficult to say why I acted the way I did. That is the truth. I did not act with flippancy; perhaps I acted irresponsibly. I may have overstepped my authority and rights. I believe that there are things in life that make a man change; a man changes for many reasons. Perhaps the opportunity to operate independently also had a bearing on this.

[Escalona] Excuse me, Ochoa, when I asked whether you had acted with flippancy I was thinking about the fact that you are not only being linked to drug trafficking, the possibilities of deals in Mexico, and involvement with Tony de la Guardia's group, but also to other things. I ask myself, how long has that Nicaraguan money been deposited in the account in Panama?
[Ochoa] I think that account was opened in 1985, but there were others involved...

[Escalona, interrupting] The Nicaraguans know the money is there?
[Ochoa] They know the money is there. Even...

[Escalona, interrupting] But was it your decision to leave it there, or was...
[Ochoa, interrupting] No, no, no. I left the money there for them to pick up. Even after I left Nicaragua, I do not know how long after—Martinez can tell you more about that—I left Nicaragua, Martinez continued to make trips to see if he could help them get the weapons they wanted.

[Escalona] Were there any problems with that?
[Ochoa] I would rather not explain...

[Escalona, interrupting] Ochoa, do you think the Nicaraguans may think we wanted to keep that money? As a matter of fact, we have kept that money.
[Ochoa] No, no, no. The Nicaraguans may think that I wanted to keep the money, but not you.

[Escalona] That Arnaldo Ochoa wanted to keep the money?
[Ochoa] Yes. They could very well think that; that is what many people think.

[Escalona] Ochoa, do you have any idea how much money was left over after the purchase of radios for Angola?
[Ochoa] No. I do not remember.

[Escalona] How did you get those 200,000 pesos?
[Ochoa] The explanation.... [changes thought] according to Martinez, I deposited $46,000; as far as I am concerned, I only deposited $20,000.

[Escalona] Where did those $46,000 that Martinez talked about come from?

[Ochoa] From here, from the money I brought back from Angola.

[Escalona] But that money was for the Army?
[Ochoa] Yes, but where do we shop? We were going to buy what we could here and the rest we were going to buy in Panama.

[Escalona] Where did that money come from?
[Ochoa] The deals we made there. Most of the money was left over there and we brought some of it to buy some things...

[Escalona, interrupting] What was that money going to be used for?
[Ochoa] No. The deal was made with the idea of making about 60 or 70 million kwanzas. However, part of the merchandise...

[Escalona, interrupting] Sixty or seventy million kwanzas for what?
[Ochoa] For the Bengela airport.

[Escalona] How much would that be in dollars?
[Ochoa] No, no, that money was left over there.

[Escalona] But, more or less, how many dollars are we talking about?
[Ochoa] I do not know.

[Escalona] Ochoa, there are some figures here that have caught my attention. Expenses between December 1987 and January 1989 include camp housing expenses for 307,000 pesos; 53,000 pesos for the rear guard of the mission [retaguardia de la mission]; other expenses, 24,000 pesos. However, Casa Uno and headquarters expenses add up to $564,000. Ochoa, is that not a lot of money?
[Ochoa] No, no, that cannot be true, much less if that includes Casa Uno expenses.

[Escalona] Those are expense figures for Casa Uno and headquarters.
[Ochoa] That is not possible.

[Escalona] Could someone else have taken money from there to use for something else?
[Ochoa] I do not know; however, for Casa Uno expenses, that is impossible.

[Escalona] Who handled that money?
[Ochoa] Finance.

[Escalona] Ochoa, these figures were provided by finance.
[Ochoa] Right, finance handled the money. I did not handle money.

[Escalona] And who controlled finance?
[Ochoa] Mmmm, well.

[Escalona] [Words indistinct] De la Guardia?
[Ochoa] Well yes, we handled finance for a long time.

[Escalona] Ochoa, when you were looking for kwanzas to build the airport, you created a number of commercial mechanisms?
[Ochoa] We cannot talk about mechanisms.

[Escalona] You traded sugar, you sold sugar for kwanzas...
[Ochoa, interrupting] Yes, yes. We sold some sugar, some fish; we sold two or three things. They talked about selling other things, but...

[Escalona, interrupting] Is the ivory business true?
[Ochoa] Yes, but the ivory was not a clandestine business. In the Congo you can buy ivory as easily as you can buy a television set.

[Escalona] And you can take it out of the country?
[Ochoa] Yes, you can take it out through the airports or any other way you wish to take it out of the country. People use the airports to fly the ivory to France. It is not a clandestine operation. We simply sent for the ivory, paid for it in CFA francs, and sent it to Tony de la Guardia. He paid for it at the same price, but in dollars, and the money was given to finance.

[Escalona] Where was the money put?
[Ochoa] It was given to finance.

[Escalona] Was it deposited in the account in Panama?
[Ochoa] No, no, no. In Angola. In Angola.

[Escalona] Why did you not deposit the money you sent to Panama in Angola?
[Ochoa] Because the Angolan money sent to Panama was transferred by the bank to the account Panama.

[Escalona] The deals made in Angola were aimed at improving the living conditions of the troops.
[Ochoa] No. The deals were to pay for the airport, not to improve living conditions.

[Escalona] Not to improve living conditions?
[Ochoa] No, no. The living conditions in Angola were improved with other things and we spent...

[Escalona, interrupting] The airport was finished...
[Ochoa continues] ...and we spent a lot of dollars because we bought many air conditioning units. The pilots did not have air conditioners. We bought a lot of things.

[Escalona] How was the airport finished?
[Ochoa] A little less than half the airport had been built when I left. We really did not have the kwanzas for the airport. We did not have enough to meet payments.

[Escalona] However, the things Llicas sold, the sugar and the other things Llicas sold were paid for in kwanzas and the kwanzas were sold on the black market to get dollars.

[Ochoa] No, no. Several million kwanzas were left for the building of the airport.

[Escalona] Then what happened?
[Ochoa] There were things that were sold for dollars.

[Escalona] Ochoa, during the Honor Tribunal proceedings there were two officers who said that the cycle was: sugar-kwanzas-black market-dollars.
[Ochoa] In our case, I am talking about the deals I participated in, it was the other way around. We exchanged dollars for kwanzas. I think that on two occasions we made changes.

[Escalona] Then why did Antonio give you $24,000?
[Ochoa] Because I told him: If you have money left over after you close the books, bring it to me because I will need that money.

[Escalona] Was that mission money?
[Ochoa] Yes, yes, it was mission money. It was money from our sales.

[Escalona] What about the 23,000 [currency not specified] that Llicas brought back?
[Ochoa] From the sales. The 23,000 that Llicas brought back was from the sale of a shipment of television sets sent from Cuba, I think.

[Escalona] Who sent that shipment?
[Ochoa] I think Martinez did.

[Escalona] Martinez sent that shipment?
[Ochoa] Yes. We sent to buy...

[Escalona] What did Martinez buy those television sets with?
[Ochoa] Martinez?

[Escalona] What I meant to ask was what money did Martinez use to buy those television sets?
[Ochoa] Oh...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did he buy them in Cuba or in Panama?
[Ochoa] I do not know where he bought them.

[Escalona] Who owned those television sets?
[Ochoa] He must have bought them with the Panama account.

[Escalona] But there is no money in the Panama account. Is there money in that account?
[Ochoa] I do not know. I do not know if Martinez had money...

[Escalona, interrupting] But where did the television sets come from?
[Ochoa] I do not know. I cannot say because I do not know.

[Escalona] Then why is the money from the sale of those television sets yours?
[Ochoa] It is not my money.

[Escalona] That depends on where the money went, and that money ended up in your hands.
[Ochoa] It is not my money. All the dollars are there. Part of the money is in Panama.

[Escalona] Yes, it is in Panama. But my question is, why was that money given to you?
[Ochoa] I have already explained why.

[Escalona] But you were no longer mission chief.
[Ochoa] That is correct.

[Escalona] Then that money should have been given to the new mission chief.
[Ochoa] Yes, no one has said otherwise.

[Escalona] All this is a matter of irresponsibility, lack of discipline, violations of the [words indistinct].
[Ochoa] Yes. I cannot in all honesty deny that. I would not deny that. What I am trying to do is answer your questions.

[Escalona] You surprise me. I wish I could find some logical reason why you did this. You got an order from the minister...
[Ochoa, interrupting] No, no, no. The minister gave no order. The minister had nothing to do with this. Never in my life had I walked around with dollars, but, as I said, I was irresponsible and said: If there is any money left over, bring it to me because the Army is going to need it. Of all that money, I think I spent some $11,000 or $12,000.

[Escalona] Ochoa, if you were so worried about the economic situation your country was experiencing, why did you not deposit the $200,000 in Cuba?
[Ochoa] Because that $200,000 was not ours. When I got back...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who did that money belong to, Ochoa?
[Ochoa] The $200,000 belongs to the Nicaraguans.

[Escalona] So why has that money not been returned?
[Ochoa] All right, I already told you. I explained that and told you that...

[Escalona, interrupting] Why have you not returned the Angolans' money?
[Ochoa] The Angolans' money was not to be returned.

[Escalona] Then what was it for?
[Ochoa] No...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was that money a commission? Did you participate in the purchase of the C-130?
[Ochoa] No, I did not.

[Escalona] You had nothing to do with that?
[Ochoa] No, I did not. The Angolan president asked me if it were possible to purchase five C-130's, and I think he also asked for one or two batteries of long-range Howitzers, the G-5 kind. I told Patricio about it, and he told Tony.

[Escalona] The business was done through one of Tony's firms?
[Ochoa] No, Tony did not do it, it was done by a guy who was always with them; I believe he is Jewish.

[Escalona] Of course, you do know how that deal ended?
[Ochoa] I have heard about it.

[Escalona] Regardless of what you have heard, it seems to me that we should not have been involved. The end result of this deal is that thanks to the brilliant business transaction made by citizen Tony de la Guardia's firm, the Angolans are demanding we pay them the $5 million they gave to these famous businessmen.
[Ochoa] I cannot give you details of this deal, but I do know the Angolans were the ones who made the business transaction with the Jewish businessman. I am sure of this.

[Escalona] Yes, but it was based on the backing given by the Cubans.
[Ochoa] Possibly so.

[Escalona] The backing was given either by you or by Patricio.
[Ochoa] It was not given by me; I only made the contact. I told the president a businessman was going to visit him and that he should talk to him.

[Escalona] Ochoa, I really feel bewildered.
[Ochoa] What?

[Escalona] I feel bewildered.
[Ochoa] Why?

[Escalona] Because I have known you for many, many years. I have seen you command the Armed Forces' eastern, central, and western armies. I have seen you conduct operations, command exercises, and lead troops. I know of your feats in Ethiopia. I know the things you have done. And I ask myself, is it possible that such a man could turn into a perfectly irresponsible person? Could this be the same man who risked his country's prestige, dignity, and honor with total irresponsibility? Could this be the same man who knew there were people in Cuba linked to drug trafficking and—although he was a general, a hero, a responsible person—did not go to the highest level in government and report that criminals in the country were doing business with drugs? I ask you, are you the same Ochoa who was in Ethiopia?
[Ochoa] Possibly not.

[Escalona] You have risked Cuba four, five, six times?

[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] You also invented a business that was not backed by anything [que no se sostiene], because there was nothing with which to back it, and you opened the road for drug traffickers to launder their money. It was not even our money being laundered; it was not even money from our famous drug traffickers who worked outside Cuba. It was, simply, that you allowed one of your friends to come and launder drug-trafficking money in Cuba just to show your goodwill and because he was your friend. You did this and took the risk that the matter would be discovered and that later it could be said: This drug trafficker invested his money in Cuba. Can a drug trafficker invest in tourism and construction in Cuba without the approval or knowledge of the Cuban Government? Why did you hide this information? You created...[changes thought] You dreamed buildings would be constructed and tourism would be developed. Now I think about those buildings being demolished because of the shame this country has to experience when we are told: The investment that has brought you benefits was invented by Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and is the result of drug trafficking.

[Ochoa] That is correct.

[Escalona] But, Ochoa, this is your country.

[Ochoa] Yes, I have never denied this.

[Escalona] You have defended this country thousands of times.

[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] What happened within Arnaldo Ochoa that caused him to give the country away? To give the country to the enemy?

[Ochoa] That is why I am telling you the truth about how things occurred.

[Escalona] I have finished for now, Comrade President.

[Espinosa] Ochoa Sanchez, face the court and answer the questions that will be asked by the defense lawyer.

[Toste] Defendant Ochoa, I will ask some questions, and you will reply to the court. My questions will be regarding the charges made against you and are included in the list of conclusions you and I both have. Throughout the questioning made by the comrade prosecutor attorney you have referred to matters such as business, tourism, and all the transactions you made and said they were abuses, illusions, and that you were responsible for all of them. You also said you were undisciplined and that all the charges made by the prosecution are true. I would like you to tell the court of your analysis of the things that happened in the past. What is your understanding of these events? I do not want you to state only that these were abuses, etc; I want you to tell the court what you have learned from all this?

[Ochoa] I.... [changes thought] The first thing I must say is that I believe that at at one time or another I detracted from the real objectives of the Revolution. I think that is what happened. I have thought about this a lot. I cannot say I have reached a final conclusion yet. However, I realize there were many irresponsible and corrupt activities. For instance, what right did I have to handle any kind of money? I had never handled money like that before; I was never a greedy person, and I had no need for it.

I can also tell you there was a time in my military life when I felt very tired. In other words, objectively speaking, I was not the same man who, as the prosecutor said, once headed and directed combat actions. I even felt like a dull person. Many times in Angola I found myself in very difficult and complex situations. I think that because of that, and because I could act on my own for so many years, I took the wrong path. In other words, to a certain extent, I lost my sense of reality.

It has been implied that I did not do my job, which is not true. I tried hard to comply with my duties, even though I may not have fulfilled all of them. Some people believe I only dedicated myself to do business, which also is not true. I got other people involved in doing business for me, but I was not directly involved.

However, I have reached the same conclusion as you concerning what all this has meant for Cuba. That is why I admitted my responsibility at the Honor Tribunal, because in all fairness, no one could justify what I have done.

I think we could spend a lot of time analyzing this. Even I cannot understand why I did those things. At times, I felt I was immune to a lot of things, but reality showed me I was wrong. When a human being loses credibility, he is no one.

I think I do not have anything to add; the facts are there. Therefore, I would prefer you go by facts. Would you like to ask me another question?

[Toste] I think you should explain these things to the court, because, in making its decision, the court will also take this into consideration, according to the law. I want to ask you: In a few words, do you believe those decisions were in keeping with your previous conduct?

[Ochoa] No, they were not in keeping with my previous conduct at all. I was not myself. There are many comrades here who have known me for years, and they know that I did not act that way. That is the truth.

[Toste] I have one more question, Mr President. You have been critical of yourself in front of the court before. Looking back—naturally, the purpose of all these business and drug-trafficking operations was to make a profit—however, can you tell us what motivated you to do these improper things? What were you looking for?

[Ochoa] As I told the prosecutor, I do not want to give explanations that can be interpreted as justifications. It is not my intention to defend myself before a revolutionary court or to justify myself. If I try to explain these things, it may look as if I am trying to justify myself. Therefore, I would prefer not to answer your question.

[Toste] I was referring to your self-criticism. Do you believe there was a reason, now after making a self-evaluation...
[Ochoa, interrupting] No, look...

[Toste, interrupting] Let me finish the question. What I mean is, did you act out of selfishness, greed, or for any other reason, even though it may have been wrong?
[Ochoa] Even though I said the evidence is against me, those who know me and those who know how I live, know that I have never been selfish or greedy. That is the truth. I may have been irresponsible and a libertine, but those who know me, know how I live.

[Toste] I have another question for him, Mr President. Throughout this entire process, you have made some public statements, which have been published in newspapers. I would like you to tell the members of the tribunal, as the prosecutor said, how you believe your actions have adversely affected our country, for example. Can you clarify anything that may require an explanation?
[Ochoa] You want me to explain how our actions have adversely affected our country?

[Toste] Yes.
[Ochoa] Well, I believe this is something that is quite clear. It has been covered in the press. It has been pointed out that all these actions have serious political implications for Cuba. I said—the prosecutor read this—that while the commander in chief was saying that we were not involved in drug trafficking, we were actually involved in it. We were making a liar out of the commander in chief. What is more serious than that? There cannot be anything else. We were also putting the fatherland at risk. I do not want to repeat what I said at the Honor Tribunal. It was well documented there and is widely known. That remains my position. [Words indistinct] they are different things.

[Toste] Mr President, I am finished for the time being.

[Escalona] Mr President, I have a question.

[Espinosa] Ochoa, answer the prosecutor's question.

[Escalona] Ochoa, a little over 3 years ago, this country was asked to undergo a process of rectification by the commander in chief, which has stirred up a large majority of the population. During all this time, were you away from Cuba?
[Ochoa] I do not know. I have been away from Cuba most of my life.

[Escalona] You do not.... [changes thought] Did you ever get excited about the idea of carrying on the Revolution with different methods?
[Ochoa] Those are difficult things.

[Escalona] You were not excited about these things?
[Ochoa] Why should I not become excited? Those are difficult things to say now. It is not a matter of not taking this into account.

[Escalona] I am saying in the political [words indistinct].
[Ochoa] I can honestly tell you that the fact that I betrayed the land where I was born haunts me.

[Escalona] I understand. Ochoa, I have one last question. In both of your appearances at the Honor Tribunal, you showed us why you were a division general and a hero of our country. Have you been informed of what is being said abroad regarding all the problems we are facing in this trial?
[Ochoa] Actually, I was waiting for you to finish, so I could ask permission of the president to talk about this. I have had the opportunity to see some material that talks about the events here. It talks about this small group of drug traffickers, beginning with me. I have seen the lies that have been broadcast in the United States. To be more exact, I saw some newscasts of Telemundo from the CNN [U.S. Cable News Network].

[Escalona] They said you had taken drugs here at the Tribunal.
[Ochoa] Yes, and, by the way, I saw a very intelligent psychologist, who even pointed out, at a U.S. university, the type of drug I had been given. Yes, I saw it. He is a very intelligent man. Actually, what are they saying there? That there are political problems; that there is a military uprising in Cuba; that there is sedition; that there is a rebellion in the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and in the Interior Ministry; that there are internal divisions within the party...

[Escalona, interrupting] You have more military [words indistinct].
[Ochoa] No, no. That gives a little more freedom.

[Escalona] [Words indistinct]
[Ochoa] Right, right. They have also said there is a struggle between the old and new generations, and they said that Castro is purging the country. That is, they are saying so many things that one realizes how far their shamelessness can go. They have set up a huge propaganda mechanism around this case, which is far from being a thank-you message to Cuba. Of course, Cuba does not fight drug trafficking to be thanked by them, but they say just the opposite—that Cuba has always been engaged in drug trafficking and that this is a political problem.

In other words, once again we see how far imperialist slanders and insolence can go. Once again we see how many things are dogs of their imperialist masters,

because there are masters and there are dogs. There are dogs such as fossils Nazario Sargen, Huber Mators, and traitor Del Pino, who bark when they are told to bark and who are capable of inventing things to harm the Cuban Revolution. I would say, however, that such things only demonstrate the greatness and value of the Cuban Revolution.

How can anybody say that I was drugged and then taken before the Military Honor Tribunal? I can tell you all that if shame is a drug, then I was drugged. The truth is that all this has represented great shame for me.

After saying I was drugged, they showed another scene of the hearing, and they showed me with my head held high. That shot instantly revealed their attempt to show a bunch of lies.

I, however, believe those things were necessary. They showed many scenes of the hearings. Since they took over the task of informing the world about this, they should at least broadcast the truth. They should broadcast the truth. They should say that neither in the Cuban Interior Ministry, the Armed Forces, or the PCC... [incomplete sentence as heard]. On the contrary, I would say that our Revolution is increasingly firmer and stronger. The Revolution has consolidated itself over the years. What is happening in this very trial is proof of what I am saying right now. That is the truth. I want to tell them not to be cynical. They are true slanderers.

[Escalona] Ochoa, I only wanted to know whether those internal activities that you have not wanted to discuss or provide an explanation for—either at the Military Honor Tribunal or here—were going on while you were thinking of the possibility of conducting great operations involving millions of pesos and while you had 50,000 men fighting in Angola?

[Ochoa] Yes, and I worked on those activities.

[Escalona] So you led 50,000 men in Angola and at the same time you were involved in those other activities?

[Ochoa] Yes, but I was involved in those activities through other people...

[Escalona, interrupting] You in fact had to dedicate all your time to those activities. If you had unmasked this group of men, who are here right now, you would have spared the country this horrible shame. The Cuban people now feel like saying these individuals here have nothing to do with Cuba. They feel like saying these men have nothing to do either with the Cuban Interior Ministry or with anything that deals with us. In other words, if you had stopped those activities in time, if the hero Ochoa or Gen Ochoa had prevailed, we would not be here right now. That is all, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Do any of the defense lawyers wish to ask the defendant a question?

[Defense Lawyer Major Ramon Aymeriche] I do, Comrade President.

[Espinosa] Ochoa, answer the defense lawyer's question.

[Aymeriche] I will change the subject a little. Ochoa, regarding defendant Rodriguez Estupinan and referring to the time in Angola you talked about before, you said the deals in the black market were basically linked to two objectives, or in fact to one basic goal. You wanted to obtain both foreign exchange and Angolan currency to build an airport in Angola. Is that correct? Is that what you said?

[Ochoa] Yes.

[Aymeriche] I would like you to tell this tribunal whether that is the way you began operations with a number of officers, including Rodriguez Estupinan?

[Ochoa] Yes, yes. That is right in his case. Those 100 tons of sugar were sold with the intention of building an airport. In other words, that was the only goal we pursued with that sale. Let me remind you that there were other deals there that have always gone on in Angola. The Military Honor Tribunal, however, linked one thing with the other. Those deals were something else, and it is not fair to establish a link between them. Those deals were something else. The department of finance was in charge of those deals. That was something different.

In any case, Estupinan was placed in charge of those things after his return from a trip to Cuba. He had gone to Cuba to request 80 million kwanzas from the funds that were in Cuba, but he did not obtain the money. I simply made a decision and told him: Listen, I am not going to look for money somewhere else. Take this and sell it. With the money we will build the airport anyway.

[Aymeriche] Do you know whether your assistant made any profits from the operations conducted during that time? I am referring in this case to Estupinan.

[Ochoa] No, I do not know.

[Aymeriche] Regarding the deals with the kwanzas and the dollars, which Estupinan gave you—tell me, was it the policy that in all cases you were the one who would finally receive everything?

[Ochoa] Yes, oh yes.

[Aymeriche] Nobody else?

[Ochoa] No, no. Well, I do not recall whether he delivered something directly to the Department of Finance. I do not remember. He, however, always reported everything to me. I never knew of him to take any money for himself.

[Aymeriche] I have another question, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Go ahead.

[Aymeriche] In addition to what you have said, do you know whether Estupinan arranged some kind of deal or venture without your knowledge or authorization?
[Ochoa] No, no I do not.

[Aymeriche] According to what I learned, the system was that once that money got into say, in this case, Estupinan's hands, he put it away immediately in one of his drawers.
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Aymeriche] You established an internal control on a notebook of how much money was accumulating.
[Ochoa] Yes, that is right. We had some of it changed for kwanzas, I think once or twice. He must remember.

[Espinosa] Another question, please.

[Aymeriche] Regarding the acquisition of ivory tusks, did Estupinan participate directly in this operation. What was his role?
[Ochoa] No, no. That was carried out by Colonel (Theo Detrutis) on my instructions.

[Aymeriche] Did he, in this case Estupinan, receive the money?
[Ochoa] No, the money for the tusks was given to me through Patricio.

[Aymeriche] Did he know about this operation that you were carrying out through other means?
[Ochoa] I cannot answer. If I say yes or no, I would be lying.

[Aymeriche] That is all that I have for the moment, Comrade President.

[Major Aramis Villalon] Now a question for the accused: Defendant Arnaldo Ochoa, according to your testimony, there were some transactions that, according to the conclusions contained here, were carried out with the accused Antonio de la Guardia. My specific question is: How did you coordinate the sales or the receipt of the previous stones, in this case, the diamonds?
[Ochoa] Well, there had been...

[Aramis, interrupting] Wait a minute, let me finish. How much did he give you for the diamonds? How much were they worth? And how were they acquired?
[Ochoa] No, in fact, I never saw the diamonds. I do not know how many there were, and he did not pay anything for them. We did it out on the street. We traded some bags of sugar for some diamond rocks. I do not know how many there were, but I do recall that I personally turned them over in a small box to Patricio to send them.

[Aramis] It was never given to him directly?
[Ochoa] To whom?

[Aramis] To the accused, Tony de la Guardia.
[Ochoa] No, never.

[Aramis] Did the diamonds ever return to your hands, since they were not sold?
[Ochoa] No, no. I do not know what became of them. I simply gave them to Patricio and Patricio sent them to him.

[Aramis] I asked you that question because the accused said that that sale of diamonds could not be affected, because they were false diamonds and had been returned to you again.
[Ochoa] That is possible, but they did not return to my hands.

[Aramis] There was no transaction, they were not paid for?
[Ochoa] I do not think so. That is what I was told.

[Aramis] That is all, Comrade President.

[Espinosa] Does any other member of the defense wish to speak?

[Major Julio A. Gonzalez] Yes.

[Espinosa] Comrade Ochoa, please answer the question that defense lawyer Gonzalez is going to ask you.

[Gonzalez] Ochoa Sanchez, I want you to clarify something about the participation of the accused, Patricio de la Guardia, specifically in the diamond trade. The prosecutor's charges pertaining to you and Patricio de la Guardia state: Through the purchase of or barter for other products—always for personal use—and the use of resources destined for more noble purposes for lowly purposes, they directly obtained dozens of diamonds and other precious stones, which Antonio de la Guardia later converted into dollars. To do this he used his team of workers and took advantage of possibilities as they arose. Regarding the accused, Patricio de la Guardia, I would like you to tell me—by that I mean the tribunal—to the best of your knowledge, what was the participation of Patricio? What is your knowledge of this?
[Ochoa] First of all, I do not know where the hundreds of diamonds came from.

[Gonzalez] Dozens of diamonds.
[Ochoa] Yes, I took some stones in a small box to Patricio. There may have been six or eight, but they were not diamonds. They were small. One learns from all of these activities. I also learned about diamonds. A diamond is worth something when it is the size of a chick-pea or larger. Otherwise, it is not worth much. If they are too small, then they are sold for next to nothing; they are not worth much. I think that is what happened to Tony. What is obtained on the market there is worth almost nothing. In other words, diamonds are worth something when they are big enough to be used for jewelry. A diamond that is a little over the size of a chick-pea is worth $70,000 to $80,000, but it has to be polished. That is what happened [words indistinct].

[Gonzalez] Look, regarding the participation of Patricio de la Guardia...
[Ochoa, interrupting] I do not believe that I answered your question. I gave Patricio some of those little diamonds in a small box at his house one day, that is all, and I think that he sent them to Tony.

[Gonzalez] That is what you believe?
[Ochoa] That is what I believe.

[Espinosa] The accused, Ochoa, please answer the question.

[Escalona] Regarding this problem of the precious stones, Ochoa, your aide Martinez said that you gave him 136 stones and that he took them to Panama and sold them. Is that true?

[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] He also said he took the precious stones to Panama, where he sold them.
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Is that so?
[Ochoa] Yes. Those were very small precious stones. That was done as the result of the contacts that were made. Martinez gave the money to me. The money is included in the money that [words indistinct].

[Escalona] Is it?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Martinez gave the money to you?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] Therefore, did you sell some of those very small precious stones?
[Ochoa] Right.

[Escalona] Were the precious stones sold in Panama?
[Ochoa] Yes [words indistinct].

[Escalona] Ochoa, there is one question that has been in my mind for a long time. Through my work requirements, I have participated in various UN-sponsored events dealing with the struggle against drug trafficking. We have had the opportunity to see the consequences of drug consumption, particularly among young people and especially by children. We have seen the harm this scourge causes to mankind. As a revolutionary, as a general, and as a hero—before the mechanism that allowed you to be in that position was discovered—did you not feel repugnance for the consequences of your actions? Am I making myself clear? Did you imagine that opening a path for drugs meant the death and degradation of hundreds or thousands of citizens, youths, and children—and even the death and degradation of the United States and its people? Did you think you could someday feel as happy as Pablo Escobar, knowing you are killing a significant portion of mankind just to get rich and to be able to build hotels in Cuba? Do you think this Revolution deserves the unworthy action of developing its tourism from money stained by drugs and by the blood and degradation of who knows how many hundreds of citizens throughout the world? Did you ever think about this?
[Ochoa] Prosecutor, when one goes the wrong way, one is content with many things.

[Escalona] Do you think our Revolution could live from [words indistinct]?
[Ochoa] No.

[Escalona] Do you think our Revolution could live subsidized by drug trafficking?
[Ochoa] Why did I tell the Honor Tribunal that I was more of a revolutionary now than 20 days ago? Because many things have become clear now. [Words indistinct]...

[Escalona, interrupting] It is inconceivable that this Revolution, which you helped to build, [words indistinct]...
[Ochoa, interrupting] I may be hated, but it is still my revolution.

[Escalona] Fine. This Revolution you helped to build would have become a cancer spreading venom, cocaine, marijuana, and God knows what else in the world. Do you think we.... [changes thought] From that moment on, it would have been better if Cuba were to disappear from the face of the earth, if this country was going to live from the business deals conducted by these men.
[Ochoa] The fact of the matter is all these mechanisms do exist.

[Escalona] But at what price, Ochoa? At what cost? At the cost of the people's health, of the world's health? How many millions and millions of pesos are spent throughout the world in the struggle against drug trafficking? Ochoa, what does drug trafficking represent for the world? If it was a business of.... [changes thought] Maybe we could forgive the searching for diamonds, or even the Congo ivory business, but drugs, Ochoa?
[Ochoa] Yes, of course.

[Escalona] Cocaine, Ochoa, which poisons entire nations. We, who are international volunteers, who send our people to voluntarily die in defending other peoples, are we going to become international drug traffickers and spread the venom of drugs? Why are we defending peoples? To kill them later on with drugs? This is all, Mr President.

[Espinoza Martin] Ochoa, to clarify and to explain matters about which the tribunal still does not have a very clear idea, we would like to ask you some questions. We have learned during the investigation about money you have in a Panamanian account under Martinez' name. We understand that on one occasion, you ordered a transfer of funds to Cuba into an account in the

foreigner's [not further identified] name. How can you justify depositing the money there for purchasing the equipment and materials needed by the Western Army, which, as I understood, you admitted during your recent remarks? How can you explain such actions?
[Ochoa] Mr President, there is confusion about this. The money was brought here. Then, given the possibility that this foreigner could be killed, it was also possible that the money could be lost. Therefore, the money had to be sent back there [Panama]. However, the money I told you about for the equipment that we were going to bring here, for the equipment I planned to purchase for the Army, is not the same money; that money came from Angola and was also sent to the account in Panama. Do you understand?

[Espinoza Martin] Let me clarify the question. I understood that the money you had sent from Angola with Martinez was placed into the account in Panama, an amount that reached $200,000, and that you then ordered that the account be closed.
[Ochoa] Not exactly. We sent the money there always with the thought in mind that this money was part of the funds we needed for equipment purchases.

[Espinoza Martin] The tribunal finds that you have still not clarified part of the question; we want you to clarify this. Concerning the transfer of funds to Cuba to an account under the foreigner's name, if you were planning on buying equipment for the Western Army, and, if later on, you were planning to use that money for the reasons you just mentioned [words indistinct]. Perhaps the foreigner could have kept the money for himself. You transferred the money back to Panama to an account in Martinez' name?
[Ochoa] Concerning the transfer of this account, what happened was that the money in that account belonged to the Nicaraguans and there was other money left over from it. This matter can be cleared up by Martinez more than by me; he was the one who managed the account. I do not even remember why we transferred it here. The fact is, this foreigner has an account here [not further identified] and the merchandise that we bought here in Cuba was paid for out of his account, later we would pay him. We did so in order not to carry the money with us.

[Escalona] Ochoa, answer the question...
[Ochoa, interrupting] Yes, it was only to [words indistinct]...

[Escalona continues]...concerning Defendant Martinez. Was he your subordinate?
[Ochoa] Yes.

[Escalona] How was his military conduct before all these events took place?
[Ochoa] I really had a great deal of trust in him and I believe he trusted me, too. Martinez was always a man who kept his commitments and was very responsible. His conduct was excellent.

[Escalona] [Words indistinct]

[Espinosa] Ochoa, do you have anything else you want to add? Do you want to make any additional statement to the court?
[Ochoa] Yes, taking the opportunity the court is giving me, I want to make reference to events that took place during the Honor Tribunal. I was the only defendant to be present at the Honor Tribunal. Many of the defendants present here today and witnesses who are not here made statements. I want to say to this court that many of them tried to evade responsibility and that I believe they did not speak clearly and that others lied. This includes certain witnesses, who I believe are not in this courtroom right now, but who exaggerated their statements. Basically, they did so to evade responsibility.

[Espinosa] Ochoa Sanchez, you may withdraw.
[Ochoa] Of course.

[Espinosa] Defendent Jorge Martinez Valdez, come forward and face the court.

[Espinosa] Defendent, the law gives you the right to make statements. Do you want to do so?

[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Espinosa] Always face the court and answer the questions that will be made by the prosecutor?

[Escalona] Defendent Martinez, when did you meet Arnaldo Ochoa?
[Martinez Valdez] I met Ochoa in Ethiopia in 1977.

[Escalona] What were you doing in Ethiopia?
[Martinez Valdez] I started working with him as his personal spokesman.

[Escalona] Were you sent to Ethiopia in active service or as an officer...

[Martinez Valdez, interrupting] I went as a reserve officer.

[Escalona] Did you return to Cuba once you ended your mission?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, I did.

[Escalona] Where did you meet with Ochoa again?
[Martinez Valdez] After the first mission ended, Ochoa told me that he was staying [corrects himself] that he had been reassigned for an additional year and asked me to return with him for that period.

[Escalona] To Ethiopia?
[Martinez Valdez] That is correct.

[Escalona] And you went to Ethiopia?
[Martinez Valdez] I did.

[Escalona] When did you start to develop your clever economic and financial abilities? In Ethiopia?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] In Nicaragua?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] What turned you into a financial whiz?
[Martinez Valdez] I do not regard myself as a financial whiz. I believe that I am a man who was given tasks, who was obliged to take measures, and I carried them out.

[Escalona] Martinez, you went to Panama with money that belonged to the Sandinist People's Army [EPS]?
[Martinez Valdez] That is correct.

[Escalona] Did you buy weapons?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] How much money was left over?
[Martinez Valdez] The Nicaraguans handed over $120,900 for the weapons purchase. Initially, the weapons were to be paid...

[Escalona, interrupting] No, I mean how much money was left over?
[Martinez Valdez] I am trying to explain...

[Escalona, interrupting] I do not want an explanation. I want you to answer my question.

[Espinosa] Defendant Martinez, you may respond only to the question asked of you by the prosecutor.

[Escalona] How much money was left over?
[Martinez Valdez] There were $115,000 left over.

[Escalona] What did you do with that money?
[Martinez Valdez] I deposited it in a bank.

[Escalona] On whose orders?
[Martinez Valdez] On Gen Ochoa's orders.

[Escalona] What explanation did Ochoa give you?
[Martinez Valdez] That the Nicaraguans had not given us an account number to which to return the money. Ochoa said to deposit the money because the Panamanian citzen who was going to purchase the weapons for us still owed $45,000.

[Escalona] I do not understand you. Despite your acumen as a financier, I do not understand. Ochoa ordered you to deposit the $120,000 in Panama's Bilbao Viscaya Bank? Why did he do that? [Words indistinct] your response.

[Martinez Valdez] Because the Panamanian still had to return the $45,000.

[Escalona] Why did he have to return $45,000?

[Martinez Valdez] Because we had given him $120,000, and he only returned $75,000.

[Escalona] Because [words indistinct]?
[Martinez Valdez] Because the weapons shipment became a complex matter.

[Escalona] When did the Panamanian return the $45,000?
[Martinez Valdez] That amount was never returned.

[Escalona] What did you have to do to get the Panamanian to pay you back?
[Martinez Valdez] We tried to get him to pay back...

[Escalona, interrupting] In what year did this happen?
[Martinez Valdez] In mid-1987.

[Escalona] You have not been able to get him to pay you back in years?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] You do not appear to be such a clever financier. Is the account still at the Viscaya Bank?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, it is still at the Viscaya Bank.

[Escalona] What other deposits did you make to this account?
[Martinez Valdez] The commission resulting from the purchase of radios for Angola was also deposited into this account.

[Escalona] Who received this commission?
[Martinez Valdez] The commission resulted from the sales transaction.

[Escalona] The Cuban military mission charged the Angolans a commission for purchasing communication equipment for them?
[Martinez Valdez] No, the mission did not charge a commission.

[Escalona] Where did the commission come from?
[Martinez Valdez] The commission came from.... [changes thought] The 100 radios initially cost a total of $595,000, and, as a result of a direct transaction with the factory, the radios ended up costing a total of $4...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who gave you the commission then?
[Martinez Valdez] Ochoa took the commission [corrects himself] Ochoa decided to take the commission.

[Escalona] How much was the commission?
[Martinez Valdez] Approximately $50,000.

[Escalona] What did you do with the $50,000?
[Martinez Valdez] It was kept in the bank.

[Escalona] $50,000?
[Martinez Valdez] Approximately $50,000.

[Escalona] What bank account did you deposit it into?
[Martinez Valdez] In Panama, in the Bilbao Bank in Panama.

[Escalona] So now you have $50,000 and $145,000...
[Martinez Valdez, interrupting] No, $50,000 and $115,000.

[Escalona] And $115,000, which totals $160,000 [figures as heard].
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, $160,000.

[Escalona] Very well. What was the account for?
[Martinez Valdez] We opened the account, because, as I said a while ago, the Nicaraguans never opened an account in which to deposit the money for a number of items that we purchased for them, for which we always paid in cash. So in order not to have that cash on hand...

[Escalona, interrupting] Wait a second, I do not understand. Please just answer my question.

[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] I become confused when you give me the whole story at once. My question is: What was the account for?
[Martinez Valdez] Its purpose was to keep the money in a safe place.

[Escalona] Whose money?
[Martinez Valdez] The Nicaraguans' money.

[Escalona] Did you serve as a financial go-between for the EPS?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Then why did you keep the money?
[Martinez Valdez] Because I received the money from the Sandinists' financial chief.

[Escalona] Why did you keep it?
[Martinez Valdez] Because I still had to collect $45,000 owed by the Panamanian.

[Escalona] Why have you not returned it yet?
[Martinez Valdez] Because we consulted Ochoa, who initially told us that the Nicaraguans had not given us...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was the account not opened in your name?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, in my name.

[Escalona] What about the Angolans?
[Martinez Valdez] No, the Angolans do not have an account there.

[Escalona] Martinez, what is your profession?
[Martinez Valdez] I am a communications technician.

[Escalona] Communications technician. What business do you have dealing with finances?
[Martinez Valdez] Nothing.

[Escalona] Nothing. After Ochoa ended his mission in Nicaragua, he went to Cuba?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] How long did he stay in Cuba?
[Martinez Valdez] I stayed in Cuba...

[Escalona, interrupting] No, I mean Ochoa. How long did he stay in Cuba? Were you with him?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, we arrived within a week of each other, in February 1986.

[Escalona] You arrived within a week of each other. You arrived in February 1986?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] How long did you stay in Cuba?
[Martinez Valdez] We stayed until November 1988; pardon me, until November 1987.

[Escalona] From February 1986 to November 1987. That is approximately 2 years.

[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] What did Ochoa and you say about the account during those 2 years?

[Martinez Valdez] Can I explain myself?
[Escalona] Briefly.

[Martinez Valdez] Briefly, at first we agreed that the account could not be transferred to the Nicaraguans, because, as I said, they never gave us an account number. Each time I received money it was paid in cash.

[Escalona] Wait, wait a second. The Nicaraguans did not give you an account number and therefore you did not have a place in which to deposit the money for the Nicaraguans. However, since it was such a large sum of money, would it not have been better to take the money by plane to Nicaragua?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, but since we still had to collect more money, we consulted Ochoa, who told us...

[Escalona, interrupting] If you did not have all the money, Martinez, would it not have been more honest to turn over what you had on hand rather than keeping the whole amount?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, of course.

[Escalona] You kept the money.

[Martinez Valdez] Of course.

[Escalona] Perfect! How did the Angolans' money get into that account?

[Martinez Valdez] After the deal involving the radios at the end of 1988—in November 1988.

[Escalona] In November 1988. How much money did the Angolans send?
[Martinez Valdez] The Angolans transferred $508,285.

[Escalona] When?
[Martinez Valdez] Approximately in January 1988.

[Escalona] In January 1988. Did you travel to Panama?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] You bought the equipment?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] How much did the equipment cost?
[Martinez Valdez] A little over $435,000.

[Escalona] How much was left?
[Martinez Valdez] The difference was approximately 35 or 15...

[Escalona, interrupting] You do not know? Did you not deposit the difference in the bank?
[Martinez Valdez] No, because we paid a commission to the foreigner who made the transaction.

[Escalona] A commission. How much did you deposit in the bank?
[Martinez Valdez] Approximately $50,000.

[Escalona] Why did you deposit it in the bank?
[Martinez Valdez] Because I was following Ochoa's orders.

[Escalona] So you set up an international fund?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] A Nicaraguan-Angolan fund? Did the Angolans ever ask you to return that money, the difference?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Why?
[Martinez Valdez] I do not know.

[Escalona] Did they know about that surplus money?
[Martinez Valdez] I do not know. We...

[Escalona, interrupting] So by then your account totaled how much?
[Martinez Valdez] Approximately $160,000.

[Escalona] $160,000. When did your account begin to increase again?
[Martinez Valdez] That account began to increase again when Ochoa gave me $40,000 here in Cuba.

[Escalona] Here in Cuba?
[Martinez Valdez] Here in Cuba.

[Escalona] After the mission was accomplished?
[Martinez Valdez] After the mission was accomplished.

[Escalona] Where did the $40,000 come from?
[Martinez Valdez] I believe that it came from the Angolan business.

[Escalona] From the Angolan business. Were the Angolan business profits not earmarked to increase mission funds?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Yes or no?
[Martinez Valdez] I do not know, Comrade Prosecutor.

[Escalona] Were you not Ochoa's field assistant?
[Martinez Valdez] No, I worked.... [changes thought] His field assistant was Colonel [name indistinct].

[Escalona] What was your job?
[Martinez Valdez] I was in charge of receiving the money and depositing it in Panama.

[Escalona] That was all?

[Martinez Valdez] That was all.

[Escalona] Your mission in Angola consisted of that?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes. I was involved in the drug trafficking business during the entire time that I was in Angola.

[Escalona] How long.... [changes thought]. Did you receive a medal for fulfilling an international mission in Angola?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] During the final stage?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] How long were you actually in Angola?
[Martinez Valdez] Not quite 2 months.

[Escalona] Not quite...

[Martinez Valdez, interrupting] Not quite 2 months.

[Escalona] Who brought you the medal?
[Martinez Valdez] Antonio brought it to me; Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan.

[Escalona] Ah, Antonio, the colonel. Do you believe that therefore you have fulfilled an international mission?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Did you return the medal?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] I wonder, what about the 300,000, the more than 300,000 Cubans who have honorably fulfilled an international mission? Are you equal to them?

[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Did you fulfill your duty to fight in Ethiopia?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, I fought.

[Escalona] What happened in Angola?
[Martinez Valdez] Ochoa sent me, sent me, sent me [repeats himself] to fulfill other missions.

[Escalona] Martinez, I have a question to ask you. Is the Ochoa with whom you worked in Angola the same Ochoa you saw in Ethiopia?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Why?
[Martinez Valdez] He had changed significantly.

[Escalona] In what sense?
[Martinez Valdez] He had changed the way.... [changes thought] We noticed some arrogance and a lack of political and ideological maturity.

[Escalona] Do you think that he was deteriorating?
[Martinez Valdez] He was changing.

[Escalona] Was he deteriorating in a political sense?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] Fine. Martinez, you came.... [changes thought] Do you wish to tell us who Jaime Tejada is?
[Martinez Valdez] Of course.

[Escalona] Who is he?
[Martinez Valdez] He is a Panamanian who was arranging the weapons purchase for us, and, on other occasions, he bought military equipment for us.

[Escalona] Did he introduce you to Frank Morfa?
[Martinez Valdez] He did not introduce Morfa to me; he talked to me about Frank Morfa.

[Escalona] What did he tell you about Frank Morfa?
[Martinez Valdez] He told me that Frank Morfa was a U.S. citizen of Italian origin who acquired military equipment upon our request.

[Escalona] Did you hold meetings with him?
[Martinez Valdez] I held meetings with Jaime Tejada.

[Escalona] Did you hold meetings with Frank Morfa?
[Martinez Valdez] Never.

[Escalona] How did the idea of money laundering came about?
[Martinez Valdez] During the most recent weapons deal, Jaime Tejada told us that Morfa was a very rich and influential man in the United States. He also said that Morfa had acquired some money through exaggerating the number of invoices, and he had no way of justifying this. Therefore, he wanted to invest the money into the purchase of equipment, and he proposed to buy some in Nicaragua and some in Cuba.

[Escalona] Martinez, tell me, why did Jaime Tejada bring this topic up with you?

[Martinez Valdez] Why?

[Escalona] Why did Jaime Tejada propose this to you?
[Martinez Valdez] He raised this topic in my presence...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did you present yourself as a drug trafficker or a money launderer? Why did he bring this up with you?
[Martinez Valdez] He discussed this with me because of relations that had been established since 1984.

[Escalona] These relations involved the purchase of weapons, right?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, we also had obtained some equipment illegally—in other words, some types of military equipment that are not available through the usual means. Thus, already...

[Escalona, interrupting] Like what?
[Martinez Valdez] Some equipment, some night-vision goggles.

[Escalona] What does that have to do with drug trafficking and money laundering?
[Martinez Valdez] No, the question that you asked is why Jaime Tejada had approached me with this. My answer is that Jaime Tejada regarded me as a person who was involved in the illegal purchase of military equipment.

[Escalona] But this equipment had nothing to do with drug trafficking?
[Martinez Valdez] It has nothing to do with drug trafficking.

[Escalona] So why did he bring this up with you?
[Martinez Valdez] Because the money laundering, as he saw it.... [changes thought] I repeat that there was some money that Morfa obtained through padding invoices and that he needed to get rid of.

[Escalona] Did you give Jaime Tejada an answer?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] What did you do?
[Martinez Valdez] I consulted Ochoa.

[Escalona] What did Ochoa tell you to do?
[Martinez Valdez] To maintain the contact.

[Escalona] To maintain the contact for what purpose?
[Martinez Valdez] Apparently so that he could consult with someone.

[Escalona] To consult with whom?
[Martinez Valdez] I do not know.

[Escalona] Ciro Moscoso?

[Martinez Valdez] Ciro Moscoso?
[Escalona] Yes.

[Martinez Valdez] He is a Panamanian.

[Escalona] Who is he? What does he do?
[Martinez Valdez] He is a Panamanian who was working in customs at the airport in Panama and lost his job. We established good relations with him.

[Escalona] Why?
[Martinez Valdez] We knew him because he worked with a group of Cubans in Panama. He told me that he knew someone who might be able to help me.

[Escalona] Who might be able to help you. And he introduced you to Fabio Pareja?
[Martinez Valdez] He introduced me to the Colombian Fabio Pareja.

[Escalona] What did the Colombian tell you? That he would help you?
[Martinez Valdez] The Colombian said yes, that he could help.

[Escalona] That he could help you?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] In the transfer of weapons?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] And when was drug trafficking brought up?
[Martinez Valdez] We discussed drug trafficking afterward. During these meetings...

[Escalona, interrupting] What do you mean by afterward?
[Martinez Valdez] When I went to a meeting in Havana.

[Escalona] To a meeting in Havana? With whom did you meet?
[Martinez Valdez] With Tony de la Guardia. Ochoa sent me to that meeting in April 1988.

[Escalona] In April?
[Martinez Valdez] 1988.

[Escalona] 1988. Who participated in that meeting?
[Martinez Valdez] The people who initially participated in that meeting.... [changes thought] I had arrived from Angola and went to Tony de la Guardia's house.

[Escalona] Who participated in that meeting?

[Martinez Valdez] In the meeting?
[Escalona] Yes.

[Martinez Valdez] The first meeting was attended by four Colombians and three Cubans.

[Escalona] What decisions were reached at that meeting?
[Martinez Valdez] During that meeting the topics of dollars and establishing a cocaine processing plant in Cuba were discussed.

[Escalona] A cocaine processing plant?
[Martinez Valdez] In Cuba.

[Escalona] Who raised the subject?
[Martinez Valdez] The Colombians.

[Escalona] They raised the possibility...
[Martinez Valdez, interrupting] They came to persuade us that this idea...

[Escalona continues] ...of building a factory in Cuba.

[Martinez Valdez] They came to persuade us to do that.

[Escalona] To whom did they propose the idea?
[Martinez Valdez] To Amado Padron.

[Escalona] To Amado Padron. What did you contribute to that meeting?

[Martinez Valdez] What did you say?

[Escalona] What did you do there?
[Martinez Valdez] As I have already said, Ochoa sent me to see Tony de la Guardia because Tony had been invited to a meeting and to visit [Colombian drug trafficker] Pablo Escobar's farm in Colombia. Tony was not going to be able to accept the invitation because of his rank and position. Ochoa, therefore, sent me in Tony's place.

[Escalona] That is the beginning of your links with the drug trafficking world?
[Martinez Valdez] That is correct.

[Escalona] You did so consciously?
[Martinez Valdez] That is correct.

[Escalona] You did so on orders from your chief?
[Martinez Valdez] That is correct.

[Escalona] The defendant Arnaldo Ochoa?
[Martinez Valdez] That is correct.

[Escalona] Moreover, you did so to create a cocaine laboratory or processing plant in Cuba?
[Martinez Valdez] No. That topic was raised...

[Escalona, interrupting] They [the Colombians] proposed that idea. What else did they propose?

[Martinez Valdez] They proposed the processing plant. They also made a proposal regarding a very modern machine with which they could print very good counterfeit U.S. dollars.

[Escalona] What else did they propose?
[Martinez Valdez] They suggested sending a boat...

[Escalona, interrupting] What did you say? What did you say at that meeting?

[Martinez Valdez] What?

[Escalona] You were Ochoa's representative at the meeting?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] What did you say at the meeting?
[Martinez Valdez] At this meeting I.... [changes thought] Amado Padron headed this meeting, and I was consulted there about the cocaine factory, if it could.... [changes thought] Padron responded that this could not be done in Cuba, that this was unthinkable, that it had to be done elsewhere. He turned to me and asked if something could be done at my boss' place.

[Escalona] Your boss' place? What did you tell him?
[Martinez Valdez] That I was going to consult with some people.

[Escalona] Did you?
[Martinez Valdez] No. I said...

[Escalona, interrupting] What month was that?
[Martinez Valdez] This was in April 1988.

[Escalona] All right. Did you already have a Colombian passport at that time?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] Who gave it to you?
[Martinez Valdez] Fabel Pareja.

[Escalona] Had Ochoa instructed you to get a Colombian passport?
[Martinez Valdez] They [not further identified] suggested it to me; I consulted Ochoa and he said yes.

[Escalona] How did you consult Ochoa if Ochoa was in...

[Martinez Valdez, interrupting] Because that was in 1987, and Ochoa had not yet left for...

[Escalona, interrupting] Yes, he had not yet left for Angola. You came to Havana and consulted him?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] And did he say yes?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] [He said] that you should get the Colombian passport? Then it was at that meeting that the decision on the boat was made?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] What boat was that?
[Martinez Valdez] The "Jennifer."

[Escalona] The "Jennifer," but the trip was not made.

[Martinez Valdez] The trip was not made.

[Escalona] Did you make a commitment at that meeting to obtain the paper for the counterfeit money?
[Martinez Valdez] At that meeting I made the commitment to relay to Ochoa, that is, I asked Padron to ask Ochoa if he could make the arrangements for the money over there.

[Escalona] What do you mean by over there?
[Martinez Valdez] Where [word indistinct] ah, ah, in, in Angola.

[Escalona] Angola. Did you have Angolan paper currency?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Did you realize that?
[Martinez Valdez] No, but Ochoa told me from the beginning that it was impossible, that that could not be obtained. There was no further talk about that.

[Escalona] There was no further talk about that? What did Amado Padron say at that meeting?
[Martinez Valdez] Amado Padron headed the meeting and told the Colombian drug traffickers—the four Colombians— that the matter of the cocaine laboratory was impossible and that consultations would have to be made about the money. The possibility of laundering money was discussed and there was talk about the boat...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who talked about laundering? Did you agree to money laundering in Cuba?
[Martinez Valdez] No, no.

[Escalona] So it definitely boiled down to the boat?
[Martinez Valdez] No. It boiled down to the boat and money laundering.

[Escalona] What money laundering?
[Martinez Valdez] There was a second meeting the next day.

[Escalona] A second meeting with the same people?
[Martinez Valdez] And a third one.

[Escalona] With the same people?
[Martinez Valdez] Not with the same people. The second meeting was held with two Mexicans and two U.S. citizens.

[Escalona] Who took you to see those people?
[Martinez Valdez] Amado Padron. The meeting took place at the Hemingway Marina, in one of the houses belonging to...

[Escalona, interrupting] Were they drug traffickers?
[Martinez Valdez] I do not know if they were drug traffickers.

[Escalona] What were they then? They were there to talk to you about drug trafficking.

[Martinez Valdez] What?
[Escalona] They were there to talk to you about drug trafficking.

[Martinez Valdez] No, we discussed money laundering.

[Escalona] Who was to launder the money, Padron or you?
[Martinez Valdez] The money-laundering idea was raised by a Mexican who suggested working with some Colombians to carry out a money laundering operation in the United States.

[Escalona] What did you Cubans have to do with that?
[Martinez Valdez] Amado Padron was the man involved.
[Escalona] Amado Padron, very well. Tell me something, Martinez, did you travel to Colombia after that?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes. After those three meetings, I went there. Ochoa was already at the [word indistinct].

[Escalona] How did you inform Ochoa that you were going to Colombia?
[Martinez Valdez] He already knew that I was going to Colombia.

[Escalona] How did he know?
[Martinez Valdez] Because he sent me there to replace...

[Escalona, interrupting] Well, anything could happen in a meeting among distinguished men of that trade. Either the others might attend or might not attend, the negotiations could be called off, anything could happen. Did you call him [Ochoa] to tell him that you were going or was that not necessary?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] You acted on your own?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes. After that I left and the meeting took place.

[Escalona] You left to meet with the illustrious Escobar?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes, with Escobar.

[Escalona] Did you reach any agreements there?

[Martinez Valdez] Escobar was not interested in the money-laundering business. He was interested in the boat. He requested approximately ten surface-to-air missiles and that a plane be ready in Cuba so that it could be sent for him in time of need.

[Escalona] What did you reply?
[Martinez Valdez] I told him that I would discuss it, except for the boat business.

[Escalona] With whom did Escobar believe that you would discuss it?
[Martinez Valdez] That was not mentioned.

[Escalona] I specifically ask you: Did you tell him that you were going to discuss this with...

[Martinez Valdez, interrupting] With no one. I just told him that the matter would be discussed.

[Escalona] Just like that?
[Martinez Valdez] Just like that.

[Escalona] With the Holy Spirit or with the Virgin Mary?
[Martinez Valdez] No, not with the Holy Spirit. I want to explain something. During Fernando's [not further identified] visit to Havana, when the four Colombians visited Havana, they had a good image of Cuba. Fernando...

[Escalona, interrupting] Martinez, please do not give us a long story because we will never finish. What other Cubans participated besides Padron?

[Martinez Valdez] What?

[Escalona] What other Cuban participated besides Padron?
[Martinez Valdez] (Eduardo) and (Willy).

[Escalona] That is when you discussed the drug processing laboratory?

[Escalona] Did Pablo Escobar by chance mention a falling out with Cuban cocaine dealers who failed him?
[Martinez Valdez] He did not tell me about a falling out. He told me that he had been involved in drug trafficking with Cubans and asked if I knew anything about that activity.

[Escalona] He said that he had been involved in that activity. Of course that was not news to you.

[Martinez Valdez] It was news to me; I did not know that.

[Escalona] No, it was not news to you. You (?had already met) with Amado Padron, [name indistinct], with (Willy) and (Eduardo). Why was that news?
[Martinez Valdez] Amado did not tell me who they were.

[Escalona] Why did you meet with Colombians and other foreigners to discuss money laundering, drug trafficking, and other issues?
[Martinez Valdez] I met with them, but I did not know who they were.

[Escalona] You believe now that there were others?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] You waited for the boat in Havana?
[Martinez Valdez] No, what I waited for in Havana was a telephone call so that [words indistinct].

[Escalona] You were to leave on the boat; you boarded and sailed.

[Martinez Valdez] I was to board that boat, but the boat never arrived.

[Escalona] The boat did not arrive. Did you remain in Havana?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] For how long?
[Martinez Valdez] A few days.

[Escalona] How did Ochoa inform you of the outcome of his efforts?
[Martinez Valdez] Ochoa telephoned me from Angola to ask me about the drug business; he knew about the boat. He had found out about it in Havana during a working trip.

[Escalona] Did you explain the situation to him?
[Martinez Valdez] I explained that our plans had changed, that an airplane would be used because the plans involving the boat would never work.

[Escalona] Did he agree?
[Martinez Valdez] He agreed.

[Escalona] Why did you travel to Panama in August and September?
[Martinez Valdez] To plan the airplane trip.

[Escalona] The airplane trip. Who were you representing? Tony de la Guardia or Arnaldo Ochoa?
[Martinez Valdez] I represented Tony de la Guardia's group; this is what the Colombians believed.

[Escalona] Tony de la Guardia's group. You replaced Tony, the person Escobar invited, right? I assume that you are a member of Tony's group.

[Martinez Valdez] Yes, although they had never met Tony.

[Escalona] Why did the Colombian Fabel Pareja give you 5,000 pesos in Panama?

[Martinez Valdez] Fabel gave me 5,000 pesos because at one of the meetings I demanded money for expenses and he gave me 5,000 pesos for three people.

[Escalona] Are those the rules among drug traffickers?
[Martinez Valdez] No, but we did not have the money for the trip.

[Escalona] Was it in October that you traveled to Colombia again?
[Martinez Valdez] I do not know exactly if it was to Colombia, because Fabel Pareja.... [changes thought] Before that I held a talk with Escobar's brother, and he made it clear that he disagreed with the destination of the merchandise. He insisted on talking to me. Then Fabel came in on a private flight and we left through Paitilla Airport in Panama to a place that might have been in Colombia. I am not sure because it was in the middle of [words indistinct].

[Escalona] What did [word indistinct] say?
[Martinez Valdez] To Garcia. [sentence as heard]

[Escalona] What was the meeting for?
[Martinez Valdez] The meeting was for Garcia to say that the place chosen to [word indistinct] the merchandise was located to the south, southwest of Key Sal, very far from the coast. Efforts were under way to claim a boat which the border guards had seized in June in Oriente.

[Escalona] What was your response?
[Martinez Valdez] I told him that I did not know anything about the boat and that the safest place to conduct the operation was outside Cuban waters. Ochoa said on several occasions that it was important to conduct this operation outside Cuban territory.

[Escalona] In March and April you returned to Panama?
[Martinez Valdez] No, in March 1989, I...

[Escalona, interrupting] After meeting with Escobar's brother in a place you presume was Colombia—you did not know what country you were in, right?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] You returned to Cuba?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] There is another thing, Martinez. There was a meeting in May in which a number of topics were discussed. At that May meeting, the laboratory, the money, and the paper for counterfeiting were discussed. When did you meet with Ochoa? When did Ochoa learn about those things?
[Martinez Valdez] Ochoa learned about this after I returned from my trip to meet with Escobar. I met Ochoa in Havana during a working visit and briefed him

on how the entire operation was going to be carried out. This took place at his residence, where he gave me his approval. That was approximately in late June; the ship was to arrive in July.

[Escalona] When did you leave to sell the diamonds in Panama?
[Martinez Valdez] In March 1989.

[Escalona] In March—that is what I thought. Did you go there only to sell diamonds?
[Martinez Valdez] I went to deliver the diamonds and to deposit the $40,000 that Ochoa gave me.

[Escalona] Forty. What for?
[Martinez Valdez] To deposit it into the account.

[Escalona] Into the Angolan-Nicaraguan account?
[Martinez Valdez] Precisely.

[Escalona] Where did the $40,000 come from?
[Martinez Valdez] From business in Angola.

[Escalona] Martinez, let us return to a topic that I believe is most important to this country for what it represents and because of the importance of the issues being discussed at this trial. You say that you went to meet with Pablo Escobar as representative of Tony de la Guardia or in the place of Tony de la Guardia, who was the one who had received the invitation.

[Martinez Valdez] That is what Ochoa told me.

[Escalona] Yes. Martinez, did you wear a uniform while there?
[Martinez Valdez] On certain occasions.

[Escalona] Martinez, explain to us how you obtained a passport to leave Cuba.

[Martinez Valdez] Ever since meeting Tony de la Guardia, we applied for visas to travel abroad through Amado Padron's office. Padron obtained those visas by applyng for them at an office they have called (Melbar).

[Escalona] Martinez, for whom did you serve as an envoy during your meeting with Escobar?
[Martinez Valdez] I served as an envoy for a group of Cuban officials involved in drug-trafficking activities.

[Escalona] Of a group of Cubans...

[Martinez, interrupting] Of Cuban officials, state officials.

[Escalona] Was that a society?
[Martinez Valdez] No.

[Escalona] Who was the leader?
[Martinez Valdez] They thought it was a society.

[Escalona] Who was the leader?
[Martinez Valdez] That...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who was leader in Cuba? You know who.
[Martinez Valdez] Tony de la Guardia.

[Escalona] Did you feel you represented Tony de la Guardia or Arnaldo Ochoa?
[Martinez Valdez] I felt I was a representative of Tony de la Guardia. They always saw me as member of the group of Amado Padron and Tony de la Guardia.

[Escalona] But if you represented Tony de la Guardia, why did you need Ochoa's authorization or feel a need to consult on problems with him?
[Martinez Valdez] Because Ochoa was my immediate boss, and I consulted with him on everything.

[Escalona] What was Tony de la Guardia to you?
[Martinez Valdez] Everything I discussed with Tony de la Guardia I consulted with Ochoa.

[Escalona] Who did Escobar believe you were?
[Martinez Valdez] Escobar thought I was the representative of a group of Cuban officials determined to...

[Escalona, interrupting] Martinez, stop playing games with me. What exactly is a group of Cuban officials? Whom did you represent? Whom did Escobar think you represented?
[Martinez Valdez] Comrade Prosecutor, that issue was never brought up; it was never discussed. We never talked about a boss. We never talked about a...

[Escalona, interrupting] What about you—who impressed Escobar with all the attention given to his people, his boys, when they came to Cuba—what did you believe Escobar thought concerning who you were in his relationship with you?
[Martinez Valdez] That there was a group of Cubans...

[Escalona, interrupting] I want to know who you were.
[Martinez Valdez] An official with enough authority to do what I was doing.

[Escalona] What kind of official?
[Martinez Valdez] A Cuban Government official.

[Escalona] Of the Cuban Government. So, you believe Escobar was convinced of that.

[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] And you made sure he continued to believe that, did you not?

[Martinez Valdez] What?

[Escalona] You made sure he continued to believe that, because that improved your image in Escobar's eyes, correct? Being a representative of the Cuban Government is not the same as being a representative of a group of officials, which is unimportant. It is not like being a member of a lodge or church group. A group of officials is nothing, but a Cuban Government representative is something.

[Escalona] Martinez, what rank were you then?
[Martinez Valdez] Captain.

[Escalona] All the time you were running around Panama and Colombia and during your close relationship with Escobar and the drug traffickers, did you feel you were a FAR officer?
[Martinez Valdez] Not really.

[Escalona] Who did you feel you were?
[Martinez Valdez] I felt like someone who had strayed from the path as a result of immaturity; I felt we had lost, or rather I personally had lost my moral and my...

[Escalona, interrupting] Martinez, when did you begin feeling this way?
[Martinez Valdez] I began feeling this way after everything became known. But that...

[Escalona, interrupting] Ah, only now?
[Martinez Valdez] Yes.

[Escalona] And when you were traveling the world?
[Martinez Valdez] I was also concerned then.

[Escalona] Not as much, though. Can you imagine what would have happened if a FAR captain were arrested—as an envoy of I-do-not-know-what officials—together with Mr Escobar?
[Martinez Valdez] It would have been catastrophic.

[Escalona] For whom?
[Martinez Valdez] For Cuba, for the fatherland.

[Escalona] Martinez, what does the fatherland mean to you?
[Martinez Valdez] This is my homeland.

[Escalona] This is the homeland you blemished. Martinez, do you realize you have placed the country and the Revolution on the verge of losing what is most precious and what has cost 30 years of blood and sacrifice? The people's prestige, dignity, and morals. Can you imagine you could have easily been the scapegoat that confirmed all the campaigns the imperialists have carried out year after year against this Revolution?
[Espinosa] Martinez Valdez, answer the questions.

[Toste] Are you aware you were involved in one of the most serious, adventurous, and irresponsible acts ever committed?
[Martinez] Yes.

[Toste] At this very moment, what experience and analysis have you drawn from these acts?
[Martinez Valdez] We seriously endagered the prestige and morals of the Cuban Revolution precisely when the enemy is carrying out a number of campaigns against us, and we failed to realize this because we had all become involved in this outside activity.

[Toste] Mr President, one more question. Martinez, do you accept the charges?
[Martinez Valdez] I do.

[Toste] Do you accept the accusation made by the...

[Martinez Valdez, interrupting] I accept the accusation made by the jury.

[Espinosa] Accused Martinez, you may leave.

[Martinez Valdez] Thank you.

[Espinosa] Defendant Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan, take your place facing the tribunal. Defendant, you are entitled by law to testify. Do you wish to testify?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Espinosa] Answer the questions the prosecutor will ask you, always looking toward the tribunal.

[Escalona] Defendant Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan, what was your job in Angola?
[Rodriguez] I was the mission chief's executive aide.

[Escalona] Does this mean that despite the rather strange conditions under which that mission operated, the executive aide in this situation had the same duties as an executive aide in any other Armed Forces unit?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] Did you work often with Ochoa? Did you travel with him?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] Were you aware of things taken in or out of his office? Did you receive secret documents and generally share his responsibilities?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] Good. Were you responsible for the secret documents?
[Rodriguez] I do not understand.

[Escalona] Did you do that specific job?
[Rodriguez] I do not understand.

[Escalona] Did you do that job?
[Rodriguez] Yes, I did that job.

[Escalona] How could you supervise Captain Llicas, Amelio, and so? Were you a sort of director in the black market [candonga]?

[Rodriguez] No. I never supervised Amelio, [name indistinct], or other people, nor was I a central figure in the black market. I was only engaged in the business toward the end of October 1988, as Gen Ochoa explained. I received what Llicas collected from the sale of...

[Escalona, interrupting] Defendant, limit your answers to a yes or no; when I wish a broader explanation, I will ask for it. Your statement was 14 pages long. You received the money Llicas collected?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] How much did you collect monthly?
[Rodriguez] It would be difficult to establish how much I collected monthly. I can give you an overall figure.

[Escalona] Let's hear it. How much is in that account? Did you deposit the money in a bank?
[Rodriguez] No. I put those funds in Gen Ochoa's desk.

[Escalona] Directly in Gen Ochoa's desk?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] Did any accountant check the money?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Escalona] Did anyone control that money?
[Rodriguez] I.

[Escalona] Are you an accountant?
[Rodriguez] I am not an account, but...

[Escalona, interrupting] You are the executive aide.

[Rodriguez] No. I kept an account in a notebook.

[Escalona] Did you bring that notebook to Cuba?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] Did you give it to a financier?
[Rodriguez] [Name indistinct] has it.

[Escalona] How much is in the account?
[Rodriguez] Prior to our leaving Angola, the highest figure was 17,190 pesos.

[Escalona] When you refer to pesos, what are you talking about?
[Rodriguez] Dollars.

[Escalona] $7,190 [as heard].

[Rodriguez] Yes. If I may explain, when we left...

[Escalona, interrupting] Yes.

[Rodriguez] When we left...

[Escalona, interrupting] Briefly. Be brief.

[Rodriguez] Yes. When we began this business transaction, we made two changes. In other words, at the beginning, when there was $17,000, we took $10,000 and exchanged it for kwanzas, on the black market, of course.

[Escalona] Defendant, I am not interested in all the steps taken, one by one. I am interested in learning this: You had $17,000 in the account, in Ochoa's desk drawers. Right?
[Rodriguez] In the end? In other words, in the end, when Gen Ochoa left...

[Escalona, interrupting] I am not talking about the end. How long were you there, as an assistant?
[Rodriguez] I was there for 14 months.

[Escalona] Fourteen months. What was the situation there when you arrived?
[Rodriguez] I do not know. I was not aware of any situation there at that time.

[Escalona] There were no such business deals?
[Rodriguez] There were no such business deals. That business began in October (?1988).

[Escalona] Who was the chief of mission at that time?
[Rodriguez] Gen Ochoa.

[Escalona] When you arrived, Ochoa was already there?
[Rodriguez] Yes, I arrived there together with him.

[Escalona] You went together with him? I am referring to when you arrived there. At that time, was there money in the desk drawers?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Escalona] There was none. How many kwanzas did you exchange for dollars on the black market?
[Rodriguez] How many kwanzas? In total, at the end, of those kwanzas, including everything, we exchanged $61,190.

[Escalona] Why?
[Rodriguez] That is what I gave Gen Ochoa.

[Escalona] Why? Why were those kwanzas exchanged for dollars?
[Rodriguez] Those kwanzas were exchanged for dollars because we knew, there were reports, that in view of an economic recovery, the Angolans were going to mint coins. Therefore, we could not have millions of kwanzas, as this could not be justified.

[Escalona] When you exchanged them for dollars, what did you do with the dollars?
[Rodriguez] We stored them in Gen Ochoa's office.

[Escalona] How much did you store there?
[Rodriguez] We reached $14,000 until he left.

[Escalona] When he left, did you hand him the money?

[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] What about the $24,000 you brought him?
[Rodriguez] Later, when I returned on the 23d [month not specified], I handed him $23,000.

[Escalona] Where did that $23,000 come from?
[Rodriguez] From ongoing deals.

[Escalona] Ongoing deals?
[Rodriguez] From deals with sugar, fish, and rum we had...

[Escalona, interrupting] Money obtained by trading sugar for kwanzas and then trading kwanzas on the black market for dollars?
[Rodriguez] Or trading sugar directly for dollars.

[Escalona] Yes, or directly for dollars. Defendant, did the $24,000 [as heard] belong to the mission?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] Why did you bring it to Cuba?
[Rodriguez] Because he ordered me to bring it to him.

[Escalona] But he was no longer mission head.
[Rodriguez] I was his subordinate.

[Escalona] But he was no longer mission head.
[Rodriguez] That is what he ordered me to do; that is what he ordered me to do through General Pohl.

[Escalona] Did you ask Gen Pohl?
[Rodriguez] No, I left him 30 million kwanzas.

[Escalona] You follow the due obedience principle, do you not? Do you follow the due obedience principle with your superior?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] Even if you know you are violating rules?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Escalona] How many years have you been a FAR member?
[Rodriguez] I do not understand.

[Escalona] How many years have you been a FAR member?
[Rodriguez] Me? For 29 years.

[Escalona] For 29 years. Have you ever seen a unit being managed under such a special style as the one that characterized Ochoa's most recent actions?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Escalona] As a revolutionary, do you believe you fulfilled a mission on this occasion?
[Rodriguez] I do not...

[Escalona, interrupting] Are you satisfied with the mission you carried out in Angola together with defendant Arnaldo Ochoa?
[Rodriguez] At the beginning, I really did...

[Escalona, interrupting] At the beginning?
[Rodriguez] Yes, when I...

[Escalona, interrupting] You were satisfied?
[Rodriguez] Yes, I felt I had complied with my obligations. Today, in view of the current developments and what I have seen here, I, of course, no longer feel that way.

[Escalona] Defendant, did you ever feel an obligation to inform, call, or alert your former military unit—where you used to work before leaving for the mission in Angola—about what was going on in Luanda?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Escalona] Why?
[Rodriguez] I thought we had authorization.

[Escalona] What?
[Rodriguez] I thought we had authorization.

[Escalona] What were you authorized to do? To send an Armed Forces captain to sell sugar on the black market and work with contraband dealers? Do you believe that was authorized? And what becomes of that captain? With your behavior, what have you done to that man who has fulfilled three internationalist missions and has been wounded in combat? You turned him into a black market trafficker in Luanda's black markets. Antonio, how did Ochoa treat you and Martinez? Did he give you many presents?
[Rodriguez] Pardon, I could not hear well.

[Escalona] I asked whether Ochoa gave you many presents.

[Rodriguez] To me? No.

[Escalona] He never gave you a present? Are you sure, Antonio?
[Rodriguez] He gave me 500 pesos once; that is, he gave me 1,000 pesos to pay for some things he had purchased.

[Escalona] When you talk about pesos, you are talking about dollars, correct?
[Rodriguez] Yes, dollars; I am not talking about Cuban pesos. He gave me that money to pay for some things he had purchased at Tony's store. I paid for those things...

[Escalona, interrupting] At whose store?
[Rodriguez] At a store Tony had there. I paid for those things, took the change back to him, and he told me I could keep the change.

[Escalona] So how much did you get?
[Rodriguez] I got $550 or $570.

[Escalona] Defendant, there is a point I really believe deserves deeper analysis. You have been in the Armed Forces for 29 years?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] You have displayed faultless behavior throughout your life?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] You have fulfilled several internationalist missions?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] You have assumed the responsibility of being head of missions abroad?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] You have worked in this ministry for many years?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Escalona] And suddenly, all this was gone; you completely lost your self-critical ability to judge the actions of your superior at the time; you believed everything was all right, that money could be liberally used and that you and your friend could give $47,000 to someone who was no longer head of the mission and who was not the owner of that money, which should have remained at the mission as mission property. Do you believe there is anything condemnable in your actions?
[Rodriguez] They are condemnable...

[Escalona, interrupting] There is nothing punishable...

[Rodriguez, interrupting] They are punishable...

[Escalona, interrupting] Is there any sign showing a serious deterioration in your status as a revolutionary?
[Rodriguez] I believe [sobs]...

[Escalona, interrupting] What did you say? Answer yes or no: Is there any sign of deterioration?
[Rodriguez] Yes, there is deterioration.

[Escalona] That is all for the time being, Mr President.

[Aymeriche] Comrade Rodriguez Estupinan, at any time during your stay in Angola did you keep money at your home or at your office—dollars, kwanzas, [words indistinct]?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Aymeriche] The funds Llicas transferred to you for all these operations: Did you pass these immediately to the offices of the mission chief?
[Rodriguez] Yes.

[Aymeriche] At no time then did you take part in the elephant tusk deals?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Aymeriche] Did you keep any money from these deals?
[Rodriguez] No.

[Aymeriche] Were the diamonds handed over by Llicas directly to you or to Ochoa?
[Rodriguez] He would either give them to me or to my general.

[Aymeriche] Did you also keep any diamonds at home?
[Rodriguez] No, they were kept in a little jar at the general's office.

[Aymeriche] In other words, you kept them in the office?
[Rodriguez] In a drawer at the general's office.

[Aymeriche] Aside from the sugar, meat, and corn flour operations, did you carry out any other operation that you were not instructed to?
[Rodriguez] I told you I did not carry out any meat operations.

[Aymeriche] No, not meat; I said flour, fish, and sugar.
[Rodiguez] Yes, those yes.

[Aymeriche] In light of these events and at this moment, what do you think of your conduct and attitude as a revolutionary?
[Rodriguez] In light of these events and at this moment, I do not know if the comrade attorney general knows or if the tribunal knows this: I, of course reproach my attitude; I consider my attitude as being unworthy, ungrateful, and not meriting the least consideration. I do not consider that my most serious fault was taking part in these businesses. The party's second secretary, the comrade FAR minister, called me and asked for my cooperation to help clarify this case. He dedicated about an hour of his precious time, and I lied to him. I did not tell him what I knew; I falsified the truth. To make matters worse, I wrote Colonel Trutie a note advising him to falsify the truth. I feel that was my main moral mistake, and I feel the whole weight of justice should fall upon me, without compassion, because I have become unworthy.

I have not only betrayed the trust bestowed upon me, because as the comrade prosecutor said [words indistinct] at least to the chief of the mission, because I used to work at the minister's secretariat office. I have also betrayed his trust. With that betrayal, I not only betrayed myself, but I feel I have betrayed our people, I betrayed my comrades, I betrayed my family, and I betrayed the sacred principles of our people. I feel [sobs] that I deserve to be severely punished. That is my opinion.

[Espinosa] The defendant, Rodriguez Estupinian, may now leave. The work of this tribunal is now in recess until 1500 today, 1 July. The accused will remain in their places. The public may leave the room.

Court-Martial of MININT, FAR Officials

PA0407173689 Havana Cubavision Television in Spanish 0033 GMT 3 Jul 89

["Synthesis" of the "second session, part one" of the court-martial of Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and 13 other Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) and Interior Ministry (MININT) officers at the FAR Universal Hall in Havana on 1 July—recorded]

[Text] [Division General Ramon Espinosa Martin] We resume the hearing of the trial. Will the defendant, Antonio de la Guardia Font, stand before the tribunal.

[Espinosa] De la Guardia: The law entitles you to testify. Do you want to testify?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Espinosa] Answer the questions of the prosecutor.

[Brigadier General Juan Escalona Reguera] Defendant Antonio de la Guardia, when did you enter MININT?
[De la Guardia] In 1960.

[Escalona] In 1960. Had you carried out activities against the tyranny?
[De la Guardia] Yes, I participated.

[Escalona] In Cuba?
[De la Guardia] In Cuba, I participated by supporting the directorate, and later in MININT.

[Escalona] How did you enter the ministry?
[De la Guardia] MININT? Through the National Revolutionary Police [PNR].

[Escalona] As of that moment, what post did you hold in MININT?
[De la Guardia] As of that moment, I began to work with Commander (Diaz Arguelles) in the PNR. I then worked in the MININT Instruction Directorate, then with the Border Guard Troops, then with Special Troops, where I served for 18 years.

[Escalona] For 18 years.
[De la Guardia] Later, I was transferred to the (CIMEX) [Cuban Foreign Trade Corporation], where Department Z is located, and later to the intelligence section in 1987.

[Escalona] Defendant, how and through whom, did you initiate your contacts with drug trafficking?
[De la Guardia] In 1987 or late in 1986 through an officer who was my subordinate, Ruiz Poo. He proposed a contact, an operation through one of his relatives who was involved in drug trafficking.

[Escalona] You did this directly through Ruiz?
[De la Guardia] Through Ruiz and his superior officer, Amado Padron.

[Escalona] Did you accept the proposal?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Were you empowered to accept the proposal by yourself or did you consult with anyone?
[De la Guardia] No sir, I was not empowered to do so.

[Escalona] You did not feel you had to consult about such a proposal with anyone?
[De la Guardia] I should have consulted about such a proposal.

[Escalona] What was Ruiz' proposal?
[De la Guardia] Ruiz proposed flying a plane with—I do not remember how much—cocaine, landing it in Varadero, and later transferring the drugs to some boats that would go to the United States.

[Escalona] There was a first operation that was carried out with Amado Padron and Miguel Ruiz, right?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] This proposal was presented to you. Was it carried out?
[De la Guardia] The operation was not [corrects himself] the operation was carried out, but the final destination point was not reached. I think the merchandise did not reach the final destination point, and the operation was not concluded; it was not possible to collect the money. Then, the same officer proposed another operation.

[Escalona] Who proposed that?
[De la Guardia] The same officer proposed that we carry out another operation with the same person, with the same relative.

[Escalona] How was that operation carried out?
[De la Guardia] The operation was carried out through Varadero.

[Escalona] Exactly like the first one?
[De la Guardia] Exactly like the first operation.

[Escalona] Was the operation completed?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] The operation was completed. That was the second operation you carried out.
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] What was the difference in time between the first and the second operation?
[De la Guardia] I cannot give you details regarding the dates; however, I think it would not have been more than 1 or 2 months. I really do not know. I cannot tell you the details. I do not want to tell you something that may confuse you later on.

[Escalona] There were not.... [changes thought] Did all operations involve cocaine?

[De la Guardia] No, there was one involving marijuana, which was proposed to me by Elmer, the chief of the naval section.

[Escalona] Elmer is Alexis Lago, right?
[De la Guardia] Yes, Alexis Lago. I do not recall the exact date. However, at that time, he was also supposed to come from the south, with a boat. I was told he was coming from Jamaica and would sail around the island, and then enter [Cuban] waters through Pinar del Rio. I believe the boat sailed all the way through Bahia de Cadiz Key, where it remained for a few days. Then, the marijuana was delivered to some motorboats which picked up the marijuana and transported it to the United States.

[Escalona] How did Alexis Lago became involved in drug trafficking? Thus far, you [words indistinct] Ruiz, who together, with Amado offered to put you in contact with Ruiz' relative in the United States.
[De la Guardia] Alexis Lagos, as I said...

[Escalona, interrupting] So the operation was carried out. Is that the first operation you were aware of?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Then, how did Alexis Lago, who knows nothing about that, get to offer you...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Let me explain this to you.

[Escalona continues] ...to offer you [words indistinct]?
[De la Guardia] Let me explain this. The relations we had were with some boatmen who sometimes brought to Cuba goods—not drugs, but various goods lacking in Cuba—from the United States. These were people who were linked to drug traffickers. In addition...

[Escalona, interrupting] Were you aware of that?
[De la Guardia] Pardon?

[Escalona] Were you aware of that beforehand?
[De la Guardia] Yes, we were aware of that. Moreover, some officers told me these people.... [changes thought] At that time, the relationship between the officers and the boatmen were not so close. The relations between them were just beginning. However, the officers heard comments and thus knew these boatmen could also get involved in these operations. Later on, as the relationship developed, the boatmen expressed their desire to participate in some operations. After getting to know the boatmen, he had more confidence and strengthened the links with them. Therefore, I think this is how Comrade Alexis Lago received the boatmen's proposal and accepted the operation. I think this is how he established the links.

[Escalona] There is another officer who is involved in drug trafficking. She is Captain Rosa Maria.
[De la Guardia] Rosa Maria Abierno.

[Escalona] She also gave you a proposal?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Was her proposal the same as the one received from [words indistinct]?
[De La Guardia] Her proposal also required an air shipment.

[Escalona] A shipment by air?
[De la Guardia] Yes, it required an air rather than a sea shipment.

[Escalona] Was this shipment made?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Was the shipment paid for?
[De la Guardia] Yes, that shipment was paid for.

[Escalona] Did officer Abierno also present a proposal because she was told about the other proposals by the boatmen, or did she do so because she began to notice other MC [department within Interior Ministry responsible for finding ways to counter U.S. embargo against Cuba] officers were doing so?
[De la Guardia] I believe she thought.... [changes thought] First, I imagine that somebody must have proposed it to her, and she also must have had some type of information. She also could have decided to present the proposal on her own initiative, but I doubt it. Nevertheless, she had to have some information about the situation that allowed her to present this proposal to me.

[Escalona] According to the information we have, another officer appeared: Eduardo [Diaz Izquierdo].
[De la Guardia] Eduardo already worked with Amado; I imagine that while working together they talked about it, and Eduardo took.... [changes thought] The proposals were never presented by Eduardo. Eduardo would give them to Amado, and Amado would give them to me.

[Escalona] We are talking about operations that took place in 1987?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Were new operations held in 1988?
[De la Guardia] I can recall two operations held in 1988. Reading the court papers, I noted that more drug runs [bombardeo] were made by some officers in Las Villas. I do not recall these operations; I would not like to [words indistinct] but I do not recall authorizing these drug runs in Las Villas. The ones I authorized in 1988 were given to Amado Padron.

[Escalona] In 1988?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] You did not authorize Sanchez Lima to undertake a marijuana operation in 1988?
[De la Guardia] A marijuana operation in 1988? I do not remember it, but it could be. I do not want to be categorical in my response. Anyway, if I authorized the first shipment, I am as guilty and responsible as if I had authorized 15, 14, or 13 operations. If I recall correctly,

I only authorized Amado Padron to undertake two operations in 1988. I may have given my authorization for that marijuana operation you mentioned, but I do not remember it. I can tell you that I remember...

[Escalona, interrupting] Special circumstances occurred during this operation...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] It could be...

[Escalona continues] ...because it entails a ship that ran into oil problems in the southern part of the island. Some of your officers—those who worked in your department—had to take some actions because the ship's crew members were arrested...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] I remember...

[Escalona, interrupting] Your officers took these actions and went to cover up [tirar un manto] and get the crew members out of there?

[De la Guardia] I was informed of the incident after it had taken place, but I did not know the ship had marijuana. I had not...

[Escalona, interrupting] According to the information we have, over 30,000 pesos were paid. These 30,000 pesos were given to you.
[De la Guardia] I learned of the incident after it occurred. I was told the ship had oil problems. I had no knowledge of an operation. I was informed that a ship used by them had experienced oil problems and that the Coast Guard had intercepted it and then released it. I was not informed that the ship had marijuana or...

[Escalona, interrupting] You say that in 1988 you authorized two operations?
[De la Guardia] To the best of my recollection, in 1988 I authorized Amado Padron to undertake two operations.

[Escalona] You authorized Amado Padron?
[De la Guardia] I say this to you because in 1988...

[Escalona, interrupting] But five operations appear here in the court papers.
[De la Guardia] Yes. There were some drug runs I do not recall. I mean [words indistinct] but I do not recall...

[Escalona, interrupting] There are three operations coordinated by Sanchez Lima in 1988. You [words indistinct].
[De la Guardia] Those are the operations I do not recall.

[Escalona] This was your position as the head of a small department within the ministry. A small department that, by this time, was mostly funded by drug trafficking?
[De la Guardia] That is correct.

[Escalona] Could it have been possible for Sanchez Lima or other officers to have undertaken operations without your knowledge?

[De la Guardia] It is possible, because they were the ones who had direct relations with the boatmen. I had no direct contact with those people.

[Escalona] So in addition to having a drug-trafficking center in Cuba, we also could have had sort of drug-trafficking subsidiaries? Could your officers have themselves become operation centers?
[De la Guardia] I guess they could have. I could not control them in that sense. I should have, but I did not.

[Escalona] I believe this is much more dangerous for the country.
[De la Guardia] I guess so.

[Escalona] Did any of those officers feel capable of carrying out an operation?
[De la Guardia] I did not think they would without first consulting with me.

[Escalona] In this marijuana case we are talking about, which Sanchez Lima coordinated, there is another significant thing. The boats remained in Cuba and were sold to the National Institute of Tourism [INTUR]. Do you remember that?
[De la Guardia] Yes, I remember.

[Escalona] Did the income you received as a result of the sale of boats to INTUR reach your hands?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Did you report that sale?
[De la Guardia] It must have been reported.

[Escalona] During the first 6 months of 1988, there was a new operation. It was coordinated with an aircraft in Varadero and made use of the mechanisms that had been created. Was 400,000 pesos paid here?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Then in May and June, they went to pick up the 400,000 pesos in Mexico?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] You know about that?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] In 1988, there is another operation [corrects himself] there are three operations—in October, November, and December—which were coordinated by Sanchez Lima. One operation involved Prendes, one involved Elmer, and the other one involved only Sanchez Lima, who also participated in the first operation. It also involved a boat, which remained the entire day in Cadiz Bay. In other words, it went out at night for a drug run 30 miles to the north but was not paid. He said they went on the drug run, were unable to pick up drugs, and returned empty. That boat also remained in Cuba?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] Sanchez Lima then undertook another operation. He also maintained a boat in Bahia Cadiz Key during the day, and at night a drug run was made 15 miles from Key Sal [Salt Key]. This operation was paid for. In December, Sanchez Lima and Luis Del Grande stayed a day in Puntaicaco, and made a drug run 25 miles from Cross Key. Elmer, Prendes, and Sanchez Lima participated in this operation.
[De la Guardia] I do not remember all of that.

[Escalona] Is it possible that Sanchez Lima controlled a branch of the MC?
[De la Guardia] That is possible.

[Escalona] When did you begin your relationship with him?
[De la Guardia] When we were transferred to the CIMEX intelligence department, and Sanchez Lima worked for an office of CIMEX known as Interconsul. Then when the comrades of the ministry left CIMEX, they were transferred to my department.

[Escalona] Then you received Sanchez Lima, which is when you began your relationship with him?
[De la Guardia] That is where my relationship with Sanchez Lima began.

[Escalona] But nothing seems to indicate that Sanchez Lima asked you for authorization as chief of the department to conduct operations.
[De la Guardia] He asked me for authorization for some of them.

[Escalona] In 1988, he did not ask you for permission.
[De la Guardia] Not in 1988.

[Escalona] But there were three operations?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] What is the basis for your confidence in Sanchez Lima, his operations, and his honesty?
[De la Guardia] I never thought that he would do something that I would not be told about beforehand.

[Escalona] Did you have any mechanisms for controlling your officers' activities?
[De la Guardia] No, that was impossible; I had no mechanisms; I had only myself to rely on.

[Escalona] How many operations can you recall from 1989?
[De la Guardia] Mr Prosecutor, I recall two during 1989. There might have been other operations, but I do not remember any.

[Escalona] Two? In 1989? This year?
[De la Guardia] In 1989, I recall three involving Amado Padron and one involving Elmer.

[Escalona] One with whom?

[De la Guardia] From Elmer's and Sanchez Lima's groups.

[Escalona] But you do not recall any operation coordinated by Rosa Maria Abierno?
[De la Guardia] Well, when I say Amado Padron I also mean Rosa Maria, because Padron was Rosa Maria's, Eduardo Diaz', and Alex's [Miguel Ruiz Poo's] boss. Therefore, when I mentioned Amado alone...

[Escalona, interrupting] Does that mean that Padron was involved in all the operations?
[De la Guardia] In all those that concerned his group.

[Escalona] So you basically delegated the drug trafficking activities to Amado Padron?
[De la Guardia] Well, also to Elmer. When there was an operation, Elmer's group...

[Escalona, interrupting] Well, who was in Elmer's group? Sanchez Lima? According to what you are telling me here, you conducted operations and everybody knew about them.
[De la Guardia] That is correct.

[Escalona] So Rosa Maria's operations were directed by Amado Padron?
[De la Guardia] Yes. Well, in 1987, Rosa Maria conducted an operation with Elmer, not with Padron. She conducted that operation with Gabriel Prendes and Elmer.

[Escalona] What about in 1989?
[De la Guardia] She conducted those operations with Padron.

[Escalona] Why the change?
[De la Guardia] I do not recall why Rosa Maria changed from one group to the other; I do not recall.

[Escalona] Rosa Maria coordinated a 500-kg drug operation in February?
[De la Guardia] Yes, that operation was directed by Amado Padron's group.

[Escalona] Yes, Amado and Rosa Maria.
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] In that operation they [not further identified] delivered 500,000 pesos, I mean $500,000.
[De la Guardia] I only received $350,000, I believe. My memory is not very clear on that point.

[Escalona] $350,000?
[De la Guardia] Yes, I think so.

[Escalona] There was another operation in March. That one was coordinated by Eduardo Diaz, who also belonged to Amado's group, right?
[De la Guardia] Yes, by Eduardo; that is correct, sir.

[Escalona] It says here that the March operation involved a drug run 20 miles from Bahia de Cadiz.
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] The operation involved $150,000, which was sent inside a television set to Padron. Amado Padron then delivered 150,000 pesos [currency as heard] to you. Is that correct?
[De la Guardia] I do not remember.

[Escalona] You do not remember? Well, in March there was a drug run using a plane that operated 15 miles from Key Cruz del Padre. The plane landed in Varadero Beach. There were two boats off the coasts of Barlovento and Varadero. This operation was coordinated by Amado and Rosa Maria.
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] That operation involved $580,000 and Jorge Martinez brought it [not further specified] by plane through the Bolleros area.
[De la Guardia] I remember that.

[Escalona] Oh, I see.
[De la Guardia] However, I do not remember whether the [word indistinct] was 580,000 [currency not specified], nor do I remember whether they delivered to me...

[Escalona, interrupting] No, because they used the purchase of art pieces as a cover for...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Yes, but in any case I do not remember.

[Escalona] You do not remember?
[De la Guardia] I remember the operation. What I do not remember is the amount of money involved.

[Escalona] Padron and Rosa Maria Abierno coordinated another operation in April. On this occasion, the drug run took place 15 miles from Key Cruz del Padre. This operation involved $600,000, which has not yet been collected.
[De la Guardia] I was told that the operation involved $500,000.

[Escalona] There was another drug run off the coast of Varadero Beach in April 1989. On this occasion, the front business to cover up the operation involved roosters.
[De la Guardia] I remember that one, too.

[Escalona] Oh, you remember?
[De la Guardia] During that operation they delivered approximately $500,000 to me.

[Escalona] Oh, I see. Here it says, however, that Tony was given $400,000.
[De la Guardia] Well, they did not tell me the amount.

[Escalona] It also says here that $110,000 was inside one of the infamous seized refrigerators. The rest of the 600,000 [currency not specified] was shared among Joel, Willy, Pineda, Alexis, and Eduardo.
[De la Guardia] Oh well, it seems...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did you know about that?
[De la Guardia] No, I did not know anything about that.

[Escalona] In April, there was a cocaine run in waters off the coast of Cuba. The boat broke down and was repaired in Barlovento. From Barlovento, the boat left for Varadero.
[De la Guardia] I remember that.

[Escalona] You do remember that?
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] Nevertheless, the money from that operation was not collected either.
[De la Guardia] No, it was not collected.

[Escalona] The boat stayed in Cuba?
[De la Guardia] Yes, it stayed in Cuba.

[Escalona] Sanchez Lima traveled to Panama, right? He was trying to collect the money. Subsequent investigations proved that reports that the money had not been collected were false. The money was indeed collected.
[De la Guardia] I did not know that the money had been collected.

[Escalona] Well, I will have to ask Sanchez Lima when he is presented here.
[De la Guardia] Who?

[Escalona] I will have to ask Sanchez Lima when he is presented here.
[De la Guardia] Yes, of course.

[Escalona] I am not sure whether I should ask him or you. After all, you were his boss, and he did not inform you about the collection of $150,000.
[De la Guardia] Unless he delivered that money to...

[Escalona, interrupting] Or, I should say, almost $200,000. In any case, another operation was conducted on 22 April. There was a drug run 15 miles from Key Cruz del Padre. A boat picked up the drop. Amado Padron and Eduardo were involved in those operations. The grandfather [not further identified] delivered $150,000. You did not collect that money?
[De la Guardia] No.

[Escalona] No, you did not, because the money was inside a refrigerator seized at Eduardo's house.
[De la Guardia] I did not know about that either.

[Escalona] There was another drug run on 23 April at the aforementioned place. The drop was picked up by boat. They [not further identified] were waiting for it in

Varadero. Amado Padron coordinated that operation. He was given $130,000, which were placed inside a refrigerator. You never saw that money, right?
[De la Guardia] I did not receive that either.

[Escalona] Because this was also inside a refrigerator that was seized from Jose Medina Fernandez. Right? One was seized from Eduardo and the other one was seized from Medina Fernandez. In this operation and in the previous one, 156 kg of cocaine were seized, and 156 kg were buried in Cayo Romano. Did you know that?
[De la Guardia] I did not know that.

[Escalona] Therefore, it appears that you did not know about some of these operations.
[De la Guardia] No I did not.

[Escalona] So, Defendant Tony de la Guardia, what can you tell the tribunal about this strange situation involving drugs, money, proceeds, items received, items not received? In other words, how did you handle this?
[De la Guardia] I did not in fact have the control over the operation that I should have had. I never had that much control. In other words, I never controlled the operations. These operations called for direct supervision, which sometimes required being out of Havana for 3 or 4 days. My job did not allow me the time to do that. We trusted that the officers were not going to do anything without consulting me. They were always supposed to give me the money resulting from those operations.

[Escalona] You delegated that responsibility to Amado Padron?
[De la Guardia] To Amado, when they were Amado's operations, and to Elmer, when the operations were run by Elmer.

[Escalona] Defendant De la Guardia, I am particularly interested in learning about something else. How many officers in Cuba knew about this business?
[De la Guardia] The officers who are detained here in this hall.

[Escalona] Anybody else?
[De la Guardia] Nobody else, as far as I know. I know of nobody else, I can assure you of that. When asked, I provided the names of all those who had any knowledge of this.

[Escalona] You believe that you all managed to keep these operations completely secret for 2 and ½ years, that no others learned about this or received any benefits from these activities?
[De la Guardia] Perhaps some people received some benefits but they did not know about this because...

[Escalona, interrupting] How did they receive benefits? Indirectly?
[De la Guardia] No, no, I do not know. Perhaps some relationship; someone might have given someone else a gift, but the recipient would not have known that the gift was bought from drug trafficking proceeds, or that the money came from anything like that. I do not think that anyone else knew about this, because if they had known about this...

[Escalona, interrupting] What did you do with the boat's crewmen once they were on shore, such as when you had to wait for the plane? What did your officers do with the crew?
[De la Guardia] They took the crew to some houses that we had rented in Santa Maria and Varadero.

[Escalona] You brought them from Varadero to Santa Maria?
[De la Guardia] From Varadero to Santa Maria.

[Escalona] They were there until the plane arrived?
[De la Guardia] No [corrects himself] Yes, they were there until the plane arrived. On the day that the plane arrived, they went to Varadero and waited for the boat.

[Escalona] Who were those crewmen? What nationality were they? Were they Colombians, [word indistinct], or what?
[De la Guardia] No, they were Cubans. I do not know if all of them were Cubans. I believe that many of them were Cubans.

[Escalona] Do you have a detailed list of the money seized from each of your officers?
[De la Guardia] No, I really do not have that. Oh wait, yes, yes, I do have that; I saw the list. I saw it in the document that...

[Escalona, interrupting] Could that money be part of the salaries you paid them?
[De la Guardia] No, no, not by any stretch of the imagination.

[Escalona] And from where do you think that...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] From drug trafficking.

[Escalona] From drug trafficking?
[De la Guardia] Absolutely.

[Escalona] Was this their share?
[De la Guardia] No, actually nobody should have kept one cent from the drug trafficking proceeds. They should have handed the money over to me, and I could then have taken the money and justified...

[Escalona, interrupting] About these meetings we discussed here yesterday.
[De la Guardia] [Words indistinct]

[Escalona] Mexicans, Colombians, U.S. citizens, etc, participated and your officers and Amado Padron were present. Were you not aware of this?
[De la Guardia] I knew about that, but I did not participate in the meetings here. I did not meet with any of them. I participated in a meeting with the Mexican

[not further identified] during a trip I made to Mexico to coordinate a tobacco operation. At that meeting, we discussed the possibility of using Mexico, but we did not reach any.... [changes thought] After that, I did not meet with anyone again—not even with the Mexicans. We were unable to complete the final operation.

[Escalona] Were drug trafficking deals not discussed with the Mexicans?
[De la Guardia] Yes, we discussed the matter with the Mexicans; we did discuss it with these Mexicans.

[Escalona] What did the Mexicans propose to you?
[De la Guardia] They proposed that the courier used for transporting tobacco be used to handle the drugs as well.

[Escalona] Yes.
[De la Guardia] That is what I discussed with them. They wanted us to find them a Colombian or someone who had access to drugs. I never spoke with the Mexicans again after that.

[Escalona] Was an operation conducted with the Mexicans?
[De la Guardia] No, we did not conduct any operation with them.

[Escalona] That you know of?
[De la Guardia] I am almost certain that an operation was not carried out because those Mexicans.... [changes thought] We broke off our relationship with those Mexicans because they stole an investment we had made with them.

[Escalona] A what?
[De la Guardia] An investment we had.... [changes thought] The money that Amado had picked up in Mexico remained in that country and was to be invested by the Mexican in speculative financial deals.

[Escalona] In what kind of deals?
[De la Guardia] Financial speculation.

[Escalona] Oh, yes.
[De la Guardia] This Mexican was going to invest the money. This is when I met the Mexican. I met him through business ties, not through drug deals.

[Escalona] The money, however, came from drug trafficking?
[De la Guardia] The money came from drug trafficking. I do not know if the Mexican knew that it was drug money at that time, but I think that he did. That Mexican did not keep his commitment to us and, likewise, he did not keep his commitment that he made to contacts that had been arranged by Amado Padron and Jose Luis Pineda. The Mexicans stole approximately $200,000 from these Colombians.

[Escalona] De la Guardia, where did you meet Defendant Jorge Martinez?

[De la Guardia] I met Martinez, I believe I first saw him here in Havana.

[Escalona] Where?
[De la Guardia] I believe he went to my office and that Ochoa had sent him.

[Escalona] Sent by Ochoa?
[De la Guardia] Ochoa, right.

[Escalona] Why?
[De la Guardia] I do not recall the reason for the first meeting; I met him then. I do not recall what we talked about. I do not recall if we spoke of drug related matters or not. I cannot be specific about this...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did you meet him before or after your trip to Colombia?
[De la Guardia] My trip where?

[Escalona] To Colombia.
[De la Guardia] You are talking about Martinez' trip to Colombia?

[Escalona] Yes.
[De la Guardia] It had to have been before.

[Escalona] You met him before his trip to Colombia?
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] De la Guardia, he stated yesterday that he made those trips because you were able to solve his passport problem.
[De la Guardia] Yes. We obtained the visa in the Panamanian Embassy each time he traveled to Colombia in 1988.

[Escalona] Did you know that he had been given a Colombian passport?
[De la Guardia] No, I did not know, but...

[Escalona, interrupting] And this was before he went to Colombia.
[De la Guardia continues]...he told me had gotten one...

[Escalona, interrupting] De la Guardia, was Martinez your [stresses the word "your"] representative at the meeting with Escobar?
[De la Guardia] No, no. Look, Martinez said yesterday that I had been invited to Colombia, but this is not true. I have never been invited to Colombia by anyone.

[Escalona] Who was the person invited?
[De la Guardia] I do not know. Maybe he went on his own, but I was never invited to Colombia by anyone. Furthermore, I never met the group of four persons he is said to have met either. I did not know those four Colombians. I did not know them.

[Escalona] You never saw them?

[De la Guardia] I never in my life saw those four Colombians.

[Escalona] De la Guardia, you have a pledge to tell...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Yes, the whole truth. Seriously, I will tell you about the Colombian I knew, but these particular Colombians I did not know.

[Escalona] Perfect. You met one Colombian? You did not meet these Colombians?
[De la Guardia] What?

[Escalona] You did not meet the Colombians who met with Martinez?
[De la Guardia] I did not meet them.

[Escalona] Do you know how Martinez went to see Escobar?
[De la Guardia] I have no idea; I never had any type of relations with Escobar. I do not know what he [Martinez] said when he introduced himself. I do not know what Escobar said to [corrects himself] I do not know what he said to let Escobar know with whom he worked or who he represented.

[Escalona] When did you discuss the possibility of drug trafficking with Ochoa for the first time?
[De la Guardia] In 1988.

[Escalona] When in 1988?
[De la Guardia] It must have been when I went to Angola at the beginning of 1988.

[Escalona] How did the conversation come up, De la Guardia?
[De la Guardia] I do not recall how it came up or how it started, but it did take place and we did talk about it. I do not believe it was the first time I met Ochoa in Angola. It must have occurred after several conversations, rumors,...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did Martinez visit you after these meetings?
[De la Guardia] Yes, Martinez visited me after these meetings.

[Escalona] Was his visit a coincidence or had arrangements been made between you and Ochoa to send someone to meet with Escobar?
[De la Guardia] No, no. I really never sent Martinez to meet with Escobar nor did Ochoa ever tell me to send Martinez to see Escobar.

[Escalona] Did Martinez go with the help of his [Ochoa's] officers?
[De la Guardia] Right, I had to get him the visa and his passport so he could leave.

[Escalona] Was there any talk about establishing a cocaine laboratory in Africa?
[De la Guardia] Yes sir.

[Escalona] When?
[De la Guardia] It must have been in 1988 or at the beginning of 1989.

[Escalona] Did you discuss it only once?
[De la Guardia] We...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did you discuss that possibility in 1988?
[De la Guardia] I do not, I do not [repeats himself] remember if we discussed this in 1988 or in 1989. We discussed, we commented on this possibility, but never implemented anything specific.

[Escalona] Did you mention it to Ochoa?
[De la Guardia] Yes, I mentioned it to Ochoa.

[Escalona] So you discussed this possibility?
[De la Guardia] Yes, we saw this as a possibility.

[Escalona] Did Ochoa agree to it?
[De la Guardia] Yes, in a certain way.

[Escalona] Explain to me what—in a certain way—means?
[De la Guardia] Well, we commented on it, but never implemented or were able to carry out the plans [words indistinct]. We held a conversation, and we saw there were possibilities for establishing a cocaine laboratory in some of those [African] countries. However, we simply discussed the subject, and carried out no action or investigations.

[Escalona] I have a question De la Guardia. How far were you planning to go with these drug deals?
[De la Guardia] Actually, I was not planning to get too far. I was not interested in conducting large drug operations or establishing laboratories or things like that. I just wanted to obtain some foreign exchange. Actually, it was not just to get foreign exchange. I am not trying to find a justification for everything I have done [words indistinct]. I do not want to justify the harm I have caused. Moreover, I had already planned not to carry out any more drug operations, since the enterprises that had been created were progressing and had some capital; they had basic capital that could produce foreign exchange. I did not want to continue with the drug trafficking. I did not like that business. Honestly, I am not trying to justify my actions. I was aware I was causing harm. I never realized how much harm I caused. However, I was aware I was acting wrongly. I did not feel comfortable with this.

[Escalona] When did you make the decision to cease the drug trafficking? Was it in...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Actually...

[Escalona, interrupting] When did you intend to cease the drug trafficking deals?
[De la Guardia] I meant to end the drug trafficking last year.

[Escalona] Did you carry out eight operations during the first year?
[De la Guardia] That is correct, that is correct. However, I thought: This year I will not continue. That is what I thought. I was not sure if I would have done it again.

[Escalona] Well, you had an objective last year.
[De la Guardia] Yes, that is correct.

[Escalona] That objective turned into eight operations...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] This year.

[Escalona] This year, during the first half of this year.
[De la Guardia] Yes.

[Escalona] What assurance do we have this business was going to end?
[De la Guardia] I could not assure that. I was [words indistinct] what I was thinking.

[Escalona] In addition, there was already the risk that your officers were acting on their own [piezas sueltas] in this business.
[De la Guardia] No, what...

[Escalona, interrupting] You already had the contacts, the possibilities.
[De la Guardia] What happened is that I was planning to close the sea channel, and not to carry out any further operations—in other words, to restrict access to the contacts.

[Escalona] De la Guardia, do you have children?
[De la Guardia] I have four children.

[Escalona] Four?
[De la Guardia] Four.

[Escalona] Did you ever think—while you were carrying out those operations in which you received drug trafficking dollars, and when you reinforced your enterprises through drug trafficking—did you think about the repercussions drug trafficking has for youths around the world?
[De la Guardia] Actually, I did not think, [repeats himself] I did not think about that.

[Escalona] You have traveled much around the world.
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] You have seen poverty.
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] You have seen the repercussions of drug trafficking.
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] You have seen what drug trafficking does to youths.
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] Are you aware that is the scourge of mankind these days?
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] You are part of that factory of disgrace for the world?
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] How does your conscience feel De la Guardia?
[De la Guardia] Very bad.

[Escalona] I have finished Mr President.

[Espinoza Martin] De la Guardia, respond to the questions the defense lawyer will ask you.

[Defense Lawyer Maj Juan Aramis Villalon Ona] We think there are some elements that must be specified to further clarify this situation we are [words indistinct] representing here our defendant. My first question will be directed toward something I want to determine concerning the diamond deal—as my defendant said during the hearing—with defendant Ochoa Sanchez. One second please. It has been said that they delivered six or seven diamonds to you.
[De la Guardia] Yes, sir.

[Villalon] I would like to know what happen to those diamonds?
[De la Guardia] Those diamonds came from Angola. I received them. I knew nothing about diamonds. Therefore, I investigated their value. I sent the diamonds to Panama. An acquaintance who works with jewelry there gave us an appraisal of the diamonds. I think he even sent them to Switzerland. The diamonds came back with an appraisal, but their price was truly insignificant. They had no commercial value. It was not worth investing anything, because they were worth very little and there was almost no profit there. Thus, I sent the diamonds back to Angola along with their appraisal stating the reason why those diamonds were worthless.

[Villalon] After learning that the diamonds had no commercial value, did you receive any other diamonds?
[De la Guardia] No.

[Villalon] Did you hear anything about the 136 diamonds sent to Panama?
[De la Guardia] No, I did not know anything about that.

[Villalon] So you had nothing to do with those deals?
[De la Guardia] No, I had nothing to do with the diamond operations.

[Villalon] Did you know through whom defendant Ochoa Sanchez sent the diamonds to Panama? Did he send them through one of the people who work with you?
[De la Guardia] No. The diamonds were received in Havana, but those were not Martinez' diamonds. I did not know anything about Martinez' diamonds.

[Villalon] How many men did you have in the department you headed, in the MC?
[De la Guardia] Approximately, including the officers, it would be approximately 20 or 30 men. I cannot tell you the exact number.

[Villalon] As for the drug trafficking operations, you just told the prosecutor that at first you did not conduct those operations personally. You said you were rather involved in the legal matters that deal with establishing enterprises and that for that reason some drug trafficking operations could have been carried out without you knowing about them. Among the operations that were carried out, for example the ones coordinated by Amado Padron, there are several operations—I recall when I talked to you at the State Security Department, you remember when I went to tell you I was your lawyer—that you had not authorized and that you did not know about. That is why I am repeating that same question I asked you at the State Security Department.
[De la Guardia] Well, I did not know about the Key Romero operation. I did not know that operation had been carried out. I was not aware of it. There was another operation conducted by an individual called Miguelito. I learned later that [words indistinct]. I do not want to free myself from my responsibilities over...

[Villalon, interrupting] We know that, defendant. We know you are aware of your responsibility.
[De la Guardia] In addition, to the operations I just mentioned, I did authorize Padron to conduct all the other operations. I authorized him to conduct the other operations he carried out.

[Villalon] Fine. Did you also know about some of the operations conducted by Sanchez Lima?
[De la Guardia] No, in that case if there were more operations...

[Villalon, interrupting] There were three operations.
[De la Guardia] I do not recall the drug runs conducted at Las Villas in 1988. I also do not recall the operation involving the cargo ship that was seized and subsequently released. I did not know that the ship had drugs on board. I did not know that the ship had drugs and that it had to do with one of our operations.

[Villalon] What about the operations linked with the ship "Ali Baba?"
[De la Guardia] I was told the "Ali Baba" was a regular ship. In other words, a ship that was [word indistinct] normally. I was told it did not have [words indistinct] got out...

[Escalona, interrupting] But look at your comrades.
[De la Guardia] I did not know about the operations in which they went out.

[Villalon] For how long did you serve [word indistinct] before becoming...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Twenty-nine years.

[Villalon] Twenty-nine years. Were you sent on internationalist missions and other significant operational missions during those years?
[De la Guardia] Yes. I recieved two medals for my work as an internationalist and I completed several important missions.

[Villalon] Repeat once again, the medals you have received.
[De la Guardia] Two medals of...

[Villalon, interrupting] Two medals?
[De la Guardia] Of first rank internationalist.

[Villalon] First rank?
[De la Guardia] Yes, and the others have to do with important operations.

[Villalon] We would now like for you.... [changes thought] We will not continue on the same issues you have discussed here with the prosecutor. Therefore, I am going to ask you questions about other issues. I would like for you—if you are willing—to make an evaluation here of the consequences of the serious charges against you and your attitude concerning your responsibility to the party, our commander in chief, and the prestige of our Revolution, whose integrity and honesty are somewhat affected by these events.
[De la Guardia] I want to stress here that, first of all, I accept all the charges raised against me. I also want to point out that I am the person most responsible for this. I have a serious responsibility in this. None of my superiors was aware of this. On several occasions they asked me if I was aware or if I had any participation in actions of this nature, and I denied it. I said I had nothing to do with it.

I also want to point out that the basic reason for all of these operations is, first of all, a state of (?deterioratation) of irresponsibility—what have you, of all descriptions—of corruption, that at a certain moment, I had, we had. It did not allow me to see, it did not allow me to become aware of the serious mistakes I was making. It was an attitude of looking after my personal interests, seeking profit and personal benefits for myself. All of this allowed me access to money, money that I did not have to justify in any way. All of this contributed in great part toward these problems.

I am fully aware of the damage, the tremendously serious mistakes I have made, the damage I have done Fidel, the Revolution, my comrades, my institution, my children; this is irreparable damage. I also want to point out that we—the defendants who are here—do not represent MININT. There are hundreds of heroic fighters in MININT who, day after day, shed their blood and wipe the sweat from their brows, making sacrifices, guarding the coasts and keys of our country; they provide security, guard us from our enemy, and fulfill internationalist missions.

We forgot all of them; all of this was forgotten. We betrayed the image of our [cries] martyrs, of our brothers whom we have infamously betrayed. [De la Guardia continues to cry as he speaks.] I did not think of them, I just did not think of them. My conscience bothers me very much; I feel very bad just to think of my brothers who died in Angola and Venezuela. We deserve the worst; we deserve severe punishment.

I ask that this serve as an example to other revolutionaries, fighters, so they will not commit the crimes I committed, ever. This can never be erased from one's conscience—impossible—to betray the commander in chief and his image, the Revolution, my institution, my comrades who were loyal to me for so many years. How could I be so disloyal to them, after they trusted me so much?

I also want to stress once again that this serve as an example. [De la Guardia continues to cry, is offered a glass of water, drinks, and clears his throat.] I urge the other detained persons to have a civic, honest attitude, and to tell the truth of why they did these things and not to seek refuge in the Revolution.

There is no excuse at all for this. Some day, let us hope very soon for me, but perhaps later on for them, they will be able to forgive me and remember me as the revolutionary I once was for 20 some years [cries] and not for what I have done, and for what I am now. That is all, Mr President.

[Villalon] Concerning Rosa Maria [Abierno], you just told us you were almost sure she had gotten involved in the drug deal through another comrade.
[De la Guardia] No. What I meant is that she entered the drug deal through [word indistinct] comrade. I do not know how she entered the drug deal. I only know that—I recall this very well—Rosa Maria and Prendes visited me at my home on a Sunday, I remember, and proposed a deal to me. The two of them together did. In other words, I do not know who joined whom.

They asked me to participate in an operation. I do know that the link for this operation was someone Rosa Maria knew. The link was someone Rosa Maria knew and not someone that Prendes knew.

[Defense Lawyer Maj Luis Raul Martinez Perez] Excuse me, Mr President. Did you order or authorize another of your officers to use any of Rosa Maria's links for drug trafficking operations without telling her or expressly telling your officer not to tell Rosa Maria anything, because she was not trustworthy?
[De la Guardia] What? Can you repeat the question please?

[Martinez] I asked you whether you ordered or authorized someone else to use one of Rosa Maria's links...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Of Rosa Maria's?

[Martinez] Yes, one of her links. Did you authorize someone to contact Rosa Maria's links to conduct drug trafficking operations and did you tell your officer Rosa Maria could not be trusted for that kind of operation?
[De la Guardia] No. What I do not remember well is whether [words indistinct].

[Martinez] How many women work in your department?
[De la Guardia] There are several women.

[Martinez] And Rosa Maria is the only one who was...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] The only one who knew about this.

[Martinez] Why do you think she was the only one...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Because of the kind of work the other female comrades did and because the other female comrades would not get involved in any of this. They are revolutionary comrades who would never get involved in such activities.

[Martinez] And Rosa Maria is not a revolutionary?
[De la Guardia] She is a revolutionary like me, with a certain training level. The other female comrades...

[Villalon, interrupting] Gentlemen of the court, I know that as the chief of the department, the defendant must answer the questions he is asked, but it seems to me that, unfortunately, some of the questions have a subjective and a captious tone, which could lead my defendant to give incorrect answers. It seems to me he must answer the questions, but I believe my comrades, who need to clarify things for their defendants, are asking captious and subjective questions. We are all defending these people and we have to represent them.

[Espinosa] Defense lawyer, ask more specific questions.

[Martinez] Mr President, I did not mean anything with my questions. I was only curious to see how in an office where there are a number of female comrades, there is only one who gets involved in drug deals. That is the only reason I asked those questions. I did not mean to ask captious questions and I did not mean to ridicule or [word indistinct] the defendant. I have finished.

[Escalona] Mr President.

[Espinosa] De la Guardia, answer the prosecutor's questions now.

[Escalona] Defendant De la Guardia. Yesterday, defendant Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez made statements before this court. For us, it is important to know about your relationship with Arnaldo in detail. When did that relationship begin? When did that relationship start to be linked with drug trafficking activities? How did you exchange opinions about possible deals? What were his positions? What were the opinions he gave you concerning your small business? What were his ideas in general?

[De la Guardia] My relationship with Arnaldo began in 1988 after my trip to Angola. I do not remember the exact date on which we started talking about drugs or how the subject came up. I know we talked about the profitability of large drug operations. We talked about several countries that live off those activities and of countries that had to live off those activities because of the nature of their economies.

Our conversations usually centered around those topics. We talked about drugs in general, without falling into situations in which I could tell him about the operations I had carried out.

I cannot tell you the exact date when I talked to him or when he talked to me about the possibility of getting involved in drug deals. I do not remember where we were when we started to talk about those things or how it happened.

Yesterday, he said I had never told him I was involved in drug deals. I lied to Arnaldo once. I did tell him—I want to be frank—that I had never conducted drug operations through Cuba. In other words, I told him I had never being involved in drug deals in which the drug touched Cuban territory. That was the truth. Later on, when he was aware that I was indeed involved in drug trafficking, I told him I conducted drug runs off the northern coast of Cuba. I told him the drop-offs were picked up there. I told him that when the planes entered they were clean. I told him how I coordinated the operations and how I operated in Cuba. He was aware of that. However, I want to be frank. That is why I told you what I told him at first. I told him the planes always entered clean.

We obviously talked about my links. I told him I had links. We talked about the boatmen. He asked me whether they could be used to pick up freight from merchant vessels. I reiterated to him that it was very difficult to use those boatmen for that kind of opeation because of their nature. They were irresponsible people and were not prepared for large-scale operations or for...

[Escalona, interrupting] Excuse me. Are you talking about a merchant vessel carrying drugs?

[De la Guardia] Yes. I was saying that a merchant vessel can transport large amounts of drugs. I told him the boatmen were not prepared to receive the amounts of [word indistinct]. In other words, they were not prepared for such large operations. I always told him it was very difficult to use the links I had. I told him it was difficult to use my links because of the size of the operations he mentioned and because of the people with whom we had to deal—in other words with Escobar. I said it was not a good idea to use my links, because they were going to make a bad impression on Escobar. I told him the vessel would come in and go out and no one would be waiting for it out there in the sea. I told him that perhaps one boat would go, but not the other one, things like that. I asked him what excuse we would give those people if something like that happened? Those boatmen were good for small operations, but not for large ones.

[Escalona] How much drugs would that vessel carry?
[De la Guardia] I never found out because.... [changes thought] They were big vessels, merchant vessels.

[Escalona] Perhaps hundreds of tons of cocaine?
[De la Guardia] No, no, no. I do not think that much. Perhaps 4 or 5 tons.

[Escalona] Or 10 tons?
[De la Guardia] Or 10 tons.

[Escalona] On board one ship?
[De la Guardia] On one ship.

[Escalona] Did he tell you that for those deals there were links with Escobar?
[De la Guardia] Martinez [Defendant Jorge Martinez Valdez] told me about the links with Escobar, because he traveled to meet with Escobar.

[Escalona] You are saying that Martinez traveled to meet with Escobar?
[De la Guardia] Yes. Later on I found out.... [changes thought] Yes.

[Escalona] You found that out because it was your own officers who had arranged it all, right?
[De la Guardia] No. I was not aware of the relationship between Martinez and Escobar. Martinez told me about it later. He told me he had a Colombian passport. He told me he met with Escobar through one of Escobar's brothers and through a Panamanian. That is what he told me more or less. The information I have about Martinez' trips to meet with Escobar.... [changes thought] He told me about his links with those people.

[Escalona] Martinez told you that?
[De la Guardia] Yes, Martinez.

[Escalona] Ochoa never told you about that relationship?
[De la Guardia] Yes, he told me about that relationship, too.

[Escalona] What did Ochoa tell you?
[De la Guardia] He told me he had a relationship or that he was in touch with Escobar.

[Escalona] Why did you give $50,000 to Ochoa?
[De la Guardia] Ochoa asked me for $100,000 and then he asked me [rephrases] No, I mean he asked me for $100,000, but I could not give it to him. I did not have that much money at the time. I gave him $50,000 later.

[Escalona] Why?
[De la Guardia] He did not tell me...

[Escalona, interrupting] But why did you give him $100,000, or was it that Ochoa felt he had a right to ask you for $100,000?
[De la Guardia] Due to the relationship there was.

[Escalona] Commercial?
[De la Guardia] No, not commercial, because he was referring to something having to do with ivory, but, oh well...

[Escalona, interrupting] And that ivory operation amounted to $100,000?
[De la Guardia] The ivory deal amounted to $70,000 approximately.

[Escalona] Seventy thousand dollars?
[De la Guardia] Seventy thousand dollars.

[Escalona] Ochoa sent you $70,000?
[De la Guardia] No, I sent it to Ochoa for the ivory.

[Escalona] You sent $70,000 to Ochoa in payment for the ivory you received. But the $70,000 you sent had nothing to do with the $100,000 he asked you for?
[De la Guardia] No, nothing.

[Escalona] Then, why did you feel obliged to give Ochoa $50,000?
[De la Guardia] [Words indistinct]

[Escalona] I ask you, did any of you ever wake up from dreaming that this country could live off the money from narcotics trafficking?
[De la Guardia] Of course.

[Escalona] That this country would never experience shame from living off money that serves to murder the people? You never talked about that?
[De la Guardia] No, we never talked about it.

[Escalona] This is enough, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Will the defendant Amado Padron Trujillo come before the tribunal?

[Espinosa] Defendant, the law allows you the right to testify. Do you want to testify?
[Padron] Yes.

[Espinosa] Answer the questions of the prosecutor.

[Escalona] Defendant Amado Padron, were you a member of MININT?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] Beginning when?
[Padron] Since 1963.

[Escalona] How did you make the connection with Ruiz?
[Padron] What?

[Escalona] With Ruiz, with Ruiz Poo.
[Padron] In Panama.

[Escalona] At this stage?
[Padron] Yes, at this stage.

[Escalona] In your new stage, as businessman?
[Padron] That is correct.

[Escalona] What was Ruiz Poo doing in Panama?
[Padron] Ruiz Poo was the representative for Interconsult.

[Escalona] When did you first talk about narcotics trafficking?
[Padron] I returned to Cuba and he remained in Panama as representative of Interconsult, no, MC...

[Escalona, interrupting] No longer as Interconsult, but for MC.
[Padron] MC.

[Escalona] You spoke about drug trafficking in Panama?
[Padron] No, never.

[Escalona] When was the first time the subject came up?
[Padron] The first talks took place when I was back in Cuba, he was the MC representative and he contacted his cousin Reynaldo Ruiz.

[Escalona] What did he propose concerning drugs?
[Padron] He told me that his cousin's wife was Colombian and that there was a possibility of carrying out some drug trafficking operations through Cuba.

[Escalona] Were you not horrified when he made that proposal?
[Padron] Yes, at the beginning, but then I consulted higher up.

[Escalona] When was the beginning?
[Padron] When he told me and I asked how this could be possible, however, I consulted on this higher up.

[Escalona] You were no longer sufficiently horrified to prevent you from proposing to Tony de la Guardia this new line of work?
[Padron] That is correct.

[Escalona] Well?
[Padron] We proposed this deal to Tony de la Guardia and he said we would have to look into it carefully, as more information was needed and we needed to talk things over with Ruiz.

[Escalona] That is Ruiz, the relative?
[Padron] Yes, Ruiz, the relative. We then asked him to come to Cuba to hold talks.

[Escalona] Who asked him, Tony de la Guardia or you?

[Padron] He [Tony de la Guardia] authorized me to have Ruiz come to Cuba.

[Escalona] Then he gave you the responsibility of being the great drug trafficking mentor within MC?
[Padron] That is correct.

[Escalona] You took up this reponsibility with great zeal?
[Padron] That is correct.

[Escalona] So much so that.... [changes thought] How long did it take you to bring Ruiz to Cuba?
[Padron] About 15 to 20 days afterward.

[Escalona] Where did you take him?
[Padron] He came on his own plane.

[Escalona] Where?
[Padron] To a Cuban base.

[Escalona] Villa Clara?
[Padron] Villa Clara.

[Escalona] Who met him there?
[Padron] Ruiz [Miguel Ruiz Poo] met him.

[Escalona] What story did you make up to get a border patrol officer to escort him?
[Padron] This was coordinated by Comrade Tony.

[Escalona] Who?
[Padron] Tony.

[Escalona] Tony. What about the use of the border patrol house and all the attentions afforded. Was that arranged by Tony?
[Padron] The border house was lent to us.

[Escalona] Who are us?
[Padron] Ruiz, myself, and (Yani).

[Escalona] In other words, Tony got a general permit for you to be attended well and without being disturbed?
[Padron] That is correct. What else?

[Escalona] Continue to tell the court all the activities from that moment on—Varadero, the boats, the ships, the contacts, the links and so on.
[Padron] Sure. After contacting Ruiz, we agreed to carry out the first drug operation. Ruiz left and we told him that when he had the operation ready to let us know through Miguel [Ruiz Poo].

Afterward, about 1 or 1 and ½ months later, we were advised that everything was prepared, meaning that the conditions were right for carrying out the first operation. We instructed him to send us the plane's registration number, information on the type of plane, the pilots who would participate in the [corrects himself] I mean the names of the pilots. He said that this was always a problem: figuring out who would carry out the first operation.

Once we had this information, we asked.... [changes thought] The information was passed on to Tony's office so that he could submit the request for a landing permit. The request was submitted, stating that the airplane would bring computer equipment. The landing permit was issued. Thus, the first drug trafficking operation was carried out in late 1986.

[Escalona] [Words indistinct] 1986.
[Padron] Yes. Late in 1986 or early in 1987.

[Escalona] January 1987?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] Was this a cocaine [operation]?
[Padron] Yes, cocaine.

[Escalona] I see. The operation was carried out by you and Reynaldo?
[Padron] And Reynaldo.

[Escalona] Aha. What happened?
[Padron] Well, the airplane arrived and it brought 300 kg of cocaine. It was unloaded in Varadero and sent to the United States through some boatmen whom he had sent in advance—in other words, they had arrived the previous day [corrects himself] no, they had arrived 3 or 4 days in advance. The drugs were seized. In other words, the U.S. Coast Guard captured the boatmen a few miles off the coast.

[Escalona] Was that the first [operation]?
[Padron] It was the first.

[Escalona] And later?
[Padron] Later Reynaldo again contacted Ruiz, meaning Miguel, in Panama; he asked Ruiz...

[Escalona, interrupting] Reynaldo was still working in Panama?
[Padron] Reynaldo traveled from here to Panama.

[Escalona] Expressly for that purpose?
[Padron] No, he came.... [changes thought] When the first operation was carried out, he came from Panama via...

[Escalona, interrupting] I mean, was he still the MC representative in Panama?
[Padron] Ah, yes, yes, yes. He came for that operation. As I was saying, the second contact was made later for the second operation. Reynaldo asked Miguel to check out the possibility of carrying out another operation, because the previous one could not be carried out and the collection never took place. Miguel contacted me and, following a consultation, the operation was

approved, so he was given the green light. The operation was carried out 2 or 3 months later, around March 1987, and the airplane brought 400 kg of drugs.

[Escalona] 400 kg?
[Padron] Of cocaine.

[Escalona] I see.
[Padron] The previous operation's modus operandi was followed in this operation. The drugs were picked up at the airport and transferred to the boats. It could not be sent in the first boat. Only one boat arrived so the whole amount could not be loaded. Therefore, the boat had to make a second trip. In other words, the operation was divided into two phases.

[Escalona] I see.
[Padron] All the drugs were eventually smuggled and $400,000 was paid.

[Escalona] How much was paid?
[Padron] $400,000.

[Escalona] $400,000?
[Padron] $400,000.

[Escalona] Go on, go on.
[Padron] The money was...

[Escalona, interrupting] You have approximately 12 adventures of the same kind to tell us about.
[Padron] The money was delivered to Tony. Later on, while in Varadero, the boatmen who had been working in this second operation with Ruiz brought us another citizen, who was called (Galichi), to coordinate a new operation.

[Escalona] Who brought (Galichi) to you?
[Padron] The boatmen who took the second load.

[Escalona] Aha.
[Padron] The same modus operandi [would be used], meaning the plane would land and the drug would be transferred to the speedboats.

[Escalona] Aha.
[Padron] This was discussed or authorized [corrects himself] This was discussed with Tony, was authorized, and we later carried out the operation. The airplane came from Colombia with 500 kg of cocaine, it was unloaded in Varadero, and the boatmen who came with him unloaded it. This operation.... [changes thought] Approximately 370 kg were taken; they [not further identified] were also caught. In other words, the money was not collected. Later, when the remaining 130 or 140 kg were picked up, we collected $130,000.

[Escalona] You consulted with Tony on all the operations that you carried out?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] All of them?
[Padron] I...

[Escalona, interrupting] And if Tony was abroad, you did not carry out an operation until Tony...
[Padron, interrupting] That is correct; we did not carry it out. That was our way of conducting operations.

[Escalona] Padron, I have a question: Were you only involved in cocaine deals?
[Padron] What?

[Escalona] You were never involved in marijuana deals?
[Padron] No.

[Escalona] Why? Was marijuana not...
[Padron, interrupting] No, I was never asked to participate in marijuana deals.

[Escalona] Perhaps Elmer or Alexis Lago Arocha and you divided the work: He took care of marijuana and you took care of cocaine. Was that the arrangement?
[Padron] No, absolutely not. I was never asked to participate in marijuana operation.

[Escalona] Let us talk about 1989 then.
[Padron] In early 1989, specifically in February, my subordinate Comrade Rosa Maria Avierno commented to me about her contacts with drug traffickers, namely Jorge and Alberto, who...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who?
[Padron] Jorge and Alberto, who brought the launches; he [not further identified] was the launch man.

[Escalona] The launch man.
[Padron] We had previously carried out a drug operation with them. They proposed to us another drug operation similar to the previous one. In other words...

[Escalona, interrupting] Rosa Maria arranged that when she was Elmer's subordinate?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] That was during the first operation?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] So you are now talking about a second operation; why did she transferred?
[Padron] That was a decision made by the leadership.

[Escalona] By the leadership, but that (?does not mean that you do not know why). Why did she leave Elmer to come and work with you?
[Padron] That was a decision made by...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was there a new division of labor in your MC?
[Padron] No, that was a decision of the leadership because she was...

[Escalona, interrupting] Elmer was chief of operations in [word indistinct]?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] And you were head of a directorate?
[Padron] Of a special operations section.

[Escalona] But you ended up being the boss and even more?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] Even the boss of the launch people?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] Did you take over Elmer's responsibilities?
[Padron] Apparently, yes.

[Escalona] You were more efficient?
[Padron] I do not know.

[Escalona] Okay, continue.
[Padron] They proposed an operation similar to the previous one, that is, to put the drug ashore in Varadero and transfer it to the launches. In the beginning, we told them that we no longer wanted to be involved in any more operations...

[Escalona, interrupting] Not participating in any more operations was your decision?
[Padron] Tony's, I am talking about operations in which the drug passed through...

[Escalona interrupting] As Tony's lieutenant, you helped him very little to implement his decisions, correct?
[Padron] I was not his lieutenant.

[Escalona] As the person in charge of the drug operations, you helped him very little to implement his decisions, because Tony said no in late 1987, and you carried out all the operations you wanted in 1988. He said no in 1988 and you came up with more operations than ever in 1989. You did very little to enhance Tony's self-respect as a boss or his image as a boss, correct?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] But in April, you carried out many operations?
[Padron] We carried out five operations in April.

[Escalona] Had you carried out five operations in any other month?
[Padron] What?

[Escalona] Had you carried out five operations in any other month?
[Padron] Months?

[Escalona] In a single month.
[Padron] No, never. That was between January...

[Escalona, interrupting] And this took place after Tony's decision that there would be no more operations—a decision that you ignored.
[Padron] No more within the territory...

[Escalona, interrupting] There would be launch people and drug traffickers; all those would be in national territory under your protection?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] And the drug was floating on the sea waiting for you to pick it up. And you carried out five operations. Why did you carry out five operations in April?
[Padron] Not in April.

[Escalona] There were five operations in April 1989.
[Padron] We did not carry out five operations...

[Escalona, interrupting] Rosa Maria and Amado, Joel and Amado, Eduardo and Amado, and Eduardo and Amado. Those are four operations involving you.
[Padron] Four operations.

[Escalona] And another one involving Sanchez Lima and Prendes. Those are five MC operations in April. I ask you, the great drug boss within the MC: Why did you step up this suicidal way of carrying out operations?

[Padron] That was the last month we were going to carry out operations, and we wanted to have...

[Escalona, interrupting] Amado: You are speaking the truth, correct?
[Padron] I...

[Escalona, interrupting] Until recently you were a MININT officer?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] How many times have you mentioned to me that you entertained the thought of not carrying out any more operations?
[Padron] Several times but...

[Escalona, interrupting] What guarantees does this country have that you were going to stop drug trafficking in April?
[Padron] None.

[Escalona] Did you really feel disciplined enough to withdraw from such a productive business?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] When did that discipline first appear?
[Padron] As I said, I had even spoken with all the officers and told them I would not carry out any more operations.

[Escalona] But Amado, what does cassette five explain?
[Padron] I told you, it was the last.

[Escalona] It was a farewell?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] A big farewell party. You never felt the enemy had infiltrated this trade?
[Padron] No.

[Escalona] Who guaranteed you that those well-known Mariel boatmen would keep your secret in Miami?
[Padron] Nobody. However, on the two occasions they were arrested, they did not say they were from Cuba. They said they were from the Bahamas.

[Escalona] They always said they were from the Bahamas?
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] (Where did you give that information?) Did you have policemen in the [words indistinct]?
[Padron] No, a newspaper published the statements.

[Escalona] A newspaper. You believe, then, that the DEA did not have the slightest knowledge?
[Padron] I believe it did, but...

[Escalona, interrupting] When do you believe the DEA first knew of this?
[Padron] From the time (Treinaldo Ruprez) was arrested.

[Escalona] From the time (Treinaldo) was arrested. You did not stop, however.
[Padron] No.

[Escalona] What?
[Padron] No.

[Escalona] But you are aware of what it would mean for Cuba if the DEA had nabbed you red-handed?
[Padron] Yes, we were very well aware.

[Escalona] We are going to talk about your international contacts now. What were your international contacts like?
[Padron] [Words indistinct]

[Escalona] With Colombians, Mexicans, Americans?
[Padron] As I said, my first contact was with Colombians in Mexico. After that, here in Cuba, officer Joel told me that there were three Colombian men and one Colombian woman who was the wife of my latest contact—a contact who did not work with me—who had come to Cuba and wanted to meet with me. I met with them and the Colombian men and woman told me of the possibility of carrying out a drug operation. They proposed, among other things, that we set up a laboratory on one of the keys on the northern coast and the possibility of obtaining paper to counterfeit dollars.

[Escalona] To set up what on one of the keys?
[Padron] A laboratory to...

[Escalona, interrupting] A key on Cuba's northern coast?
[Padron] Correct. And to deal in cocaine through the airport...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who attended this meeting?
[Padron] Joel and I attended this first meeting.

[Escalona] Joel and who?
[Padron] I.

[Escalona] You. Go ahead.
[Padron] We did not give the Colombians any encouragement. We really did not want to establish ties with the Colombians. We wanted to do business solely and exclusively with the boatmen. In regard to the paper, we told them that we were not certain, and they explained that the paper could only be gotten at the state level, that no individual or merchant could purchase that type of paper anywhere, that a state had to purchase it.

[Escalona] Did the Colombians know you were a major in the MININT?
[Padron] No, no.

[Escalona] They never knew it?
[Padron] No. In regard to the laboratory, we said from the start that no, that could not be done here, that it was madness. All the proposals were discussed with Tony, who said he agreed with us that nothing could be done about this, but to take Comrade Martinez to the next meeting and...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who?
[Padron] Martinez.

[Escalona] Where did you meet Martinez?
[Padron] Who?

[Escalona] You.
[Padron] No. Tony told me to take Martinez to the meeting.

[Escalona] You knew Martinez?
[Padron] I think I knew him but I had no.... [changes thought] I knew him.

[Escalona] You knew him.
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] From where did you know him?
[Padron] From Tony's office.

[Escalona] You had seen him in Tony's office?
[Padron] I had seen him in Tony's office.

[Escalona] Whom did Tony say Martinez was?
[Padron] Gen Ochoa's aide.

[Escalona] Gen Ochoa's aide.
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] Perfect. Then Tony decided that Martinez should attend the meeting.
[Padron] Correct.

[Escalona] Continue.
[Padron] The next day we went to the meeting with Martinez and the same proposals were discussed. We told the Colombians that if they were interested in the laboratory it could be installed in another country, in Africa or any other country, but they were not interested in this. Referring to the paper, Martinez said at the meeting that he would check out the possibility of purchasing this kind of paper in an African country.

The Colombians left later on without receiving a positive reply. We said no to everything they proposed. However, they were on the same flight as Martinez when he went back to Panama.

[Escalona] Who flew with Martinez, the Colombians?
[Padron] The Colombians. They left the same day that Martinez left. He had scheduled a trip to Panama.

[Escalona] I see.
[Padron] They were on the same flight, and later on, when Martinez returned, he told us that he had gone to Colombia with Fernando—who (?was also a) Colombian—and had met with Pablo Escobar.

[Escalona] Amado, Amado, did you not know about Martinez's trip?
[Padron] I did not.

[Escalona] What?
[Padron] I did not know about Martinez's trip.

[Escalona] Who took care of the budget.... [corrects himself] Martinez' passport?
[Padron] Well, I was in charge of requesting a visa for Martinez every time it was needed. However, we were told that Martinez would make some communications deal in Panama.

[Escalona] Martinez had never talked to you about this?
[Padron] No, never.

[Escalona] Did you know Martinez was going to Colombia?
[Padron] No, I learned about this after he returned.

[Escalona] Then you are not the drug-trafficking boss. You were falling into disgrace. How was that?
[Padron] Well, I knew nothing. When he returned from Colombia he told us that...

[Escalona, interrupting] What did he tell you?
[Padron] That he had gone with [the Colombians] to Colombia and that he had used a Colombian passport he had to enter Colombia.

[Escalona] What else did he tell you?

[Padron] He said that he had met with Pablo Escobar and that Pablo Escobar had offered to make several cocaine deals, that is drug-trafficking deals.

[Escalona] Amado.
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] When you introduced Martinez to the foreigners during your meeting in Havana, whom did you say he was?
[Padron] One of our group.

[Escalona] What group? What kind of group did you say it was?
[Padron] No, no, no. We never said who we were or anything because, well, it was a relationship that went back some time. I do not know what had been previously discussed with him, but it was never mentioned. All that was said when I was introduced to them was: This is our boss. That is all we told the Colombians.

[Escalona] How was Martinez introduced? As another member of the group?
[Padron] As another member of the group.

[Escalona] What about when he went to Colombia? Who did he say he was?
[Padron] No, he went as [corrects himself] He went on his own. I do not know who he claimed he was when he went to Colombia but...

[Escalona, interrupting] But you saw each other frequently.
[Padron] I learned about the trip to Colombia later.

[Escalona] But you saw each other frequently. Did he not tell you that he was going to Colombia before he left?
[Padron] No.

[Escalona] Was that a decision he made in Panama?
[Padron] He was going to Panama.

[Escalona] What? Did he decide to go to Colombia when he was in Panama?
[Padron] I believe so.

[Escalona] What did he tell you after he returned? What did he tell you about Mr Pablo Escobar, who must be an interesting person? What did he tell you?
[Padron] He told us that Pablo was annoyed because he thought he had coordinated with some Cuban officials the sending of a boat with drugs—I do not know if it was cocaine or marijuana—through Cuba's jurisdictional waters, and the boat was seized by the border guards. Regarding this coordination, we had no contacts with Pablo; we did not know Pablo, and we knew nothing about the boat. It seems that on several occasions these same people, meaning Cuban drug traffickers, told the Colombians that they had coordinated the passage of drugs through Cuba, yet they did not coordinate anything. It seems that this was one of those cases.

[Escalona] Amado Padron Trujillo, we found $294,918 hidden in refrigerators and at the homes of your friends. Was this your hard-earned money? Did you earn this money with the work you did during the past 2 years and months?
[Padron] That was money from our last two drug operations.

[Escalona] Why did you not give the money to the MC?
[Padron] Because when the last payment was made, Comrade Tony had already been replaced, so we decided to keep the money.

[Escalona] What for?
[Padron] We held on to the money just in case we continued our operations there. If the operations continued, we would then hand the money over to the MC.

[Escalona] Let us see: You gave Willie Pineda $20,000; you buried $108,000 in the cement you gave Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo; you gave Jose Diaz Izquierdo $166,020 to hold for you, and he in turn gave the money to Jose Medina—that money was in a refrigerator found in California neighborhood. Right?
[Padron] Right.

[Escalona] Since that money belonged to the MC and you had no intentions of keeping it, why did you not make everything legal?
[Padron] Because we wanted to justify that money through some commercial operations we would arrange at a later date.

[Escalona] What do you mean, justify?
[Padron] As we did in the past...

[Escalona, interrupting] Continue making transaction after transaction and continue making money with drug money.
[Padron] It was the only way to do it.

[Escalona] Oh, that is great. Padron, what did you want 11 pistols and 8 revolvers for?
[Padron] I like to collect weapons.

[Escalona] You like to collect weapons and cars?
[Padron] Not cars. That information is not correct.

[Escalona] Lada, license plate No 4591; Lada, license plate No 15858; Lada—the three are Lada 2107 cars—license plate No HB9899; Lada 2105, not being driven and sales contract issued to Margarita Vasquez Hernandez, wife of Amado Padron Trujillo; VW 1300, registration papers in the name of Esperanza Artamendi Ferrer—car believed to belong to Amado Padron; Lada 2107, blue, having some body work done and, according to Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo, it belongs to Amado Padron; Lada 2101, red, having some body work done; Lada 2105, belonging to your son, Alexis Padron Garcia; Lada 1600. Eleven cars in all. How many cars did you drive a day?

[Padron] I will tell you what I know about those cars, at least the cars I know about.

[Escalona] And do not forget the motorcycle because over there you forgot about the motorcycle.
[Padron] What?

[Escalona] Did you ride that motorcycle?
[Padron] No.

[Escalona] Then why did you buy it.
[Padron] It was never ridden because it...

[Escalona, interrupting] How much did you pay for that motorcycle?
[Padron] I paid $3,400 for it.

[Escalona] And was that money yours?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] Yours?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] From your wages?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] How much did you earn a month?
[Padron] While in Panama, I was making $700 a month.

[Escalona] And you spent 4 months wages on a motorcycle?
[Padron] No, I had...

[Escalona, interrupting] You went hungry for 4 months?
[Padron] No, I was in Panama for 4 [corrects himself] 3 years.

[Escalona] So you saved that money?
[Padron] That is right.

[Escalona] And you spent 4 years of savings on a motorcycle?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] On a motorcycle you never rode?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] A Honda, five-speed, that no one else in this country has. What did you want to prove to the people? That you could not be punished; that you could live above the standards of our people; that you could go around showing off those fancy cars in Villa Marita while people stood at the corners waiting for a bus? What did you want to prove? That the drug trafficker in Cuba could live like an Escobar in Colombia? Do you feel that you are Cuba's Escobar?
[Padron] No.

[Escalona] The truth is that your business is a sickening business and whatever you touch you make dirty. I have finished, Mr President.

[Espinoza] I was saying, Amado...

[Escalona, interrupting] Mr President, excuse me.

[Espinoza] Yes?

[Escalona] I would like to clarify one more thing. During the last operation, 156 kg of cocaine were buried on Romero Cay. Is that true?
[Padron] Yes.

[Escalona] Several tests were made of that cocaine at the Central Crime Laboratory. The tests showed that: 1. samples of white powder found on Romero Cay, north of Punta Hicacos, and which belonged to detainees Amado Padron Trujillo and Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo, were sent to this laboratory for testing. The tests showed that the powder was 100-percent pure cocaine. Cocaine is an internationally banned drug that ranks number one on the list of the 1961 UN convention on narcotics, of which Cuba is a signatory. So you ride around in 11 cars and disregard the agreements this country signs with the United Nations. That is all, Mr President.

[Major Aristides Ruisenor de la Pena] Defendant Amado Padron, you have been pretty explicit in admitting your participation in the various crimes and in answering the questions of the comrade representative of the attorney general. I understand that it is not necessary to expand on details that have already been provided before this court. However, I do feel that it is necessary to ask you the same question we asked the defendant Tony de la Guardia. Please tell us who managed the work you did? Regarding the hundreds of thousands of dollars, how did you hand over that money to your immediate superior, to the defendant Tony de la Guardia.
[Padron] I gave him the money in a bag, in a suitcase, depending on what the money came in. When the money was delivered, no papers were signed.

[Ruisenor] No documents were signed?
[Padron] No documents were signed.

[Ruisenor] Was the section you headed ever inspected?
[Padron] Negative.

[Ruisenor] Never?
[Padron] Never.

[Ruisenor] At no point during your tenure as section head?
[Padron] Correct.

[Ruisenor] All right, when the comrade prosecutor questioned you recently, you mentioned certain things that you have repeatedly discussed with me pertaining to the seizure of 10 vehicles. By the way, the comrade prosecutor referred to 11 vehicles, but the prosecution summation refers to 9 vehicles and 1 motorcyle. During our meetings, you explained to me the origin of each one of those automobiles. You explained here specifically how you obtained the first vehicle, that is, the motorcyle. Could you briefly tell us how you obtained each one of the other vehicles?
[Padron] I got the first car after my first tour in Panama, that is, between 1970 and 1978. I got the first vehicle upon returning from Panama.

[Ruisenor] Who gave you the authorization?
[Padron] The Foreign Ministry.

[Ruisenor] Did you buy it?
[Padron] I bought it.

[Ruisenor] Aha.
[Padron] I bought the second vehicle after I completed my second tour in Panama. CIMEX, where I worked, gave me the authorization. CIMEX is authorized to approve cars for officials once they complete their...

[Ruisenor, interrupting] With what money did you purchase it?
[Padron] With money I obtained in Panama.

[Ruisenor] Money from what?
[Padron] My salary.

[Ruisenor] Your salary...
[Padron, interrupting] At that time, we were not yet...

[Ruisenor, interrupting] What was your salary at that time?
[Padron] $750.

[Ruisenor] What about the other vehicles?
[Padron] I have already said that the motorcycle was also purchased around that time. I do not own any other car. I only own the car I was allowed to purchase by virtue of my employment. There is also my wife's car, a Volkswagen, which was purchased with national currency. I helped her purchase it. She had some money and I helped her with 11,000 pesos. She had 12,000 and the car cost 23,000.

[Ruisenor] That is the Volkswagen?
[Padron] My wife's Volkswagen.

[Ruisenor] Was it paid for with foreign or national currency?
[Padron] With national currency.

[Ruisenor] With national currency. What about the other cars that were seized—the one seized from your son, for example?
[Padron] What?

[Ruisenor] The car seized from your son?

[Padron] I did not know about it. He told me about the car after he purchased it at the House of Gold [Casa del Oro] with jewelry his grandmother had given him. He also bought Margarita Vasquez', my ex-wife's, car in the same way.

[Ruisenor] As family members, did they have access to the jewelry that was later used to purchase the cars mentioned here at CIMEX?
[Padron] Yes.

[Ruisenor] They had access to it?
[Padron] Yes.

[Ruisenor] All right.
[Padron] As for the other cars, I do not know whether they are assigned to the section. The cars I own are the ones I have referred to.

[Ruisenor] In sum, you admit having purchased two Lada cars as a result of money you earned during your foreign tours and also a motorcycle and your wife's Volkswagen?
[Padron] Correct.

[Ruisenor] All right, let us discuss another topic. In nearly 27 years in the organization, have you ever received disciplinary or any other kinds of punishment?
[Padron] No.

[Ruisenor] Never?
[Padron] Never.

[Ruisoner] You have led a normal life within the party?
[Padron] Yes.

[Ruisenor] Over all those years, were you given specific and honorable duties such as participating in military operations against bandits?
[Padron] Yes.

[Ruisenor] In what year?
[Padron] In 1961 [corrects himself] in 1962.

[Ruisenor] Where were those operations?
[Padron] In El Escambray.

[Ruisenor] In El Escambray. Did they last a long time?
[Padron] Yes, about 8 months.

[Ruisenor] Eight months. Okay, what has been your attitude during the preliminary investigation process?
[Padron] I have cooperated to explain everything that happened, and I need not express how I feel. I have no words to express my feelings.

[Ruisenor] As your statement indicates, you have made a self-assessment of all these unfortunate events in your life.
[Padron] Correct.

[Ruisenor] And you have arrived at the conclusion that they are deplorable from any standpoint in the eyes of your family and comrades?
[Padron] Correct.

[Ruisenor] Have you reached that conclusion?
[Padron] Correct.

[Ruisenor] That is all, Comrade President.

[Espinosa] You may leave. Defendant Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo, stand before the tribunal. Defendant: The law gives you the right to testify. Do you wish to testify?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I wish to make a statement.

[Espinosa] Answer the question the prosecutor will ask.

[Escalona] Defendant Diaz Izquierdo, on what date did you begin working with the Interior Ministry?
[Diaz Izquierdo] On two dates.

[Escalona] What did you say?
[Diaz Izquierdo] On two dates.

[Escalona] On what dates did you begin with the Interior Ministry?
[Diaz Izquierdo] The first time was in 1967.

[Escalona] So, it was twice.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes, I was demobilized in 1969 at my request and rejoined in 1981.

[Escalona] When did you reach the Z Department?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In 1984.

[Escalona] You rejoined that department?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes, in the latter part [of 1984].

[Escalona] When did you first come in contact with the drug-trafficking activities?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In 1987.

[Escalona] In 1987. How did you end up in the drug-trafficking operations?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I took part in two operations. In the first operation, I played a support role. I played a support role in the two operations; that is, I drove the vehicle that picked up the drug at the airport. I did not know that the first operation involved drug trafficking, but Amado Padron told me what the second operation was all about.

[Escalona] Who got you involved in the first operation?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Amado Padron.

[Escalona] And he did not explain anything to you?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, I simply picked up the merchandise. When I picked it up it was packaged in such a way that I did not...

[Escalona, interrupting] Where did you take the merchandise?

[Diaz Izquierdo] I took it from the airport to Punta Hicacos...

[Escalona, interrupting] All the way to Punta Hicacos. How was it concealed?
[Diaz Izquierdo] The first shipment was hidden in cartons of Marlboro.

[Escalona] Marlboro cigarettes?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes, Marlboro cigarettes. This was during the first operation.

[Escalona] Where exactly in Punta Hicacos did you take the drugs?
[Diaz Izquierdo] To a yacht belonging to the department. From there we moved it to the yacht that was going to transport it to the United States.

[Escalona] Where was that yacht? At the border guard post?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, it was not exactly at the border guard post. It was in the vicinity—in the cockfight arena behind Punta Hicacos.

[Escalona] Who else was involved in the operation?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Reinaldo Ruiz, Miguel Ruiz Poo, and Amado Padron.

[Escalona] Ruiz Poo and Amado Padron. And in the second operation?
[Diaz Izquierdo] The same three people I mentioned and I participated in the second operation. I was fully aware that this operation...

[Escalona, interrupting] How did Amado Padron tell you that drugs were involved?
[Diaz Izquierdo] To be frank, I must say that Amado Padron called me and explained that, because of the importance of the operation—and forgive me for speaking this way but I am nervous.

[Escalona] Calm down.
[Diaz Izquierdo] I am. I am grinding my teeth.

[Escalona] Defendant, please calm down.
[Diaz Izquierdo] I am doing what I can. He called me in and explained that the operations were drug-trafficking operations.

[Escalona] When did he explain that? Before the operation?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In the case of the second operation, before.

[Escalona] Before the operation began?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Before it began.

[Escalona] Regarding the development of this operation, was it like the first one?

[Diaz Izquierdo] Identical. In this second case, the merchandise, that is, the drugs, were hidden in Epsom salt cases. Some of them were shipped out of Cuba in cigarette cartons and others in Epsom boxes.

[Escalona] Where did you change the packaging?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In a house that was rented for that purpose in Varadero.

[Escalona] Where in Varadero?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In Villa Tortuga.

[Escalona] In Villa.... [changes thought] You changed the packaging in that very house?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In that very house.

[Escalona] The same people?
[Diaz Izquierdo] The same people.

[Escalona] Did any other person participate...
[Diaz Izquierdo, interrupting] There were also the boatmen, who were already there to take the drugs away.

[Escalona] How many were there?
[Diaz Izquierdo] There were five boatmen in this case.

[Escalona] Had these boatmen been in the country before, or did they arrive at that time?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, they arrived that day.

[Escalona] Did they leave immediately?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, they left the next day. The plane did not arrive that day. It arrived the next day.

[Escalona] Were those boatmen given an opportunity to meet with their families?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, not in this case.

[Escalona] There was no time?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, they were not allowed to see their families.

[Escalona] I see. In how many other operations have you participated?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Following those two operations?

[Escalona] Yes.
[Diaz Izquierdo] I participated in the last two operations carried out in April. I coordinated them.

[Escalona] April 1989?
[Diaz Izquierdo] April 1989.

[Escalona] Are there any others, Eduardo?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In my case?

[Escalona] Yes.

[Diaz Izquierdo] No. I have participated in many other operations within the department, but I only provided support to Mr Ruiz' first two operations and then the last two operations, which I coordinated directly with Miguelito, also known as the grandfather.

[Escalona] When were these operations coordinated with the Grandfather?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In late March and April.

[Escalona] March and April. Did Amado Padron always participate with you?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Amado Padron was the chief of the section where I worked, and he always participated with me in the operations.

[Escalona] What benefits did you derive from all this?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Well, I received a gift from Amado Padron: $35,000.

[Escalona] $35,000.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes. I am not trying to avoid blame. I have worked since 1987, as I told you, amidst all this barbarity—I can say that it is barbarous—and I knew what I was doing. However, I did think that this was possible due to a problem in the department directorate and the trust that I have had in the department directorate and the prestigious comrades who have been in charge of the department where I worked. I knew what I was doing was illicit and illegal, but up to the last moment—without trying to avoid blame for the crimes I committed—I always had the idea that it might be an illicit business but it was done with—not without—with a certain amount of awareness in the department directorate. I have become more certain of this during the hearing and during the time I have been under arrest, and in the talks I have held with the lawyer who is handling my case.

[Escalona] Eduardo, why was there $184,000 in your house?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Let me explain. The day I was arrested, meaning the 15th, I had gone to Varadero for a visit.

[Escalona] Not to work?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Not to work.

[Escalona] No?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I went to make a visit. Coincidentally, two of the boatmen who had been my contacts, and with whom I had carried out the last two operations, arrived by boat at Varadero that evening. They brought a cooler with a certain amount of money. I did not touch the money, and I never knew how much was there. I put the cooler in the trunk of my car—that is, the car I had—and in the early morning hours I came back to Havana, because I had to be at the office at 0800. When I passed by a room I rented in Santa Maria del Mar, I.... [changes thought] Let me tell you, I was terrified, and I acted in a cowardly manner instead of delivering the money where I should have and talking clearly. I acted in a cowardly way and I hid it there.

[Escalona] In that moment of terror, did you not think of going to the MININT and denouncing all this filth?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Prosecutor, I think that would have been the right thing to do, but I have to confess that I was so caught up in all this business that I could not think straight.

[Escalona] Eduardo, did you negotiate with foreign exchange?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes.

[Escalona] Whose dollars were those?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Well, I changed some of the money Amado Padron had given me.

[Escalona] Did you exchange the dollars for Cuban money? Did you negotiate with this?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Please, Prosecutor, repeat the question.

[Escalona] In other words, on certain occasions the boatmen gave you dollars so that they could be exchanged for Cuban pesos.
[Diaz Izquierdo] In the boatmen's case you mean?

[Escalona] Did they give the dollars to some officers because they wanted to leave money for their family, to have Cuban money, etc? Was the money exchanged? Was the discrepancy between the black market price of the peso and the dollar modified on certain occasions? This leaves a profit. Did you ever do this?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I never did this in the boatmen's case.

[Escalona] In what cases did you do it?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I did it with the money Amado Padron gave me.

[Escalona] How much did you exchange?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I changed approximately $10,000.

[Escalona] $10,000. When did you exchange it?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Well, I exchanged some of it with an old contact of a brother and some more with one of Rosa Maria's contacts.

[Escalona] Continue.
[Diaz Izquierdo] I exchanged the rest through one of Sanchez Lima's comrades.

[Escalona] Through Sanchez Lima.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes.

[Escalona] How did you exchange the dollars?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Well, Sanchez Lima...

[Escalona, interrupting] No, no, no, not the way you did it but the exchange rate.

[Diaz Izquierdo] Oh, the exchange rate. In Sanchez Lima's case and in the Spaniard's case, it was 6 pesos for 1 dollar.

[Escalona] Six pesos for a dollar.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes, that is right.

[Escalona] And you exchanged $10,000?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Approximately $10,000.

[Escalona] In conclusion, Eduardo, did you meet Martinez?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes, I did.

[Escalona] Where did you meet him?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I met him during his regular visits to the office where I work.

[Escalona] Did he visit the office frequently?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Sometimes. I cannot tell you exactly how many times he came to the office, but he did come frequently.

[Escalona] Mr President, I have no more questions for the time being.

[Espinoza] Eduardo, answer the questions that will be asked by the defense attorney.

[First Lieutenant Esther Recio Zamora] Eduardo, you said that you began working for the MC in 1985.
[Diaz Izquierdo] In 1984.

[Recio] In 1984.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Excuse me, but I said 1984, even though I had worked there before. I had been assigned there, however, the official appointment to the Interior Ministry was in 1984.

[Recio] That is correct. In 1984 you began working at the MC.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes.

[Recio] When did you get involved in these drug-trafficking activities?
[Diaz Izquierdo] In 1987.

[Recio] In 1987.
[Diaz Izquierdo] In mid to late 1987.

[Recio] Mid to late 1987?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Mid-1987.

[Recio] Eduardo, do you recall how you were approached regarding these drug-trafficking activities? Please tell the court how you were advised that you would no longer do what you had been doing since 1984 and would now become involved in drug trafficking. Can you do that?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Of course I can.

[Recio] How were you told?
[Diaz Izquierdo] How?

[Recio] Yes.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Well, Comrade, or Citizen Amado Padron told me that because of my responsibilities and because of the kind of person I was, I had been chosen to do the job. He told me it was a dangerous activity, an extremely secret activity and that I had been chosen to participate because I was a responsible person.

[Recio] Eduardo, were other words, aside from dangerous and extremely secret, used?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I do not know what you mean. If you clarify your question perhaps I will be able to answer it.

[Recio] For example, were you told that this was some kind of a mafia that was operating and that it was necessary to do this work?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, no.

[Recio] Those words were never used?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, no, no.

[Recio] They were not?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No. I have always viewed what I did as a job. Despite all that has been said before this honorable court and despite the serious charges, I always viewed this as my job. I never got paid for doing it.

[Recio] You were never told that the work you were doing was linked to an authorized mafia?
[Diaz Izquierdo] As of the date I mentioned earlier, I did nothing more than this job.

[Recio] Eduardo, how did you participate in these activities? What did you do during the first two operations? What was your participation in the April 1987 and November 1987 operations? What did you do during the six cocaine drops you participated in and what was your involvement in the Romero Cay incident, which we are discussing today?
[Diaz Izquierdo] You are asking about six different operations. I coordinated two operations—the two initial operations Reinaldo Ruiz participated in.

[Recio] Did you independently coordinate and plan any of these activities? Did you do this without Padron's knowledge?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, I coordinated these activities with our foreign link, with the Cuban traitor, but my boss was always aware of what was going on. I never did anything on my own.

[Recio] Eduardo, in late April 1988 two meetings were held. One meeting with the Colombians and one meeting with the Mexicans. Why were you at those meetings?
[Diaz Izquierdo] To meet the contacts.

[Recio] To meet the contacts. Who else participated at the meeting?

[Diaz Izquierdo] Amado Padron participated and...

[Recio, interrupting] No, that is enough, Eduardo, that is enough.
[Diaz Izquierdo] I beg your pardon?

[Recio] That is enough. You were there to meet the contacts. Did you hear me?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, no, I did not. Excuse me.

[Recio] You said that you participated in the two meetings to meet the contacts.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Ah, yes. I thought that you had asked who had participated.

[Recio] We would like you to evaluate before the court the testimony we are hearing here today. What do you think about all this?
[Diaz Izquierdo] First of all, I want you all to excuse me if I get tongue-tied when I make the evaluation. I will try to do it slowly because this is the most important part of all this for me. I did not stop to think for a moment what kind of punishment this honorable court would give me for the crimes and the barbarities in which I participated. I am very sorry for all these barbarities. I was somewhat disappointed to hear the statements of some comrades who have had an even bigger responsibility and, on top of that, have been extremely valuable comrades, yet they have not been completely sincere. I think that my share of the responsibility should not be shared by anyone else, and I want the court to strictly enforce the law and make me pay for my share of the responsibility. This is not simple demagoguery or an attempt to justify anything.

I am totally repentant, and I swear before this court and the honorable comrades who are here and those who are listening to me, and before my children and my small family, that with the last drop of my blood, I will try, in any way I can, to remove the ugly blemish I have given the Revolution and to overcome my great betrayal of the commander in chief's principles, despite my humble origins.

I never had anything. I have always had what the Revolution has given me, which has been a lot because I was born with the Revolution. However, for no reason and in an absurd, stupid, and cowardly way, I have sunk to this level of corruption and selfishness.

[Recio] That is all, Mr President.

[Escalona] May I speak, Mr President?

[Espinoza] Yes, Mr Prosecutor.

[Escalona] Eduardo, I have two questions for you: In the photograph that appears on this board—please show it to him—are you the person who appears in the photo beside the over 100 kg of cocaine?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes.

[Escalona] Then, did you participate, along with Amado Padron, in burying 156 kg of cocaine on Romero Street?

[Diaz Izquierdo] We knew that the cocaine had been buried, but we did not bury it. The cocaine was buried by the boatmen. We, however, sent the cocaine to them. The matter was discussed with Amado Padron...

[Escalona, interrupting] You provided the cocaine?

[Diaz Izquierdo] Yes, we provided it.

[Escalona] One last question: You have stated that in addition to this, Amado Padron was also involved in foreign exchange trafficking and he did this regularly.

[Diaz Izquierdo] That is true.

[Escalona] You participated directly in these operations as you met this citizen [not further identified] to exchange dollars for Cuban pesos on several occasions.

[Diaz Izquierdo] That is true.

[Escalona] You recall that the exchange rate was on a six-to-one basis.

[Diaz Izquierdo] That is true.

[Escalona] Did you exchange money for Amado Padron, or did you exchange Amado Padron's money and yours too?

[Diaz Izquierdo] On several occasions, I exchanged money for Amado Padron, and on other occasions I exchanged money for myself.

[Escalona] Eduardo, as a member of the MININT, you knew of this country's great struggle against illegal foreign exchange trafficking. Is that true?

[Diaz Izquierdo] I do know about it.

[Escalona] However, you helped increase the level of this trafficking. You did it to promote the good life for Amado Padron. You exchanged money for him at a rate of six to one. You mean to tell me that, in addition to blemishing the country and placing us in a crisis situation in regard to drugs, you also contributed to the weakening of our economy and currency by exchanging money at a rate of six to one and that you also contributed to the corruption process that the MININT, primarily, has been fighting over the years? You admit that you participated in these crimes? Is that true?

[Diaz Izquierdo] That is true.

[Escalona] That is all, Mr President.

[Espinoza] Do any of the court members have further questions? Defendant, you may step down.

[Diaz Izquierdo] Thank you.

Part II of Second Session of Ochoa's Trial
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[Special program on "the second part of a summary of the second session of the oral hearing corresponding to case No 1 of 1989 of the expeditious trial of the special military tribunal" pertaining to the case of former Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez at the Revolutionary Armed Forces, FAR, Universal Hall. All speakers identified by caption; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Division General Ramon Espinosa Martin] We now resume the trial. Accused Antonio Sanchez Lima, present yourself in front of the tribunal.

Accused, the law gives you the right to give testimony. Do you wish to do so?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Espinosa Martin] Answer the questions asked by the prosecutor.

[Juan Escalona Reguera] Accused Sanchez Lima, when did you begin working in the Ministry of the Interior?
[Sanchez Lima] In 1969.

[Escalona] Where did you come from?
[Sanchez Lima] From the customs office.

[Escalona] Sanchez Lima, in what year was the attempted hijacking of the Cuban plane which you prevented?
[Sanchez Lima] I have a very poor memory; however, I think it was 1977.

[Escalona] In 1977?
[Sanchez Lima] 1977.

[Escalona] You prevented it, risked your life, and were injured?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Escalona] That is why later you were promoted in recognition of your heroic action?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Escalona] When did you become involved with drug trafficking?
[Sanchez Lima] In 1987.

[Escalona] So, that means that 10 years after a heroic action, you began a denigrating life?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, denigrating and dirty.

[Escalona] Who got you involved in drug trafficking.
[Sanchez Lima] I started working at the MC Department, in the naval operations section. Then, the comrade who was chief at that time, and now, (Hermes) asked me to do an operation. He needed my support. So I went with the comrade to carry out the operation.

[Escalona] Were you told what the operation was?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes I was told what the operation was.

[Escalona] You had no objections?
[Sanchez Lima] I had no objections. I agreed. That was the operation...

[Escalona, interrupting] What was the operation?
[Sanchez Lima] Eh?

[Escalona] When and where was the operation?
[Sanchez Lima] The operation was carried near the Bahia de Cadiz.

[Escalona] You were aboard the ship?
[Sanchez Lima] Repeat the question please.

[Escalona] Were you aboard that ship as it sailed from the southern to the northern part of the country, or did you (?stand) guard from land?
[Sanchez Lima] No, no. I went up to the Bahia de Cadiz on a yacht. There, I joined the ship.

[Escalona] What about afterward?
[Sanchez Lima] I was there for 20 days until all the merchandise was taken.

[Escalona] The merchandise was taken on small boats?
[Sanchez Lima] On fast boats.

[Escalona] The boat was there about 20 days?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, about 20 days, I think it was 29 days.

[Escalona] Twenty-nine days.
[Sanchez Lima] I am not sure, but I know it was many days.

[Escalona] Was there any contact? Or, were you discovered by a (?ship), a Navy ship, or any one?
[Sanchez Lima] No. The ship was authorized to be there.

[Escalona] It was authorized by whom?
[Sanchez Lima] By Comrade (Hermes) who was our chief.

[Escalona] No, no. What authorized you to go up to the border guard, and merely say who you were, and not have him act or sound the alarm?
[Sanchez Lima] The mere fact that we worked in that directorate.

[Escalona] How was it authorized from here, through whom? Was it through the Border Guard leadership?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, we used a paper, in other words a letter.

[Escalona] Who signed the letter?
[Sanchez Lima] The letter was signed by Tony de la Guardia.

[Escalona] Tony de la Guardia would sign the letter addressed to the Border Guard patrol?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Escalona] So, in the same way that the trafficking was done in the aerial corridor, the trafficking was also done by the ships?
[Sanchez Lima] That is right. The same...

[Escalona, interrupting] So, [word indistinct] border waters, the ship is untouchable?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, untouchable.

[Escalona] Sanchez Lima, in what other activities did you participate? How many activities did you coordinate (?for) drug trafficking?
[Sanchez Lima] Well, the ones that were coordinated were a few, here and there. After those, I participated in five operations in which Comrades Prende and (Hermes) also participated. Although, it appeared as though I was alone, I never in my life carried out an operation by myself, and much less without coordinating it. It was always coordinated with my chief who was (Hermes). Additionally, the three of us would meet, it was said [rephrases] they would say what they needed, wanted. Comrade (Hermes) listen to everyone's opinions, and he would say that he would consult with Tony and that later he would tell us the answer. So, later he would bring us the answer as to whether or not the operation could be done.

[Escalona] There is something that catches my attention. The only marijuana operations that took place in this long account of shamelessness were carried out by you and by Sanchez Lima [corrects himself] I mean by you and (Hermes). Did you prefer marijuana, or was the way the work was distributed internally, or, how did that work?
[Sanchez Lima] Twice we were asked to do it, and we accepted twice.

[Escalona] A while ago, I asked accused Amado Padron [Trujillo], and he said he never had any contact with marijuana.
[Sanchez Lima] We did.

[Escalona] (?Not him), but you did?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Escalona] Why? Was it because he did not accept to work with it and it was passed down to you, or was it because you directly...
[Sanchez Lima, interrupting] No, the ties proposed that type of...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was the second activity with marijuana carried out in the same manner as the first?
[Sanchez Lima] No. It was different.

[Escalona] What happened?

[Sanchez Lima] We were asked to do an activity from Jamaica, going by Cape San Antonio, and then, they would continue on to the United States.

[Escalona] What happened?
[Sanchez Lima] They did the operation as planned. However, they did not inform us that they were going to go by Cape San Antonio. After they had the problem over there, they did not inform us any more about anything.

[Escalona] What was the problem?
[Sanchez Lima] It was the problem that was talked about where they were on the coast...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was this the ship that ended up without fuel?
[Sanchez Lima] Ah, that is right. They were on the southern coast.

[Escalona] Did you go with (Hermes) to the Isle of Youth?
[Sanchez Lima] No.

[Escalona] Where did you meet the boat?
[Sanchez Lima] We met it in Batabano.

[Escalona] In Batabano, and the boat was loaded with marijuana?
[Sanchez Lima] No, it was empty.

[Escalona] Had it already been unloaded between [word indistinct] and Batabano?
[Sanchez Lima] No. It was on its way over there.

[Escalona] Where was it headed?
[Sanchez Lima] It was headed to Jamaica to load.

[Escalona] Why did you have to give it a cover if it was empty?
[Sanchez Lima] We did it because we had been called and told that they had had problems.

[Escalona] With whom did they have the problem?
[Sanchez Lima] They had problems with the border guards, and I do not know if [rephrases] I do know that they did have problems with the border guards.

[Escalona] Where did you go? Did you go up to Batabano?
[Sanchez Lima] We went to Batabano.

[Escalona] Had you previously been to Batabano?
[Sanchez Lima] No, never before in my life.

[Escalona] What kind of explanation did you give to the Batabano Border Guards so that they...
[Sanchez Lima, interrupting] He was told that it was our ship and that we were going there.

[Escalona] Ours?

[Sanchez Lima] Yes, ours.

[Escalona] Did you have some kind of special credentials to show the Batabano Border Guards saying that you were a [word indistinct] in this country?
[Sanchez Lima] No, but they already had been informed through the leadership that we were going there.

[Escalona] The MC leaders informed the Batabano Border Guards?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, they informed the Batabano leadership.

[Escalona] So, the latter gave orders saying that the two illustrious MC representatives were coming to save the drug traffickers who were in Batabano?
[Sanchez Lima] That is right.

[Escalona] Are you a merchant?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, I was.

[Escalona] Since when, Sanchez Lima?
[Sanchez Lima] Since early 1964.

[Escalona] Since early 1964. Sanchez Lima, in what other activities have you participated?
[Sanchez Lima] Drug related activities?

[Escalona] Yes, drugs. Aren't we talking about drugs?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Escalona] Do you have another drug business?
[Sanchez Lima] I participated in the Alibaba, the MI [no further expansion provided], and the Luis Esgrande which is the same one that is talked about there [audience murmurs]...

[Espinosa Martin, interrupting] Let's have silence in the room.
[Sanchez Lima] The three of us also participated in the one that was carried out in 1989. Our comrade chief...

[Escalona, interrupting] You worked together like an (?ace)? You worked together—(Hermes), Prende, and Sanchez Lima?
[Sanchez Lima] That is right, always together.

[Escalona] You worked on naval operations?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes. There were three of us, and we worked...

[Escalona, interrupting] You worked as if you were one person?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, like a single person.

[Escalona] It was the same people who worked with marijuana as well as with with cocaine?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, they all did.

[Escalona] Sanchez Lima, where did the 275,000 pesos [corrects himself] $276,000 that were in your house come from?
[Sanchez Lima] Well, we bought a boat from the owner, legally, with property and everything.

[Escalona] Who is "we?" Is it naval operations, the trilogy?
[Sanchez Lima] No. I say "we" because we (?work) in naval operations. We needed to pay for the boat. So, I was sent to Panama. Comrade Prende was going to be sent. However, it was decided to have Comrade Prende go to Mexico, and I was sent to Panama to pay for the boat. I had taken with me $64,400 to pay for the boat. When all these problems occurred, I received a phone call in Panama and I was told not to give the money and to return it. I did not give the money, and returned with it to Cuba. That is part of the money, $64,400. The other $200,000, Comrade Prende and I had it saved to turn it over a few days later, and we thought—this may seem somewhat funny [passage indistinct]—however, that is the truth and it must be told. The boatmen came, Raulito [not further identified] came and he brought me the money.

[Escalona] How much money?
[Sanchez Lima] He brought me $300,000.

[Escalona] Uh-huh.
[Sanchez Lima] $200,000 was for the department and $100,000 was a gift for Prende and me.

[Escalona] $100,000?
[Sanchez Lima] I gave the 50 to Prende, and I took the 50...

[Escalona, interrupting] Not the 50, Sanchez Lima, the $50,000.
[Sanchez Lima] $50,000.

[Escalona] There is a small difference of three zeros, right?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, it is a big difference.

[Escalona] Yes.
[Sanchez Lima] The problem is that I am a little nervous. I am sorry. We took the $50,000; that is the truth. We did not turn over the $50,000 [as heard] in order to give the $200,000 which I was going to bring from Panama as a cover-up. The money, naturally, was already here.

So, we told the new chief of the department—Tony was no longer there—I told him that I had a connection who was going to lend me the money for the ship factory that was needed here, in Matanzas. Since there was no money, I told him I had a connection who could lend me the money, and that I would go look for him. I told him a lie to be able to justify turning over that money. So I

told Prendes when I returned from Panama—since I was the first one to leave—that we were going to turn in the money and say that (?we) took it to Panama. That is the truth about the...

[Escalona, interrupting] That is much more serious than the narration you are giving us.
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, it is very serious.

[Escalona] In other words, you received $200,000 [words indistinct] $300,000 after the operations had been suspended because De la Guardia was no longer heading the department.
[Sanchez Lima] That is right.

[Escalona] You received it in Cuba?
[Sanchez Lima] That is right.

[Escalona] You said that you owed $200,000 in Panama. You made a false trip.
[Sanchez Lima] No, the trip was not false.

[Escalona] No, the trip was to.... [changes thought] It had no purpose but rather it was a cover-up for the 300,000 pesos [as heard] that you acquired.
[Sanchez Lima] No. I went to Panama to pay the money and for other business...

[Escalona, interrupting] You went to pay what money?
[Sanchez Lima] I went to pay for the boat which should have been paid for 3 months earlier.

[Escalona] That boat...
[Sanchez Lima, interrupting] The boat was sold to the INTUR [National Institute of Tourism] for $90,000.

[Escalona] And how much did you buy it for?
[Sanchez Lima] We bought it for $65,000.

[Escalona] For $65,000. What about the $35,000? Did that also stay in your house?
[Sanchez Lima] I do not know where...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who was it given to?
[Sanchez Lima] Elmer probably turned it over.

[Escalona] Yes, Sanchez Lima, but let us return to.... [changes thought] You spoke to the new department chief.
[Sanchez Lima] No. What I said to the new department chief...

[Escalona, interrupting] Excuse me, let's see if you and I agree on what I am saying.
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Escalona] You spoke with the new department chief and told him that you had not collected the money yet?
[Sanchez Lima] No, not ever.

[Escalona] However, you told him you had someone who was going to lend you the money.
[Sanchez Lima] That is right.

[Escalona] Who was going to lend the money?
[Sanchez Lima] It is a connection of ours.

[Escalona] A connection. This means that when you turned over the $200,000 the department owed your connection the same amount?
[Sanchez Lima] Of course.

[Escalona] So, that means that at any moment you can claim $200,000 to return it to the connection?
[Sanchez Lima] No, because that would be telling another lie. We were already...

[Escalona, interrupting] What is another lie if your life is continuously full of lies?
[Sanchez Lima] That is just it. That is what we mean by another lie.

[Escalona] How much more could another lie matter?
[Sanchez Lima] It would be another lie saying that the connection had died, he had been killed, or whatever the situation, but...

[Escalona, interrupting] Are you sure?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes I am sure. I am sure about what I am saying.

[Escalona] I would like to have the courage to believe you, Sanchez Lima, but I cannot, right?
[Sanchez Lima] That is right.

[Escalona] Why did you invent a trip to Panama to deceive a new department chief? That constituted a prolongation of the chaos and disorder that existed in [word indistinct] the guard in that department. That was mocking a new department chief that the Ministry of the Interior placed there.
[Sanchez Lima] Comrade Prosecutor, you must not have understood what I explained.

[Escalona] It is very difficult to understand, Sanchez Lima.
[Sanchez Lima] I told you that I made a trip to Panama to pay for the $65,000. That is a fact; that is truth.

[Escalona] You made a living from drug trafficking. You pretended to have a business, but it was based on drug trafficking. You are here today thanks to drug trafficking. I tell you, with all my heart, that I feel very sorry for you. A man like you knew how to endanger his life to save a plane that was going to be hijacked, and who just 10 years later, evolves to the point where you are now and to the moral level where you are now! This causes me shame. I am done, president.

[Espinosa Martin] Sanchez Lima, answer the questions asked by the defense.

[Ramon Fernandez Concepcion] Thank you, president. Sanchez Lima, when did you join the MC?
[Sanchez Lima] What did you say?

[Fernandez Concepcion] When did you join the MC? On what date?
[Sanchez Lima] In 1986.

[Fernandez Concepcion] In late, early 1986? In what?
[Sanchez Lima] I cannot tell you when. I imagine it must have been around mid-1986.

[Espinosa Martin, interrupting] Let's have silence in the room.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Around mid 1986?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Fernandez Concepcion] When did you find out that MC was carrying out drug trafficking activities?
[Sanchez Lima] I found out when I was asked to participate in the Bahia de Cadiz.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Who suggested you participate in that activity? Your chief?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes.

[Fernandez Concepcion] During the months of October, November, and December of 1988, you participated in three drug trafficking operations. Did you coordinate them?
[Sanchez Lima] The coordination was done with Comrade Prende, (Hermes), and I—the three of us.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Who coordinated them?
[Sanchez Lima] Well, we spoke with (Hermes). The situation was explained to (Hermes). (Hermes) said he was going to coordinate with Comrade Tony and that later he would give us an answer. So, we waited, and the answer was positive.

[Fernandez Concepcion] I want to know, Sanchez Lima, who coordinated them. Did you do it?
[Sanchez Lima] No, no. We coordinated them, Prende and I.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Who had the connection?
[Sanchez Lima] Raulito was my connection. Carlos Rivas was Prende's connection. However, we always worked together. In other words, we worked and coordinated together.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Correct. The accused, Diaz Izquierdo who took the stand before you, in his statements, said that you exchanged for him dollars for pesos.
[Sanchez Lima] That was right.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Cuban money?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, Cuban money.

[Fernandez Concepcion] What were you going to use it for?
[Sanchez Lima] We were going to use it for our personal affairs.

[Fernandez Concepcion] You [rephrases] Let's move on to another subject. Did you collect any sum of money in Panama as a result of a drug trafficking operations?
[Sanchez Lima] No, that is not so.

[Fernandez Concepcion] As I recall, according to the notes I took from your previous statements, it was said that you collected $150,000 in Panama.
[Sanchez Lima] No, that is not true.

[Fernandez Concepcion] That is not true?
[Sanchez Lima] I was going to collect it.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Explain that.
[Sanchez Lima] That is the money, the $200,000, that I said I was going to collect. However, I had said that to some comrades, such as Prende, with whom we had already agreed on that. That is not to say that I was actually going to collect the money. It was like a cover-up—to say that I was going to go collect it.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Is that the case you were just talking about in which you were going to get rid of the $200,000 that the drug trafficker, Raulito, had brought you.
[Sanchez Lima] Exactly. That was the money. We did not collect again, because there was not another operation. There was nothing else I could be given the money for.

[Fernandez Concepcion] Sanchez Lima, what did you think about this whole drug activity to which you completely dedicated yourself during these [passage indistinct]?
[Sanchez Lima] What I can tell you is that I have been disrespectful toward the Revolution, our commander in chief, our people, party, and especially to the Ministry of the Interior [MININT]. I have been disrespectful toward that (?man) who I cannot face, please.

I have been disrespectful toward everyone. I am a denigrator, an unworthy person. The MININT should not have ever accepted me. The truth is that it seems my mind wasn't very clean when I ended up doing these things. I have been disrespectful. I have been disrespectful to all my comrades. I feel ashamed. I do not know how to pay for this. Even if my penalty is high, I will never in my life pay for what I have done. I will always remember this. I will feel ashamed. Never in my life will I be able to lift my head; I feel like I will always be pointed out. Especially, [I have been disrespectful] to my comrades, such as the general who came to see me many times while I was injured. There is no name for what I have done. Whatever I am called, will not be enough. I will accept whatever I am called. I am not worth 2 cents. I am no good. It will take me a lot of work to stand on my

own again. But, I hope that at least I get the opportunity to stand again. I have been disrespectful toward my wife and my children. I have been disrespectful to everyone. I am not worth 2 cents. That is the truth.

[Fernandez Concepcion] That is enough, [words indistinct].
[Sanchez Lima] I don't know how many more things could be said about me. They wouldn't be enough. So, there is no need for me to continue saying things. The only thing I feel bad about is that the MININT.... [changes thought] I know that, internationally, horrible things are going to be said about it. It is the MININT; and [I hope] that they are not going to say it is a bunch of trash that behaved in this way. They are going to talk about the MININT, our general, and chief.... [rephrases] minister of this ministry. I am a no good, comrade.

[Espinosa Martin] Does someone else in the defense wish to ask the accused questions?

[Escalona] President, just one question, briefly.

[Espinosa Martin] Sanchez Lima, answer the prosecutor's question.

[Escalona] Sanchez Lima, six pistols and two revolvers were seized from you.
[Sanchez Lima] That is right.

[Escalona] Where did they come from?
[Sanchez Lima] One was given to me for the shots fired during the plane incident so that I could continue taking care of the airport. I had another P38 since the war, which didn't work; it was broken, but I still kept it as a souvenir. The two revolvers were gifts given to me by the boatmen. The other two pistols were also gifts.

[Escalona] They were from the boatmen?
[Sanchez Lima] Yes, from the boatmen also.

[Escalona] Did you need eight guns?
[Sanchez Lima] What?

[Escalona] Did you need eight guns to carry out your job?
[Sanchez Lima] No, but I liked them and accepted them. I didn't even use...

[Escalona, interrupting] You accepted the other guns from the boatmen.
[Sanchez Lima] I accepted them.

[Escalona] Were you going to participate in the war of all the peoples with those guns?
[Sanchez Lima] It looks like it.

[Escalona] That is enough for me, president.
[Sanchez Lima] Comrade prosecutor, I didn't even carry a gun. I have always been unarmed.

[Escalona] [Word indistinct]

[Espinosa Martin] Does the tribunal wish to ask the accused any questions? Accused, you may step down.
[Sanchez Lima] Thank you very much.

[Espinosa Martin] Accused Rosa Maria Abierno Gobin, place yourself in front of the tribunal. Rosa Maria Abierno Gobin, the law gives you the right to give testimony. Do you wish to do so?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Espinosa Martin] Answer the questions asked by the prosecutor.
[Abierno Gobin] Excuse me, may I...

[Espinosa Martin, interrupting] Answer only the questions asked by the prosecutor. Later you will have the opportunity to express other necessary matters.

[Escalona] Rosa Maria, you were captain in the MININT?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] In what year did you join the ministry?
[Abierno Gobin] In 1975.

[Escalona] Where did you transfer from?
[Abierno Gobin] Intelligence.

[Escalona] From where?
[Abierno Gobin] Intelligence.

[Escalona] No, you came from the...
[Abierno Gobin, interrupting] From the Ministry of Education.

[Escalona] What did you do there?
[Abierno Gobin] I was a teacher.

[Escalona] You were a teacher?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] Then you transferred to the Intelligence Directorate?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] Where in that directorate did you work?
[Abierno Gobin] In the Cadre Directorate [corrects herself] in the Cadre Department.

[Escalona] Cadre Department.
[Abierno Gobin] In the Training and Cadre [Department].

[Escalona] Up until what year did you work there?
[Abierno Gobin] I worked there just under a year.

[Escalona] What about later?
[Abierno Gobin] I then transferred to the operations unit.

[Escalona] What about after that?

[Abierno Gobin] I transferred to Cimex [Cuban Foreign Trade Corporation] to the corporation of...

[Escalona, interrupting] In what year?
[Abierno Gobin] In 1983.

[Escalona] Who took you to Cimex?
[Abierno Gobin] Colonel (Serbando), (Sergio Martinez Serbando), who used to work in intelligence. In other words, he used to work in intelligence but transferred to Cimex. He asked for me.

[Escalona] He what?
[Abierno Gobin] He asked for me.

[Escalona] He asked for you when you were in the Instruction and Cadre Department?
[Abierno Gobin] No, excuse me...

[Escalona, interrupting] No, he asked for you when you were at the operations unit.
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, the operations unit.

[Escalona] Yes, excuse me. For how many years were you a teacher?
[Abierno Gobin] I was a teacher for 6 years.

[Escalona] You were a teacher in an elementary school?
[Abierno Gobin] No, in secondary school.

[Escalona] You dealt with adolescents?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] How did you get involved in drug trafficking?
[Abierno Gobin] In late in 1987. Well, not late that year, but during the second semester of 1987. I knew someone who, up until that time, had been a merchant. I made a trip to Spain, and on my way there I contacted that merchant.

[Escalona] You knew him as a merchant?
[Abierno Gobin] Up until that time, I knew him as a merchant. His ties with us had been totally commercial. He told me about a comrade, who up until then had worked not as my subordinate but with me, Comrade Eduardo Diaz. He said he had asked Diaz, on his previous trip to Cuba, about the possibility of finding some connections who were involved in some way with drug trafficking. However, he was told that I could not be told about that request, conversation.

[Escalona] They could not tell you about it?
[Abierno Gobin] Right, not me.

[Escalona] Was he a discreet person? Did he tell you as soon as he saw you?
[Abierno Gobin] Of course he did.

[Escalona] Fine.
[Abierno Gobin] He asked (?why); he said that I did not abuse the trust of the department.

[Escalona] However, Eduardo was not chief of the department.
[Abierno Gobin] No. According to what he said, Eduardo had made the proposal on behalf of his chief and Colonel Tony de la Guardia.

[Escalona] In other words, on behalf of Amado Padron and Tony de la Guardia.
[Abierno Gobin] That is what he told me, up until that moment. When I returned to Havana, I spoke with Eduardo. At first, I did not even want to speak with him, because it seemed to me that what he had done was not right. So, when I returned to Havana I spoke with Eduardo and I told him what I had been told. First, he denied it. Later, he even spoke with me and told me it had not been his intention to hurt me, or to take a connection away from me that I had used up until that time. However, he said [word indistinct] and that he had done it. I asked him if it was true that those activities were being carried out in the department, and he told me it was true. He even told me about the first activity...

[Escalona, interrupting] He told you about the first activity we talked about here?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, the first one with Reynaldo Ruiz, he told me everything about it. He told me how it was done, where the unloading took place, the whole thing.

[Escalona] So, you immediately went to the intelligence leaders and denounced the activities?
[Abierno Gobin] Unfortunately, I did not do that.

[Escalona] Ah, no? Well, continue.
[Abierno Gobin] Nevertheless, I began to observe what was going on in the department to see if the activities were actually taking place. Yes, they were. What I did was to use someone, who up until that point had been a merchant, as a connection.

[Escalona] You changed him and asked him for help.
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, I asked him for help. That gentleman put me in touch with a drug trafficker.

[Escalona] A foreigner?
[Abierno Gobin] He was of Cuban origin.

[Escalona] Cuban origin.
[Abierno Gobin] I never had any contact with a [word indistinct]...

[Escalona, interrupting] Where did he live?
[Abierno Gobin] He lived in the United States, in Miami.

[Escalona] So, how did you contact him?
[Abierno Gobin] You want to know how we contact this person who is now a connection?

[Escalona] Right, the one who is now a connection.

[Abierno Gobin] The way to bring this connection to Cuba was through the normal operations carried out by the department, which were authorized. When this connection visited this country, we spoke with him.

[Escalona] Did he already come with the goal of carrying out operations, or to contact you?
[Abierno Gobin] Well, he came with the purpose of exploring the possibilities.

[Escalona] Yes.
[Abierno Gobin] He came to see whether or not there were possibilities. Undoubtedly, it was already known in the United States that, in one way or another, Cuba was covering-up drug trafficking operations. That is something which is very difficult to avoid. So, he came and explained the situation. They [not further identified] had brought $50,000, and they wanted to explore the possibilities for drug trafficking via Cuba. With this proposal [rephrases] Excuse me, in order to help this connection, I began working, for the first and only time, with someone who told me about Prende.

[Escalona] Excuse me, but at that moment, Prende, Eduardo, and you were under the orders of (Hermes) in the department of naval operations, right?
[Abierno Gobin] Excuse me, but no. Eduardo was no longer in the operation...

[Escalona, interrupting] Eduardo had already transferred to the [word indistinct] command?
[Abierno Gobin] That is right.

[Escalona] However, Prendes and you were still in naval operations?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes. In his section were Eduardo [corrects herself] Excuse me, Prendes, Sanchez Lima, and I were in that department, if I remember correctly. I don't think I have missed anyone. Then...

[Escalona, interrupting] What about Leonel Estevez Soto? Wasn't he also there? He was?
[Abierno Gobin] I think so.

[Escalona] Excuse me, he was there at that time?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes I believe he was there, because Leonel transferred to Amado's section when I also transferred.

[Escalona] That is right.
[Abierno Gobin] So, they told us the situation. Then Prendes and I went to see Col Tony to tell him about it.

[Escalona] You went directly to him?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, we went to see Tony directly. We told Tony the situation. Their proposal was to do drug trafficking, but they wanted to keep the merchandise in Cuba. Everyone was concerned about keeping the merchandise in Cuba. Well, it was not really keeping the merchandise in Cuba, but it was the unloading and then reloading and shipping off of the merchandise. It was not a matter of doing it in the modus operandi of dropping the merchandise from a plane, but another way. We told him about it, and Tony accepted the proposal. They were already prepared. The boats were already here. The operation was covered up with computers. In other words, the plane brought computers and cocaine. The cocaine was unloaded.

[Escalona] Did it come from Colombia?
[Abierno Gobin] Excuse me?

[Escalona] Did it come from Colombia?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, it came from Colombia to Havana.

[Escalona] Right.
[Abierno Gobin] It would land at the Varadero Airport.

[Escalona] Was it the same modus operandi? That is to say, were the drugs dropped from the plane in the northern part, then it would return empty...
[Abierno Gobin, interrupting] Excuse me, but no. There was no dropping of drugs.

[Escalona] There was no dropping?
[Abierno Gobin] No, this was not drug dropping. This is the case where the merchandise stays in the country.

[Escalona] That is right.
[Abierno Gobin] According to what had been planned for the operation, the merchandise was not supposed to remain in the country any more than ½ hour, maybe an hour. However, there was bad weather. When there is bad weather, the boats cannot leave. Therefore, the merchandise stayed in the country. So, we put it away in Santa Marta. Ah! I forgot one part. Tony was told about the situation, but Tony called Elmer for this operation. Elmer participated in this operation.

[Escalona] Elmer participated in accordance with the hierarchy?
[Abierno Gobin] That is right.

[Escalona] Right.
[Abierno Gobin] So, the merchandise remained in Havana. First it was in Santa Marta.

[Escalona] Was it in Santa Marta, next to Varadero?
[Abierno Gobin] That is right, right there, in front of the Varadero Airport.

[Escalona] Where did you keep it there?
[Abierno Gobin] There are some cabins there that are being repaired. They are Border Guard cabins. The cabins are being repaired for tourism development for the combatants. At that moment, the cabins were not being used. They were, well, there were people working there, but that day, there weren't any. The merchandise remained there for a night. The next morning, it was moved in a small van to Santa Maria del Mar. It was kept in Santa Maria del Mar for 2 days.

[Unidentified person says to Escalona: Ask her why. However, Escalona does not ask her.]

[Escalona] Yes, continue.
[Abierno Gobin] It stayed there 2 days. Then it was transferred on a ship and taken to the United States. This was the first operation.

[Escalona] So, it was first in Santa Marta, and where was it taken to from Santa Marta?
[Abierno Gobin] It was taken to Santa Maria del Mar.

[Escalona] Santa Maria del Mar. Was it taken in an MC van?
[Abierno Gobin] It was taken in an MC van. Yes, in a Toyota.

[Escalona] Who participated in that? You and who else?
[Abierno Gobin] Prende, Elmer...

[Escalona, interrupting] And you?
[Abierno Gobin] And I.

[Escalona] Continue.
[Abierno Gobin] I am not sure if Sanchez Lima participated in this operation. I am not absolutely certain. I think he did. He joined...

[Escalona, interrupting] Where in Havana did you keep the merchandise?
[Abierno Gobin] In that house, in the Santa Maria del Mar house.

[Escalona] Did you rent the house?
[Abierno Gobin] It was rented there in Santa Maria del Mar.

[Escalona] Who rented it? You?
[Abierno Gobin] Well, one of us did. I cannot tell you for sure...

[Escalona, interrupting] That is fine. How many days was it in Santa Maria?
[Abierno Gobin] It was there 2 days.

[Escalona] Two days.
[Abierno Gobin] It was there 2 days. Then, the weather got better, and the merchandise was taken out. That was the first operation.

[Escalona] Right.
[Abierno Gobin] After this operation, another one was carried out with Elmer. The second operation was carried out about 20 or 25 days later with the same modus operandi which consisted of 500 kilos. Everything was done...

[Escalona, interrupting] Excuse me, but I see an internal accounting problem here.
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] The first operation was agreed to be done for $250,000. Right?
[Abierno Gobin] Well, we agreed to do it for $50,000 and later $250,000 more. That is to say a total of $300,000.

[Escalona] Was the agreement for $250,000?
[Abierno Gobin] No.

[Escalona] Why were $250,000 more agreed to?
[Abierno Gobin] No,...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was the additional money agreed to because of the risks?
[Abierno Gobin] No. No additional money was received.

[Escalona] It was simply $300,000 all along?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes. Allow me to explain. We tried to tell the boatmen, or the connections, that, since the operation had run more risks than we originally thought, we should be paid more. However, the connections did not agree to pay more.

[Escalona] So, it was not $250,000 plus $50,000 for their appreciation?
[Abierno Gobin] No. The agreement had always been to pay $1,000 per kilo of cocaine. That was the agreement—$1,000. If 300 kgs were moved, it would be $300,000. What would happen is that there would always be an advance payment of $50,000, because you could run the risk of losing the merchandise in the ocean, one way or another. It could be lost if people were detained or if there was bad weather.

[Escalona] Fine. What about the second case?
[Abierno Gobin] The second operation used the same modus operandi as the first one.

[Escalona] However, the merchandise was not moved to Varadero?
[Abierno Gobin] No. It was shipped immediately.

[Escalona] What about the third case?
[Abierno Gobin] By that time, the activities had been recessed. I no longer did those kinds of activities in 1987. In 1989, I...[rephrases] Well, there was a new division created in the department. That refers to the question you have asked many times, to which I also do not know the answer. I was transferred then and started working with Amadito, Amado Padron. While I was in the section of Amado Padron, during the month of January...[rephrases] during the first 3 months of the year—it could have been January or early February—I became involved again in drug trafficking activities.

[Escalona] So what happened in 1988? The activities did not cease in 1988.
[Abierno Gobin] No. In 1988, I did not get involved in any of those activities.

[Escalona] Why?

[Abierno Gobin] I did not do it, because there was no connection, nor did the leaders ask me for anything. I dedicated myself...[rephrases] Excuse me, I did not carry out any illicit activities. I dedicated myself to legal activities.

[Escalona] Legal activities.
[Abierno Gobin] In 1989. May I continue?

[Escalona] Yes, of course.
[Abierno Gobin] In 1989, I started working with Amado Padron. In January, I say January but it could have been February...

[Escalona, interrupting] Yes, yes, I can tell you. It was in February.
[Abierno Gobin] In February?

[Escalona] Yes.
[Abierno Gobin] Amado told me that...[rephrases] Amado knew about the activities I had been carrying out previously with Elmer, because he had seen the operation in Varadero. He had seen the movement.

[Escalona] Everything was known in the MC.
[Abierno Gobin] Of course. Then I was asked again to use the connections that I had and that I had used with Elmer. We almost never called directly to Miami. We only called if circumstances dictated it.

[Escalona] So, the February operation was carried out and was successful?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] You received the money.
[Abierno Gobin] The money was given to me and Elmer. Elmer always picks it up.

[Escalona] Was the cover-up that you were transporting modern furniture?
[Abierno Gobin] No, we are talking about the February operation.

[Escalona] Right.
[Abierno Gobin] Excuse me, can I clarify this?

[Escalona] Yes.
[Abierno Gobin] From February on, in other words when I started working with Amado Padron...

[Escalona, interrupting] You added a new twist to this operation then? You carried out two operations...[corrects himself] one operation in February, one in March, and one in April. In other words, Amado Padron added a new twist to your activities after 1 year. Right? Continue. What happened in March?

[Abierno Gobin] I was telling you that in the month of February, the activities...[rephrases] the modus operandi of all the trafficking done in 1989 no longer involved leaving the merchandise in the country but, instead, it was dropped from a plane. The first operation was carried out in February. Payment for the week was collected.

[Escalona] Right. In March?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, in March. Then I was asked to...[rephrases] Two or three operations needed to be done quickly because the drug trafficking activities were going to cease.

[Escalona] Do you really think this is reason for the actions that took place in the month of April?
[Abierno Gobin] I think so.

[Escalona] Were you convinced that the operations were going to cease?
[Abierno Gobin] No.

[Escalona] Did you already have information that Tony was going to be replaced in the department?
[Abierno Gobin] I did not have that information.

[Escalona] Did Amado Padron have it?
[Abierno Gobin] I do not know.

[Escalona] How did you find out that Tony was going to leave the department?
[Abierno Gobin] During a meeting that...[rephrases] What happened was I had an accident, and I was out of the unit for approximately 40 days.

[Escalona] When did that happen?
[Abierno Gobin] I was not able to participate in the last two operations.

[Escalona] In the last two operations in April?
[Abierno Gobin] I was not able to participate in the ones in April.

[Escalona] However, you did participate in three of them?
[Abierno Gobin] I participated in two with Elmer and one with Amado.

[Escalona] No, no. In March, you participated in one with Amado, in another operation of the same type. That was in March. In other words there was one in February and one in March. In April, you also participated in another operation.
[Abierno Gobin] No, let me clarify that situation. In March, the day the boatmen arrived for the two last operations, I went to look for them in Varadero. When I went to the boat where the border guards had detained them, I twisted my foot and fell. When I fell, I broke two vertebrae. The following day I went to the doctor. No, not the following day because it was Sunday. On Monday I went to the doctor, and he recommended bedrest; I couldn't move. That is why I am telling you that in the last two operations, I participated in everything that had to do with coordination, but not actively.

[Escalona, interrupting] But you did not participate in the realization of those activities?
[Abierno Gobin] No, not in the realization of them.

[Escalona] So, you were not an active participant. However, in April, there was another operation with your connection, right?
[Abierno Gobin] What happened took place at the end of March. Everything was done in 1 week.

[Escalona] The two of them?
[Abierno Gobin] The last two operations were done in 1 week. The plan...[rephrases] According to what Amado Padron told me, the idea was to carry out three of them in 1 week.

[Escalona] Three in 1 week?
[Abierno Gobin] Three in 1 week. However, only two were possible to carry out because the connection did not have...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was Amado Padron trying to pay Cuba's foreign debt with the drug trafficking money in 1 month? Was that the goal? Did you get money for the last operation?
[Abierno Gobin] No. That is what I was about to clarify. During the last operation...[rephrases] Of the two operations, we were paid for the first, not for the second.

[Escalona] Is it going to be possible to get paid for it?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, of course. Well, I think so.

[Escalona] You think so? Despite your situation? Is it possible? It is certain that there were five coordinated operations. You participated directly in three of them. You did not participate in the others because you were injured. Let's move on to another matter, briefly. How much money was seized from you?
[Abierno Gobin] $14,000.

[Escalona] Where was it seized?
[Abierno Gobin] Well, can I expand a little bit on this, or do I have to answer only what you ask?

[Escalona] If it would help at all for you to expand, please go ahead, so that the people here can understand.
[Abierno Gobin] Yes. In the first drug trafficking operation that was carried out with my connection...

[Escalona, interrupting] How much did you get for that?
[Abierno Gobin] No. If you'll allow me, I will explain that as I go along. The first drug operation was carried out with my connection. There were very serious problems with transportation because there were a lot of people and they did not fit in a small car. When the connection came to pay, he told me he wanted to buy a van or something which would be more spacious than the car and which would allow him to move the people more easily. We had had to rent taxis in Varadero, because the situation...[shifts thought] So, he left $10,000 to buy a car, a van, or something. It was not possible to buy a van or a [word indistinct] with that money in Cuba. So, it was decided to buy a Comby car. It cost $4,800. The remaining $5,200...[pauses]

[Escalona] Yes, yes, continue.
[Abierno Gobin] The remaining $5,200 was put in the fixed-rate account of an enterprise. It was approximately $5,000.

[Escalona] Who gave those $5,000?
[Abierno Gobin] That was the difference between the $10,000...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who took the the money there?
[Abierno Gobin] The connection took the money, the drug trafficker. The person who had been a merchant and then became our connection was the one who took the money there. He knew I did not have a home. He gave me a certain amount of money—along with another sum of money that was his, that is to say it was for his personal use—which came from drug trafficking profits. He wanted me to exchange those dollars into pesos. I gave Elmer that money, which—if I remember correctly—was approximately $10,000. I am talking about the time when I was still working with Elmer. I gave the money to Elmer and explained to him that it was for the merchant-connection of ours. Elmer exchanged that money at the currency unit. In other words, at the unit...

[Escalona, interrupting] For how much?
[Abierno Gobin] I think it was for 5.50.

[Escalona, interrupting] 5.50!
[Abierno Gobin] I think that was the exchange rate.

[Escalona] So, you got 55,000 pesos?
[Abierno Gobin] I got part of those 55,000 pesos because the $10,000 was not mine. In other words, all the money I exchanged did not end up in my hands. Part of that money was what I was going to get for a home.

[Escalona] Did you get a home?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, I got a home, and it was also [word indistinct]

[Escalona, interrupting] How much did you pay for it?
[Abierno Gobin] I paid between 50 and 55,000 for it.

[Escalona] Where did you get that money, because [word indistinct]?
[Abierno Gobin] Excuse me?

[Escalona] That is not part of the $10,000 you exchanged. Did you have money?
[Abierno Gobin] Previously, I had my own money.

[Escalona] That is why I am now asking you how much did you make from each drug trafficking operation?
[Abierno Gobin] I did not make money from each operation.

[Escalona] How much was given as gifts to you?
[Abierno Gobin] It is the gifts that I am now explaining to you. All the cases I am explaining to you...[rephrases] In other words, for each case, I am trying to tell you everything I received.

[Escalona] How much did Amado Padron give you?
[Abierno Gobin] Once, around March, Amado Padron gave me an envelope with $900. When I went to return the envelope to him, he told me to keep it.

[Escalona] [Word indistinct] chief. Anyway, that money was not his. That was everything that Amado gave you?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, that's all from Amado.

[Escalona] Who else gave you money?
[Abierno Gobin] The connection. The merchant-connection gave me $10,000 to exchange into pesos. I received that money, and I only kept 35,000 pesos.

[Escalona] What about the rest of the money?
[Abierno Gobin] The rest of the money went to...

[Escalona, interrupting] What about the other connection, how much did he give you?
[Abierno Gobin] The other connection gave me the $10,000 to buy transportation. However, there was a sum of money which remained from that. I was also given a...

[Escalona, interrupting] Rosa Maria...
[Abierno Gobin] I was also given a Rolex watch.

[Escalona] Did Amado Padron give you that watch?
[Abierno Gobin] No, no. The connection gave me the watch.

[Escalona] Rosa Maria, who uses the Comby?
[Abierno Gobin] I use the Comby.

[Escalona] You use it?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] All the time? So that means that the connection gave you the money to buy the Comby so that he could use the vehicle if, through some miracle, he should return to Cuba?
[Abierno Gobin] No. The connection did use the Comby. I am talking about the Comby which was bought during the second operation.

[Escalona] Hasn't he returned again?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, after that time, he has carried out three more operations.

[Escalona] Or four times. So he has used the Comby 4 or 5 fives. How often did you use it?
[Abierno Gobin] I used it the rest of the time.

[Escalona] So that means that the Comby was almost a gift for you.

[Abierno Gobin] That is right.

[Escalona] However, in addition to the Comby, you have another vehicle?
[Abierno Gobin] I had the vehicle that was assigned to me by the department, the one that was sold to me.

[Escalona] How did the department sell it to you?
[Abierno Gobin] Well, through a...[rephrases] Well, I paid 250 pesos to Cubalse [purchasing agency for the diplomatic corps and president of Cubanacan].

[Escalona] What do you mean you paid 250 pesos? Don't you have a Lada 2107?
[Abierno Gobin] That was a Lada I had for work.

[Escalona] Yes...
[Abierno Gobin] Through actions in the department, all the officers and I were sold...

[Escalona, interrupting] They were sold to you for 250 pesos?
[Abierno Gobin] That is what is called...

[Escalona, interrupting] Or was it for $250.
[Abierno Gobin] No, it was 250 Cuban pesos. That is how much...

[Escalona, interrupting] An MC Department vehicle is transferred to its officers for 250 pesos? Are you an owner of one? Is it in writing and is everything legal?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, yes.

[Escalona] [Word indistinct]
[Abierno Gobin] That is how much Cubalse charges for the transfer of...

[Escalona, interrupting] You had such a generous boss! So, that means that in one way or another, you acquired a 55,000-peso home, a Lada 2107, and a Comby which your connection leaves here until he has the courage to return to Cuba. I have finished, Mr President.

[Espinosa Martin] Rosa Maria, answer the questions the defense will ask you.

[Raul Martinez Perez] Accused, for me it has been...

[Espinosa Martin, interrupting, asks audience to be quiet]

[Raul Martinez Perez] For me, the explanation you have given the Prosecutor's Ministry has been very extensive. Nevertheless, we would like to make two or three clarifications for your defense.

You said that you worked 14 years for the MININT. Is that right?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Martinez Perez] How many internationalist missions have you carried out?
[Abierno Gobin] None.

[Martinez Perez] I would like you to give your assessment, what you think, of this whole situation. However, before that, I would like for you to explain to me what was the real reason you turned from an experienced operative officer into an experienced drug trafficker. In other words, what influenced you? Was it the environment that was created in the MC Department where you heard that your comrades had had so many operations, and that they had had so many profits, and that they handled a lot of dollars, money? First of all, what motivated you to take that step?
[Abierno Gobin] It was a wretched motivation. Unfortunately, I can see today, and not sooner, that it was a wretched motivation. My motivation was to do what everyone else was doing. I am the only female officer in the department. I was afraid of being left out of some important operation which would bring in money. I did not stop to think about the political consequences this activity could have. It was not that I did not stop to think because I was illiterate, because I did not read GRANMA, due to a lack of political awareness, or due to ideological weaknesses...[rephrases] ideological maturity. It is none of those reasons.

I was simply allowed to be taken, I fell into this filth. [sighs] Now I am sorry, but it's too late. The damage has been done. We have begun doing damage to the revolution and to the other activities of the department, the ministry, the people, and the family. All our families [chokes up] were proud of us. In my case, at least, my parents could not even imagine that I would be involved in this kind of filth. Instead, they were proud of me. It is damage that cannot be paid with anything. But the damage is done, and now it must be paid. [sobbing] There is nothing left to do but pay, and I have nothing to pay with. [hangs her head and cries silently].

[Martinez Perez] That is all I have, Comrade President.

[Espinosa Martin] Comrades of the tribunal, do you have any questions?

[Escalona] President.

[Espinosa Martin] Yes, comrade prosecutor.

[Escalona] Rosa Maria, where did you study to be a teacher?
[Abierno Gobin] Where did I teach?

[Escalona] Where did you graduate from as a teacher?
[Abierno Gobin] I graduated from the university.

[Escalona] In what [word indistinct]?
[Abierno Gobin] The career is called higher teaching for economics.

[Escalona] What year did you graduate?
[Abierno Gobin] In 1980, I was already in the ministry.

[Escalona] In 1980 you were already working in the ministry, in the Instruction [Department].
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, in the Instruction Department.

[Escalona] So, you taught for 6 years?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes, I taught for 6 years.

[Escalona] You taught adolescents there?
[Abierno Gobin] Yes.

[Escalona] Were you able to live with the change from being among the adolescents to becoming a distribution center for drug trafficking which would be consumed by adolescents throughout the world? Or at least to be consumed by the adolescents in the United States? Did you sleep well at night knowing that? So, you started your career with the aspiration of becoming a teacher? That is all I have, Mr President.

[Espinosa Martin] Accused, you may step down. [Calls the next accused] Accused Alexis Lago Arocha. Place yourself in front of the tribunal. Lago Arocha, the law gives you the right to give testimony. Do you wish to do so?
[Lago Arocha] Yes.

[Espinosa Martin] Answer the prosecutor's questions.

[Escalona] Lago, you were a Lieutenant Colonel in the Ministry of the Interior?
[Lago Arocha] Yes, sir.

[Escalona] When did you join the ministry?
[Lago Arocha] In 1966.

[Escalona] Had you participated in the struggle against Batista, or were you still too young.
[Lago Arocha] I was part of a [word indistinct] for the 26 July.

[Escalona] For 26 July. So, what did you do after the triumph of the revolution?
[Lago Arocha] Well, first I worked as a stevedore.

[Escalona] As a stevedore?
[Lago Arocha] Yes.

[Escalona] Right.
[Lago Arocha] I worked as a stevedore in an oil factory. Then I transferred to the INDER [National Institute for Sports, Physical Education, and Recreation]. Then I was transferred to counterintelligence where I worked until 1983. During that year, I was transferred to CIMEX [State Enterprise for Import Export].

[Escalona] When did you begin your drug trafficking activities?

[Lago Arocha] The first time it happened was with the connection Francisco Rivera Cruz. He is also known as Paquito, and he is the connection of Officer Joel [Leonel Estevez Soto]. He [not further identified] told me that this individual, on several occasions, gave him the opportunity...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was he Cuban?
[Lago Arocha] What?

[Escalona] Was Paquito Cuban?
[Lago Arocha] Yes. He was of Cuban origin.

[Escalona] Is he one of the ones that left from the Mariel?
[Lago Arocha] Yes.

[Escalona] I see.

[Lago Arocha] He [not further identified] approached me several times, and I would tell him that that was not permitted in this country. I told him that if he was going to help, he should do it in another way. Nevertheless, he continued to insist. So I told Tony about the idea he had to send a ship from Jamaica, sail it on Cuban coastal waters, have it arrive at Bahia de Cadiz, and then sail it away to the north. At first, Tony had doubts. However, I am not sure if it was 2 or 3 days later when he said: let's do it. That is when he agreed to do this particular operation.

[Escalona] Elmer, I have a question: Did you say that Tony had doubts?
[Lago Arocha] No he did not have doubts. What happened was that he did not approve the operation at first.

[Escalona] However, he had already started the drug trafficking business.
[Lago Arocha] Excuse me?

[Escalona] He had already started the drug trafficking business with Amado Padron.
[Lago Arocha, interrupting] Yes, but I did not know about that at all.

[Escalona] That is what I am saying. It was not a matter of him having doubts, or of him being surprised by the idea of something he had already started.
[Lago Arocha] I did not...[rephrases] Well, let me explain.

[Escalona, interrupting] It was only a [word indistinct], right?
[Lago Arocha] Well...

[Escalona, interrupting] You were not the one to start drug trafficking in the MC Department. It had started much earlier.
[Lago Arocha] By what has been said here, it appears that [word indistinct].

[Escalona, interrupting] It started some time earlier. What?
[Lago Arocha] By what has been said here, it appears not.

[Escalona, interrupting] Fine. So what happened with that ship? Was that the ship that had the tragedy, the one that was supposed to have the marijuana but did not?
[Lago Arocha] Yes.

[Escalona] That is the one in which the connection died, and no money was collected?
[Lago Arocha] Right, no money was collected.

[Escalona] Elmer, what other operation did you carry out?
[Lago Arocha] Afterward...[rephrases] Prior to that situation, some time passed. That was when this operation we talked about took place. Comrade prosecutor, will you allow me to make a clarification? I think it is important.

[Escalona] A clarification? Yes, go ahead.
[Lago Arocha] From the moment I joined that section, I went with Tony to the Border Guard headquarters. This explains several things that have been said here. A general coordination plan was established; Tony explained to the Border Guard the need to give cover to legal operations.

[Escalona] Safe-conduct operations?
[Lago Arocha] That is right. I was the chief of that section. I do not know if Amadito also went. So, a permanent coordination plan was established. That is what permitted the connection to be covered for all these operations.

[Escalona] The all-powerful Tony de la Guardia coordinated with the Border Guard a safe-conduct for all the ships which he said carried his products?
[Lago Arocha] That is right. Exactly. The other situation which arose was the one about Raulito. The ship sailed by southern Cuba. According to what I recall, they [not further identified] were told not to do it, but they insisted on doing it. We told them we could not give any guarantees because the weather was very bad for any kind of operation of that nature. Tony was told about that, and he agreed. Nevertheless, after some time went by—like Sanchez Lima stated—the ship had a problem and it was repaired. They got lost. About a month went by, and a report was released which said that they had been detained. But they had not really been detained. They were outside our territorial waters, they had drifted off because they were out of fuel. They had information...

[Escalona] Were they your connections?
[Lago Arocha] That was Raulito, Sanchez Lima's connection.

[Escalona] Sanchez Lima's connection?

[Lago Arocha] That is right. So, the Border Guard reported that the Navy had spotted a ship which was asking for help. It needed fuel.

[Escalona] How did the connection identify himself to you? With a radio?
[Lago Arocha] No, no. In this case, there was no...

[Escalona, interrupting] How did Sanchez Lima find out about it?
[Lago Arocha] He found out through the Border Guard.

[Escalona] Did (?you) tell the Border Guard that [words indistinct]?
[Lago Arocha, interrupting] They were coming to Barlovento. [answers Escalona's question] No, it was not handled on behalf of Tony. They were coming to Barlovento, and they had merchandise for us.

[Escalona] But didn't the Border Guard realize the ship was empty?
[Lago Arocha] It was outside our territorial waters. It was not...

[Escalona, interrupting] As chief of a naval operations section, if you find a ship that has drifted near our waters, and if the Border Guard goes aboard, don't you have to search it?
[Lago Arocha] I would think so. I do not know why...

[Escalona, interrupting] So why wasn't it done? Was it because it had the [word indistinct] patent of the MC Department?
[Lago Arocha] It appears as though the Border Guard spoke with them, and they did not touch the ship. They did not do anything to them. So they were told to supply them with fuel.

[Escalona] You told them?
[Lago Arocha] Yes.

[Escalona] Who gave them the fuel? The Border Guard?
[Lago Arocha] Yes, the Border Guard. Then they set sail again on their course. Approximately 2 months later they appeared again. They said... [rephrases] But something was said there which we do not know whether or not it was true. It is not known whether it was marijuana or cocaine what they were carrying. They said it was marijuana. I do not...

[Escalona, interrupting] When did that happen? After the fuel incident? Two months later they arrived again?
[Lago Arocha] They arrived again with a ship...

[Escalona, interrupting] Where did they arrive?
[Lago Arocha] They arrived at Barlovento. They asked for permission to enter and they got it. They turned over $30,100 which were registered in the department as a tobacco operation.

[Escalona] As what kind of an operation?

[Lago Arocha] As a tobacco sales operation.

[Escalona] $30,100? Why did they turn over those $30,100?
[Lago Arocha] It was an expression of gratitude for the favor that had been done for them.

[Escalona] It was gratitude for the favor and the fuel?
[Lago Arocha] Yes, and the fuel.

[Escalona] It was also for your discretion?
[Lago Arocha] That is right.

[Escalona] Continue.
[Lago Arocha] They left. Interest in buying the ship was shown....

[Escalona] Continue.
[Lago Arocha] They returned. They showed interest in selling the ship. So, they offered to sell it. It was bought and then sold to the INTUR.

[Escalona] What about the $30,000. Was that given only as a form of gratitude?
[Lago Arocha] Yes, and I gave it to Comrade Tony.

[Escalona] To comrade who?
[Lago Arocha] Tony.

[Escalona] Tony. Fine. Elmer, tell me about another operation.
[Lago Arocha] Later there was an operation which I did not initiate. That is the one Comrade Rosa Maria spoke about. That is the one involving the plane. Tony called me. He said: There is this kind of an operation. There is a plane that comes, etcetera. Take care of that problem, because it is complicated. Help is needed. That is how I got involved in that operation. I think there are some things which maybe, in the minds of the comrades...[changes thought] So, the operation was carried out like Comrade Rosa Maria explained. The plane landed and, on that same day, part of the shipment was taken out. However, since they [not further identified] said it was too much, they left part of it in Santa Marta that night and went to look for it the following day. However, the weather got worse, and it was decided to take the merchandise to a house in Santa Maria. Two or three days later, the merchandise was transferred again. At that time, I told Comrade Tony that I thought it was crazy what they had done. I said it was one thing to have a ship sail on the territorial waters and another thing to use a plane. A plane could crash or have an accident and then a very complex situation could develop.

[Escalona] Was Tony in Varadero that day?
[Lago Arocha] No.

[Escalona] Did he go there later?
[Lago Arocha] No. As far as I know, he did not go.

[Escalona] Did he go after you spoke with him?

[Lago Arocha] No.

[Escalona] After you held that conversation with Tony...
[Lago Arocha, interrupting] I went to see him.

[Escalona] Ah, you went to see him in his office?
[Lago Arocha] I went to see him in his office after the operation was over. The other operation in which I participated...[changes thought] I was reviewing, here, the statements...[rephrases] It seems to me that as you look at all the statements made by the comrades...[does not complete sentence] In October 1988, an operation was attempted through the Bahia de Cadiz. That is the operation in which the "Ali Baba" ship participated. That operation failed. That operation...[rephrases] Although it was said that Comrade Tony does not remember, I will say that he was consulted and he approved all the operations. I did not carry out a single operation he did not approve.

[Escalona] Naturally, those things were discussed with much discretion in Tony's office. Since there have been so many discussions, it is possible that Tony does not remember. Is that what you are saying?
[Lago Arocha] Yes, that is what I am saying.

[Escalona] Very well. What other operation did you carry out?
[Lago Arocha] The other one was in April with the same connection, Raulito. The operation consisted in coming from southern Cuba and sailing in international waters. The connection received a shipment of cocaine from a ship. He was going to sail in our waters. He had a small breakdown but the ship was repaired. Then the ship was sent to...[rephrases] It was sent to Icacos; then in the [word indistinct], near Icacos, at night time, it was given permission to exit. I was not directly involved in that operation. [corrects himself] Ah, excuse me, I was not in the 1988 operation. Even though it looks like it. I was in Havana, although I am also responsible. But Prende and Sanchez were there coordinating it, and I stayed in Havana.

[Escalona] Prende and Sanchez Lima?
[Lago Arocha] Yes, and Sanchez Lima.

[Escalona] This is the...
[Lago Arocha, interrupting] This is the October 1988 operation. Several operations appear there, all mixed up, which do not...

[Escalona, interrupting] There was an operation in October in which Sanchez Lima and Prende participated but you did not. There is one in November in which Elmer, Prende, and Sanchez Lima participated. There is another one in December in which Elmer, Prende, and Sanchez Lima participated.
[Lago Arocha] No, I remember that there was only one operation.

[Escalona] Could it be possible that the same thing that happened to Tony is happening to you?
[Lago Arocha] No, sir.

[Escalona] No?
[Lago Arocha] I am sure not.

[Escalona] What other operation was there?
[Lago Arocha] The last operation was in April 1989. It was the same one I was referring to. The ship had a breakdown and it was quickly repaired. The ship continued en route to Icacos. I stayed in Havana. Comrades Prende and Sanchez took the responsibility of finishing the operation near Icacos. I did not participate in any additional operations. I did not know about this operation. I thought money had not been collected for it and that is what I stated. The comrade instructors [as heard] assured me that yes...

[Escalona, interrupting] What?
[Lago Arocha] They assured me that the money had been collected, but I said it had not. I continued saying that. I just now found out that Comrade Sanchez had actually collected the money...

[Escalona, interrupting] That operation involved the "Mai" or "Mi" ship?
[Lago Arocha] It is called "Emi".

[Escalona] "Emi". I see, it did not have an "E" here. "Emi", I see. Was that your last operation? In April.
[Lago Arocha] Yes, April.

[Escalona] Why did you not participate in the last set of operations. There were many operations which needed to be done and in which many people participated.
[Lago Arocha] I can say with all certainty that I was still not totally involved in the activities of Amado Padron's group. I did not know...[rephrases] I had imagined they did something like that. However, I did not know the quantity with which they dealt nor the frequency. I have no connections with Amado's group whatsoever.

[Escalona] I know, but I imagine that this explosion of activities must have involved the whole department. When the drug trafficking operations of that mysterious and strange department ended...[rephrases] When the operations ended for Amado Padron, they must have ended for you too. Right? Didn't they tell you the operations had ended?
[Lago Arocha] No, I was not told that.

[Escalona] When did you find out that Tony had left the MC Department?
[Lago Arocha] Excuse me, but I do not remember the exact date. It must have been...[rephrases] Let's see, we are in June...

[Escalona] You do not remember?

[Lago Arocha] Excuse me, let me see if I can...[rephrases] I think it was late April. I think but I do not know. It was then that the activities were ending...

[Manuela Garcia Valdez, interrupting] Of the operations your group—your naval operations unit—carried out, how many were successful?
[Lago Arocha] Drug trafficking operations?

[Garcia Valdez] What was the total number?
[Lago Arocha] In actuality, only two were successful.

[Garcia Valdez] Only two? What was the total amount of money collected?
[Lago Arocha] $30,000 from the operation carried out with the connection Raulito, and $250,000 for the Varadero Airport operation. I gave all that money to Tony.

[Garcia Valdez] In other words, you turned in all the money you received for the operations?
[Lago Arocha] That is right.

[Garcia Valdez] Did you personally benefit from those operations?
[Lago Arocha] No, not at all.

[Garcia Valdez] Did you use any of that money for yourself?
[Lago Arocha] No, never.

[Garcia Valdez] How many cars do you have?
[Lago Arocha] Just one.

[Garcia Valdez] How did you acquire that vehicle?
[Lago Arocha] That vehicle was assigned and sold to me. I paid for it with my salary.

[Garcia Valdez] Did you have another vehicle...
[Lago Arocha] No. That other car was practically ruined at work, and I had to repair it. So, Tony let me use another car for my work as section chief.

[Garcia Valdez] Regarding the dollars that were seized from you, was any national money also seized from you?
[Lago Arocha] No.

[Garcia Valdez] Regarding those dollars, why did you hide them?
[Lago Arocha] I must confess here, even if it is shameful, that up until a short while ago, I was completely wrong about Comrade Tony. I was totally wrong.

[Escalona, interrupting] About whom did you say?
[Lago Arocha] About Tony.

[Garcia Valdez] Was it customary for the chiefs and officers who worked in the MC Department to have those sums of money in their homes for operations...
[Lago Arocha, interrupting] No, not in my house, but upstairs [as heard].

[Garcia Valdez] You had it upstairs. So you were not the exception. It was customary for you to handle that money or have it with you.
[Lago Arocha, interrupting] This was so especially for the chiefs.

[Garcia Valdez] Basically the chiefs?
[Lago Arocha] That was true for that amount of money. At least, that was my case.

[Garcia Valdez] You said that toward the end...
[Lago Arocha, interrupting] Allow me to explain. I know that in this situation, it is difficult to believe this, but it is my truth and I will say it. There were plans to move our offices. Repairs were being made. We had construction personnel there. We did not have guards there, only older night watchmen. The offices' roof and windows remained totally opened. I had a small strongbox that a man could easily carry on his back. That weekend, I decided to take that money to my house. We were in the midst of holding meetings for the move; these were meetings between Tony and the new chief. I think it was on Monday or Tuesday that I found out about Tony's arrest, and about Patricio's arrest and that his house had been searched. For me that was truly...[rephrases] I really do not know what to say. I say this with shame. I lost my courage, and I said: what if...[shifts thought] Well, it was assumed that I would also be arrested if they found this money upstairs. I was a coward. I even thought about destroying the money. Then I changed my mind and thought I should not do it. I saved it.

However, once...[rephrases] The comrade instructor asked what was happening. I was briefly informed about the seriousness of the events. I immediately said where I had put the money. Even if you do not want to believe me, I tell you that I was not going to keep that money. I do not have a single cent of that money. I would also like to explain a few other things, but...

[Garcia Valdez] Go ahead, explain them.
[Lago Arocha] You see, this trial has been very shameful for me. I have listened to all the statements made by the comrade prosecutor, and he is completely right. I do not deny what he says. During this time, I have analyzed how this happened, how it was possible that I, an officer, party member, and even our comrades, have arrived to this. We allowed ourselves to be corrupted by convenience. That is the truth. Everything was convenient, easy. Everything was resolved. Tony showed he had the power solve things. This was seen as something that happened, not overnight, but he had done it for years. It was incredible, but he solved everything. He would say: Do you need something? Take it. He resolved it. I think that, in my case, that was what started a process of corruption which makes one insensitive out of convenience. All the deep analysis that comrade prosecutor has made is right—convenience, the easy acquisition of things. I advise my children that when something comes to them easily, they should look carefully at what they are getting. I think that is what has led to this process of

degeneration. I feel deeply ashamed. The news that my name had appeared on the papers had a great impact on me. [sobbing] I have suffered terribly, and I know that I have thrown away a life of work—approximately 20 years of work. I am ashamed to be in front of my comrades, friends, and family. [sighs] All the statements the comrade prosecutor has made are absolutely true. I think that this process, which makes one insensitive, which prevents one from thinking like one should, has no explanation. There is no explanation for it when you think about the irreparable damage I have done to my family. I am ashamed and sorry. These days have served as a good time to think about this. Although....[bows his head and holds back his tears] Although I am not worthy of being in the Minint and much less in the party, I feel like a revolutionary person. I am willing to give my life for the revolution.

[Espinosa Martin] Accused, you may step down. [Espinosa calls next accused] Accused Miguel Ruiz Poo. Place yourself in front of the tribunal. Accused Ruiz Poo, the law gives you the right to give testimony. Do you wish to do so?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, I do.

[Espinosa Martin] Answer the prosecutor's questions.

[Escalona] Accused, you were a captain in the MININT. Right?
[Ruiz Poo] That is right.

[Escalona] When did you join the MININT?
[Ruiz Poo] On 2 February 1969.

[Escalona] In 1969? So, you are now 36 years old?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, 36 years old.

[Escalona] Are you a lawyer?
[Ruiz Poo] I have a degree in judicial sciences.

[Escalona] Degree in judicial sciences. You were a deputy director of Interconsul [no further expansion provided].
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, I was deputy director of Interconsul.

[Escalona] Then, you transferred to Panama?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes.

[Escalona] Fine. So, did you know your relative Reynaldo?
[Ruiz Poo] No.

[Escalona] Where did you meet?
[Ruiz Poo] Reynaldo had asked for certain services...[rephrases] for some Interconsul schedules. He had to pay for them.

[Escalona] He had to what?
[Ruiz Poo] He had to pay for them.

[Escalona] Right.

[Ruiz Poo] Then, the offices we had in Panama...

[Escalona, interrupting] How did you contact your relative?
[Ruiz Poo] He came to pay.

[Escalona] How did he identify himself?
[Ruiz Poo] He came to pay, and while he was there he found out that the manager's name was Miguel Ruiz Poo. His name is Reynaldo, and he knew my father, because he is my father's cousin.

[Escalona] I see. When did he leave Cuba?
[Ruiz Poo] He left in 1962.

[Escalona] Did he leave legally?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, he left legally.

[Escalona] Was it at that time that he established relations with you?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, I charged him for the services, and we began relations.

[Escalona] Was it not prohibited for the officials of this department to deal with a relative who is a worm [former Cuban citizen]? It is not prohibited?
[Ruiz Poo] Not at all. You must realize that the only kind of people I dealt with were worms.

[Escalona] Yes, but it is one thing to have a worm as a client, and another to associate with a relative who is a worm and to establish relations with a relative whom you had never met. Right?
[Ruiz Poo] No, I don't...[rephrases] Well, that is right.

[Escalona] No, go ahead, say it.
[Ruiz Poo] Not exactly. I did not establish relations or anything of that sort. I charged him for the services. Then he mentioned to me the possibilities of obtaining equipment and resources. We started talking about commercial matters and about what he did.

[Escalona] You talked about normal commercial matters. When did drug trafficking get into this?
[Ruiz Poo] I am about to explain that. That is how we started talking. Then one day he made the comment. He told me.

[Escalona] You did not tell him?
[Ruiz Poo] No. He told me. For a long time there had been discussions. I saw that he was the first one to tell me about it. The only thing I wish to do is to tell you the whole truth, and the instructor can (?support) me in that. So, he told me that he had a sister...[corrects himself] a Colombian wife. He wanted to work something with the Cuban section. As you know, I was a Cuban investor who lived there. I worked for Cuba. It did not mean that I had moved to Panama. So everything he brought was for a group of friends of mine, and to see if I could somehow get a commission out of all that. That is how, one day Amado Padron and I talked over there. I told Amado

Padron that he had mentioned to me the possibility of dealing with this group. That is what I told Amado Padron. Amado Padron told me that it needed to be discussed further in Havana.

[Escalona, interrupting] That it needed what?
[Ruiz Poo] He said it needed to be discussed in Havana. Nevertheless, Amado decided to meet with him. We met with him, and he told us in detail what we already knew. He said that he owned two planes, that he had direct connections, and that he had direct connections with boatmen. He started talking about several things that dealt with drug trafficking. Amado Padron told me and him that the decision could not be made then and that it needed to be discussed. [passage indistinct] A few days later, Amado Padron asked me to travel to Cuba with ...

[Escalona, interrupting] With your cousin.
[Ruiz Poo] With Reynaldo Ruiz. I accompanied him on a regular flight. Then we went to the meeting. The meeting was held in Tony de la Guardia's office—the office that Tony de la Guardia had left. The office was now occupied by Amado Padron. He, Tony de la Guardia, and I met. During the meeting, Tony de la Guardia talked strictly business. That impressed me a lot because...[rephrases] I don't know why. It was drug trafficking. [Words indistinct] I gave my opinion to Amado, and Amado discussed it with Tony. [Passage indistinct] Later, he spoke about tobacco. [Words indistinct] tobacco in the United States. He said, literally, that for him to take tobacco to the United States was the same thing as taking drugs there. He (?combined) the two, although what he was really interested in was drugs. That was the conversation.

I told the instructor that I am still not able to say exactly when he discussed the full operation, the details of the operation. I told the instructor, and the instructor believes that I have told him everything with all the details.

[Escalona] Was there an agreement made?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, there was an agreement.

[Escalona] Was there a trip to Santa Clara?
[Ruiz Poo] The trip to Santa Clara was made specifically so that the son [nor further identified] would be introduced. The son is a pilot, and he needed to know how to get into Cuba.

[Escalona] That is right.
[Ruiz Poo] The son was given the information...

[Escalona, interrupting] What information?
[Ruiz Poo] He was given the information on how he needed to communicate on the radio, etcetera.

He was given the information and left the following day. He was about to leave immediately, but he left only on the following day. I then returned to Panama. I am talking about events that happened in 1986.

[Escalona] Yes.
[Ruiz Poo] I returned to Panama. I was told that everything was ready for the operation. He explained to me that a plane would take off from Panama. We were aware of all that and we had already [stutters]... arranged it; that is, the details were all known, so that no time would be wasted. Then I came with him.

Two operations were mentioned here, but there were three operations. I came with him to participate in that operation. When I arrived here, he and I went to Varadero, where the boatmen arrived. He had to meet the plane but the plane did not arrive because of problems in Colombia or wherever, perhaps in Panama. I am pretty sure that the plane was in Colombia. The plane did not come, and the action was frustrated because the boatmen had to leave. Amado Padron then told me that I should no longer come, that I should stay there, because we had communications problems. He told me to stay there, so that he might call me if he needed me, so that I might meet with the contact, with any... [hesitates] with his wife or so. So I stayed there. He then told me that I [changed thought] I just do not want to explain how things happened...

[Escalona, interrupting] [?Go on.]
[Ruiz Poo] I don't want to. He told me to stay there. It is true that, during the first operation, companero Eduardo did not know anything about the case. This is true. The case was known only by Amado Padron, Tony de la Guardia, and myself, and nobody else. We were the only people who were aware of the case...

[Escalona, interrupting] Uh-huh.
[Ruiz Poo]...at least as far as I know and as far as I have seen. Amado Padron then told me that after I left, Eduardo would join in at the guest house where Reinaldo stayed whenever he came, and that I should stay there to act as liaison.

Another operation was carried out. I am not aware of the details of the operation, but I know that it was carried out. I know that they arrived. I know that they—he and Eduardo—took care of it. I know that the boatmen left and that they were arrested.

[Escalona] Go on, go on.
[Ruiz Poo] I know that they were arrested. A third operation was carried out later. This was followed-...[changes thought] Ah! Amado Padron told me that I should try to compel Reinaldo to pay him a sum of money—even despite the failure, because of the risk involved. I forced him, and he paid. If I am not mistaken, that amount was approximately 400,000 [no currency specified]; it was about...

[Escalona, interrupting] ...The pay was for...[stutters] for the frustrated operation?
[Ruiz Poo] For the frustrated operation.

[Escalona] Aaah!

[Ruiz Poo] For the frustrated operation. The second operation was then carried out.

[Escalona, interrupting] Your relative was generous.
[Ruis Poo] I beg your pardon?

[Escalona] Your relative was generous, because as I have seen here he paid for something that had not been done.
[Ruiz Poo] He did pay for it.

[Escalona] Very nice.
[Ruiz Poo] Reinaldo Ruiz paid for it.

[Escalona] Go on with the next operation.
[Ruiz Poo] The third operation was then carried out. The third operation was also carried out by Amado Padron and Eduardo. This operation was successful. The pay for that operation was...(changes thought] I don't know the exact amount that was paid for that operation. I am not really aware of it. I don't know. He paid me $40,000 or $42,000.

Even despite the fact that Amado Padron was in Panama I (?received the money), which was paid to me as a commission. Of that $40,000 I gave $20,000 to Tony de la Guardia. Finally, that I don't...

[Escalona, interrupting] He apparently paid $320,000...
[Ruiz Poo] No, I don't... [Escalona interrupting] ...in addition to the $40,000 that he paid to you.
[Ruiz Poo] (?haw)? Look, we had our budget...

[Escalona, interrupting] And if the commission was yours, why did you have to give $20,000 to Tony de la Guardia?
[Ruiz Poo] Ah, because Tony de la Guardia is a department chief, and it was too much money for me to keep all for myself.

[Escalona] So you kept only $20,000, which was...
[Ruiz Poo, interrupting] I will explain why, I will explain why. The reason is simply that we were not receiving the budgeted amount.

Initially, I could have been weak enough—anyone can be weak, right?—to keep that $20,000 for myself. I could have been weak, but I confess that I left the money there and that the money was used to pay expenses. When I returned here—even before returning, about 5 months before, or 4 months...[stutters] more or less 5 months... [changes thought] (?After) my return in November—when I returned, all the debts had already been paid. Then, when I arrived here in Havana in March; that is... [changes thought] [?When I say I arrived I mean I was not...] like in a vacation. I retuned to work in January. I arrived at... [hesitates] at the office, and a few days later... [changes thought] Ah! Reinaldo came once again, because he married a Cuban girl, and he left with the Cuban girl...

[Escalona, interrupting] Yes.

[Ruiz Poo]... and he was arrested in Panama.

[Escalona] In Panama?
[Ruiz Poo] No, upon (?this) return, he learned that his yacht had been retained, because [name indistinct] returned alone. He then went to the United States—I learned about all this while I was in Cuba—he went to the United States and then he left this country. He reported that there were actually no difficulties, that the captain of his yacht had used drugs aboard the yacht and that he was... [changes thought] Then, when everything was normal, that he was... [hesitates, changes thought] in one of the... [hesitates] of the...[changes thought] that he planned to leave through the airport or something like that, Interpol arrested him at the airport. He was taken to the United States. He was arrested. As far as I know, the entire department knows this.

[Escalona] When did that happen?
[Ruiz Poo] About March.

[Escalona] Of 1988?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes. Not in 1988 but in 1987.

[Escalona] In 1987.
[Ruiz Poo] During that time I began to [word indistinct] here. People began arriving, and I attended some of the meetings. I attended a meeting with a Mexican, who went to Varadero. The meeting was attended by Willy, Eduardo, Amado, and me. Everything was analyzed there; that is, I was there, but this was the meeting during which the Mexican issue was analyzed.

One day Amado Padron told me to attend a meeting that would be attended by (Joel). Ah! First he told me to support Joel ["Joel" Estevez Soto]. [Word indistinct] told me to support Joel. And we analyzed a raid operation 20 miles north of Varadero.

If I am saying something wrong it is because I am not an expert, I am not really an expert. He [not further identified] was told about the approximate location of the operation zone. The operation was to be carried out for roosters [fighting cocks]. I learned about it. I did not participate in the rest of the operation, but I have as much responsibility as those who masterminded, planned, and supported the operation.

[Escalona] What do you mean by roosters? Was it a...?
[Ruiz Poo, interrupting] No, the cover was to buy roosters...

[Escalona, interrupting] Aahh ...
[Ruiz Poo] ... That is, they would carry out the raid and then...

[Escalona, interrupting] The (?cover) was the purchase roosters?

[Ruiz Poo] ...The purchase of roosters. This was the cover for the plane, which had to be refueled. I repeat that I have as much responsibility as those who planned, organized, and supported the operation. I don't know when the operation was carried out but it was. I know it was carried out. I don't know how much was charged for it, but I know that an amount was charged. [Ruiz Poo repeats] I know that an amount was charged for it. I don't know the exact figure, but I was there, and I even saw the money paid.

[Escalona] Where was the money delivered? In Cuba?

[Ruiz Poo] The money was delivered in Cuba, in Varadero, where I went for the last time...

[Escalona, interrupting] Uh-huh.

[Ruiz Poo] ...this was a few days...[changes thought] When I... [changes thought] Amado Padron told me something very important. (?Bah!), it was a story. I was in Amado Padron's house. A phone call was received saying that there was a plane, that some signals had been given, and that someone's name had been mentioned, either Eduardo's or somebody else's. I think it was Eduardo's name.

Amado Padron then told me: I am going to Varadero because there are problems with a plane. In my illusion and fancy, I believed that it was important to go, that it was my responsibility or whatever you want to call it. I went there in my own car, despite the fact that I cannot drive well at night. I obviously arrived a bit late. When I arrived, Amado Padron told me that everything was solved, that there were no problems, and that those people dumped the drug, that they were pretending, and that this was the reason why they landed here.

The car, I mean the plane, was repaired the next day, and it left. I say this because I am also responsible for this, because I was aware of it.

I don't know if more operations were carried out later; I know nothing about that. The instructor asked me if I was aware of the operations being carried out by others. I confess that I am not aware of them. I may have been aware that there were operations. But what I was sure of was that operations were being carried out even though I had no details. And I cannot press charges against anyone; I cannot say anything because I really did not participate, and I do not know. Had I been aware of any operation, I would have reported it; I would have simply reported it. Amado Padron then told me to accompany him to conclude the Eduardo operation. He told me that there were difficulties, that one of the boats had broken down while trying to recover the drugs. I accompanied him. When we arrived in Cayo Romero, Amado Padron told me where they buried part of the shipment or simply that they could not take it with them. We said good-bye to the people, and that part of the shipment remained there.

I learned that... [hesitates] that they paid part of the money. On that day, Tony de la Guardia went to Varadero. On the same day, Amado Padron told me that he would give—that is, that each of the companeros will receive—$25,000. We then counted—he and I counted—in the house, $100,000 of that package [words indistinct]. Tony de la Guardia then arrived and told us—thank you. [drinks water] Tony de la Guardia told us about the seriousness of the situation at that time, that even the counterintelligence personnel of the radio department had managed to pick up communications messages or something like that. Everything had already been unveiled. I did not know since when, but everything had already been unveiled. Everything was already known because Amado Padron had ordered Eduardo to strip those people of their radios, so that they do not (?put up a show). Therefore, this was a security measure imposed by Amado Padron. Let us call it that.

Then the seriousness of the situation was revealed. Tony de la Guardia said that the prevailing situation [changes thought] and Amado Padron did not tell Tony de la Guardia, because it is fair, it is absolutely fair... [changes thought] He even told me that he did not say it to him. This was not clarified to the instructor, but it is fair, because he did not tell Tony de la Guardia that in Cayo Romero he buried that... [changes thought] But he did give Tony de la Guardia a bag with the rest of the money, which he placed, with my help, inside the trunk.

I arrived the following day, or a few days later, and Amado Padron told me: Here you have $25,000. I will also give the money to Willy, Eddy, Joel.

What did I do with $25,000? I changed some money and gate it to Sanchez Lima. But in addition to that, there is something that was not mentioned here, which we did, [breathes deeply] something which has not been mentioned, and which shows a phase of corruption [voice breaks] [words indistinct]. It is what we did with some allowances. Let me tell you, and this must have been recorded there, that I... [sobs] the only right thing that I did, the only thing... [sobs] from the first day... [sobs] [words indistinct].

[Escalona] The accused should make an effort. What other reasons?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes.

[Escalona] Make an effort.
[Ruiz Poo] What we did is that we took from the allowances which we had to deliver to the economic police, and we (?changed) it. This case can also (?mark a difference in my own case), although I imagine it won't be too much. I (?changed the allowances), and Amado Padron, Eduardo, and myself benefitted from it. We did it, and this shows a (?more serious) aspect of corruption.

[Escalona] You are talking about the allowance that was sent to the relatives?

[Ruiz Poo] Yes. The economic police (?may have changed part of it) [words indistinct]. We changed part of it, and we tried to justify it with the excuse that we needed gasoline for the cars. That was nothing but a rationalization because the cost of gasoline and any other expensese that we may have had were nothing in comparison with what we earned and what we stole, because that is the right word [breathes hard]. That is everything I know.

[Escalona] Does the accused have anything else to say?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes.

[Escalona] Do you still have something to say?
[Ruiz Poor] Yes.

[Escalona] Say it.
[Ruiz Poo] The only shame I have felt is that of having been unable to tell the truth about all the things that I did, and the only revolutionary qualification that I may still have is the courage that I've had to say all this [voice breaks] I did not need [words indistinct].

[Escalona] Well, I ask the accused to calm down. [Ruiz Poo seen breathing irregularly] Can you answer a couple of questions now?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, and believe me when I say that I will answer them.

[Escalona] I only wanted to ask you whether you knew Martinez during your activities.
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, and I'm glad you have asked me about him because there is something in there. I did know Martinez.

[Escalona] Where did you meet him?
[Ruiz Poo] I did meet him. I met him at Amado Padron's office. [words indistinct] Martinez and I met him when he was trying to provide us with pullover sweaters; that is, he was trying to obtain the pullovers to send to Gen Ochoa in Angola. I then called Amado Padron, who was in a meeting with Martinez [words indistinct] he was at a meeting with Martinez. He then asked me whether I could send the pullovers through one of my contacts, obviously not a contact of this type. I coordinated everything, and we sent the pullovers. [words indistinct] They realized that I... [changes thought] because one day on the sidewalk I personally told Martinez... [changes thought] because Martinez was being sought to be told that he should not talk with a Colombian who was here, because that Colombian could (?disclose something) or could detect some technical aspect, who knows? So I was going to tell Martinez that he should not go see that Colombian.

So I was aware that Martinez was being sought, and I myself told him: Amado Padron and Antonio de la Guardia want to see you. Martinez replied: Why? I (?told him) it was in connection with a Colombian. Martinez said: I have no problems whatsoever. Everything I do—and this (?was said) even by (?Alex) [not further identified]... [Changes thought] I am totally convinced of the things I am doing, of the importance of the things I am doing. I never forget that, because my boss checks at the highest level everything I do. This is what Martinez said, and those are the words he used.

I wish Martinez had the courage to say here in this room that it is not true that he said such a thing. (?but he did say it). [breaths agitatedly]

Those things (?succeeded) not because I pushed them but because Martinez used to go there frequently. One day I heard Eduardo saying in a corridor: Guy, I have the impression that this is at the highest level. But it was a lie because all of us were aware that it was not at the highest level; it was simply a lie with which we sought—in the middle of our own political cowardliness [voice breaks, breathes agitatedly]—to justify ourselves.

[Escalona] Does the accused know whether Martinez also needed that type of justification in order to feel reassured?
[Ruiz Poo] I don't know. Everyone knew his own standing.

[Escalona] Did you share those feelings?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, I was in that position at the end, but I could actually realize the way the mechanism was working. I realized this, and this is what I told the instructor. It was like a mechanism. It was a repetition. It was a mechanism. The thing was not really the way it appeared to be, and, as I told the instructor, we reached a point where one could no longer say no. Is there anything else to say? There is nothing else to be said. This is shameful. As I told the instructor, this is a situation in which it seems as if I had been recruited, as if I was an enemy [voice breaks, breathes agitatedly].

[Escalona] The accused is not an enemy. [Ruiz Poo breathes agitatedly] In addition to your contact with Martinez, do you know anything about the operations in which he was engaged?

[Unidentified voice] Secretary, have him seen by a doctor. [Ruiz Poo sobbing]

[Escalona] I ask for a few minutes to have the doctor examine him.

[Unidentified voice] Yes, [words indistinct]. [Ruiz Poo continues to breathe agitatedly]

[Escalona] Come on, come on. [background noises, unintelligible voices] Does the accused feel better?
[Ruiz Poo] I would like to make something clear.

[Escalona] Let us go on with the session.
[Ruiz Poo] I did not realize everything at first. I did realize what many of the things were, many of them. The instructor's account must cite the things that I did

recognize little by little. However, most of them I realized from the very beginning. [words indistinc] of the instructor. For example, when I arrived, it was like a mechanism; I wanted to say something, but not tell everything I knew or everything I remembered because, in the midst of all this, I might be framed for something. But you can ask me about the smallest detail, and I will tell you.

[Escalona] [Words indistinct]
[Ruiz Poo] No, because there was something else.

[Escalona] Well, if there is anything else, out with it.
[Ruiz Poo] It is just that I am in the middle of all this trying to steel myself. Excuse me.

[Escalona] That is all right.
[Ruiz Poo] I knew, because at one point I felt [sobs, changes thought] Damn it, the Americans were getting closer...[sobs, changes thought] and he told me: Fidel already knows, and I will tell you something: Fidel has resolved this problem, because he even told me, he even gave me this example about the basketball... [changes thought] And at the end our commander knew everything. He got us out of this mess [hyperventilating]. I even remembered that Tony de la Guardia mentioned that he was part of the commission and that the problem was partially resolved [sobs] because Tony de la Guardia was part of the commission.

[Escalona] You sort of lost your voice for a moment, and we couldn't understand you. You were saying that you thought that the solution was forthcoming, that the problems were going to be resolved. What did you mean? However, you did mention some commission to which Tony de la Guardia belonged. What commissin was that?
[Ruiz Poo] What I mean is that there was trouble in Varadero. Tony was worried about this trouble, and Tony de la Guardia had talked with Amado and with me, and he told us that we had to get our things together, that we had to take all necessary measures because they were after us. That is, they had information. Therefore, he told us that he had decided to set up a commission to investigate these cases, these problems, and that he would be a member of this commission. That is what I knew.

[Escalona] The drug trafficking cases?
[Ruiz Poo] No, the cases in which we were involved: The transmissions and the operations that were taking place around Varadero. We were carrying out these operations. There was nobody else; we were the only ones. [voice rises]

[Escalona] What day was that; do you remember, Miguel?
[Ruiz Poo] I cannot remember what day it was. I was there. It was the day they delivered the suitcase with the money.

[Escalona] Then Tony de la Guardia was a member of the commission that was investigating the transmissions?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, I would imagine that the top echelons of the ministry [not further identified] are well aware of that.

[Escalona] He was appointed to investigate...
[Ruiz Poo, interrupting] Yes, but I do not think he lasted all that long there because he was replaced shortly thereafter.

[Escalona] Of course.
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, they replaced him, and two new companeros were appointed to this commission. I called Tony to ask him about this, and he told me: relax, relax, take it easy; there is no crisis. He told me that General Furry had called him and told him that there were no problems, that he had even asked him about the amounts that were delivered. I even told Tony de la Guardia, and he can tell me right here whether this is true or false. I told him exactly: Tony, put everything down up to the last kilogram. Do you understand? Because we felt, and I said so, that this was a vice. We felt that we had been caught in it. That is what we felt. It is a completely rotten mechanism. So I told him clearly to put down everything to the last kilogram.

[Escalona] Was Colome's [General Abelardo Colome Ibarra] request made before or after the commission was created?
[Ruiz Poo] After is was created.

[Escalona] After the establishment of the commission was announced?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, and after he had been removed from it.

[Escalona] After Tony was no longer the head of the MC.
[Ruiz Poo] No, he was still the chief, he was still the chief, but it was after he had been removed. That is, he had been removed from the commission. He told me: Relax, relax...

[Escalona, interrupting] He was a member of the commission, and he got removed but he remained as chief of the MC, of the department?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, he was still the chief there.

[Escalona] Do you have anything else to say?
[Ruiz Poo] I am perfectly willing to answer any questions. And I want to [words indistinct].

[Escalona] I have no further questions at this time. I have finished, Mr President.

[Espinosa Martin] Accused Ruiz Poo, you will now answer the questions of defense counsel.

[Fernandez Concepcion] My defendant has been quite eloquent and explicit. I have nothing else to clarify with him.

[Espinosa Martin] Right, does any other defense counsel want to ask the accused anything else?

[Unidentified voice] No.

[Espinoza Martin] Does this tribunal want to ask anything? Accused, you may step down. The oral trial is now adjurned until 1500 on Monday, 3 July. [noises, audio problems]

[Caption reads: Miguel Ruiz Poo was summoned again for the 3d session]

[Escalona, in progress] ...trial, almost at midnight. You were in such an emotional condition, so overwrought, that is was very difficult for you to speak and the doctors recommended that the interrogation be discontinued. How do you feel today, accussed?
[Ruiz Poo] Well, much better,

[Escalona] Do you believe that you will be able to answer calmly and coherently?
[Ruiz Poo] I believe so.

[Escalona] Very well accused. At the end of your testimony you said several interesting things but the truth is that we could not understand interesting things but the truth is that we could not understand them very well because of your emotional condition. I have the transcript of your statement and I would like to go over some parts with you. You said that, quote, at the final stage of this operation you met Martinez and the latter told you: I have no problems. I am fully convinced of the things I am doing, of the significance of what I am doing, because everything I am doing, because everything I am doing has been discussed at the highest level, unquote. Later you testified: one day I met Eduardo in the hall and he told me: Chico, I have the impression that this has been approved at the highest level. In fact, you said that this was all a lie. [atmospherics, passage indistinct] ...political cowardice. Were these your words?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes and I could give you more details...

[Escalona] Mr President, I wish to delve deeper in this testimony and I ask that accused Jorge Martinez be brought before the tribunal.

[Espinoza Martinez] Accused, Jorge Martinez. Stand before the tribunal, Poo, take a step to the right. Accused Martinez, you will answer the questions of the prosecutor.

[Escalona] Accused Martinez, is it true that you told accused Ruiz Poo that you were sure that everything you were doing, your chief Ochoa was discussing at the highest level?
[Martinez] Never.

[Escalona] You never heard accused Ochoa saying that all this was being discussed at the highest level.

[Martinez] Never. I ask to be allowed to explain the way I remember things.

[Escalona] I am satisfied with his answer, Mr President.

[Espinoza Martin] You can step down for the time being Martinez.

[Escalona] Mr President, I ask that accused Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo be summoned.

[Espinoza Martin] Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo, stand before the tribunal. Accused Diaz Izquierdo, is it true that you once told accused Ruiz Poo, and I quote: chico, I have the impression that this comes from the highest level?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I have never told him that.

[Escalona] You never told me that?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Never.

[Escalona] Neither did it cross your mind?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Pardon me.

[Escalona] Neither did it cross your mind, ever?
[Diaz Izquierdo] I believe that it did cross my mind several times, and I would like to explain why.

[Escalona] Tell me.
[Diaz Izquierdo] Because of the resources, the means and the facilities that were available to carry out the activities in question, I believed at one point that these activities had been authorized.

[Escalona] Authorized by whom, at what level, at the highest party level?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, I thought that...

[Escalona, interrupting] Of the government?
[Diaz Izquierdo] No, at least at the level...

[Escalona, interrupting] Of the Interior Minister?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Of the Interior Ministry or of the minister to whom I answer.

[Escalona] Tell me something, if you actually thought that this was known at the highest level, when Tony de la Guardia was arrested on Monday 12 and you received from a boatman a huge amount of dollars on 14 Wednesday, why did you take the money away and hide it instead of going immediately to see the minister [not further indentified] to turn the money over to him and report on everything that was going on? You had almost 2 months after the group was broken up and everyone knew that an investigation was underway. You had more than enough time to report. What you are saying contradicts the attitude you assumed later. Isn't that true?
[Diaz Izquierdo] It is true.

[Escalona] If you had thought that this operation had the support of a high government or high ministry level, once the group got busted didn't that mean that the support was no longer there?
[Diaz Izquierdo] Of course. When what you just said happened I did realize that this was highly irregular.

[Escalona] And you did not think, Eduardo, that even though late, this was the time to report all these evernts.
[Diaz Izquierdo] I have realized it many times since, but I failed to do so out of dishonesty.

[Escalona] I am satisfied with these answers, Mr President.

[Espinoza Martin] Accused Eduardo Diaz, you may step down.

[Escalona] Mr President, can we summon Tony de la Guardia?

[Espinoza Martin] Accused Antonio de la Guardia (Font), stand before the tribunal. Accused Antonio de la Guardia (Font) you will answer the prosecutor's questions.

[Escalona] Accused Tony de la Guardia, do you remember ever telling these subordinates of yours, or leading them to believe that this deal was authorized at the highest level, or at a level above yourself?
[De la Guardia] Never, nor did I hint at it. I have repeatedly told them that I was responsible for this that no one knew about this at any level above me in the Interior Ministry. They know it. I made it very clear. They can say what they want but they... they cannot lie to this court by saying that they had grounds for thinking that I could have told them or hinted to them that this had the approval of the Interior Ministry. I am convinced that none of them can honestly say so.

[Escalona] Accused Eduardo said it.
[De la Guardia] He had no ground for thinking so.

[Escalona] Despite the resources you had available to you...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] No grounds for thinking so.

[Escalona, continues] moving around boats, airplanes...
[De la Guardia, interrupts] No grounds for thinking so, out of the question. From the way they were carrying out the operations, they know that it was not...

[Espinosa Martin] Accused De la Guardia, you may step down. [Escalona] Can we summon accused Ochoa, Mr President?

[Espinoza Martin] Accused Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, stand before the tribunal. Ochoa Sanchez, you will answer the questions of the prosecutor.

[Escalona] Accused Ochoa, you have courageously assumed your responsibility for the serious crimes that have been perpetrated. Did you ever lead accused Martinez to believe that this had been authorized at the highest level?
[Ochoa] No. I did not lead him to believe any such thing and Martinez knew that it had not been authorized [word indistinct].

[Escalona] Thank you Mr President.

[Espinoza Martin] Accused Ochoa Sanchez you may step down.

[Escalona] I would like, Mr President, to draw the tribunal's attention to the fact that if this accused and Eduardo had believed—even though Ruiz Poo says that it was all a lie to justify the operation—that this was authorized at the highest level, just imagine what Carlos Escobar must have thought when he saw a captain of the FAR arriving at his farm in Colombia.

Accused Ruiz Poo, you had say, I quote: I realized how my companeros treated me, they addressed me as compañero. You mean the companeros of Villa (Marite) who were interrogating you?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes Sir.

[Escalona] I keep quoting you: When I came there I got out and I told the instructor...[changes thought] I went up the staircase, I asked to talk to him and I told him that the only thing that prompted me to speak up was that Cuba could be screwed up. I told him this because at that time I felt that the Americans were on to us and he told me—your instructor did—Fidel already knows and I have a piece of news for you. Fidel has resolved this problem. He even told you, and I quote again: he even gave me this example about a basketball and said that in the end the brillance of our commander had gotten us out of this mess, and that I had to give all the information I had buried in my mind.

You uttered these words under deep emotional stress. Do you remember them?
[Ruiz Poo] I remember them and I feel them.

[Escalona] At what point did you reailize, accused, that you were endangering the country, that it could be scuttled [hundirlo] as you said, and that you had forced the commander in chief to have to cope with this new problem that the revolution was facing.

[Ruiz Poo] I am sad and sorry, but realization came as I began to figure out what was happening to me and as I became aware of the responsibility I had in the...[changes thought] when I started speaking to the companeros and began to see that the whole thing was a disaster, that it was insane. It came when I started thinking about the risks we had created by using methods alien to our system, methods that belong to a more egoistic system to make...[changes thought] believing that we would get

rich when in fact we were trampling all over the morals of the Cuban people as a whole. That is when realization came—as I thought more and more about it. Unfortunately I cannot come here and tell you that I realize all this beforehand. No, I became aware of it when I went up...[changes thought] when I realized that I was being arrested by my own comrades, that the very...[changes thought] the people where I was working. It was then and there. I cannot tell you that it happened before; I would be lying if I did. Could we...[trails off]

[Escalona] Do you feel all right?
[Ruiz Poo] I feel all right?

[Escalona] There is a third matter, accused.
[Ruiz Poo] Uh-huh.

[Escalona] Almost at the end of your testimony...
[Ruiz Poo] Uh-huh.

[Escalona] ...still overwrought as you were, and I quote you: I found out in Vardero that there were problems. Tony was worried by the problem, and Tony spoke with Amado Padron and with myself and he told us that we had to get things together because they were after us. Further on, accused Ruiz Poo, you said that when the group was most concerned because you believed that they were after you, Tony called you to say that there were no problems, that there were no problems, that General (Furry) had called him and told him that there were no problems. Do you remember this?
[Ruiz Poo] Yes, but there is something not quite correct. Tony never called the group. Tony de la Guardia never told anyone here that it was all approved at the highest level. Never. I am the man responsible for this, and I can tell you clearly that Antonio de la Guardia never told any of us that this had the approval of the high command. Never. You can rest assured of this. If anyone caught up in this cowardly and unprincipled activity wishes to assuage his conscience, that is something else, but I can assure you that Tony de la Guardia never told me—and it seems that I was first to bring this subject up—he never told me that this came from the highest level. I always felt that this was something that he instructed me to do, that he approved, but that it went no further up.

[Escalona] However, you gave an impression that could confuse the group.
[Ruiz Poo] The impression...

[Escalona, interrupting] It led Eduardo to remark on this fact to you earlier.
[Ruiz Poo] [words indistinct] Eduardo because I am not trying to remind you about Eduardo. It does not have to do with Antonio de la Guardia; it has to do with Martinez, because we are dealing with Martinez now, you see. The thing is that Martinez...

[Escalona, interrupting] Was Martinez the one who was operating at the high level?

[Ruiz Poo] No, Martinez took us to work with his group. First, comrade prosecutor, we did not have any ties with the FAR. How could we possibly believe that the FAR high command was involved. We may have thought about the top level of the ministry [not further identified]. We did not have any links with the FAR. The thing was that Martinez spoke so firmly, so convincingly, with such authority, that he may have led us to believe millions of things. However, he did specifically hint that this was something that came from the highest level.

[Escalona] Amado Padron talked to you about General...
[Ruiz Poo, interrupting] I never believed him.

[Escalona, continuing]... about Army General Abelardo Colome Ibarra?
[Ruiz Poo] I am the one that called up Tony, because I was scared, because I felt that this thing was too big for me. Tony told me [pauses] me, not the group, definitely not the group, only me. I can even tell you precisely where it was. It happened at the corner of 10th and Calzada Streets. My wife was in her car; she had run out of gasoline and I was giving her some gasoline. So, Tony went to this corner, the corner of 10th and Calzada Streets and told me: relax, there are no problems. He told me not to mention it to anybody, but that just so I would stop worrying, he said, companero General (Furry) had called him and asked him to report on the money we had turned over, on how much we had delivered, adding that everything was all right, that I could relax, that there was no need to... [changes thought] that we could all relax. I told him: Tony, please report up to the last cent that we have made. This happened at the corner of 10th and Calzada Streets. There was no group, I was there and I [words indistinct]. No, no, no, there was definitely no group there. He told this to me, to me.

[Escalona] To you?
[Ruiz Poo] Uh-huh.

[Escalona] I suppose that when he told you about the conversation he had with Army General Colome, he was referring to the two talks that Gen Colome held on 30 May and 2 June following instructions of the FAR Minister? The general spoke with the accused Tony and Patricio de la Guardia. The first of these talks took place 12 days before your arrest, and the second was 10 days before your arrest. Those were the only two occassions on which General Colome Ibarra talked with the De la Guardia brothers. The first talk had been requested by Tony and the second by General Colome. Mr President, in view of the significance of this situation, I ask that the accused Tony and Patricio de la Guardia be called before the tribunal.

[Espinoza Martin] Antonio de la Guardia, take one step to the right. Accused Patricio de la Guardia, stand before the tribunal. Accused Patricio de la Guardia (Font), the law gives you the right to testify or refrain from doing so. Do you wish to testify?
[Patricio de la Guardia] I wish to testify.

[Espinoza Martin] You will answer the prosecutor's questions.

[Escalona] Accused Antonio de la Guardia, when you asked to meet with Gen Colome Ibarra you had already been replaced at the MC. The MININT had met 1 month earlier to discuss the need to investigate possible drug trafficking operations, and you—as we now know—had already suspended the operations. Tell us honestly, why did you ask to meet with Gen Colome Ibarra?
[Tony de la Guardia] The truth is that Patricio told me: Talk to (Furry) and explain to him all about our involvement in the operations that were being carried out in Africa and some details of this other operation. Since he had returned, I mean Gen Ochoa had returned, Patricio was worried that all these operations in Africa were tied to (?their) return from there. So I asked General (Furry) to meet with him for a talk. That was the first meeting.

[Escalona] Accused Patricio de la Guardia, why Colome.
[Patricio de la Guardia] I wanted to talk with Gen Colome because one of the operations, that is the one involving the C-130 that had raised some dust in Luanda, because it was depicted as having great significance for the Armed Forces and in fact the Armed Forces had nothing to do with it. I wanted to explain to Gen Colome about the meeting that I held in Luanda before leaving with Colonel Jose Maria [not further identified] and with the secretary of the president [not further identified] and tell him that the FAR had nothing to do with it. So I just wanted to give him an explanation of the operation involving the planes and also tell him about the real situation in Angola.

[Escalona] Accused Antonio de la Guardia, which of your enterprises was involved in the purchase of the planes?
[Tony de la Guardia] Pardon me.

[Escalona] Which of your enterprises was involved in the purchase of the planes?
[Tony de la Guardia] None, none of our enterprises.

[Escalona] [Question indistinct]
[Tony de la Guardia] The enterprises belonged to the trader, the one who was negotiating the purchase...[changes thought] that is, Cuba would bring... [changes thought] that is, I had no companies that could handle this type of operation.

[Escalona] Could either of the two accused answer this question: What does Gen Colome have to do with this business?
[Tony de la Guardia] Nothing at all.

[Escalona] Had Colome ever given any instructions about company operations of any sort?
[Tony de la Guardia] None at all.

[Escalona] Have you ever supplied the MINFAR with funds from the profits of your companies?

[Tony de la Guardia] No funds at all.

[Escalona] Then why bring Colome into this?
[Tony de la Guardia] Because of the alleged involvement of Patricio and Gen Ochoa in the Angolan business when in fact they were not responsible for that at all. I was responsible for the effects of the Angolan operation [words indistinct] having (?sent) a message there and having launched the planes' deal.

[Escalona] Comrade President, Comrade Members of the tribunal, it is true that the accused Tony and Patricio de la Guardia spoke on 30 June with Gen Colome Ibarra under the pretext [words indistinct] the affair involving the purchase of planes for Angola. I have here the recording and the transcription of everyhing that was said that day. It was clearly stated by Gen Colome Ibarra, however, we must bear in mind that on 30 May the MINFAR minister had met on 29 May with the accused Arnaldo Ochoa for more than 3 hours. Gen Colome Ibarra and Gen Ulisses Rosales, [First Vice Minister of the MINFAR, Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro] were present at that meeting. You were about to be arrested. My question is: Was there any point at that time to go on talking about the MINFAR, about commissions, about operations, about the planes, and so forth?

[Tony de la Guardia] No.

[Escalona] Why don't you tell the truth? Why don't you say that you were really trying to find out about your personal situation?
[Tony de la Guardia] No, I wasn't really aware of the fact that I was going to be arrested. I frankly did not know that I was going to be arrested, but...

[Escalona, interrupting] Do you remember that 2 days after the first meeting that Gen Abelardo Colome Ibarra [words indistinct]. Do you remember the questions that (?this gentleman asked you)? What did those questions refer to?
[Patricio de la Guardia] The questions referred to the business that Ochoa and I had in Angola, to the ivory business. I believe that Gen Colome was giving us a chance to say everything we had to say.

[Escalona] Did you do that?
[Patricio de la Guardia] We lacked the courage that a revolutionary should have in admitting his own mistakes, so we did not say anything.

[Escalona] Mr President, I do not think the accused remember the questions that Gen Colome put to them accurately. The questions were prepared by the minister of FAR. I have the next of the questions here. I also have a recorded version and a written transcript of the second meeting with Gen Colome. I will read the questions in order to refresh the accused's memory and in order to inform the tribunal.

How did the FAR and the MININT mission in Angola become involved with the business deals?

Who planned such involvement?

What products were used for the commercial operations performed by the FAR and the MININT missions and by Tony de la Guardia?

Who was the foreigner who contacted Gen Ochoa and Gen Patricio [not further identified]?

What kind of support was provided by Tony de la Guardia to the stores under PAR control... [pauses] under military mission control? Explain whether the containers were sent from Panama.

What was the procedure used for the ivory transaction between the FAR military mission and Tony de la Guardia?

What were the activities performed with (?Eliodoro de la Uneca) in Punta Negra?

How was the diamond purchase deal planned?

How many operations were performed with the participation of FAR members?

What was Tony de la Guardia's plan for buying crude oil in Angola? What was the FAR chief role in connection with Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos, and what were the specific accomplishments in this regard?

As you can see, fellow tribunal members, we cannot understand how, after these clear and precise questions about facts that were being investigated, the accused Tony de la Guardia could have remained calm or could have tried to calm some of his subordinates.

To me the issue is clear and I hereby end the questioning of the accused.

[Espinosa Martin] The accused Antonio and Patricio de de la Guardia may leave.
[Escalona] Mr President, I could not understand Ruiz Poo's final words because he was very emotional during the previous session. I have no other questions to ask him.

[Espinosa Martin] Does the defense counsel want to ask any question of the accused Ruiz Poo?
[Fernandez Concepcion] Yes.

[Espinosa Martin] The accused Ruiz Poo shall now answer questions from the defense attorney.

[Fernandez Concepcion] What is your opinion of all these facts? I did not ask you this question before because of your physical condition.

[Ruiz Poo] I have thought about all these mistakes and I feel a bit like I am mainly responsible. I am the youngest person involved; therefore, I should have been more clearly aware of the lessons taught by the Cuban Revolution and the Cuban people, like the firm determination to be permanently on guard against the false ideals of obtaining material earnings. I believe I have the greatest responsibility. It is still unbelievable. The only possible explanation is an extremely serious collapse of moral principles. I don't think that this has been the result of a sudden impulse, and I still wonder why it happened. It is impossible that after making a contact 1 day, as of that day ... [changes thought] and that I should not have resisted, and that everything should have happened all of a sudden. There must be an explanation. There must have been some previous errors that I cannot identify.

The only thing that I could do was to reflect on the many mistakes I made. From the very 1st day, I have tried to report things as clearly as possible. I have tried to do something about the great harm that I caused. I have tried to struggle, [words indistinct] so that this may turn into a lesson, and so that at least I may feel at peace with myself because I said everything and because this will be a lesson for everyone.

What feelings can a person like me, who was virtually born inside the Interior Ministry, harbor now?

The only thing I expect now is that the strictest punishment will be imposed on a revolutionary who indulged in this type of weakness. Believe me when I say that I have thought about all the possible punishments, and I believe that the strongest punishment should be imposed to correct all such mistakes.

I want to say [breathes deeply] that even if the tribunal sentences me to death, I will accept it with the courage that I lacked in the past. Deep in my soul [sobs] I will keep these people, the MININT, the FAR, and Fidel. [weeps]

[Espinosa Martin] Does the defense attorney have anything else to say? Does any other defense attorney have anything to say?

Miguel Ruiz Poo, you may leave now.

'Summary' of Third Session

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["Summary" of the third session of the court-martial of Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and 13 other Revolutionary Armed Forces, FAR, and Interior Ministry, MININT, officers at the FAR Universal Hall in Havana on 3 July—recorded]

[Text] [Division General Ramon Espinosa Martin] Defendant Jose Luis Pineda Bermudez, please stand and face the tribunal. The law gives you the right to testify or remain silent. Do you wish to testify?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Espinosa] Please answer the questions that will be asked by the prosecutor.

[Brigadier General Juan Escalona Reguera] Defendant Jose Luis Pineda Bermudez, also known as Willy: You were a first lieutenant at the MININT with 15 years of service.
[Pineda] Yes.

[Escalona] Is that correct?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Escalona] When did you start working for the MC [MININT department responsible for bypassing U.S. embargo on Cuba]?
[Pineda] After the MININT's Control Directorate was abolished, I was transferred to the MC.

[Escalona] What year was that?
[Pineda] In 1986.

[Escalona] But you had been working for the ministry's Control Department?
[Pineda] The Control Directorate.

[Escalona] The Control Directorate. How many years did you work there?
[Pineda] Approximately 2 years.

[Escalona] Defendant, when, where, and how did you learn of the drug trafficking activities carried out by the MC?
[Pineda] I heard about those activities in early 1988 when I was in Mexico City. I heard of these activities from Amado Padron.

[Escalona] Excuse me, you started working for the MC in 1986?
[Pineda] Yes, in 1986.

[Escalona] You were sent abroad immediately after you started working?
[Pineda] No. My first mission abroad was in late 1987.

[Escalona] In 1987. And in 1988, while you were in Mexico, you met Amado Padron. Please continue.
[Pineda] In late 1987 I returned to Havana, and in early 1988 I went back to Mexico. A few months after my arrival, Amado Padron came to visit and informed me of these activities.

[Escalona] How did he tell you about these activities.
[Pineda] While I was in Mexico I was advised of his visit. Padron arrived with two Colombians. That was when Padron told me that his group was involved in some drug trafficking activities. He told me that the Colombians did not deal in emeralds; they were involved in drug trafficking. He told me that the activities were carried out in international waters near Cuba. He told me that small boats were used for these operations. That is what I was told in early 1988.

[Escalona] When did your relationship with Padron begin?
[Pineda] When I started working for the department.

[Escalona] What crossed your mind when Padron told you about his activities when you hardly knew him?
[Pineda] I do not know.

[Escalona] Willy, he was risking the possibility that you would talk.
[Pineda] I could have.

[Escalona] Why did you not talk?
[Pineda] It was a weakness on my part; it was a mistake.

[Escalona] Did you think that Cuba was involved in drug trafficking?
[Pineda] No, no way, no.

[Escalona] Did you ever think of doing something to stop what was going on?
[Pineda] I never thought of it.

[Escalona] Defendant, did you ever think of Cuba? What did Amado Padron offer you?
[Pineda] Absolutely nothing.

[Escalona] What about all that money, all those suitcases full of money you picked up in Mexico? Did some of that money end up in your hands?
[Pineda] None.

[Escalona] Then you are a drug trafficking patriot. You sacrificed your prestige as a revolutionary, you sacrificed your honor and your dignity, and you endangered Cuba in exchange for what? For money? How can you explain

throwing away all those years of service for the MININT? How can you explain throwing away personal prestige, the trust and respect people had in you, to become nothing more than a vulgar drug trafficker?
[Pineda] There is no explanation.

[Escalona] Willy, there must be something that can explain your behavior. What did Padron know about you? Did he use blackmail?
[Pineda] No, he did not. Early in 1988 Amado Padron asked me to look for a Mexican who would work with the Colombians in getting the drug from Colombia to Mexico and from Mexico to the United States.

[Escalona] And afterward?
[Pineda] After that I came to Havana and met with Tony de la Guardia. Tony explained that he did not want to get me involved in this kind of activity. He said that, once all introductions among the Colombians and Mexicans had been made, I would not participate in any of the activities that would take place in order to avoid implicating me in any way. This is what happened. In other words, the only meetings I attended were coordination meetings between the Mexicans and Colombians.
My impression was that if anything (?shady) was going on I should not be present; that they should do the coordination directly among themselves; that the commission would be collected in Panama through Amado Padron; and that I would go to Panama to collect the commission that was owed for this liaison work.

[Escalona] What percentage were you going to receive for the drug smuggling through Mexico?
[Pineda] I think it was between 3 to 5 percent of the total value of each shipment.

[Escalona] Did the Mexicans visit Havana?
[Pineda] The Mexicans visited Havana for two purposes. The first was to discuss tobacco smuggling into the United States. It was said the two visitors were Mexicans, but this was inaccurate. Only one was; the other one looked American, although he actually was a Mexican citizen. This American said he was in a position to smuggle the tobacco, but drug smuggling was not discussed with him. He was the one who suggested that he could launder money through U.S. banks. The Colombians with whom he met were not interested in the money laundering at all. This was the meeting in which I participated with other Colombians whom I had not met before.

[Escalona] [Question indistinct]
[Pineda] I do not know with whose help they arrived in Cuba. (?Carlos) learned that I took the Mexicans to that meeting.

[Escalona] Willy, where did you get to know Martinez?
[Pineda] I met Martinez at Amado Padron's office here in Havana, approximately in...

[Escalona, interrupting] And?

[Pineda] During 1988. On that occasion, well, Martinez asked me in front of Amado if I had, that is, if I could—with these same Mexicans—do some drug trafficking jobs, but with Colombians he knew. I explained to Martinez that this could be done but only under the right conditions. I said the situation in Mexico was not very good for this type of activity, or at least the Mexicans I knew did not have the proper facilities. I said we had to wait.
Martinez called me two or three other times. I saw him again that year, and he always insisted on the matter of the Mexicans. Actually, nothing was ever done through Mexico. [Words indistinct] and, besides, this coincided with the arrest during a raid of Mexico's drug-trafficking czar, Felix Gallardo, when his entire organization was dismantled. I guess because of that, the Mexicans were not able to carry out the plan.

[Escalona] Willy, did Amado Padron tell you to go to Panama?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Escalona] When was that?
[Pineda] I think it was in 1988, perhaps in late 1988.

[Escalona] In late 1988. Whom did you find when you arrived Panama?
[Pineda] I found out that, coincidentally, Martinez was in Panama.

[Escalona] Who else? Who was Martinez with?
[Pineda] I saw Martinez alone in the house of...[changes thought] He had the apartment in Panama. Then other Colombians introduced themselves to me.

[Escalona] However, you said during your testimony—and I quote—that when you arrived in this country, in Panama, the matter to be discussed had not been specified. That is, Amado Padron called you and told you to go to Panama but did not specify anything. When you arrived in Panama, you found Captain Martinez, Gen Ochoa's aide, was there together with Amado; you discussed with them other plans to smuggle cocaine through Mexico, cocaine brought by Martinez; and Martinez needed to be put in contact with Mexican drug-traffickers to smuggle cocaine to the United States through Mexico. Regarding this conversation and the request from Martinez, the defendant alleges he said the objective conditions for this activity did not exist for the time being and that should the possibility exist later, he would send a message through Amado Padron himself.
[Pineda] That is correct.

[Escalona] What impression did you get from Captain Martinez?
[Pineda] The impression I got from Martinez was that he was eager to do business for money. I do not know his purpose—that is, if he wanted money to give to someone else or for himself. However, I always had the impression he was eager to carry out business deals, and...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did he give you the impression he could somehow be important?
[Pineda] No, he did not. He gave me the impression...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did he tell you who he was working for?
[Pineda] Yes, I knew.

[Escalona] Since when?
[Pineda] Padron told me here in Havana that Captain Martinez was Ochoa's adjutant.

[Escalona] Did he ever speak to you about Ochoa?
[Pineda] I do not remember. I supposed everything Martinez did was authorized by Ochoa, because Martinez was his assistant and moved freely, but I cannot remember Martinez speaking to me about Ochoa.

[Escalona] So you do not remember. What did you and Amado Padron do approximately a month ago?
[Pineda] Padron gave me $20,000.

[Escalona] To pay for your services?
[Pineda] He told me this money was for work previously done and that he had decided to withdraw a certain amount to distribute it among the various comrades.

[Escalona] You accepted the money, of course.
[Pineda] No, I did not.

[Escalona] What did you do with the money?
[Pineda] I used $5,000 to buy a car and kept the other $15,000 to take to Mexico on my return trip. An agreement had been reached with a Mexican who was there—this is another commercial relationship—to purchase an apartment. We could not stay where we lived because the official's wife had arrived in Mexico. This is why we agreed to buy an apartment. I planned to use the $15,000 as a down payment on the apartment if I did not receive any additional money and even if the $15,000 would not be reimbursed to me later on. This operation was necessary; otherwise, we would not have had a place to live in Mexico. This was my initial intention.

[Escalona] What did you do with the money when you were summoned by the security department?
[Pineda] I took with me the $15,000 I had at home. The next day, I delivered the remaining $5,000, which I did not have at home at the time because I had given it to a comrade to buy a car for me, considering that I was planning to go to Mexico.

[Escalona] Were you summoned or taken to the security department?
[Pineda] I was summoned.

[Escalona] You said you brought with you only $15,000 the day you were summoned instead of the full amount.
[Pineda] Yes, $15,000.

[Escalona] Acting dishonestly, you delivered the rest of the money to the judge only after you were requested to do so.
[Pineda] Yes.

[Escalona] So you were dishonest up to the last moment. You began by being dishonest toward Cuba, the MININT, and yourself, and ended up being the collaborator of a drug trafficker, a dishonest person who conceals the drug-trafficking money even at the moment of detention. Is this not so? That is all, Mr President.

[Espinosa] The defense lawyer has the floor. Pineda Bermudez, answer the questions to be asked by the defense lawyer.

[First Lieutenant Esther Recio Zamora] Comrade President.

[Escalante, interrupting] Silence in the room.

[Recio] There are some aspects regarding the defendant's testimony and the questions asked him; we deem it necessary to point out a few things. Pineda, did you receive any decorations and incentives during the 15 years you served in the MININT that you can tell us about?
[Pineda] I received a medal for 10 and 15 years of service and a silver medal for 30 years of work at the MC.

[Recio] We have pinpointed the time you began working for the MC. We have specified the time when you were appointed permanent representative of the medical department. Something remained unclear to me yesterday, however. Defendant de la Guardia said you received orders from him concerning certain activities while he received instructions from defendant Padron. Pineda, specifically who was your boss? To whom did you answer?
[Pineda] This is a little ambiguous.

[Recio] Yes.
[Pineda] The department comrades living permanently abroad usually answered directly to the department head. In this case, it was Tony. In my specific case—I suppose the same is true of the Panama case—because of these same activities, some commercial and others related to drug trafficking, I was included in Amado Padron's section. This is to say, the responsibility was split.

[Recio] In other words, from that point on, you worked directly for Amado Padron?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Recio] Pineda, I must establish something of interest. Did you have specific, total knowledge of these drug-related activities when your boss Padron first visited Mexico during the 1st quarter of 1988 to collect this money? Did you learn about these activities then?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Recio] It was at that moment?
[Pineda] I did not know...

[Recio, interrupting] Prior to this, you did not know about the operations being carried out?
[Pineda] I knew absolutely nothing.

[Recio] During that visit, apart from other purposes that have been discussed in this room, such as the collection of funds from previous operations carried out in Varadero, how did Padron tell you, speak to you, or point out to you—other terms have been used—that contact would be sought between the Colombians and Mexicans? Specifically, how did he instruct you to carry out this operation?
[Pineda] He told me these contacts were necessary as an alternate solution. I found out later it was an effort to eliminate this type of activity in Cuba. I really was not aware of the magnitude of the activity in Cuba. That is how it happened in my case.

[Recio] That is how it happened. Willy, you also knew—because Amado must have told you at some point after his visit to Mexico—about the operations carried out in Cuba. How much did you know about the operations already under way in Cuba? How many specifics did you know concerning the magnitude of what was really going on; how much did you really know?
[Pineda] What I knew about this activity I found out by reading the comrade prosecutor's accusatory conclusions. I knew—because Padron had explained and I had discussed it later in Havana with Comrades Miguel Ruiz and Eduardo—that operations were carried out with boats. However, the discussions I held were always restricted to Padron's group, which included Ruiz and Eduardo. The full scope of the activities was never discussed. That is all I knew. I did not know the extent of the operation and was not in on the secret that the comrades here were involved in this type of activity. I did not know.

[Recio] Good. Willy, let us talk about money now. It is clear Amado Padron gave you $20,000 in June 1989.
[Pineda] Yes.

[Recio] When you were called to the investigations department to discuss this issue, you took $15,000?
[Pineda] Yes, exactly.

[Recio] The prosecutor says you were dishonest when you returned the money, but little has been said about honesty. You have admitted you were dishonest with the money. You told this tribunal you returned $15,000, and you explained that at least in the beginning you had planned to lease an apartment for your stay in Mexico.
[Pineda] Yes.

[Recio] You told us you were at another comrade's home in Mexico. Defendant Padron was also asked yesterday if part of the money to which he had access could be used to lease or purchase that apartment in Mexico. I would like to discuss the honesty issue regarding the remaining $5,000. You told the tribunal earlier that you handed in the remaining $5,000 later because you had left it at the home of a comrade to whom you had also given a letter authorizing the purchase of a car. Explain your dishonesty regarding the money's return. Why did you not return all the money? Why did you turn over $15,000 and then $5,000? You must at least explain this lack of honesty.
[Pineda] I do not want to justify...

[Recio, interrupting] Without justifications, Willy. No.
[Pineda] I do not want to justify my actions. I really...

[Recio, interrupting] We are here...[changes thought] Excuse me, Willy, please. I am not seeking a justification; that would go against our principles. However, an explanation is necessary. You returned the money; did you receive any other money, Willy? Did Padron give you money in dollars or local currency prior to the $20,000 he gave you in June? Did Padron give you any other funds prior to the $20,000?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Recio] Linked to drug trafficking?
[Pineda] Yes. Some months earlier, Padron had given me $3,500 to purchase a vehicle, but the purchase was not made because no vehicle was available. The money was used to make four payments pending at the Intelligence General Directorate [DGI] and to partially pay for a room for a commercial contact who had arrived, the same contact who had come before and had stayed at the apartment.

[Recio] Then you did not take the $5,000 on the same day you took the $15,000?
[Pineda] That is correct. I should have taken the $20,000 the day I was summoned to Villa Marista. I should have done that, but I was late leaving my house. I did not have the $5,000 with me at my house; it was at a friend's house. I was preparing to leave for Mexico, and he was going to buy the car. So I took the money the next day. I have no other excuse for this.

[Recio] Willy, tell us briefly how you contributed to the clarification of the incidents we are discussing today.
[Pineda] I wrote a report explaining my part in the matter. The second time I was summoned to the Villa Marista offices, I submitted the report. The report also included information I had heard from other comrades. I said in the report that if I had overlooked something, it was not because I refused to include it but because I had forgotten it. In essence, I mentioned the main aspects.

[Recio] Willy, the prosecutor's report states on 20 April you met with Martinez in Havana. Was this after Padron visited you in Mexico?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Recio] After Padron's visit to Mexico?
[Pineda] Yes.

[Recio] One last question, Luis Pineda: In light of all that has happened, now that you are aware of the real consequences of your actions, how would you evaluate the whole situation? The prosecutor described you as a drug-trafficking patriot. From your viewpoint, from your honest and objective viewpoint, please tell us what you think about what has been said here today and for the past few days.
[Pineda] I fully agree with everything all those who have spoken before me have said. I am aware of the serious mistakes I have made. I am aware of the damage I have done to the revolution, the party, and the institution. I only hope the greatness and purity of the MININT will not be hindered by the rash actions of this group of adventurers who stand here before you. If the revolution were to give me another chance, I would try to amend my mistakes, retake the correct path, and live the life of a true revolutionary.

[Recio] That is enough for us, thank you.

[Espinosa] Does another defense attorney wish to ask more questions? Defendant Pineda Bermudez, you may step down. Defendant Gabriel Prendes Gomez, please stand before the tribunal. Defendant Prendes Gomez, the law gives you the right to testify or remain silent. Do you wish to testify?
[Prendes] Yes.

[Espinosa] Defendant Prendes Gomez, please answer the questions asked by the prosecutor.

[Escalona] Defendant Gabriel Prendes Gomez, you served 25 years for the MININT?
[Prendes] Yes.

[Escalona] You had the rank of major?
[Prendes] Yes.

[Escalona] Prendes, when did you begin stealing? At the MININT? At the National Tourism Institute [INTUR]? When you began working for the MC?
[Prendes] When I began working for the MC.

[Escalona] Why?
[Prendes] You are asking me when I began...

[Escalona, interrupting] When did you begin stealing?
[Prendes] Not stealing. Drug trafficking, yes; I can tell you when I began, but I did not steal...

[Escalona, interrupting] You mean you did not steal when you were working for INTUR [National Tourism Institute]?
[Prendes] No.

[Escalona] Then why did you steal from the boatmen?
[Prendes] I did that, but it was after I began working for the MC.

[Escalona] What is it about the MC that turns people bad? Is it Amado Padron?
[Prendes] No.

[Escalona] Tell the court how much you stole from the boatmen.
[Prendes] Who?

[Escalona] Tell how and the amount you stole from them.
[Prendes] In April 1984, I began my relationship with these men.

[Escalona] What men?
[Prendes] Excuse me?

[Escalona] The boatmen, the drug traffickers?
[Prendes] Excuse me, first I would like to talk about my drug- trafficking activities and then talk about the rest.

[Escalona] I was reading your confession, and I think that...
[Prendes, interrupting] What I am saying is...

[Escalona, interrupting] Everything you have done is bad; absolutely everything you have done is bad. You were told to take care of the boatmen who live in the United States—Carlos Rivas, Juan Carlos Rivas, Julio Alegre, Agustin, Elio, etcetera—and you robbed them. You exchanged dollars for pesos, and you have confessed to pocketing 50,000 pesos. Was that pesos or dollars?
[Prendes] No. It was 50,000 [currency not specified], but when the exchange is done, the Cuban currency increases to a maximum. That is why I wanted to talk about my drug-trafficking activities and then about this other thing, because the topics are related. If you allow me...

[Escalona, interrupting] My allowing you is not the point; you can say all you want as long as you clarify this situation.
[Prendes] I will tell you all about it. In September 1987, the comrade chief of the section where I worked asked me to accompany Comrade Rosa [Rosa Maria Abierno Gobin] to board a launch. I already had experience with the boatmen; I had been working with them for 3 or 4 months, so I agreed to help her. She knew about other things but not about the boatmen.

[Escalona] Had you previously participated in this kind of activity or was this the first time?
[Prendes] This was the first time; I had not participated previously.

[Escalona] Never?
[Prendes] In drug-trafficking activities? No.

[Escalona] Did Elmer [Alexis Lago Arrocha] approach you about drug trafficking?
[Prendes] No.

[Escalona] Who did?

[Prendes] No one did. That was when I started...

[Escalona, interrupting] When you began, did you know about things or not?
[Prendes] No. I did not participate in the first operation Elmer and the other comrades participated in. However, I was...

[Escalona, interrupting] So you went with Captain Rosa Maria?
[Prendes] Yes, and that was the first operation I participated in.

[Escalona] Did you know you were going to pick up the boatmen?
[Prendes] We were going to pick up some boats.

[Escalona] For a drug operation?
[Prendes] First, I boarded the boat; then I found out about the drug business and participated...

[Escalona, interrupting] Who told you about this?
[Prendes] The comrade and I talked about it.

[Escalona] You carried out operations as an MC member under Elmer?
[Prendes] Yes.

[Escalona] Without being aware that these were drug operations?
[Prendes] First, I was asked to help them get some boats, because Rosa had no experience. She brought in some equipment. While we were talking about the first operation...
[Escalona, interrupting] Excuse me, you are a MININT major; at that time you had 23 or 24 years of service with the MININT. You did all that and then joined a group of drug traffickers, and your conscience never bothered you?
[Prendes] That is correct.

[Escalona] Did you have a conscience?
[Prendes] At that time, I did have a conscience.

[Escalona] And you exchanged it for dollars?
[Prendes] I probably did.

[Escalona] You sold your conscience for dollars or for cocaine? Tell the court how you robbed the boatmen.
[Prendes] We went ahead with the operation; it went well, but we did not charge for that operation. The second operation came 15 or 20 days later. The three comrades who always participated with me in the other operations and Comrade Rosa took part in it. We picked up the merchandise in Varadero and took it to Santa Marta, where we should have delivered it to the boat; however, there was bad weather, so we returned to Santa Maria and remained in a rented house for 3 days. We then returned to Santa Maria, put the merchandise on the boat, and sent it abroad.

In June 1988, I participated—even though the prosecutor's report said that I did not—in coordinating Raulito's [not further identified] operation that called for taking the "Miss Ida" from Jamaica to the United States. I later learned the "Miss Ida" was stopped, but I did not know if Comrades Tony and Elmer took care of that. I do know the boat was taken care of, but I was not involved in that case. I must add that Comrade Elmer always warned us about the dangers of a plane and that we should not get involved in that type of operation, which is why we started other operations.

The fourth operation I participated in was with the "Ali Baba." That was my operation. I coordinated it with Sanchez Lima and Elmer. We agreed this should be carried out 30 miles off shore. Two boats were to pick up the merchandise, but a big ship was also needed. The merchandise would be transferred to the boats, and then the ship would sail into Cuba without the merchandise. However, the ship was intercepted by a U.S. ship, and the transfer did not go as scheduled. I will explain that later. The "Ali Baba" came back empty, so we did not charge for the operation. It was said that INTUR was not paid. That was not true. I do not know if our department paid the owner of the ship for his services; that was not my business.

I will continue. Later on, we got in touch with Raulito. Elmer, Sanchez, and myself participated in this operation. This was the operation: The "Luis Grande," Raulito's launch, sailed 18 or 20 miles from Cuba, picked up the drugs dropped on the ocean, and continued on to the United States. The launch sailed from Cuba, but failed to pick up the drugs because other launches apparently tried to intercept it. Therefore, the launch's crew got scared, as is stated in the charges. I carried out my last operation, the one with Raulito, in 1989. Elmer and I participated in this operation. The merchant ship "Lenin" would pick up the cargo between 18 and 20 miles off the Isle of Youth, coast around Aguila, and head for open waters off Varadero. The ship experienced a mechanical malfunction between Pinar del Rio and Havana. Another ship and a few crewmen towed this ship to the Windward Islands, where the ship was repaired, because repairs could not be done in high seas. The ship then continued on to Varadero. The launches found the drugs, picked them up, and departed. The ship remained in the country. These are the six drug-trafficking activities in which I participated.

[Escalona] How much money was seized from you, Prendes?

[Prendes] Nearly 160,000 Cuban pesos and nearly $41,500.

[Escalona] I am finished, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Defense lawyer. Prendes Gomez, answer the questions to be asked by the defense lawyer.

[Manuela Garcia Valdes] Your problems began as soon as you started working for the MC in 1987?
[Prendes] Yes.

[Garcia] Was Comrade Elmer, your superior, aware of the amount of money you had at home?
[Prendes] No.

[Garcia] So he did not know about that?
[Prendes] No.

[Garcia] How many cars did you own?
[Prendes] Only one.

[Garcia] Only one, which was sold to you at a very low price. This is why it was confiscated.
[Prendes] It was sold at a low price out of gratitude. I bought it with Cuban pesos.

[Garcia] What kind of home do you have?
[Prendes] I live in a one-room apartment in a building that has been declared an uninhabitable building under repair.

[Garcia] How many people live there?
[Prendes] Four.

[Garcia] Four people. Why did you not use this hoarded money to buy a home, as some other people have done?
[Prendes] Without trying to disagree with what was said by the comrade prosecutor—who, I believe, has been fair in his judgment—it is true that I did not use it. I could have used it, because I had saved money since 1987. Between 1987 and April 1989, I had saved almost 30,000 pesos. As you can see in my testimony and as the witnesses can confirm in April...[corrects himself] in May 1989, I exchanged almost 130,000 [currency not specified]. Prior to this, I had 30,000 Cuban pesos, with which I could have leased my home, purchased a home, and made several repairs to my home. Yet my home, as can be attested to by the comrades who went to get the money, does not meet minimum standards. This shows I had another idea, which does not justify what was said...

[Garcia, interrupting] Without going into justifications, which is not your role or ours here, why did you have that money in your home if you did not intend to use it?
[Prendes] I did not plan to use it for personal things. As you can see, my participation in drug-trafficking activities was fatal. I was not able to contribute any money to the department—this activity was all at department level. I want to explain this very clearly. The ministry, the high command, Fidel, Raul had nothing to do with it; only we did. We had an idea; perhaps it was superficial, because we could not hand over a dollar without explanation to our superiors. That was my idea, to do so afterward. We had been told we had to bring in boats, sophisticated equipment, etc., etc. Then other individuals would be involved in the money exchange, which is where I could justify the commission. I want to explain this does not justify what the prosecutor charged me with, stealing.

[Garcia] Was it not more logical for you to have that money in a safety box in your office or someplace there?
[Prendes] As you know, Elmer explained our offices were not safe enough. Our office was being repaired. In fact, 1 or 2 months ago, we had been working for the Nautical Department, where there were civilians in charge of the office. I do not have a safety box, so I put it away responsibly. Therefore, I say I am responsible for having put it away in that manner.

[Garcia] Is there anything else you wish to state here in connection with the facts, with the activity?
[Prendes] I feel responsible for what I have done. As some comrades stated—and not wishing to repeat anything or to make demagogic statements—we are solely responsible. We are not making judgments here or saying we were authorized at any level. The only level.... [changes thought] In other words, I was not authorized to do what I did. I knew people as far up as the level of department head. The ministry's high command, the minister, the FAR minister, the party, the Revolution, and Fidel did not know about this. This was a harebrained, crazy adventure of ours. Maybe it was the lust for personal profit or the desire to get a few dollars that led us to commit these errors, which are serious. I am prepared to pay any price necessary for this error. As I say, I admit these are negative tendencies, negative errors, which I will amend if I am given the opportunity. The only thing I will not stop being, even if I receive the maximum penalty, is a revolutionary. This is the only thing I will not stop being, even if I am told I am a criminal, a trafficker—that I am what I am.

We are embarrassed enough before the comrades who knew us and our family. However, we are not embarrassed—that is, please understand we are quite embarrassed and mortified, but we will not be embarrassed to serve a sentence. We will surely serve it honorably and with sacrifices, at any price. I am prepared to answer any question the comrade prosecutor or any other member of the tribunal, may want to ask.

[Garcia] The defense has no further questions.

[Escalona] Mr President, allow me. The fact is, the comrade counsel asked why Prendes' money was not in the bank. Prendes' money was in the refrigerator in his home. It was a safer bank. In addition, as one can appreciate, Prendes lived modestly. He had a modest apartment, with a stock of approximately 10 bottles of whiskey and cases of rum. Mr President, if you or the comrade counsel so wish, I will show all this to you. Here you have Prendes' bank [Escalona shows photographs of the refrigerator].

[Prendes] I request permission to make a point clear, Mr Prosecutor.

[Escalona] As you can realize, this was a prodigious refrigerator. [laughter] Is this your refrigerator?
[Prendes] Yes and no. I admitted I had the money in another place. I admitted it, but this other thing you said about the apartment being modern...

[Escalona, interrupting] I did not say...
[Prendes, interrupting] Modest.

[Escalona] You had cases of rum and whiskey in the apartment. You can live anywhere you want—in a cave—but you enjoy a cushy life. [laughter in crowd] Do you doubt that?
[Prendes] It is possible.

[Espinosa] Comrade Prosecutor, have you concluded?

[Escalona] I just wanted to clarify his situation a little.

[Espinosa] Prendes, answer the questions the defense counsel will ask.
[Prendes] Yes.

[Aristides de la Pena] Were you a subordinate to Amado Padron at any time during your stint at the MC?
[Prendes] No.

[De la Pena] Did Amado Padron have any negative influence over you, as the comrade prosecutor hinted during the first questioning?
[Prendes] No.

[De la Pena] That is all.

[Espinosa] Prendes Gomez, answer another question to be made by another defense counsel.

[Major Raul Martinez Perez] Defendant, you say the first drug-trafficking operation you participated in was to support Rosa Maria?
[Prendes] Yes.

[Martinez Perez] Did you hear what Tony de la Guardia said when I asked him how Rosa Maria had been initiated? He explained to the tribunal that both of you had gone together to visit him at his house to propose this deal to him. Which of the two is the truth?
[Prendes] No, I am sorry; I do not mean to say Rosa was the one who initiated me. I made it clear.... [changes thought] Let me see if I can say it slower. I was instructed to get together with Rosa, because some boats were going to come in. Since she did not know of the mechanisms involved to bring in the boats, I was to help her in this aspect. Then Tony said I participated with her in that operation. This was not my case, but I participated with her. In other words, although I was part of this, it was not my doing. I do not know if I have explained myself.

[Martinez Perez] Perhaps. When I asked Tony de la Guardia how Rosa got involved in drug trafficking, he told me she and you had been to his house together and had invited him to engage in this kind of deal.
[Prendes] Right, no one is denying that; but are you asking me if I was influenced by her of if I influenced her?

[Martinez Perez] No, I did not...
[Prendes continues] ...or if the two of us went together? Yes, that is correct.

[Martinez Perez] However, you said your first mission was to support Rosa.
[Prendes] Excuse me. Let us see if you can understand me. Perhaps the word support does not fit here. Two of Rosa's launches were arriving incorrectly, so I participated with her in arranging for the correct arrival of the launches. This is how the two of us learned about this. In other words, this was her case, she allowed me to participate, and the two of us went to Tony's house. I am not evading my responsibilities in this regard.

[Martinez Perez] I am not saying you are trying to evade your responsibilities. I am just trying to get this clarified.
[Prendes] Yes. However in this case, if you ask me if I was the one who hinted to Rosa the...

[Martinez Perez, interrupting] No, I did not ask that. I told you that you yourself had mentioned that your first drug-trafficking operation consisted of providing some support for Rosa. Then Tony stated here—when I asked him how Rosa had gotten involved in this problem, in this issue—that the two of you together had been to visit him. This is what I understood from defendant De la Guardia's statements: The two of you went to propose that he get involved in drug trafficking. This is what I understood from defendant De la Guardia.
[Prendes] That is correct if you see this from that point of view. I did participate with her; I was aware; and I am also part of this, because we can separate...[rephrases] We cannot separate coordination from participation. The two of us coordinated together, although this was one of Rosa's cases. The two of us coordinated and participated, which is also what I said about Sanchez Lima and myself: The two of us coordinated and participated in the operation. Is that what you mean?

[Martinez Perez] That is all, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Prendes Gomez, answer your attorney's questions.

[Garcia] Can you please explain why you had all those things at your house? Can you explain that?
[Prendes] I think I am responsible for that. I am a very irreponsible person. However, I want to clarify that I did not have boxes full of whiskey. I did buy four or five boxes of rum for my daughter's 15th birthday. However, there were no boxes, I did not buy boxes of whiskey—I had 10 bottles, 8 bottles of whiskey. There may have

been 7 bottles of Napoleon whiskey, but I did not have 10 boxes of whiskey. This has been.... [changes thought] Despite my being responsible... [interrupted by crowd murmur]

[Espinosa] Silence please, silence.

[Prendes] Despite my being responsible, as you said, I had bought five boxes of rum for my daughter's 15th birthday. I am fully responsible for that.

[Garcia] That is all, Comrade President.

[Espinosa] Does any defense attorney want to ask more questions?

[Unidentified speaker] No.

[Espinosa] Gomez Prendes, you may sit. Let's be silent in this room. Defendant Leonel Estevez Soto, please stand in front of this tribunal. Defendant, the law gives you the right to testify or to abstain from testifying. Do you wish to testify?
[Estevez] Yes.

[Espinosa] Respond to the prosecutor's questions to you.

[Escalona] Estevez Soto. You were a captain at the MININT. You served at the ministry for 21 years; is that correct?
[Estevez] Yes.

[Escalona] Your first contacts with drug trafficking began at the MC?
[Estevez] Yes.

[Escalona] You never heard about drug-trafficking deals before then?
[Estevez] Never before.

[Escalona] You never participated in any of these deals?
[Estevez] Never.

[Escalona] How did you become acquainted with Francisco Riverol Cruz, known-as El Nene, a Cuban drug trafficker living in Miami?
[Estevez] There is a mistake, Comrade Prosecutor. He is not known as El Nene, he is known as Paquito.

[Escalona] Is he known as Paquito?
[Estevez] He is known as Paquito. That is his nickname, not El Nene.

[Escalona] No, I am not talking about El Nene. In your declaration, you said you knew a Cuban citizen living in the United States whose name is Francisco Riverol Cruz, known as Paquito.
[Estevez] Right, but you said El Nene.

[Escalona] There is no mistake at all. I said El Nene, excuse me, defendant. Between the boatmen and the drug traffickers, I am going to be driven crazy. Please continue. [laughter].
[Estevez] As I said in my declaration, I first got involved in drug trafficking in 1987. This happened because an acquaintance at work had brought some goods at our office's request. By the end of 1980...[corrects himself] Between 1986 and 1987, I think in March, he told us he and his brother were interested in buying tobacco from us, because they had a tobacco factory in Tampa. We discussed it and agreed he would return later so we could give him an answer. At the same time this was going on, there was a change of leadership, and a new comrade became the boss. Our contact returned to obtain a reply to his proposals. We met with this citizen. His main proposal was that he could bring a boat with 8,000 pounds of marijuana, but he needed support and needed to sail the boat around the cape, service it with fuel, and continue its journey on to the United States. He made that proposal to Elmer, who was my chief at the time and who was involved in the discussions. The operation was later authorized.

[Escalona] Did the drug-trafficking operation begin at the office of naval operations when Elmer arrived? Was there any drug-trafficking activity before then?
[Estevez] I do not know.

[Escalona] Go on.
[Estevez] Where was I?

[Escalona] We were at the boat. We were sailing the boat with the marijuana on board.
[Estevez] The authorization was given. The boat sailed around the cape, but then had engine problems. It arrived at Cadiz Bay in very poor condition, and the boat remained there for several days until the alleged merchandise was completely unloaded. They were suppose to pay us $100,000 for that operation. We were later informed the operation had been a trick. The bales, which supposedly had marijuana, were full of dry grass. This resulted in problems and confrontations among them there; therefore, we were not paid for the operation. I conducted the operation...[changes thought] I do not know whether I should explain everything related to drug trafficking.

[Escalona] Do not give us the details, because we have already heard several defendants talk about this boat. We want to know about your participation in this. We want to know about the second operation in which you participated.
[Estevez] My second operation—I carried out two operations at the MC—was carried out in April 1989. Our contact was known by the name of El Nene, whom we are referring to now. He came to us in January or February for the first time. He talked to us about the possibility of sending drugs through our waters. We told him no. By the time this meeting took place, I was working with Amado Padron.

[Escalona] Why did you leave Elmer and move to another section to work with Amado Padron?
[Estevez] Because of internal changes.

[Escalona] Did Tony la Guardia give the orders to make those changes?
[Estevez] I do not know; those changes were ordered by the leadership. We [words indistinct].

[Escalona] The leadership—does that mean Tony la Guardia?
[Estevez] Of course.

[Escalona] Continue.
[Estevez] The contact arrived. He was supposed to bring new information on the activities we had been conducting since 1988 and 1987. When he returned, Comrade Amado Padron and I spoke with him. He told us he wanted to carry out those activities in our waters. We told him no. We told him the activity could not be carried out like that. Then someone suggested the operation could be carried out by air, so the drugs could be dropped. We agreed to drop the drugs about 40 miles [as heard] and decided to use as a cover-up the shipment of fighting cocks, which they were also interested in obtaining in large quantities.

[Escalona] Defendant, excuse me just a minute, but before the fighting cocks: Was Rosa Maria's operation carried out?
[Estevez] No, I did not participate in that operation.

[Escalona] You knew about it in Varadero?
[Estevez] I knew about one of them, which took place in 1987 or 1988.

[Escalona] After that, you met with some Colombians, did you not?
[Estevez] Yes, I am telling you about my participation in drug trafficking.

[Escalona] The thing is that we have heard the modus operandi of such operations many times. You have also heard it here many times. We have heard about the dropping of the drugs, the so-many-miles north of such and such a place. What I really want is for you to talk to me about your participation in the coordination, the shipping and receiving, and the carrying out of the two other operations.
[Estevez] Let me finish the one I was talking about. I am responsible for this last operation in 1989 with El Nene. I participated in that operation; I collected the money and everything, and we returned to Havana.

[Escalona] Did you deliver the money?
[Estevez] Yes, I did.

[Escalona] The whole sum?
[Estevez] Yes, the whole sum, $500,000.

[Escalona] Whom did you deliver it to?
[Estevez] To Amado Padron, who was our chief then.

[Escalona] To Amado Padron. How much did you earn at the MC?
[Estevez] 272 pesos.

[Escalona] 272 pesos. What additional revenue did you obtain from that business?
[Estevez] Additional income?

[Escalona] Yes.
[Estevez] I had not made any additional income until after that operation, when he gave each one of us approximately $25,000.

[Escalona] $25,000. Was that the only money you received from Amado Padron?
[Estevez] He had not given me any money before that time.

[Escalona] Then what was the spirit of patriotism that guided you to earn 270 pesos and throw mud on your reputation with such a repugnant business?
[Estevez] None. We were indignant.

[Escalona] Indignant toward whom? Toward yourselves?
[Estevez] The work we did made us indignant; we should have known better. However, what can one say when one sinks so low?

[Escalona] You know, Estevez, I wonder, when you began this activity, did you think you could get rich?
[Estevez] I did not see it that way.

[Escalona] How did you see it? Did you think that you were doing something for your country?
[Estevez] Initially—and I am not trying to justify the idea—I thought we could make a few dollars easily, without any problem, for the revolution.

[Escalona] Without any problem for the revolution?
[Estevez] I thought... [changes thought]. There is no justification, it was a mistake, an absurdity, a crass act of stupidity.

[Escalona] Estevez Soto: I assume that you have enough education and that you read international dispatches. Do you know how many times Cuba has been accused of drug trafficking?
[Estevez] Yes, that is right.

[Escalona] After Ruiz Poo's relative was arrested, do you know how many cases were reported, some of which even implicated the FAR minister through loathsome propaganda? Did you know that?
[Estevez] I heard...

[Escalona, interrupting] You never heard of that?
[Estevez] I am not trying to...

[Escalona, interrupting] And you continued to receive cocaine and to traffic in cocaine in this country?
[Estevez] I am not trying to justify...

[Escalona, interrupting] I am not asking you for a justification. I want you to tell me how a man with 21 years in the Interior Ministry—in that honorable, clean institution that has fought the enemy, that has prevented hundreds of attacks and counterrevolutionary activities in this country—as a member of that institution, how could you forget all that and dedicate yourself to becoming a vulgar drug trafficker and throw mud all over Cuba? What was the reason? Did you believe that you could become rich?
[Estevez] Not at all.

[Escalona] Then what moved you? Do you know the consequences of drugs? Have you seen a drug addict?
[Estevez] No.

[Escalona] Do you know about the struggle being waged by honest men in this world to eliminate drug trafficking? Do you know the risks that this entailed for Cuba? You never thought of that?
[Estevez] I have thought about it during these days.

[Escalona] These days. So you are also an irresponsible man?
[Estevez] Correct.

[Escalona] That's all, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Estevez Soto, answer the defense lawyer.

[Captain Froilan Hernandez Concepcion] Leonel, were you ever penalized during your 21 years of service in the MININT?
[Estevez] No.

[Hernandez] When did you begin working for the CIMEX [Cuban Foreign Trade Corporation]?
[Estevez, sighing] Approximately 1984-1985.

[Hernandez] Approximately 1984-1985. What were your duties in the corporation?
[Estevez] I initially began as a duty officer, then I was in charge of services [not further identified], after which time I worked in the counterintelligence section or internal security. I worked in that section until 1986, when it was separated from the MININT and the MC was created under Naval Operations.

[Hernandez] Before joining the MC, did you receive any personal benefits for your job in the corporation?
[Estevez] Well, the usual sort.

[Hernandez] Like what?
[Estevez] Incentives, medals, service pins.

[Hernandez] I mean anything that could make you feel different than the average citizen.

[Estevez] No, no, no.

[Hernandez] When did you receive the $25,000 from Amado Padron and what were those funds for?
[Estevez] That was after the last operation in April; between April and May... [corrects himself] I mean in April, a few days later.

[Hernandez] April 1989?
[Estevez] Yes. He said to me: Take this money, use it for your personal expenses, for anything you want; it is yours.

[Hernandez] What did you do with the money?
[Estevez] Part of that money was used—as it has been said here—to pay for the departure of the people who served as links [vinculos] during the last phase when problems emerged as a result of the counterintelligence services' tracing calls made over the radio. It was an abrupt departure. El Nene had come to bring the money; he had been transferred to Havana. He was here in Havana. Then he left. I saw Tony, Colonel Tony. I was asked to get in touch with him when he returned from Varadero. It was early in the morning. He told me that they had to leave in a hurry, together with all those who were with them. So, as you can imagine, I had to get them out to Varadero at an early hour. At that time I had to pay for certain expenses that they had incurred during their visits here.

[Hernandez] To whom?
[Estevez] What?

[Hernandez] To whom did you pay the money?
[Estevez] Well, I gave some money to my father and to an uncle of mine. They were having problems.

[Hernandez] The money used to purchase the jeep belonged to your father [words indistinct] occupied?
[Estevez] Yes, that is right. He had a car that...

[Hernandez, interrupting] You told me it was a Willys jeep, right?
[Estevez] Yes.

[Hernandez] It was not a new vehicle, right?
[Estevez] No, it was old.

[Hernandez] Where did you get the vehicle you were driving?
[Estevez] They sold it to me at the department. It was used.

[Hernandez] Did you cooperate to clarify these incidents, Leonel?
[Estevez] I believe that I did. At first, when we were arrested, the magistrate spoke to us. He explained to us that we were facing serious problems. The second time we met, he explained that the revolution was facing a

very difficult problem and that it needed the cooperation of each one of us, despite the mistakes one may have committed, because the object was to save the revolution.

[Hernandez] How did you cooperate?
[Estevez] Well, I told them all that I knew about the violations and crimes I had committed and had heard about.

[Hernandez] After telling us about all these incidents, what is your evaluation of the events? How do you evaluate your participation in the incidents? We would like to know why you carried out an operation in January 1987, and then you did not become involved again until late 1989 [as heard].
[Estevez] Actually, between that first operation and the second, I was involved in other jobs, which I enjoyed doing. As for these incidents, I cannot justify anything. I cannot say that I did these things because I was authorized to do them. No one threatened me or anyone else with a gun to carry out these dishonest activities. We have betrayed the trust of the commander in chief. We have stained the image of the revolution. We should not even be breathing the air that we breath. Our punishment must be severe [blinks away tears] because I have sons who are in the military, and I am not setting a good example by my actions. I expect no pity; I expect a severe sentence, which is the only thing with which I can repay these people, whom I betrayed.

[Hernandez] That is all, Mr President.

[Escalona] Mr President, defendant Estevez, how much money did you have?
[Estevez] 7,000 Cuban pesos and over $9,000.

[Escalona] About $9,600?
[Estevez] More or less.

[Escalona] The old jeep that you bought cost you 15,000 pesos, did it not?
[Estevez] Approximately.

[Escalona] That is all, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Defendant Estevez, you may leave.

[Escalona] Mr President, I would like you to call Patricio de la Guardia Font.

[Espinosa] Defendant Patricio de la Guardia Font, please appear before the court. Defendant Patricio, answer the prosecutor's questions.

[Escalona] Defendant Patricio de la Guardia, as we all know here, you were the chief of the MININT mission in Angola. Prior to that you were chief of the MININT central general staff. Please explain to the court what your relations with Arnaldo Ochoa were during the time that you were in Angola.

[De la Guardia] I had a working relationship with Arnaldo Ochoa in Angola at the outset. Later, late in 1988, more or less around September or August we began a working... [rephrases] commercial relations, by running an ivory business from the Congo and other types of things, such as diamonds, etc. A lot of these things were not marketed later.

[Escalona] What did Ochoa tell you about the drug trafficking activities?
[De la Guardia] The drug trafficking began more or less around December to January of 1988. When we spoke of our economic crisis, Ochoa told me about, we discussed the possibility of using the drug money from Colombia in a money - laundering scheme to invest it in tourist businesses here in Cuba.

[Escalona] Did he explain how this was going to be done?
[De la Guardia] It would be carried out through one of his comrades, whom I did not know at the time; I did not have anything to do with drug trafficking. We would use this comrade to make these investments in Cuba, using the drug money.

[Escalona] Did he explain how this money would be laundered, how it would be...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] No, no, no. Those were just conversations, and we did not specify anything.

[Escalona] Those were general conversations?
[De la Guardia] General conversations. We talked about stupid things.

[Escalona] Patricio, did you discuss drug trafficking?
[De la Guardia] That is correct.

[Escalona] You talked about money laundering?
[De la Guardia] Correct.

[Escalona] You talked about Pablo Escobar?
[De la Guardia] Correct.

[Escalona] And none of that made a deep impression on you?
[De la Guardia] It did not make a deep impression on me, Comrade Prosecutor, because I was irresponsible. I was totally irresponsible and did not...

[Escalona, interrupting] Patricio, when did you learn that Tony was in the drug trafficking business?
[De la Guardia] When did I learn of it? I learned of it more or less around September, October—I mean September 1988.

[Escalona] What did you do?
[De la Guardia] Nothing; I did not do anything. I did not have the courage to do anything. I just went along with him. I did not even draw his attention to it.

[Escalona] You [rephrases] Your family ties were stronger than your sense of responsibility as a MININT general?
[De la Guardia] Yes, I was a coward; I was not brave enough to stand up to him. If, at the beginning, when this was first mentioned in Luanda, during Tony's visit to Luanda—which was in December or January of 1988, January, yes, of 1987 or 1988, when he arrived in Angola—if at that time I had shown Tony or Ochoa a dignified, revolutionary stance, I would not have been driven by the false concepts of friendship or brotherhood, and neither Ochoa, nor Tony, nor any of the other comrades would be sitting there now. I want to say that I am one of the ones most responsible for this situation.

[Escalona] Patricio, how did you carry out the ivory deal over there?
[De la Guardia] The ivory deal was made as a result of Arnaldo's need to pay off some debts involving a series of batteries, tires, equipment—I believe—that he had bought in Punta Negra. He spoke to me of the possibility of getting large quantities of ivory and asked me what the price was. I answered that I did not know, but that I would check with contacts in Havana. I wired Tony and asked him if he could check out the price of ivory; I told him that Arnaldo needed money to pay off some debts he had incurred related to some projects he was carrying out. About a week later, Tony sent me a note, a letter, a cable, I do not remember which, telling me that the price of ivory was $250 a kilogram, that it could only be marketed in Japan and Mexico, that the marketing possibilities were very difficult, nothing else. I told Ochoa, and he said that he would see if he could come up with a big shipment of ivory to see if Tony could market it for us.
This ivory arrived in Luanda, and I wrote a letter to Tony asking him how he could help us sell that ivory in order to pay Ochoa approximately $64,000, the amount he had invested. Tony told me to send the ivory gradually to see if he could market it, that he would try to get it into Mexico or Panama. I sent this ivory to Cuba in boxes in a C-26 that came to Cuba more or less during the year that Ochoa returned. I bought more ivory after that. There were about 10 engraved tusks, which were more valuable because they had intricate carvings. I sent those to Tony in Cuba via diplomatic pouches.

[Escalona] In other words, after the deals with Ochoa involving ivory, you got enthusiastic and also became an ivory merchant.
[De la Guardia] Correct.

[Escalona] What money did you use to buy the ivory?
[De la Guardia] I bought the ivory with $6,000, which Tony sent me to pay some bills.

[Escalona] Were you Tony's representative or were you the head of the mission?
[De la Guardia] No, I was in charge, but I did not do a good job [words indistinct].

[Escalona] You also represented his interests?
[De la Guardia] I also represented Tony's interests.

[Escalona] Why did you turn over 64,000 pesos [corrects himself] $64,000 to Ochoa?
[De la Guardia] To Ochoa?

[Escalona] Yes.
[De la Guardia] To pay for the ivory, to cover the cost of the ivory he had bought.

[Escalona] What did Ochoa tell you? What did he want the money for?
[De la Guardia] The money, I believe, was to pay off some debts he had in connection with an airport he was building. They were buying some batteries, I believe, some tires, some mechanical parts, I believe.

[Escalona] I want to appeal to what is left of your manhood, your dignity. Did you believe that that was the truth?
[De la Guardia] Comrade prosecutor, at that time I thought the money was for those projects. I realized later that the project was very large. Because I do not have...

[Escalona, interrupting] Did you believe that by picking up kwanzas on the black market you could build an airport?
[De la Guardia] One could not have built an airport, nothing like that.

[Escalona] Yet you believed that the announcement of the construction of an airport would suffice as a cover-up to allow you to say that you did things with the best of intentions?
[De la Guardia] I might have felt that way, but I do not think so.

[Escalona] What is your opinion of Martinez? Did you get the chance to get to know Martinez?
[De la Guardia] I saw him; I met him there; I saw him four or five times; I spoke to him only four or five times. He was in Angola for only a short time.

[Escalona] Yes, his mission in Angola lasted 1 and ½ months.
[De la Guardia] I saw him in Santiago for a couple of days. Then I saw him...

[Escalona, interrupting] What did Ochoa tell you about Martinez, Patricio?
[De la Guardia] He told me that Martinez was his liaison in Ethiopia to purchase communications and other equipment that he needed. Ochoa asked me to get in touch with Tony to arrange for a visa for Martinez so that he could go to Panama to contact some Colombians. After that I did not think too much about it, due to my irresponsibility. Later, in September 1988, Ochoa told

me that Martinez had contacted a liaison, one of the Escobar brothers. That was in September 1988. That is when I really became aware of the problem that we were all in.

[Escalona] What did you do?
[De la Guardia] Nothing. I did not have the courage to do anything; I kept quiet.

[Escalona] Is that called indolence, Patricio?
[De la Guardia] Cowardice, not indolence.

[Escalona] Were you not terrified by the idea of what could happen if the Ochoa drug - trafficking contact was discovered?
[De la Guardia] My irresponsibility and stupidity prevented me from thinking clearly at the time, Comrade Prosecutor. I was completely irresponsible.

[Escalona] You were out of Cuba for so long that you forgot that you had a homeland?
[De la Guardia] No, never.

[Escalona] You thought that the homeland could be traded for cocaine?
[De la Guardia] Never.

[Escalona] Moreover, Patricio, from Luanda you used MININT officials for dealing drugs, right?
[De la Guardia] Yes, I used those comrades to bring the ivory from the Congo. I used them, those three comrades, on different occasions.

[Escalona] Where did you get all the money?
[De la Guardia] From the sale of equipment.

[Escalona] Only from that? Because it was only $10,000.
[De la Guardia] No, no, no. It was much more than $10,000; it was $20,000 to $30,000 that were...

[Escalona, interrupting] In your initial statement, in your initial testimony you mentioned $10,000.
[De la Guardia] No, I did not say $10,000. No, no, no; it was much more. I had to use money to buy tickets to travel to...[changes thought]. You can be sure that the money [words indistinct].

[Escalona] No. However, you used $4,000 to buy a car for your ex-wife?
[De la Guardia] Correct.

[Escalona] Patricio, at the beginning, $6,822 were found in your house.
[De la Guardia] That is correct.

[Escalona] Did you get that from the business operations?
[De la Guardia] No, that money had been saved by my wife, from the salaries she collected there in Angola.

[Escalona] How long were you in Angola?
[De la Guardia] Three years.

[Escalona] Three years. So you saved $6,800?
[De la Guardia] Perhaps less. I may have given her...

[Escalona, interrupting] What about the $20,000 that was found at the house of your wife's grandfather?
[De la Guardia] That is part of the money I stole.

[Escalona] That is part of the money you stole. However, more money was found afterward.
[De la Guardia] Yes, more money was found later.

[Escalona] Where was that money found?
[De la Guardia] I had given the money to a comrade and asked him to save it for me.

[Escalona] How much do you estimate that you stole in Angola?
[De la Guardia] Approximately $30,000.

[Escalona] Did you witness a conversation between Ochoa and Tony in which they discussed the whole business with the Colombians? Is that the conversation you lacked the courage to report to your superiors at the Interior Ministry?
[De la Guardia] No, the conversation I witnessed between Ochoa and Tony took place when I came back, when I went with Tony to Ochoa's house. Ochoa told me, he told us that Martinez...[rephrases] Ochoa said that the Colombians had told Martinez that Tony was being cheated by the boatmen because they were making drug drops without Tony being aware of this and without paying Tony anything. In was on this occasion that I became more or less aware of what was happening.

[Escalona] And you learned about that because Escobar was angry because drugs were being stolen from him?
[De la Guardia] Escobar was informed that some of his boats had been seized.

[Escalona] Drugs had been stolen from Escobar. What about the diamonds, Patricio?
[De la Guardia] Ochoa gave me six small diamonds so that I could explore the possibility of selling them. I sent the diamonds to Tony in a small box. I understand that Tony sent the diamonds to Panama. Approximately 2 months later, he returned the little box with the 6 diamonds to me, with an evaluation of each diamond. He also told me that the diamonds were of little value because they were too small and impure. I returned the little box to Comrade Ochoa and there were no further diamond deals.

[Escalona] Patricio de la Guardia, it is truly deplorable and inconceivable that 29 years of a wonderful life devoted to the revolution have been destroyed and have turned you into a traitor to the revolution, for which you fought so hard. You were aware of and yet allowed Cuba to face a deadly risk, which could have destroyed the revolution, owing to Ochoa's plans and your brother's

dirty business deals. You forgot about your rank as a general, your revolutionary status. You even forgot about your honor as a man and the risks your country faced, cowardly suppressing those feelings to conceal all this.
[De la Guardia] That is correct.

[Escalona] Unfortunatelly, there is only one word for you: You are a traitor. That is all, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Patricio, answer the defense lawyer's questions.

[Julio A. Gonzalez] You helped make the ivory deals. First you said that Ochoa [words indistinct] with you. Later that... [changes thought]. You also invested in this business. In other words, you bought ivory to sell later. Did you have your own ivory deals separately from Ochoa's business operations?
[De la Guardia] It was a separate business. I bought ivory in the Congo and shipped it to Tony in Havana.

[Gonzalez] Was it a separate business from Ochoa's?
[De la Guardia] It was a separate business.

[Gonzalez] Another aspect we want you to clarify. You mentioned the diamonds. You said that you had received some samples. After getting these samples, did you carry out any separate diamond deals?
[De la Guardia] No, after the diamond and gold samples, and after the fake emeralds business, I told Tony that if more deals of this kind were to be made, I would need authorization from the ministry I worked for. I then banned all those deals; all the deals involving diamond, gold, and mercury, which had also been requested.

[Gonzalez] Was your request sent in writing or via telex?
[De la Guardia] I sent a letter stating that if he were interested in buying diamonds, emeralds, gold, or mercury—they wanted 3 tons of mercury—then I would need authorization, because I was not going to approve any of those deals over there. We made no diamond deals. As far as the gold is concerned, we only had the samples, but we did not sell or buy gold. The same happened with the emeralds.

[Gonzalez] Who ordered the evaluation of the diamonds?
[De la Guardia] Ochoa asked for it. He wanted to know how much they were worth.

[Gonzalez] De la Guardia, you held the rank of brigadier general. I would like to know how many years of service you had with the MININT.
[De la Guardia] Twenty nine years of service.

[Gonzalez] Twenty nine years of service. And what about other internationalist missions? Had you been on other internationalist missions prior to the one in Angola?
[De la Guardia] In Chile.

[Gonzalez] After that mission did you receive an award?
[De la Guardia] I received the Internationalist Medal in the first degree because I was in Chile, commanding the troops when the coup d'etat in Chile occurred. I also carried out other special tasks, other special operations.

[Gonzalez] Can you tell us whether your attitude has remained the same since you were arrested and charged?
[De la Guardia] I think it has, although I believe that I could have had a better attitude toward the officer who spoke to me.

[Gonzalez] There is something that I think should be made public today. When I was appointed your defense attorney, I met with you and asked you whether you had any objections to having me represent you. I would like you to...
[De la Guardia, interrupting] Yes. I met Comrade Julio many years ago. I asked that he represent me. I would like to clarify something if I may.

[Gonzalez] I would like to clarify my question before the court. I have brought this up because today's newspapers carried a report on the trial, and I believe this is of interest to everyone, particularly the defense attorneys who are representing the defendants.
[De la Guardia] Regarding what Julio asked...

[Espinosa] The defendant may answer.
[De la Guardia] I have been reading recent foreign dispatches on statements by some gentlemen of a human rights commission, who have mentioned my name, my brother's name, and the names of some comrades. They have expressed great concern over our situation. According to the reports I have read, they claim that we have been physically and mentally tortured, that we are being held incommunicado, that we are being pressured, that our families have been exposed to police pressure, and I do not know how many other lies.
I would like to tell the comrades present here that from the very moment of my arrest, I have been treated in a way I feel unworthy of. I have been treated with great respect, consideration, and attentiveness. I have never been held incommunicado. Whenever I have wanted something, I have asked for and received it. I requested my defense attorney. I have known the comrade major for many years. I have not been pressured to do or say anything. I have freely admitted my guilt. I have done this because I am ashamed; I do not want more shame to be brought upon me by members of some human rights commission. That is all.

[Gonzalez] No further questions, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Would another defense attorney like to ask a question? Defendant Patricio, you may step down.

[Unidentified speaker] Ten witnesses appeared before the 3rd session of the special military tribunal. Through their testimonies, they helped to prove the charges against the defendants. The first seven witnesses were:

Esteban Yaniz Diaz, Lieutenant Colonel Andres Manuel Pardo Ramos, Carlos Manuel Pena Gonzalez, Antonio Alberto Pena Gonzalez, Colonel Rafael Morales Velasquez, Lieutenant Colonel Enrique Montero Venzano, First Lieutenant Ramon Ferrin Lopez. The witnesses' testimonies further proved the defendants' guilty participation in drug - trafficking operations as well as in the destruction of proof relating to those activities. As the witnesses spoke, new evidence of disloyalty, corruption, and the illegal possession and concealment of foreign exchange was brought to light. This strongly proved the corrupt and corrupting nature of all the defendants.

[Escalona] I ask this tribunal to call the investigators of this case as witnesses. I ask that the tribunal call Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Alvarez Lugo, Division General Manuel Fernandez Crespo, and Lieutenant Colonel Eduardo Delgado Rodriguez.

[Espinosa] The prosecutor's request is granted. Secretary, proceed in that order unless the comrade defense attorneys object to the prosecutor's request. Secretary, proceed in that order.

[Tribunal secretary] We call Lt Col Pedro Alvarez Lugo.

[Espinosa] Witness, what is your name?
[Alvarez Lugo] Lt Col Pedro Alvarez Lugo.

[Espinosa] Occupation?
[Alvarez Lugo] Head of the State Security Investigations Department.

[Espinosa] Do you know the defendants?
[Alvarez Lugo] I met them during the preliminary investigations. I know some of them because they have been in the MININT for a long time.

[Espinosa] Do you feel any enmity toward or have any blood relationship or friendship with any of them?
[Alvarez Lugo] No.

[Espinosa] Witness, you have the obligation to testify and to state the truth about everything you know about the case and to answer truthfully all questions. Otherwise, you will be committing a crime.
[Alvarez Lugo] Correct.

[Espinosa] Answer the prosecutor's questions; at ease.

[Escalona] Lieutenant Colonel, would you describe for this tribunal the attitude of the detainees during the preliminary investigations?
[Alvarez Lugo] As for defendants Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amado Padron Trujillo, Antonio Sanchez Lima, Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo, and Gabriel Prendes Gomez, I can report that from the very beginning of the investigation, when we began to interrogate them, we had to use information available to us to force them to admit responsibility for actions under investigation and in which they were involved—even though these actions were obvious, proven, and in fact took place. They later changed their attitude, and all of them began to cooperate with the preliminary investigations, even revealing certain information that they had previously withheld, such as money that they had not previously mentioned and a number of other details. In the end, they cooperated with the ongoing investigations. As for the other defendants, from the very beginning they admitted their responsibility and cooperated with the preliminary investigations.

[Escalona] Based on the results of your investigation, would you explain to the tribunal and to all of us how you assessed the defendants' degree of responsibility for the actions under investigation and what conclusions you reached regarding, for example, the defendants' responsibilities as leaders?
[Alvarez Lugo] As for the degree of responsibility, there were chiefs and officers, who were their subordinates. Among the chiefs were General Patricio de la Guardia Font. He was a MININT general and head of the MININT's mission in Angola, a job that entails great responsibility, as has been demonstrated throughout this trial. He participated in these actions and was aware of drug - trafficking activities involving his brother, defendant Antonio de la Guardia Font. However, he failed to do anything to prevent this, to force his brother to quit; nor did he denounce these activities, which was his duty as a MININT general. He also participated in business deals and a number of illicit activities not in keeping with his position or capacity as a MININT general and party member.
As for Antonio de la Guardia, who was a colonel at that time, he was head of the MC; he was a senior MININT member trained for this kind of special activity. As department head, he had been assigned responsibilities that did not include drug trafficking but which focused on breaking up the ironclad blockade that imperialism has imposed on us for nearly 30 years. He was tasked with obtaining through clandestine means a number of things or products the country needed. However, he was not tasked with accomplishing this through drug trafficking; that was not authorized. I believe that it was very evident during the preliminary investigations that this was the most serious crime committed by this defendant, who was perfectly aware of what he was doing.
In addition, he concealed these facts from his superiors every time he was asked to clarify something. Such was the case during the most recent meeting, when the inquiry was already in progress. Not only that, he drank alcoholic beverages to better conceal the truth, destroyed documents, and did a number of other things that indicate the defendant's guilt. He also personally led the drug-trafficking activities and made the contacts, all of which involved the country, particularly the MININT, in an extremely serious situation.
Defendant Amado Padron Trujillo was a section head in the department and had under his command a number of officers who were involved in the work I mentioned at the beginning: drug trafficking. We can say Padron was

very active in drug trafficking organization and planning, in making contacts, and carrying out all sorts of activities that were not included among his regular duties. He was a section head. He had been appointed to break the blockade, not to engage in drug trafficking. He tried to conceal this at the time he was detained. As I explained earlier, he even assumed a stubborn position. His comrades knew they were being asked about something they knew well. They were not forced to give any information. So he could not say this is why they told the truth. We spoke to them clearly and to the point and tried to appeal to their revolutionary awareness. But the defendant maintained an inappropriate attitude at all times, thus showing he knew full well what he was doing and that this was a fact. In addition, he participated in collecting, concealing, and distributing money among all his officers. We will later more fully explain this to the prosecutor, if he should ask that we do so.

Alexis Lago Arocha, or Hermes, which is the name he used, was head of the naval operations section, so named because of its responsibilities related to boats and other things. We can say that, since the beginning, Hermes cooperated with us and admitted his involvement in this activity. This cooperation, however, does not reduce the blame he must assume for these activities. As a lieutenant colonel and head of a section in the department, he had the specific duty of helping to break the blockade, not to deal in drug trafficking. That is why he is responsible.

As for the rest of the defendants, who were officers in this department and subordinates of the superiors I mentioned earlier, they must also bear blame due to the fact that they were officers in a ministry. Some were lieutenants, others first lieutenants, captains, or majors. Most of them had spent considerable time in the ministry and knowingly participated in these activities. Not one of them was deceived. Every one knew what he was doing but took measures to conceal it. As ministry officials and party members, they should have taken action against these activities as soon as they learned what was going on, but they did not. They knowingly participated in these activities, but they have contended that they thought what they were doing was right. I suppose the trial has made it clear that drug trafficking is not a practice of the revolution or a policy of the MININT, the Armed Forces, or Cuba. At all international forums where this subject has been brought up, we have stated clearly that this is an activity that goes against the most basic aspects of human life and mankind, yet they violated these principles. They knew what they were doing.

[Escalona] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, during the long sessions of this trial and according to the documents we have had to consider, there is something we have not determined and on which even the defendants themselves have been unable to give a consistent answer. Perhaps you can assist us.

[Alvarez Lugo] Yes.

[Escalona] When and how did the duties of this group become distorted?

[Alvarez Lugo] In the investigation that was carried out, Comrade Prosecutor, it was not easy for us to determine this. However, we did reach certain conclusions. We concluded that the distortion began when the defendants stopped doing what was expected of them. As long as the blockade was broken, their mission was accomplished. When they began drug trafficking, they made contacts with several drug traffickers. They planned and carried out clandestine operations, such as those that have been described at this trial, they received dirty money from their contacts, exchanged currency, and carried out all sorts of business deals with these people. This is when their activity became distorted and when widespread corruption spread among the defendants. It was at this point that they totally lost control. They started spending money earned from drug sales, buying cars, watches, and other things they could buy because of their activities, thus bringing about a total distortion, with the result that their activities became secret, totally clandestine. All of this we uncovered during the investigation.

[Escalona] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, sums of money—some of them astronomical—have been mentioned. Some of the money has been seized, some has not been collected, and some has been lost. What can you tell the tribunal regarding this money problem?

[Alvarez Lugo] Comrade Prosecutor, in response to your question, where I must quote specific figures, I will try to remember. During the investigation, especially during the interrogations portion, we determined that $1,231,791 was still in the country, and this money has been seized; 423,744 Cuban pesos, the proceeds of illegal, last-minute currency exchanges, have also been seized. I know, for example, that the defendants carried out operations totalling approximately $3 million and that they owe large sums of dollars. In Spain, for example, one of their contacts owes them $500,000 and has failed to pay; in Mexico they lost $600,000 on certain illegal stock market deals; they have invested in office equipment, on items for their personal use such as vehicles; they exchanged Cuban pesos for dollars, all of which has been clearly established at this trial. All of them had money. For example, it has been disclosed that [words indistinct] money in a refrigerator door or in the back of a refrigerator buried under a floor or concealed in a variety of places such as a wall [faralla] behind the house. This is how the money we have recovered was distributed. The sums found were large.

[Escalona] Considering what you have said, Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, I find it impossible to believe that all the defendants' efforts, sacrifices, and concerns were aimed at bringing foreign exchange into Cuba to improve the country's economic situation.

[Alvarez Lugo] It has been proven that foreign exchange cannot be obtained that way. The defendants were not seeking foreign exchange but dirty money from drug trafficking. The investigation has proven this. Had they acted in good faith, we would not have had to interrogate

them or seize the money they concealed in all these hiding places, nor would they have exchanged dollars for Cuban pesos. The simple fact is that upon finding out that they had been discovered and that this investigation would be carried out, they should have been honest and taken the money to the top ministry officials and said: Look, this money is the result of such and such an activity, and I am turning it over to you. None of them did that.

[Escalona] Were you able to determine if they mixed money from drug trafficking and the different businesses?

[Alvarez Lugo] Yes. They tried to justify mixing the funds by purchasing business and office equipment. They mixed the money they collected from their activities.

[Escalona] This court studied some of the defendants as they testified. They used a number of vehicles for their activities. Many of the defendants, among them Amado Padron, deny this fact. Could you explain to the tribunal how many vehicles they used, what type of vehicles they were, and, all in all, the condition of the vehicles defendant Amado Padron used?

[Alvarez Lugo] Yes, of course, Comrade Prosecutor. All in all, 39 cars and a Honda motorcycle were being used. All of the vehicles, or rather most of them—I cannot say that all of them because six or seven of them were being repaired—are luxury cars equipped with air conditioning, tinted windows to prevent anyone from looking in, and a variety of large tires of capitalist origin. This sort of thing may not be considered bad in Panama, but with Cuba's problems they are not viewed as normal nor do the people consider them normal. Amado Padron used 11 cars and 1 motorcycle. We seized 11 of the cars, not because Amado Padron reported them but because people have called my department to say: I have a car that Amado Padron left here, or I have four cars—as happened with TRANSIMPORT [Cuban Vehicles and Transportation Equipment Import Enterprise]. The four cars were there. They had been left there by Amado Padron.

What does this mean? It means we have a process under way that has not concluded but should end as soon as possible, trying to track down the origin of each car, who purchased it, who has it, and so on. We need a detailed list to be able to be fair and say who really owns each car, how it was acquired, and if any dirty deals were made or not.

[Escalona] Of course, if any mistakes were made then we can return the cars to the legitimate owners.

[Alvarez Lugo] We would return the cars, of course, to the legitimate owners, just as we would in any other case where we may have made a mistake. If there is really a mistake, then we shall return the property to the owners and their names will be cleared after we investigate.

[Escalona] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, there is one more thing that has caught the attention of those close to this investigation: the great number of weapons that these defendants had in their possession. This is hard to understand since no one can shoot eight pistols at the same time. Where did all these firearms come from? We have on our hands a criminal case of illegal possession of firearms by a group of MININT officers who knew very well they needed a license to have these guns. How many weapons did we confiscate? Where did these weapons come from?
[Alvarez Lugo] We have confiscated 186 firearms up to now, out of which maybe—I say maybe because I do not have the details here with me—10 or 12 could be considered collectors' items—old shotguns and things like that. All the rest were combat weapons, such as M-16, AR-15, Mini 14, and AKM rifles; Beretta and Browning pistols—all were combat weapons. All these weapons, according to the investigation, were mostly gifts, brought through this same route; in some cases given by these same ranchers or drug traffickers; others were obtained by the defendants when they were abroad on some mission.

[Escalona] All of them had arms?
[Alvarez Lugo] All of them were gun collectors, but many of the weapons that were confiscated were being kept in an irresponsible place—they had them at home instead of at an office, sealed, secure, and under lock and key, as firearms should be kept. The way they were kept left open the possibility of anything happening, such as some burglar being attracted to one of these homes—because some of these homes attract attention—to take what was inside and steal the 10 or 12 pistols. This could have happened.

[Escalona] Anyway, Lieutenant Colonel, there is no doubt that to work at the MC and do the work assigned to this department one does not need to be surrounded by so much armament.
[Alvarez Lugo] Comrade Prosecutor, I cannot recall the last time we were subjected to an armed attacked by the Yankees.

[Escalona] Mr President, I have finished.

[Espinosa] Witness Alvarez Lugo, you may step down. Secretary, call the next witness.

[Secretary] Division General Manuel Fernandez Crespo.

[Espinosa] Tell us your name.
[Fernandez] Division Gen Manuel Fernandez Crespo.

[Espinosa] What is your occupation?
[Fernandez] Vice minister in charge of counterintelligence operations.

[Espinosa] Look over the defendants. Do you know them?

[Fernandez] General, I know the defendants because they have been investigated by our office.

[Espinosa] Are you related to them in any way, or are they friends of yours?
[Fernandez] No.

[Espinosa] Witness, you are under the obligation to testify, to declare and tell the truth regarding all you know about this case. If you do not, you will be breaking the law.
[Fernandez] Correct.

[Espinosa] Witness Manuel Fernandez, answer the questions the prosecutor asks you. General, you may remain at ease.

[Escalona] Comrade General, can you tell the tribunal when your group began the investigation of this case?
[Fernandez] We began as soon as we received instructions from our commander in chief, and from that moment on we started investigating the 11 defendants who are here until they were arrested and processed. We would like to point out that, from the counterintelligence point of view, in April—specifically the end of April—thanks to work by our technicians, we detected some radio signals and there were indications of possible broadcasts from Cuban territory directed to the United States and Colombia. From then on, through radio direction-finding techniques, the origin of these broadcasts was established. In fact, at 1200 on 24 April, which coincides exactly with the drug-trafficking operation carried out by the defendants, the technicians carried out triangularizations that placed the source of these signals in northern Varadero, near the sewer drain, exactly where the drugs were dropped on that occasion. It was from then on and also as a result of instructions from our commander in chief that the full investigation began.

[Escalona] General, was there any clue or signal that drug trafficking activities were somehow being conducted from Cuba?
[Fernandez] A message we intercepted on 24 April indicated that Miami-based drug traffickers and Colombia-based drug traffickers had been meeting in Cuban territory. This same day, our technicians intercepted and recorded the conversation of a pilot who participated in a drug-trafficking operation.

[Escalona] Was there any other clue before this date?
[Fernandez] There was no concrete evidence of this activity before that date.

[Escalona] In other words, the technical group's activities were very well coordinated.
[Fernandez] Most of this work was carried out by our technicians rather than by operations specialists.

[Escalona] General, did you determine whether defendant Patricio de la Guardia participated in these drug-trafficking activities?

[Fernandez] According to our investigation and the interrogation of Patricio and the other detainees, Patricio de la Guardia's participation only goes as far as being aware of his brother's activities. We cannot say, therefore, that Patricio participated in drug-trafficking activities directly.

[Escalona] In other words, he was not a member of the drug traffickers ring.
[Fernandez] No, he was not; although, as we know, Patricio did business of various kinds with Tony. It has been demonstrated, however, that Patricio did not participate in the drug-trafficking activities directly.

[Escalona] Altough he was aware of his brother's activities.
[Fernandez] Although he was aware of his brother's activities.

[Escalona] General, what is your assessment of the defendants' attitudes? They have been serving for so long in the organization and the MININT and have worked in various fronts. Some of them distinguished themselves as fighters. What are your thoughts on the end of these men's active lives?
[Fernandez] The final conclusion is that the defendants' activities constitute a grave offense and treason against our homeland, particularly considering what our revolutionary government has been saying in public for many years, again and again, through forums and activities, official statements, and speeches by our commander in chief saying that our government and country did not participate in drug trafficking. In the case of the defendants, we regard as even more serious the fact that they belonged to the MININT. We regard this fact as even more serious because they were members of this ministry and worked in this department, which was created to defeat the boycott. Their activities allowed them to use the department to override the MININT's official operating mechanisms. We regard this as extremely serious because, with this activity, the defendants succeeded in sidestepping—we will give some examples later—the country's immigration policy. In other words, the Central Counterintelligence Directorate's mission is to discover possible illegal immigrants in our country. The defendants' activities violated our country's security because these people had not been registered as having entered our country. CIA officials and agents and even people brought into Cuba aboard these boats could have infiltrated the country to participate in activities dangerous for our country, such as personal attacks, terrorism, or similar dangerous actions.
By setting this mechanism in operation, however, and because they had the power to use the country's sea and air to introduce equipment and drugs into our country, they violated our country's security. It has been shown that the defendants had no control over the men brought into Cuba aboard these boats. They have said these men were kept in a house. We have found, however, that in some cases these men moved about freely in our territory, specifically in cities or elsewhere, to see their

relatives. We consider this very serious because it violates the country's security. In addition, the border protection provided by the Border Patrol General Directorate has been violated. In other words, through tricks and other mechanisms, by pretending that these people were coming in to carry out legal activities, they also violated our border protection system. We feel that this is very serious, that it is treason. Furthermore, we feel that the situation is even more serious because they were members of the ministry.
We also wish to speak specifically of the violation of all the procedures in our institution. Everyone is aware that our institution, the MININT, carries out public activities. However, it also carries out secret activities. Secrecy is essential for some of the ministry's activities. We feel that the situation created by the defendants has seriously affected the operational aspect of our state security. Because of what they have done, there will always be a certain doubt in an agent's mind when he is chosen for a secret operation or any other state security operation. Because of this situation, the chosen agent will always have doubts and will always wonder whether the operation has been authorized or whether it is something else. Aside from having received a serious blow to the heart as a result of having our morals brought into question, this situation has seriously affected our institution. On behalf of our comrades, we morally reject and repudiate the actions of the defendants. Their actions have cast a doubt over the revolutionary quality of the MININT members who work, day and night, to defend the homeland. This is why we feel that their crime is a very serious crime, that it is treason. They have not only betrayed Fidel and the homeland but have also betrayed their MININT comrades; they have betrayed the ministry's mechanisms, and they have betrayed the prestige of the institution. Therefore, we feel that their crimes are very serious crimes. That is all I have to say.

[Espinosa] Does the defense wish to question the witness? Witness Division Gen Manuel Fernandez, you may step down.
[Fernandez] Thank you sir.

[Espinosa] Secretary, please call the next witness.

[Tribunal Secretary] Lieutenant Colonel Eduardo Delgado Rodriguez.

[Espinosa] Please state your name.
[Delgado] Eduardo Delgado Rodriguez.

[Espinosa] Your occupation?
[Delgado] Chief of the First Department of Counterintelligence.

[Espinosa] Do you know the defendants?
[Delgado] Yes.

[Espinosa] Are you related to any of the defendants? Are you a friend of any of the defendants? Do you dislike any of the defendants?

[Delgado] No.

[Espinosa] Witness, it is your duty to state the truth regarding all you know about this case. You must answer all the questions. Should you refuse to do so, you will be committing a crime. Answer the questions the prosecutor will ask you.

[Unidentified speaker] At ease, Lieutenant Colonel.

[Escalona] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, would you briefly explain to the tribunal what prompted the investigations into defendant Ochoa Sanchez's behavior. Would you tell the tribunal what prompted military counterintelligence to carry out the investigation?
[Delgado] I must first remind everyone that our FAR minister has already said that there were some minor thing in Ochoa Sanchez's behavior that forced him to reprimand him. However, the FAR leadership received information that painted a more alarming situation and called for more in-depth talks with defendant Ochoa Sanchez. This is why on 29 May our minister met with Ochoa and told him that there were certain incidents that should be clarified. There were certain things that pointed to unauthorized and illegal commercial activities with the use of subordinate officers. We also had information of inappropriate use of foreign exchange and other material. This occurred during his internationalist missions in Nicaragua, and especially in Angola.

Moreover, there were unauthorized contacts with foreigners that ran counter to standards established for Armed Forces officers and guidelines set by the commander in chief and the FAR minister. Preliminary investigations showed that defendant Ochoa Sanchez was involved in several activities that were outside the system and in violation of its standards and rules. This was a serious concern for our ministry's leadership. As a result of this, the FAR minister summoned Ochoa Sanchez to a meeting where he was evasive, denied conclusive evidence, and lied about other things. We decided to discreetly begin investigations around this case. We concluded that it was necessary to arrest Ochoa Sanchez to better delve into his behavior and that of others involved. I must point out that all the charges, which were discussed during the preliminary hearings, have been fully and legally confirmed.

[Escalona] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, would you describe for this tribunal what these illegal commercial activities consisted of?
[Delgado] I believe that I should first talk about our assessment of those illegal activities and then point out some of the most significant ones. These illegal activities violated a number of ethical and legal standards. The behavior of FAR officers under Ochoa Sanchez's command violated such standards. In order words, he incited, influenced, and ordered the violation of ethical and legal principles established for FAR officers. For example, to implement some of these activities, there were contacts with a number of foreign capitalists, many

of whom—and this is no secret—had links to enemy special services involved in subversive activities against our country. Also, as an important political element, we must point out that these illegal activities in the trade and economic areas created a complex situation for the Angolan authorities. A false image of our principles—of the principles established by our commander in chief regarding our presence and our internationalist aid was created, because the actions of Ochoa Sanchez and some of his subordinates linked our presence to profitmaking activities, which are neither the objective nor policy of our party's foreign missions.

Furthermore, we noticed a number of violations of administrative and financial controls; parallel structures were created; and groups were working outside the framework of structures established for the Armed Forces. Actually, the principles of military administration were constantly violated. For example, there were violations of Provision 05 of 1985 issued by the FAR minister that clearly establishes what entities may engage in commercial activities and foreign trade within the Armed Forces. It does not allow any leader, regardless of his rank, to carry out such activities by himself.

Aside from the political problems caused with the Angolan authorities, which I mentioned, an assessment of their actions and a review of current legislation reveals that the laws of that country were also violated. This, generally speaking, is our overall assessment of the illicit trade or behavior. There are many examples mentioned in the files. Sugar was smuggled on the black market. One thing that particularly caught our attention, which reflects Ochoa Sanchez's hypocritical and demagogical behavior, is that on many occasions—and we have proof of this—speaking before military audiences, he might even order the execution of any military man caught in contraband activities when, in fact, the contraband promoter at our military mission in the People's Republic of Angola was Ochoa Sanchez himself.

There is another fully confirmed charge regarding the diamond trade. Martinez clumsily carried out an operation at the end. He sold 136 diamonds in Panama. We have fully confirmed the ivory trade. Two shipments of 300 kg each were purchased in the Congo. Searches conducted by our agencies have fully revealed that the goods were also stashed in the homes of people close to Ochoa Sanchez. An example we want to point out regarding the ivory or elephant tusks trade is that it was carried out behind a front, an incredible front, a foolishly incredibly front. The Congolese who saw what was going on were told that the elephant tusks were being sent to museums in Cuba. Every museum in every Cuban town would have its own elephant tusk. They were also told that the officers, some mission officers, were Culture Ministry officers. This was proven without a doubt.

Other deals—it has been said that these illegal deals were to improve the living conditions of the troops—included the purchase, sale, and movement of precious woods. More than 75 cubic meters of precious wood were purchased. However, during the investigation, after Ochoa Sanchez had been arrested, 18 cubic meters of precious wood arrived at a Cuban port. This shipment was sent to Ochoa Sanchez. Airplanes and ships, assigned to the FAR, were used to supply our troops, and they were also being used for these other deals.

[Escalona] Lieutenant Colonel, in your report you mentioned that there were some deals being made with foreign exchange. Can you give the tribunal some examples of this?
[Delgado] Yes. I am not going to talk about the deals involving CFA francs; I am going to talk mostly of the deals involving dollars. This situation, the illegal deals, the uncontrolled businesses, resulted in their holding back money that should have been deposited at the finance offices of our institutions. It also led to appropriations, uncontrolled situations. It led to just plain stealing. As an example of this we can mention the bank account in Panama City. It has been proven that the account in Panama was in Martinez's name. At this time, I wish to inform everyone present here that this money is now in the hands of the Cuban state. In the course of his business deals, Martinez said that he could get 100 units of some special radio equipment for $435,000 of the more than $500,000 that the Angolan Government had given him. That money went into the Panama account. In February—Martinez was already in Cuba—Ochoa Sanchez gave Martinez $40,000 to bring up the amount in the account. In April 1989, Ochoa gave Martinez an extra $6,000 to bring it up to $2,000.

[Unidentified speaker] You mean to $200,000.
[Delgado] Yes, to $200,000. Martinez was then told to put this money into a numbered account and forget about it. This clearly proves what Ochoa Sanchez was planning to do with that money. In addition, after the mission concluded, $64,000 were brought into the country. This money was given to Ochoa in installments by defendant Antonio Rodriguez, and on one occasion by Antonio through Captain Llicas. Of the $64,000, $25,800 was recovered from Ochoa's home and $4,480 from Martinez's home.

[Escalona] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, the $25,000 were seized at Ochoa's home or...
[Delgado, interrupting] At Ochoa's home. At his current home—$25,800.

[Escalona] Did you know that defendant Ochoa Sanchez has said that many of the things that were done in Angola were done to improve the troops' living conditions, others because... [changes thought] In other words, that there were many justifications? And that this money, which, incredibly, the Cuban military mission to Angola brought to Cuba, was to be used to solve many of the problems faced by the Western Army, command of which Ochoa had been informed he would given? Do you believe those were the intentions?

[Delgado] I do not believe those were the intentions. Those intentions concealed the modus operandi of his foreign exchange activities and his acquisition of funds.

[Escalona] Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, will you explain what information your investigation has yielded regarding defendants Ochoa's and Martinez's involvement in drug-trafficking activities?

[Delgado] Yes. During the course of the investigation, it was established that Martinez Valdez made several trips abroad that were outside the control and regulations of the FAR. The investigation established that these trips started when his relationship with defendant Tony de la Guardia began. During the early investigations on Martinez Valdez, a letter was seized which, because of its contents, attracted a great deal of attention. It contained a request regarding a pilot who had been detained. An examination of the letter's contents revealed that it hinted at drug-trafficking activities. We investigated the letter and found another curious point. Martinez acknowledged during the interrogation that it had been foolish of him not to destroy the letter. However, we found a small card from a hotel in Medellin, Colombia, when there was no indication anywhere that Martinez Valdez had been in Colombia. With these primary elements in hand, we began to investigate the drug-trafficking issue.

It has been established, and widely discussed in the editorial of our party's official organ GRANMA, that in 1986, when Martinez contacted Panamanian Jaime Tejada, the first drug-trafficking offers were made and the possibility of laundering money was discussed with Italian-American Frank Morfa. Furthermore, it has been established that, prior to this, Martinez was in contact with Ciro Moscoso, an individual who was kicked out from Panama's customs service because, according to reports in Panama, he was involved in contraband and drug trafficking. It seems as if the deal was not made with him because of his notoriety.

These two situations or relations were investigated, first regarding weapons and then money laundering. Since there had been fiascos in the buying and selling of weapons, Moscoso introduced Martinez to Colombian Fabel Pareja. From then on, more specific conversations were held regarding drug trafficking. They discussed the need for Martinez to travel abroad, or rather to Colombia, to speak with the boss about these types of situations. At the end of 1987, in the last quarter of the year, Martinez was given a Colombian passport during one of his trips to Panama. During this time and until April 1988, it has been established that a series of conversations were held between Ochoa Sanchez and Tony de la Guardia, during which they discussed their drug-trafficking plans and the manner in which they would operate.

In April 1988, Ochoa invited Martinez to a meeting in Havana. From the airport, Martinez went directly to Tony's home. Tony, however, was not at home at the time. Several meetings took place thereafter, as reported in the GRANMA editorial. A sort of tripartite meeting was held in which Cubans, Colombians, and Mexicans participated. Three meetings were held. The first was held with Colombians; the second was attended by Colombians, Mexicans, and Cubans; the third was held with Colombians. At these meetings, the Colombians proposed the building of a cocaine-processing laboratory in Cuba but the Cubans objected. The possibility of doing this in Africa was considered, however. In addition, they discussed the possibility of counterfeiting U.S. dollars with high-quality paper. It was at this time that the bright idea that Martinez should propose this to Ochoa was brought up. The idea was to get this paper through the Angolan Government, because this high-quality paper is sold to governments only. In these meetings, some naval operations were also discussed. It was agreed that Martinez should go to Panama and later to Colombia.

The main purpose of Martinez's trip to Panama, which took place early in May 1988, and his subsequent trip to Colombia, was to establish official ties with drug lords, particularly Pablo Escobar, one of the Medellin Cartel leaders. And this was done. Martinez and Escobar agreed on a maritime operation, which consisted of shipping as much as 2,000 kgs of cocaine. Ochoa and Martinez estimated later that this shipment could yield a profit of as much as $2.4 million. The operation's various details, such as radio frequencies, the pick-up area near Cienfuegos, how to sail to the island not far from the coast as far west as Mariel, were outlined. In Mariel, four launches would carry 500 kg each and sail to the United States. The Colombians reported that the plan backfired because the ship's captain was murdered and also because they experienced trouble with the ship itself.

Nevertheless, the Colombians decided to set up a corporation in Panama to serve as cover for the movements of this ship, the "Jennifer," through the Caribbean. Other meetings were also held once the maritime operation failed. In Martinez's later trips, it was decided to carry out an air operation. This consisted of dropping cocaine southwest of Cayo Sal. This operation also failed because Escobar was dissatisfied with some of his operations in Cuba because of some irregularities. He refused to continue these operations until these irregularities were properly taken care of. There is an important detail: Escobar even threatened Martinez by saying that, if the agreement was not complied with, the Colombians would make a report to the Cuban authorities. We are sure that in these talks, in addition to offering the Colombians a good residence and a Mercedes Benz in Cuba, Martinez did not present himself as a simple member of an isolated group engaged in these kinds of activities. Escobar's demands at the meeting also indicate this. He wanted to buy antiaircraft missiles. He wanted to have a plane available in Cuba at all times. It is very clear for all of us that the revolution's top authorities and leaders were being mocked at these meetings.

Subsequently, in light of these failures and problems, Martinez informed Ochoa of what was going on. It is necessary to state that in one way or another, even with the use of telephones, consultations were made and

approvals and instructions were requested. Defendant Ochoa Sanchez has admitted this and so has Martinez. In December Ochoa Sanchez and Martinez had a meeting. They decided that Tony de la Guardia's men were a bunch of fools. All they had carried out were small deals. They wanted to make big deals—big deals have been an obsession with Ochoa for a long time. But he continued to discuss business with Tony de la Guardia. In April there was talk of a big deal. They were going to receive a shipment of 10 tons of cocaine. The shipment would be brought on a merchant ship and many launches would be used to pick up the big shipment. Ochoa Sanchez and Martinez were determined to succeed in this drug-trafficking business. They wanted to make huge profits. Furthermore, and this is quite interesting, on 28 April Ochoa asked Tony de la Guardia for $50,000. What was this money for? It was to be invested in the business we were talking about a little while ago, the Colombian drug trafficker's deal, the "Jennifer" deal being handled by the great manager, Ciro Moscoso. That $50,000 was deposited in Panama and today is in Cuban Government hands. But there is more.

During Martinez' last trip to Panama, sometime between 28 April and 5 May, he persistently tried to continue those operations. On 4 May 1989, he made a telephone call. The plans are known to everyone: A foreign investor, a friend of Ochoa Sanchez, was going to build huge buildings and make huge investments. Thanks to all those deals, the country would be saved. Also, the country's morale would be at stake. Only minds like Ochoa Sanchez's, Martinez's, and the other defendants', could think that this is the way to save a country. Thank you.

[Escalona] No more questions, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Lt Col Eduardo Delgado, you may step down.

Summary of 4th Session

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["Summary" of the fourth session of the court-martial of Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and 13 other Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) and Interior Ministry (MININT) officers at the FAR Universal Hall on 4 July—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Division General Ramon Espinosa Martin] We will resume the trial now. We will now begin examining the experts' reports. Secretary, you may call the expert.

[Lieutenant Colonel Ernesto Varsallo Consuegra] Lieutenant Colonel Marta Subero Valdes.

[Espinosa] Expert, you may identify yourself please.
[Subero] I am Lt Col Marta Subero Valdes.

[Espinosa] Expert, the law compels you to act properly and carry out your work faithfully; otherwise, the law will charge you with criminal responsibility. Please explain to this court the work you carried out and the conclusions you reached based on your expertise.
[Subero] Along with five envelopes containing samples of a white powder, the State Security Investigation Department [Departamento de Instruccion] sent us a request for an expert report. That white powder had been confiscated at Key Romero, north of Punta Hicacos, from defendants Amado Padron Trujillo and Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo.

We conducted the tests as established by the UN International Narcotics Control Board, because our methods agree with those established by the said organization.

First, we analyzed the white powder under the microscope and found that each of the samples were homogeneous. Based on those results, we decided to use two methods to identify the substances.

The first method used is called (capafina). We used higly soluble (S-254) silica gel plates as the supporting base. We used a methanol and amonia solvent at a proportion of 99 to 1 as the mobile base [base mobil]. Using (dragendorf) and platinum iodine [yodo platinato] solutions, we discovered that the substance tested showed the same reaction in its RS [not further specified], form, and color. The test thus proved that the substance we had examined was cocaine. We then placed a control sample of cocaine in our plate. We applied the same test to the five samples we had received and to the control sample. The five samples and the control sample reacted in the same manner.

The second method used is one of ultraviolet [word indistinct]. The substances underwent both a qualitative and a quantitative analysis and all reacted in the same manner. We concluded that the tested substance was 100-percent-pure cocaine.

[Espinosa] Have you finished?
[Subero] Yes.

[Espinosa] Does the prosecutor wish to ask any questions?

[Brigidier General Juan Escalona Reguera] No, Mr President.

[Espinosa] Do the defense lawyers wish to ask any questions?

[Reply unheard].

[Espinosa] Expert, you may leave. Thank you very much. This tribunal will take into account the documentary proof related to this case at sentencing time. Comrade Prosecutor, lawyers, and defendants: Do you have any other evidence that will help us solve this case?

[Reply unheard].

[Espinosa] We have concluded the evidence presentation period.

Comrade Prosecutor, please present your concluding argument.

[Passage omitted on Prosecutor Escalona's closing remarks published following text of 4th Session Part II]

[Espinosa] The defense lawyers have the floor. Colonel Alberto Ruben D. Toste Rodriguez, defense lawyer for defendants Arnaldo Ochoa and Jorge Martinez Valdez.

[D. Toste] Comrade president, magistrates of the tribunal, comrade prosecutor, and comrade defense lawyers. I will now speak on behalf of defendants Ochoa and Martinez, in compliance with the military criminal law, to contest the prosecutor's final report regarding the penalty he feels should be imposed on the two defendants whom I represent. I must first make clear that I am speaking on behalf of the defendants; I am not trying to justify the serious crimes they have committed. I would not be worthy of occupying the position I hold if I were to interpret the defense lawyer's role in this way. Defense lawyers, the prosecutor, the tribunal, and the people in general must surely feel deeply indignant and grieved by the deeds perpetrated by the defendants. Nevertheless, this profound and just repudiation of their actions cannot affect the impartiality of those of us who must fulfill the honorable mission of administering or assisting in the administration of justice during this trial.

The defendants themselves have admitted before this tribunal their responsibility for the actions for which they have been charged and they have repudiated these actions. They are aware of the serious breach of our country's security and the certain harm they inflicted on the nation by prompting the bitter and slanderous campaigns against our country's and our national institutions' prestige and honor. It is well known that our military and revolutionary tribunals, of a Mambi [Cuban rebel fighting against Spanish domination in the mid - 19th century] and rebellious origin, have been marked by their generosity since the beginning. This generosity, however, does not at all mean unlimited tolerance; it means strength.

At present, these tribunals are based on advanced legislation and are part of the judicial and penal system that established these tribunals. These tribunals are based on revolutionary principles, the application of which results in exemplary trials, such as the one in progress. My defense is based on the argument that my defendants should not be given the sentence that the prosecutor has. I base my defense on this legislation, specifically on the Penal Code and the military criminal law, which serve as the framework for my defense. We should not burden the tribunal with superfluous information. We have listened to a thorough report by the prosecutor, and we have yet to listen to other defense lawyer reports.

According to the Penal Code, however, it is up to the defense lawyer to properly represent the defendant using legal means to clarify facts and circumstances, which, in this case, might point to extenuating circumstances characterizing the defendants' responsibilities. We believe that the charges against the defendants have been sufficiently proven. The defendants themselves have admitted this before the tribunal, and they have even contributed additional information the base nature of which corresponds to the seriousness of the offenses.

Nevertheless, circumstances that the law describes as extenuating were brought up before the tribunal during the trial. The tribunal should take these circumstances into account before agreeing on the penalty to be imposed, that is to say, before selecting just sentences. We must describe what the Penal Code states regarding the tribunal's sentencing decision, which should be made according to the scale that the law stipulates for each crime. This is what the Penal Code stipulates in Article 47, Paragraph 1:

The court will establish the sentence within the limits established by the law, following legal socialist standards, particularly taking into consideration the deed's degree of danger to society, the circumstances—both extenuating and aggravating—relating to the deed, and the defendant's motives; as well as the defendant's record, personal characteristics, behavior after perpetrating the crime, and possibilities of reforming him.

Referring to our two defendants and the extenuating circumstances surrounding their actions, we have ascertained throughout the hearing that, in the case of defendant Martinez, the circumstances outlined in the Penal Code's Article 52, paragraph CH, were fully established. The extenuating circumstances are described as follows in the Penal Code:

The following are considered extenuating circumstances:

CH. The agent spontaneously proceeded to prevent, redress, or diminish the effects of the crime, or to indemnify the victim, or to confess to the authorities his participation in the deed, or to help clarify the deed.

We believe that this hearing has clearly established that defendant Martinez has repeatedly confessed his crime, and he has helped clarify how it was carried out—not only here at the hearing, but also—as stated by the investigators—since the very moment of his arrest. Therefore, we request that these extenuating circumstances be taken into consideration in defendant Martinez' case.

In addition, based on our inquiries and what you ascertained—and as the prosecutor rightfully stated in his closing argument during the trial—the defendant observed good military conduct prior to the perpetration of the crime. The defendant may have committed a crime but, as the law states, this does not imply that his conduct prior to the perpetration of the crime should be discounted.

Referring to defendant Martinez' record, we are talking about a relatively young military officer who—as he has stated here—joined the military service and was mobilized to carry out an internationalist mission. He carried out his missions on several occasions and, based on the reports, the results of his missions were favorable. It appears that his behavior following the perpetration of his crimes could not have been better and, in our opinion, the possibilities of reforming him—given his age and given his latest attitude—is evidence completely in his favor. I refer to this because precisely the previous article, Article 47—which I read and which establishes the guidelines that the court must follow to establish the sentence—states that such personal attributes on the part of the defendant should be taken into consideration. I do not refer to the crime he has committed, the seriousness of which has been reaffirmed and established, but to the defendant's personal traits.

As for the other defendant, Ochoa, the prosecutor believed that his good behavior as an officer should also be taken into account. It is pertinent to mention at this point the extenuating circumstances mentioned in subparagraph CH of Article 52 of the Military Crimnal Law, which states: In addition to those pointed out in the Penal Code's main text, the following extenuating circumstances shall be considered in connection with crimes committed by military men: Ch. The defendant must have demonstrated genuine regret through the act of reproving his own criminal behavior.

Of course, this regret must take place after the crime has been committed. We believe that at every opportunity, defendant Ochoa has shown that he completely regrets his criminal behavior and has morally reproved his own actions, as the Military Criminal Law stipulates. In other words, he has expressed his regret through his moral condemnation of his behavior. As we have said, we can attest that this happened during our meetings with him. Virtually since the beginning, this defendant has declared himself guilty of all charges and has courageously and honestly said that he is assuming full responsibility for his actions. He has said that he is willing to accept any penalty the tribunal decides he deserves.

You saw this happen at the honor tribunal, it was confirmed during our interview, and occurred again here at this tribunal. According to the law, this truly constitutes an extenuating circumstance. Regarding the defendant's record, also in accordance with Article 47, Ochoa joined the rebel army when he was still a minor, as we know and as the prosecutor said in his thorough report. I will not try to trace the defendant's military career, because his comrades-in-arms and those not participating in the trial believe that he has marred his career. We will not outline his military career. We will, however, describe the conditions under which he joined the rebel army. In the determination of the legal penalty appropriate for his crime, we should use as a basis not what he is today, but his personality at the time that the crime was committed because, as a result of other related sanctions he has been found to deserve, he was stripped of his distinction as Hero of the Republic of Cuba, his Communist Party membership, and his military rank. I think that the sentence should take into consideration all of these distinctions and honors of which he is no longer worthy.

In addition, Article 47—which includes six paragraphs and which I have read for you—refers to his behavior after he committed the crime. We also believe, for the reasons I have just mentioned, that this defendant's behavior demonstrates there is a good chance that he is capable of reform. In light of the way in which he has behaved and returning to the time when he was stripped of his honors and distinctions, I believe that he is capable of reform, although, as he said at the trial and as you will recall, the crime he committed could not be expiated even with 200 years of heroic actions.

We believe, however, that Ochoa's courageus self-criticism, to which the prosecutor also referred, should make the tribunal consider the possibility of his reform. For all of this, comrades, and without trying to burden you with details, I contend that the sentence demanded by the prosecutor should not be pronounced. I have asked several witnesses about the defendant's regret. I think that Ochoa's regret has been genuine and that the tribunal will impartially take this into consideration at the time when a fair sentence will be passed.

This is why, comrades of the tribunal, we are reiterating what we said before, that defendants Ochoa and Martinez should not receive the penalties demanded by the prosecutor; instead, they should be sentenced to imprisonment for a period to be determined by the tribunal. We believe that both men, through their behavior after their crimes, have become worthy of this opportunity. We are certain that your decision will be just. I have finished.

[Espinosa] Defense lawyer Major Juan Aramis Villalon Ona, on behalf of defendant Antonio de la Guardia Font.

[Villalon] Comrades of the tribunal and the prosecutor's office: I will now make my final statement on behalf of defendant de la Guardia based on the facts brought forth and the conclusions reached during the hearing. I must say that I repudiate the defendant's base, shameful, and destructive international drug trafficking activities, which is the scourge of mankind. Nevertheless, I am assuming the mission entrusted to me by the revolution, without betraying our revolutionary principles, as a

party member and as a MININT official. I am taking over as de la Guardia's defense attorney in compliance with the Constitution and the Military Criminal Law, which provides defendants with ample guarantees for a fair trial. I will try to secure an adequate, just, and equitable decision for the defendant.

I have no doubt, however, of the facts that gave rise to the preliminary hearing proceedings and subsequently this Military Honor Tribunal's case no. one of 1989. Similarly, I have no doubts about the defendant's guilt, as admitted to and proven during the hearing.

We agree to the public prosecutor's findings as to the nature of the crimes as stated in the prosecutor's third provisional conclusion. Regarding point five of the prosecutor's conclusions, we ask the court to take into consideration at the time of establishing my defendant's sentence—as stated in Article 47, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Penal Code, Law 62—the provisions stated in Chapter 15 and Article 52 of the Military Criminal Law, the text of which states:

Regarding crimes perpetrated by military officers, the following will be considered extenuating circumstances, in addition to those stated in the general articles of the Penal Code:

A. Good military conduct prior to the prepetration of the crime.

C. [No B. as heard] Outstanding services rendered to the homeland before or after perpetrating the crime.

CH. A sincere repentance demonstrated by one's morally reproving one's own criminal conduct.

We have been able to discern this behavior in the defendant's declaration to the court and when he was questioned by the prosecutor and the defense attorney. We have also been able to consider his actions in relation to what is stated in paragraph E, section 6 of the Penal Code: Prior to the perpetration of the crime, the subject demonstrated good conduct while fulfilling his duties toward the homeland, his family, and society.

We will not be tiresome and establish each and every one of the extenuating circumstances that we ask this dignified court to take into consideration, because this statement would be too long. Similarly, we ask that the court sees fit to apply Article 55-1 of the Military Criminal Law, regarding an evaluation of the defendant's personal traits, character, and other circumstances that the court considers worthy of taking into consideration.

Comrades of the court, comrades... [corrects himself] comrade prosecutor, all that remains is to give you my most sincere and revolutionary gratitude for the opportunities I have been given to carry out my defense—which reconfirms once more the principles of our socialist law and the equity which prevails in our courts. We expect a just ruling from the court, and we expect that the request for a death sentence will be commuted for one which the court considers more benign. I have concluded my final statement.

[Espinosa] Major Aristides Ruisenor de la Pena, lawyer of defendant Amado Padron Trujillo.

[De la Pena] Comrades of the court, we are attending—in my personal opinion—the most important trial to take place in Cuba since the victory of the revolution. The importance resides in the grave violation of basic ethical principles of the Cuban revolution and the international repercussions that have occurred as a result of the actions of those tried here.

An inviolable principle of revolutionary justice guarantees each defendant a lawyer to represent his interests and to provide the court handling the case with the necessary information to reach a just decision. Nevertheless, it is necessary to clearly establish that out of respect for the court, other participants in the hearing, and for ourselves and the defendant—who has fully confessed to the crimes with which he is charged—we will not try to deny the fact that the crimes were committed, nor will we diminish their severity. We are part of the people; we joined the ministry's ranks when it was founded; during our youth we learned about recent events and our people's demand for honest public officials; we were imbued by the moral examples set by Law No. 5 in the Moncada Program concerning the the confiscation of an embezzler's posessions; we have been ideologically and morally informed by the noblest virtues and highest principles in the ministry [MININT].

The revolutionary morale of our institutions has undeniably been affected, but the revolution's strength is so great that the setback it has suffered will be turned into an inexorable victory. Our people know that the vast majority of the members of our military institutions set an example through their virtuous conduct and represent a legitimate source of national pride.

We have represented the defendant Padron following the established guidelines, and we will present our conclusion accordingly. The legal classification of the crimes of which my defendant is accused is consistent with the actions for which he is being tried; the elements specified in each penal classification have undoubtedly been proved, and they have been fully admitted by my defendant.

Consequently, I consider it unnecessary to make a lengthy analysis of the issue. It will be more worthwhile to review other aspects which, in my opinion, prove extenuating circumstances affecting his culpability. I believe that the defendant's merits and other favorable aspects of his character must serve as extenuating circumstances to mitigate his responsibility from a criminal standpoint.

Article 52 of our law on military crimes, approved by the National Assembly of the People's Government in February 1979, states that the following will be considered extenuating circumstances, in addition to those stated in the general articles of the Penal Code:

A. Good military conduct prior to the prepetration of the crime.

C. [No B. as heard] Outstanding services rendered to the homeland before or after perpetrating the crime.

CH. A sincere repentance demonstrated by one's morally reproving one's own criminal conduct.

Those circumstances apply in my defendant's case and should be taken into consideration by the court, because he has a record of more than 24 years of exemplary service.

He confronted imperialism's mercenary bands in Escambray. He was highly praised for his achievements in sensitive areas while he worked for the ministry. He never had to be disciplined. He has never been penalized for a criminal offense. The party, of which he has been a member since it was organized, has never had to sanction him. In addition, he has demonstrated remorse, which is the first step in the rehabilitation of a man who has violated the law.

Something else that is very important to consider in assigning blame in this case is the fact that Amado Padron did not mastermind the drug-trafficking operations. He was instead the recipient of the evil seed from the hands of another defendant. At the time, Padron was unable to reject this corrupt proposal. His assistance in helping to clarify this situation is another circumstance that should be taken into consideration in determining his punishment under the law. We should draw from this trial as many lessons as possible, which should help the party and government leadership take the proper steps to avoid a repetition of similar events. The affected agencies and the revolution will learn much from examining the motivations for the actions that are under investigation here.

This is why I must discuss three things that were brought up during the trial that contributed to what happened: first, the absence of adequate control mechanisms in the MC, which should have been in place because of the highly sensitive missions entrusted to the department; second, ideological formation; and, third, the environmental influence. All of us who have studied scientific leadership know that this system is characterized by the existence of an echelon, whose levels or grades are harmoniously interrelated. An essential principle governs the various steps. This is the subordination of the lower levels to the upper levels. The latter must control the former's activities by various mechanisms, such as reports, inspections, audits, etc.

When the leader exerts control, regardless of his ability to correct deficiencies or to become personally acquainted with his subordinates and their activities, he has an opportunity to share his experience and communicate his knowledge and experience. In essence, the leader has the wonderful opportunity to educate, which constitutes one of the fundamental duties of every leader. He must educate his subordinates most of all on the Cuban revolution's policy, sacred respect for the principles that have made the revolution—we say this with pride—an example for other revolutions. Of course, this supposes that the teacher sets a good example and that there is no contradiction between his words and his deeds.

Our history is full of examples of great teachers, such as Felix Varela, Marti, Maceo, Viteras, Mella, Camilo, El Che. All of them have left legacies we will never forget. A living example is our commander in chief, who has always been keenly interested in the people's education since he achieved public prominence. All of his speeches contain valuable teaching material backed by his personal example, great human sensitivity, insight into the future, and optimism regarding the future of mankind.

More attention should be given to ideological formation, judging from what we learned during this trial. It is clear that a firm ideological foundation would preclude the behavior that has made this trial necessary. Providing each one of us with the ideological foundations of socialism, the Cuban revolution's policy and the principles that guide it would help build a solid shield against any corrupting germ that tries to infect us.

I support the idea that any noxious idea should be neutralized in the mind before any plan to carry it out can be developed. An individual must have the necessary inhibitions to prevent, following the internal debate that occurs in the mind, his making decisions that violate social norms. However, these inhibitions are only acquired as a result of adequate ideological training and a certain amount of education and culture.

The trial has clearly demonstrated the influence exerted by the atmosphere which then prevailed in the MC that made some comrades vulnerable—most of whom had a long revolutionary history full of heroism and personal sacrifices. Given this contaminating atmosphere, not one of them was capable of denouncing these activities, which were skillfully hidden beneath noble goals.

Referring to the prosecutor's request, I believe that, although it conforms with penal standards, it is too severe in regard to my defendant given the extenuating circumstances relating to his case, which I have expounded upon throughout this statement. The death penalty is the most severe penalty in our penal code, and it is only handed down in very special cases. This is reasserted in Article 29 of this new legal code, which conforms to the latest principles of the penal law.

A small period in a man's life, although marked by serious crimes, cannot wipe out a long and rich revolutionary role that was marred by a lack of control and a corrupting atmosphere. We must ask ourselves: Can Amado Padron possibly make up for this conduct and become once again the person he was until a few years ago? The experience acquired and the bitter lessons learned from this trial could create the right conditions for rehabilitating him.

Our penal code allows many forms of punishment and the issuance of separate sentences for those who violate its precepts. I firmly believe that this court—made up of valuable and wise men who have a long revolutionary history; who know, interpret, and carry out the ideological guidelines of the revolution; and who have given us proof over the past few days that their actions are measured and wise and full of the greatest guarantees a trial can offer—will pass an appropriate judgement on the actions of my defendant, and will issue a ruling in accordance with his record and the circumstances relating to the deed. I have finished.

4th Session, Part II

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["Summary" of the fourth session, part II, of the court-martial of Cuban Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and 13 other Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) and Interior Ministry officers at the FAR Universal Hall on 4 July—recorded]

[Text] [Division General Ramon Espinosa Martin, special military tribunal president] You may speak.

[Captain Roilan Hernandez Concepcion] Comrade President of the Special Military Tribunal, Comrade judges, Comrade prosecutors, and Comrade defense attorneys: We have been tasked with defending before this tribunal defendants former Major Antonio Sanchez Lima and former Captain Leonel Estevez Soto, who are former officers of the well-known Interior Ministry [MININT] MC [department responsible for bypassing U.S. embargo against Cuba].

It is extremely difficult for any revolutionary attorney to defend people who have inconsiderately violated their people's most sacred principles and interests; the greatness and security of this revolution; the credibility, prestige, and honor of our Revolutionary Armed Forces and our MININT, and the international reputation and credibility of our commander in chief.

Nevertheless, over the past few days we have concentrated our efforts on defending the rights that revolutionary laws have granted these men, despite the serious actions that they have carried out.

Before proceeding, we wish to acknowledge the guarantees offered by this tribunal in our defense efforts and to thank the members of the tribunal for this. We have been allowed to present freely and at length our defense arguments for those we represent. We also thank State Security for allowing us to meet with and to be in constant contact with our clients ever since we assumed their defense.

It is true, as our people have said and the prosecutors have reaffirmed in their many statements, that the defendants in this trial, and specifically my clients, over the past 2 and ½ years, strayed from the revolutionary path and violated the duties, principles, obligations, and standards established for MININT members, which our commander in chief summarized during a speech celebrating the 25th anniversary of the MININT.

He said: The conduct of MININT combatants must be above reproach. They must observe a special conduct because they are seen everywhere in the eyes of the people as the very symbol of authority, law, moral values, and respect for citizens and the values of the socialist state. They must be self-demanding and fight with vigor and determination any attempt to further personal interests, corruption, vanity, scorn for the people and their values, and all those things that might promote the enemy's goals.

We are aware of these actions that the defendants have admitted to; we are also aware of their seriousness and the possible consequences for our country. Although this is the reality that we as defense lawyers must face, we must also point out to this tribunal things that might help it to reach a fair judgement, that is, one that really corresponds to the involvement of our clients in the crimes committed.

As for defendant Leonel Estevez Soto, it was shown during the hearings that he carried out two drug-trafficking operations. The first one took place in January 1987. This operation failed and no money was collected, because it later turned out that the alleged marijuana shipment was 90 percent dry grass and did not contain drugs.

The second operation coordinated by Estevez Soto was carried out in April 1989. In that operation, a plane from Colombia dropped a cocaine load in Cuban jurisdictional waters. The drug was picked up by speedboats owned by U.S. drug traffickers.

The prosecutor labeled the proven facts as crimes of hostile actions against foreign states and drug trafficking. The defense agrees with the legal description presented by the prosecutor during his concluding argument, but it wishes to make the following statements regarding my defendant's degree of participation in the crimes.

Regarding the first drug-trafficking operation conducted by Estevez Soto, this tribunal must take into account that although the operation was carried out through my defendant's business connection, it cannot be asserted that my defendant coordinated and planned the operation. On that occasion, my defendant and his superior met with the business connection, who ended up being a drug trafficker.

On that occasion, the drug trafficker proposed to carry out the marijuana-trafficking operation that we discussed earlier. My defendant's superior immediately consulted with the chief of the MC Department and requested his approval to conduct the illegal operation. The chief of the MC Department authorized the operation.

We insist on reviewing this aspect, because my defendant's participation in that activity was authorized by his superior even though it was illegal. My defendant was directed by his superior. My defendant was ordered to carry out that activity.

That failed marijuana trafficking operation was carried out between late January and early February 1987, as we said before. It was not until April 1989—2 years and 4 months later—that Estevez Soto participated in the second drug trafficking operation. His participation in this second operation is similar to the first one. Estevez got in touch with the drug trafficker in the presence of his superior, who requested the MC Department chief to approve the operation he planned and directed.

The time between the first drug trafficking operation and the second one, in which my defendant participated, is noticeable. During that time, my defendant continued to work at the MC Department, carrying out other tasks, many of which were important for our country.

We will now discuss the extenuating circumstances of my defendant's criminal responsibility. We believe Leonel Estevez Soto's crimes included extenuating circumstances of criminal responsibility established in Article 52, subparagraphs A and CH of the law of military crimes and Article 52, section CH of the Penal Code. Those circumstances must be taken into account, because our defendant observed good, military behavior prior to the commission of the crime, he expressed sincere regret over his actions through his own moral reprobation of his behavior, and he helped solve this case, as has been irrefutably proved by the evidence presented during the hearings.

When deciding my defendant's sentence, we ask this tribunal—per Article 47, Section 1, of the Penal Code—to take in account our defendant's record of good military behavior displayed before the commission of the crimes. In addition, we ask this tribunal to take into account my defendant's good behavior after the commission of the crimes and the possibility that such a good record would help him rectify his behavior, which is supported by 20 years of work in the institution and accomplishments in our ranks. We ask this tribunal to take into account the strength of the revolution itself, which without ceasing to do justice, has always trusted man's ability to change his ways and especially trusts those who, despite having made serious mistakes, grew up during the revoltion, were educated by the teachings of the revolution, and became communists.

Regarding defendant Antonio Sanchez Lima: It has been proven during this process that my client participated in six of the many drug trafficking operations carried out by officials of the MININT's MC Department under the direction of the heads of that agency. It has been proven he only coordinated one—I repeat, one—of those operations. We stress this point, because we deem it necessary to note that Sanchez Lima—contrary to what the attorney general's representative has stated during the trial—always acted under the direction of his chief, and in no way can it be assumed that he operated a drug trafficking agency independently from the MC.

We believe it is not necessary to further elaborate on these drug trafficking cases. There is enough evidence confirming those actions, which were admitted by my client. The prosecutor has described those proven criminal actions as hostile actions against a foreign state and drug trafficking.

Our client accepts the charges as described by the attorney general. However, in that regard, we would like to express our views before this court:

Although our client was involved in various actions, his participation in all cases except for one case in April 1989 was largely related to orders received from his chief and to the process of moral deterioration and corruption he faced within the MC Department in which he worked.

Let us now analyze the extenuating circumstances related to his penal responsibility:

Regarding the charges filed against my client, it has been demonstrated that his actions must be judged taking into account the extenuating circumstances of his penal responsibility as stipulated in Article 52, Clauses A, B, and CH of the Military Crime Law, and Article 52, Clause CH of the Penal Code. We appeal to the court to take these circumstances into account and accept them as valid in my client's case, as it has been demonstrated during the trial that Sanchez Lima's records reflect his correct military conduct prior to his involvement in this case. His records show no penal or disciplinary action against him.

In addition, we recall that prior to his involvement in this case, the defendant participated in a heroic action in which he risked his life when he faced the hijackers of a Cubana de Aviacion plane at Jose Marti Airport. He was

seriously wounded in the incident, having been shot three times, in his face, chest, and back. His action was recognized by the MININT's High Command and our people.

During his appearance before this court, my client showed his sincere repentance by morally recriminating himself for his criminal conduct, admitting to all the charges filed against him, and collaborating in the clarification of those charges.

We would now like to refer to the sentence against my client. The prosecutor has requested that my client receive the excessive penalty of death for the crimes already mentioned. We are opposed to that request based on the following considerations:

The current Penal Code, which was recently approved in accordance with the most advanced international regulations and the level of development achieved by our society, establishes in Article 29-1 that the death penalty is an exceptional sentence that will only be applied by the court in the most serious cases involving the crimes for which it was established.

I believe that despite the gravity of the acts committed, which my client and I have accepted, upon weighing the penalty, the tribunal must consider the contents of Article 47-1 of the Penal Code, which states that the tribunal will establish the extent of the penalty within the limits contemplated by the law, in accordance with the socialist legal framework and especially bearing in mind the level of social danger of the act, the extenuating and aggravating circumstances, and motives of the defendant, as well as his background, his individual characteristics, his behavior prior to committing the crime, and possibilities of reform.

Key aspects of Article 110 establish that if the tribunal decides to implement its provisions, this does not necessarily mean the maximum penalty must be imposed. This penal regulation establishes the penalty of between 10 to 20 years of imprisonment or death. The participation of my client, I insist, has been clearly proven in the hearings. It is not one of the gravest cases, which the Penal Code demands for the imposition of the death penalty. It does not involve a chief; it does not involve a coordinator and leader of these operations; it involves only a participant in a trial of corruption and in a group of actions pertaining to the case. Therefore, I cannot consider my client among the ones chiefly responsible, in which case there would be no other alternative but to apply a penalty of this nature.

In view of the reasons mentioned in the above allegation, there is a possibility of reform and rectification on the part of my client. If this tribunal finds the need to be severe in this case, I request it consider the contents of Article 30, Paragraph 1 of the Penal Code, which establishes that the penalty of imprisonment cannot exceed 20 years. However, for those crimes in which the penalty is could be death, the tribunal can increase the term up to 30 years of imprisonment.

Before concluding, I wish to point out to this tribunal—for both my clients—other aspects in connection with these acts. I believe the most important results derived from this trial are not the opportunity to severely punish the authors of these acts, as grave as the ones we have heard and tried. I believe the principal things derived from this trial have been the teachings and lessons received by the revolution in the path that remains of our socialist reconstruction. Also, we have shown the world, as the prosecutor indicated during one of the hearings, that our country is not a drug trafficking center. The causes analyzed during this trial have shown there was a small group of officials who were corrupted and irresponsibly decided to commit these and other improvised acts linked with drug trafficking, which were controlled. We also have the guarantee that our party and revolutionary government will adopt severe measures to wipe this shame from our history.

I request that the penalty imposed on my clients be in accordance with the circumstances presented to this tribunal and the guidelines that throughout the history of the revolution, have prevailed in the imparting of justice in our country, where the most important thing has always been man, his family, and his reintegration into society. We feel these men being tried today can be given that opportunity to make amends, thus showing once again the grandeur and daily trengthening of our socialist revolution. I have concluded, Comrade President.

[Espinosa] Defense attorney First Lieutenant Esther Recio Zamora, representing defendants Luis Pineda Bermudez and Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo.

[Recio] Comrade President, we ask for permission to begin our conclusive reports. Comrade President, judges, representatives of the prosecutor's office, attorneys accompanying me at the defendants' bench, and audience in general:

With great bitterness and indignation, we have learned about these incidents that have repulsed our people so much and are deeply affecting our revolutionary sensibility. When the ability to reflect and act in accordance with one's principles is lost, when duties are unfulfilled, and when rigorous discipline is lacking, man's conscience deteriorates, and the deterioration of his conduct follows. He then disgraces even the most sacred principles, principles that made man worthy—as our Commander Ernesto Guevara said—of the highest level of the human species: a revolutionary.

Our hardened people have set multiple daily examples for us in our search for transparent and dignified solutions to problems afflicting us. This makes even more

reproachable the conduct of those who are intent on finding solutions outside the framework of our loftiest moral values and our princples.

To me, this has been a very painful experience, because I grew up at the crucible of our revolutionary process, amid the spirit and achievements of the revolution that helped me to internalize the essence, convictions, and moral values of the revolution. This very process constitutes a palpable example of the transparency of our revolution, because regardless of the seriousness of the actions that are being discussed here, respect for our laws have not been hampered; all the guarantees established by our constitution and the law have been respected.

In this trial, we represent defendant Luis Pineda Bermudez. We were tasked with this in compliance with Article 27 of the Military Procedural Criminal Law. Without delving into aspects that have already been discussed during these hearings, I wish to refer to certain aspects we consider important in view of our client's involvement in the actions that have been discussed.

It has been shown here, through the statements of defendants and our own client, that he was fully aware of these drug-trafficking activities in our country since the 1st trimester of 1988. How did he learn about them? Through his immediate superior at the time, who is a defendant in this trial. The prosecutor's office pointed out that this citizen visited our client in Mexico, where he was working, to tell him about efforts to establish new channels between Colombians and Mexicans to continue these kinds of deals that were already under way in our country.

We have pointed out here that the defendant, who was our client's superior at the time, did not just discuss this with our client but ordered him to carry out a job, which we realize was a very grave one. Our client was thus initiated in these activities. His involvement, as charged by the prosecutor's office, began after this visit, when our client was already in Mexico, as was clear to us and shown in this trial.

After this visit, there were work meetings involving Mexicans and Colombians. As the prosecutor's office stated, our client internationalized drug trafficking activities. Our client, as confirmed in this trial, participated in a work meeting, which according to the prosecution's conclusions, took place in the morning to discuss various topics. It also states this meeting was scheduled to continue in the afternoon to further discuss such activities. Our client did not attend the afternoon meeting, but his superior at the time did. The prosecutor's conclusions also state that trafficking of drugs and foreign currency were discussed but were never carried out, because of problems we do not wish to delve into.

In my defense of Luis Pineda Bermudez, I do wish to point out that he was aware of these activities from the time his superior not only informed him about them but ordered him to seek new channels. We tried to determine the extent of his knowledge about what was happening in our country.

We were not able to determine precisely whether the defendant was fully aware of all the—let us call them—dastardly activities. He really did not really comprehend the details, amounts, and links as completely as he appeared to convey in the verbal hearing and as his superior at the time also stated. We wish to make this clear.

I fully agree with the opinion of the prosecutor's office regarding the crimes my client has been charged with. I wish to point out I do disagree with the application of aggravating and extenuating circumstances regarding our client's penal responsiblity. I will refer to that.

We feel that in Luis Pineda's case, it is valid to take into account the extenuating circumstances mentioned in Article 52, Clause CH of the Penal Code, which establishes...[changes thought] We will not read it to avoid making our presentation tedious. What does Article 52, Clause CH stipulate, among other things? The contributions made when an investigative process begins; in other words, the attitude assumed by our client to clarify the case.

Yesterday, through a witness who testified before this court, we stressed this point, which we wanted to highlight. We categorically noted that our defendant collaborated from the beginning to clarify the actions we are judging today. He was even asked in a telephone call to go to the Investigations Department to deliver $20,000 he had received from his chief at that time and to report everything he knew about the case we have judged here. It was determined he initially delivered $15,000 and then the remaining $5,000.

We are not trying to justify anything in this trial. We base our argument on a basic principle: We are the first ones to reject and condemn conduct such as the ones we are unfortunately judging in this trial. However, our client observed a positive attitude in clarifying the case. He not only turned in the money; he also gave details on how it was used, such as paying the rent for an apartment in Mexico, and whether this could be done directly. Part of that information was obtained from his chief at that time but also from him.

Why did he turn in $5,000 later on? When the attorney general's representative referred to my client's honesty, we asked him to clarify that point. He did not originally have the $5,000 that he brought in the following day. As he stated here, he had given that sum to another citizen, a comrade whom he gave a letter of authorization to

purchase a car he wanted to buy. Therefore, we strongly believe this extenuating circumstance should be taken into consideration when judging him.

We also believe that Clause E concerning extenuating circumstances for determining penal responsibility should be taken into account in our client's case. It refers to the good conduct he observed prior to the actions being judged here. Our client observed conduct consonant with his incorporation and participation in the revolutionary process. He completed 15 years of service in the MININT; he was decorated upon completing 10 and 15 years of service; and he received other decorations, including the silver seal commemorating the 30th anniversary of state security organs and 20 years of party activism. During all that time, he consistently maintained what he considered to be good conduct. Therefore, we believe this conduct should be regarded as an extenuating circumstance.

Regarding the Military Crime Law as applicable in our clients' case, we believe Clause A should be taken into consideration, as well as the Penal Code regarding good conduct and Clause CH concerning sincere repentance. We believe repentance is demonstrated in various ways, but that unfortunately, it is sometimes too late. After self-evaluating themselves and expressing before this court, and before the Cuban people who have been following this trial all these days, their repentance for this barbarity—we have to call it this—so shameful to our all our people...[changes thought] Anyway, repentance is not only expressed by crying and expressing regret; a certain attitude regarding the events can also be interpreted as sincere repentance.

Based on all these considerations, we request from this court, on behalf of our client, Luis Pineda, to study the Attorney General's Office's proposal, to analyze the events we have discussed all these days, to study the circumstances and characteristics of the events, and, consequently, to make a decision in accordance with the law.

We are also representing defendant Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo in this trial. We represent him in accordance with Article 27 of the Military Penal Procedure Law, which authorizes this legal representation.

In Eduardo's case, we would like to mention some specific aspects we believe are essential. First, we want to note how Eduardo arrived at the MC Department, which at that time was under the MININT. Eduardo began to work in that department in 1984. He carried out various duties assigned to him as operations officer. It was not until 1987—this became clear to us during this trial—when Eduardo became fully aware of all the activities related to drug trafficking.

However, we must mention some aspects regarding his full knowledge of those activities. Amado Padron, who was his chief then, called him to inform him he would no longer carry out the same duties he was performing at the MX...[corrects herself] MC Department, and that he would begin carrying out other activities, which in this trial have been described as very secret and clandestine and which our defendant and others who have participated in this hearing have described as very dangerous.

The most important thing we want to determine here, however, is the way in which he was told...[changes thought] We even want to refer to something that happened while we questioned our clients during the hearings. That questioning, of course, has its origins in a previous conversation we had. It was obviously a necessary conversation between client and defense lawyer.

When Eduardo told us how he was told about those activities, which that department had been carrying out for a while and of which he had full access, we...[changes thought] He told us this perhaps because of his nervousness, his being upset, and his incoherence in many instances. He refused to help us clarify something we consider important from a general point of view. I am referring to this: Those activities were not only described to him as dangerous and clandestine; he was not only told he should be silent about those activities. He was also told—to give him a better idea of the kind of activities they were talking about—those activities were being run by a sort of mafia, an active mafia.

As part of their wrong actions and beliefs, the defendants thought they were helping the revolution. They tried to explain that in this trial. It has been proved, however—and we are completely convinced of that—that this was not the case.

We do want to stress the way in which Eduardo Diaz got involved in and became fully aware of those activities. His chief introduced him those activities; his military chief introduced him to those activities. Let us be clear on this. Diaz began participating in those activities from the moment his chief introduced him to them.

We will not talk about the way in which Eduardo Diaz participated in those activities. We already heard Eduardo Diaz say it was neither two nor six operations. He talked a little about the number of operations with us. The number is not the most important factor for us. For us, the most important things are the actions conducted during those operations. They may have carried out 1 or 20 operations; that does not make any difference to us. What matters is the harm done to the revolution and our people. That harm was done regardless of the number of operations these defendants carried out.

Although the military—specifically in the case we are discussing here—should not analyze the extenuating circumstances that appear in Article 52 of the law of military crimes, we want to ask this tribunal to allow us to refer to them. In the Penal Code, there are two extenuating circumstances that which refer to actions carried out under the direct influence of a person upon

whom the defendant is very dependent. We want to stress here that Eduardo Diaz was a subordinate. We will not completely eliminate the responsibility our clilent has in these actions, but we want to clearly state his responsibility results from his having been a subordinate of a military chief. We all know subordination—regardless of other factors—led our client to carry out some mistaken actions.

We are talking about a dependence and a close relationship. We believe—as the prosecutor has said—Eduardo Diaz was Amado Padron's right hand. Padron was Diaz' chief at the time. We are completely convinced of and fully agree with the prosecutor's opinion on that regard. Diaz was Amado Padron's right hand, but Padron implicated Diaz from the beginning. During this trial, it had been proven Diaz participated in the operations, but Amado Pardron participated in all the activities in which Eduardo Diaz participated. During this trial, we asked Diaz what his role was in the two operations in which he participated, and he told us: I participated in those operations to get aquainted with connections that already existed. In other words, Diaz was introduced to connections that had been already made by the department. Diaz did not introduce himself to those connections. He was introduced by his chief at the time. Therefore, regarding our defendant's degree of responsibility, it is basic that we take into account his having been a subordinate.

We can also refer to the influence of the environment in which Dia moved. Some of the lawyers who spoke before us also referred to the influence of the environment. We believe Diaz began moving in this circle and even entered the MININT through the MC Department. We will not go into that here, but perhaps the environment, certain wrong actions, a bad leadership, and the lack of proper surveillance of subordinates at a given time could have influenced our client in various ways regardless of other factors—which we believe are not basic in this trial—regarding control over the MC Department and other things we are aware did not exist in the MC Department.

It has been proved—as the defendants themselves admitted—that they tried to justify their aberrant actions with previous authorizations they had been given. One of the defendants said during the hearings trying to justify their actions was a way to give themselves courage, but that they were convinced their justification was not right.

We are absolutely convinced that previous authorizations were not justification. In the case of Diaz, however, we do believe that in view of his level, he did believe those operations were authorized perhaps by a section chief or a department chief.

We believe in the case of Diaz—and we fully agree with the prosecutor—he was drawn into this, regrettably drawn into this. Perhaps from the point of view of this analysis, we feel sorry for him.

We feel sorry, because Eduardo has been a person that without ever having had...[changes thought] We do not want to justify anything, because there is nothing important listed in Eduardo's record. In the hearings, we have never mentioned his participation in the revolution, because he only participated in the adult education program, and he does not even have the medal given to those who participated in this activity. However, Eduardo carried out his duties in line with his background, until these latest activities began. Therefore, we consider there was a certain degree of involvement, from a point of view of his principles, his analysis of the problems, and of the magnitude of what he realized he was actually doing.

One can talk about his involvement, and we believe it is necessary concerning the amounts that were seized and what has been discussed here. In our client's case, it is true that a considerable amount of money was seized. We want to stop to mention the amount of dollars seized from Eduardo: $184,695. We had asked Eduardo: Did you have access to this amount of money? Were you ever given other money? For us, it was proven how and when the money was delivered: June 1989, as a result of the arrest of these defendants who were active.

Concerning the money, the pesos, seized from Eduardo: Where did these pesos come from? They came from the $35,000 that was given to him as a gift by his chief. These were incredible gifts given in this department. The defendant received from his chief a gift of $35,000, which the defendant said he exchanged in the manner in which he explained here.

After talking about his participation, let us refer now to some technical issues we feel are very important. We want to refer to the prosecutor's request—we emphasize we fully agree with his assessment—for the maximum penalty of death. We believe this crime is covered by Article 101, Paragraph 2. We are not going to read it, because it is not necessary. However, considering the request for the death sentence and the resources our law provides, which we must now bear in mind, we want to use the provisions of Article 31 of our Penal Code on adaptation of penalties and request consideration of the prosecutor's request for the death sentence to be reduced to 30 years imprisonment. We will not read Article 31, because it is covered by our legislation and the tribunal has it.

We also request this tribunal to consider Article 47, Paragraph 1 on sentencing the defendant. We are referring to the extenuating circumstances of our client's penal responsibility. We want to request the tribunal to consider Penal Code Article 52, Clause CH on the clarification of events, not with the intensity that we have mentioned them, but I think that somehow—perhaps in a manner different than other defendants in this trial—Eduardo contributed to the clarification of the case; therefore, the tribunal should decide whether or not it will consider this article and paragraph.

We also request consideration of Paragraph E, of the same article, because—without being outstanding—Eduardo maintained a consistent attitude and was adjusted to the principles and actions of our revolution up to that moment. As for the law on military crimes, I also request the tribunal consider Article 52, Paragraph A on good behavior. We also request considering this same law on Article [word indistinct], which covers sincere repentance. We have already said repentance can be expressed in many ways: crying, saying things, making wrong evaluations, perhaps justifying, or by understanding the issues we are considering here. We think that through his actions and the way in which he has expressed himself, Eduardo has shown this tribunal he has repented.

Therefore, in addition to the technical issues we have brought up, I wish to conclude by asking the tribunal to also think about one last evaluation we have considered not only for our client Eduardo, but for the two defendants we represent in this tribunal. It has been proven that all the antecedants, the attitude, all the help that in one way or another we could have provided in the clarification of these events are valid for both defendants. We have provided the tribunal—we believe so—with the elements that will allow an evaluation and just analysis, and thus be enable the imposition of penalties within the framework and possibilities the penal laws allow.

We want to point out that the tribunal must deeply analyze the causes, conditions, and circumstances that contributed—among other factors; these, of course, were not the only ones—to such serious crimes. These crimes demonstrated the need to maintain as a constant through our work behavior greater political training, ideological training, criticism at the proper time, and surveillance of all of us who are concerned with such actions. In this way, we may limit and prevent any such actions from ever happening again and unfortunately making it necessary to judge them in our fatherland.

We request this tribunal issue a verdict according to the law, according to the circumstances and the facts we have mentioned here and that have been proven.

Thank you.

[Espinosa] Defense Attorney Major Manuela Garcia Nicolas, representing defendants Alexis Lago Arocha and Gabriel Prendes Gomez.

[Garcia] Comrades of the tribunal, Comrade prosecutor, defense attorneys: In this historic trial I have been called to represent Alexis Lago Arocha—Elmer—and Gabriel Prendes Gomez. The facts learned here have shocked our people in view of the condemnable nature of their acts, divorced from our revolutionary essence. We have been able to meet with the defendants in their places of confinement and have been allowed to hear their testimonies and prepare to do our duty. With regard to our defendant Alexis Lago Arocha—Elmer—we would like to start with the charges leveled against him and which have been proven here. In fact, the defendant's confession and the evidence presented do not leave any of us in doubt that the defendant Alexis Lago Arocha did in fact participate in drug trafficking activities. He participated in six operations, five of which did not net any profit because they were unsuccessful. It was also completely proven during the oral hearing that the money collected for that single successful operation was turned over to the command. It was also proven that he did not receive any economic benefit from the operations in which he participated. Also, as stated by him and his subordinates, he did not know that his subordinate Prendes had a sum of money in his home. He was completely unaware of that. Our defendant did not participate in meetings with drug traffickers or in other similar operations and did not have any other participation. He simply engaged in activities he was instructed to carry out, which we could say were the usual activities carried out in that department. We believe that in the case of Comrade Lago there are a number of extenuating circumstances, genuine extenuating circumstances offered by his life, his conduct, and his daily performance, that is, not just as a technicality, but because they are the real facts of this man's life and his conduct.

In Article 59.2, the Penal Code allows as an extenuating circumstance a defendant's outstanding conduct in the performance of duty to the homeland, work, family, and society prior to his committing a crime. Has this man's conduct not been outstanding as a PCC [Communist Party of Cuba] founder, based on his activities prior to the victory of the revolution? Has this man's conduct not been outstanding, to have been honored several times for his selfless work and sacrifice, which have won him decorations and congratulations from this country's upper echelons? Has this man not displayed outstanding conduct in raising a family of revolutionaries, his sons all working in our ranks; his offspring have also displayed this attitude because they were educated as a revolutionary family? This man has displayed outstanding conduct not only from a technical, but also from a factual standpoint.

In addition, we see with regard to this man that Article 52-C-H of the Penal Code establishes a defendant's cooperation in the solution of a crime as an extenuating circumstance. Lt Col Pedro Alvarez Lugo has pointed out here the attitude shown by our client through his actions—that he never tried to distort things, deceive, or justify himself; he was candid and sincere; he confessed everything he had to; he said all he had to say; and really contributed in a real, spontaneous, and meaningful way toward the clarification of these crimes. We point out too that this extenuating circumstance indeed exists in his case.

We also see that the extenuating circumstances described in Article 52-A-6CH of the Military Penal Law also apply in his case. The good discipline shown prior to the

action, his good conduct and production, the fact that he had not been punished before, and past achievements prior to falling to where he is now, all demonstrate that this is so.

As for my client Gabriel Prendes Gomez, his actions were actually proven through his confession and the submitted evidence. He was actually involved in five drug trafficking operations, four of which were thwarted.

He did not participate in any meetings with drug traffickers inside or outside of Cuba. Gabriel Prendes and Alexis Lago were not greatly involved or committed because they really were not members of the main groups, not among the department heads' most trusted people.

We have seen that they were not quite successful in the activities in which they were involved. Although this does not exempt them from responsibiliy, this shows us that they were the product of overall decomposition within the department in which they worked; that they were really neither the main promoters nor the most prominent people in this kind of activity.

We also believe that there are a number of extenuating circumstances in the case of defendant Gabriel Prendes Gomez, including the one contained in Article 52-E of the Penal Code. The years he has worked at MININT, his productive work, the fact that he had not been previously punished, and his life of sacrifice and honest work should be taken into account by the tribunal.

We believe that in the case of Gabriel Prendes, the sentence that is being requested is excessive. We feel that Article 55.1 of the Penal Code, which provides for the possibility of reducing sentences, should be taken into consideration by the tribunal when it passes sentence.

We would like to make a number of comments concerning this case. The seriousness of the acts that have been revealed here cannot be denied, nor can we deny the danger that they posed to the country. As a matter of reflection—not justification—we would like to comment, not without sorrow, that upon being assigned to the MC, men who had lived lives of hard work, sacrifice, and dedication to the revolution started to be influenced by the example of the departmental heads and the environment of convenience, donations, and gifts, and the appropriation of money and goods. Blinded by consumerism, they began to view as natural and normal conduct that they themselves had opposed and condemned only a short time before. It is truly incredible. We ask ourselves: Did the example of the MC departmental heads contribute to this? Did those departmental heads fulfill their proper instructional role as these men's superiors? The answer is well known to us all. The lack of control, and revolutionary discipline and vigilance on the part of all those in this department undoubtedly helped to bring about this conduct.

The defendants that I represent—Alexis Lago and Gabriel Prendes—are not primarily responsible for these activities. Nor did they receive the greatest benefit. I ask the tribunal to take this into consideration in their behalf.

These men had ethical and moral revolutionary values which they gradually lost over the course of their work in the MC. We could also ask: Is everything lost in their case? I believe these men still have values that could be revived. I believe these men can be revolutionarily rehabilitated. Their repentance, their understanding of the dimensions of their mistakes and how those mistakes could have harmed the fatherland, and their shame before their relatives, their former comrades-in-arms, and the people are proof of what I am saying here. True repentance is the first step in rectification, and they have already taken that step. The revolution has always been generous to those who attacked it, and it has had confidence in men, as has been shown in our plans for the reorientation of our class enemies and their incorporation into society, and in our work with those who commit crimes.

Defendant Alexis Lago Arocha—Elmer—deserves a chance. All is not lost in his case. We believe that he is still salvageable. The sentence requested by the prosecutor is a penalty applied in extraordinary circumstances. That is why it is worded as it is in our penal code. I believe it should be applied to the most serious crimes, which in no way applies to my client. His sincere repentance and his conduct over the course of this process have demonstrated this. He does not deserve the maximum penalty, because he can obviously be rehabilitated.

I ask the tribunal, when it passes sentence, to also take into consideration the entire moral sanction that has fallen upon these men, and to levy a sentence that is consonant with their criminal responsibility and their personalities which, in our opinion, are not comparable to that of the other defendants being tried in this case. We hope that the tribunal will issue a sentence that is fair and in line with the degree of responsibility of the defendants that I am representing, which would in no way be the sentence requested by our comrade prosecutor. That is all.

[Espinosa] Defense attorney Major Luis Raul Martinez Perez, representing defendants Miguel Ruiz Poo and Rosa Maria Abierno Govin may address the court.

[Martinez Perez] Comrade president of the Special Military Court, Comrade justices, Comrade state attorneys, Comrade defense attorneys:

As a Cuban revolutionary, as a founder of the Interior Ministry, and as a militant of the Communist Party of Cuba, I join the people in strongly condemning the sickening events we are judging today. The accused

former FAR and Interior Ministry officers have admitted that they committed the crimes with which they have been charged. Their crimes have been proven in this trial. Those crimes endangered the security of the state, and the prestige and morale of our party, of our government, of Fidel, and of our people.

Nevertheless, fulfilling my duty as a revolutionary attorney and acting in line with our revolutionary constitution and with a mandate from our socialist fatherland, I am representing in this trial, the accused Miguel Ruiz Poo and Rosa Maria Abierno Govin. They have been charged with carrying out hostile actions against a foreign state. This crime is listed in numbers 1 and 2 of Article 110 of the Penal Code. They have also been charged with drug trafficking, a crime listed under sections 1, 3, and 4 of Article 190 of the Penal Code, Law 62 of 1988. The state is calling for sentences of 25 and 30 years in prison, respectively.

The accused, in their search for personal wealth, carried out hostile actions against a foreign state. This crime is clearly explained in Article 110 of the Penal Code. Regardless of what has been stated about the crime of hostile actions against a foreign state, I am asking this court to consider the following:

My defendant Ruiz Poo participated in two drug trafficking activities, first in January 1987. He concluded this activity in April 1984 [as heard]. During this first phase, the activities involved only preparations. His second drug trafficking activity took place in April 1989, and this time a drug trafficking operation was completed. I am asking the court to take into consideration at the moment of dictating his sentence that his first activity involved only preparations, and the second activity was not a continuation of the first, considering the time lapse.

In the case of Rosa Maria Abierno Govin, she participated in five completed drug trafficking operations. She carried out the first two operations during the second half of 1987, and the other three in April of this year. This means that there was a lapse between her first and her last activities.

I ask the court to consider that although this is not a case of due obedience to superiors, my defendants did act under the influence of their superiors, especially Amado Padron Trujillo, the immediate superior of these two defendants. It has been demonstrated here that Amado Padron very actively sought the participation of his subordinates in drug trafficking activities that he planned, organized, and directed.

Therefore I ask this court to analyze what I have stated here and to take into consideration Articles 10, 11, and 12, as well as Article 52-B of the Penal Code, which refers to actions carried out by people under the direct influence of a person on whom they closely depend. We are asking for this consideration because the immediate superior of my two defendants was the main promoter of these activities, and his immediate superior was the head of the MC. I am also asking that Article 52-C-H be considered, which refers to assisting in clearing up the facts. The assistance given by my two defendants was made evident during their statements at this trial, and by the statements made at this trial and during the Honor Tribunal proceedings by Lt Col Pedro Alvarez, chief of the Counterintelligence Operations Department.

Article 52-E is also important. It refers to people who, prior to perpetrating a crime, distinguished themselves in fulfilling their duties for the benefit of the fatherland, their place of employment, their family, and society.

In the case of Ruiz Poo, we must take into account that at age 14 he was already working as a state security officer. In other words, he was a secret collaborator for the state security department. At 16, he left basic high school and became a full-fledged member of our state security department, where he provided great services to the fatherland, for which he received the following: Decorations for 10, 15, and 20 years of service to the MININT; as well as a golden seal for 30 years work in state security; and, congratulations on work performed.

In the case of defendant [Rosa Maria] Abierno Gobin; 14 years service in the MININT; joined the revolution when she was young; took part in literacy campaigns; prior to that, she was a member of the Union of Young Communists for about 10 years; later, she joined the PCC. She merited joining the MININT through recruitment. Both defendants maintained a positive work attitude and enjoyed a high moral standing.

For reasons already mentioned by those who spoke before me, beginning in 1987—the year established by this tribunal—our ministry's MC Department began a period of great decay. As we have already stated, the MC Department was created to break the imperialist blockade and to bring to our fatherland products that were needed, such as medicine and equipment. As a result of this decay, these defendants, as well as others, began breaking the law and engaging in drug trafficking.

In the case of my defendants, I ask the court to also take into account Article 52-A of our law on military crimes, which provides for those who have demonstrated good military conduct prior to perpetrating the offense; and 52-C-H, which provides for those who show sincere repentance demonstrated by one's morally reproving one's own criminal conduct. All of us, including the Cuban people, have witnessed this before this court, during the preparatory stage of the case, as well as in all subsequent stages that involve these defendants.

Evaluating the offenses committed by my clients, in addition to the extenuating circumstances involving each of them, I ask the court that when it passes sentence, it take into account these aspects and what is also covered by Article 55.1 of our law on military

crimes, which reads: Military tribunals may reduce punishment by up to one half of the required minimum, under special circumstances and due to the defendant's special situation, as the case merits; which should basically be reflected in the sentence given. I also want to leave on record that during all this trial, while acting as defense attorney, I have received every facility the law allows and that no obstacles have been placed before me while carrying out my duty. I have finished. Thank you.

[Espinosa] Defense Attorney Major Julio A. Gonzalez Guethon, representing defendant Patricio de la Guardia Font. Attorney, you may speak.

[Gonzalez] Comrade Court president, Comrade judge, Comrade prosecutor, and Comrade attorneys who accompany us in the defense: According to Article 27 of the procedural military penal law, I have come here fulfilling my duty acting as attorney for defendant Patricio de la Guardia Font, and in that regard I wish to say the following:

In this oral hearing we have listened to descriptions of events that have shaken our people, and have deeply wounded the healthy pride of FAR and MININT members. The seriousness of the events has not at all affected respect for our socialist legal system. All the proceedings and the oral hearings prove it. The understandable fury has not evoked revenge, but justice.

I must recognize here that in this process I was given all the necessary guarantees, which allowed me to meet with my client without any time limit, to learn and to review the necessary documents, and to carry out other actions as a defense lawyer.

I must explain that my client did not participate in any drug trafficking activities, therefore he was not accused of that crime. Even though the prosecutor excluded him from the charges, I believe it is appropriate for me to point this out.

It may seem that a defense lawyer should not have to defend his client for a crime of which he is not accused, however we decided to point it out because of the commotion the entire situation has caused and because of the importance of this process, in which incidents of this type are being discussed in our country for the first time. Undoubtedly, this process has had a certain effect on my client—who is not accused of this crime.

We have read confusing international reports on this situation. When they speak of the De la Guardia brothers—Antonio and Patricio de la Guardia Font—they mention my client as being accused of drug trafficking. The situation not only requires an explanation because of the psychological pressure it exerts—the fact that my client is being processed in this same case—but also because of the moral effect it has had on him and his family. Therefore, it is appropriate for me to explain at this opportunity, that at no time did Patricio de la Guardia Font participate in drug trafficking activities. Even though he was aware of his brother's activities and even though—as he pointed—he did not have the courage to denounce him, in no way did he participate in drug trafficking activities.

After listening to the prosecutor's request, I ask myself—because there are questions we sometimes cannot answer—if Patricio was processed for the same charges he has accepted and admitted—abuse of authority—would the sentence request be as severe? The prosecutor has requested a 30-year sentence, which is punishment that is next to the death penalty. I believe that once this explanation has been made concerning my client's nonparticipation in drug trafficking activities, I should clarify some aspects of the incidents.

During the entire trial, we asked questions of other defendants and witnesses. We wanted to know about the events, we wanted to know what had been purchased and sold. We wanted to know how my client had participated in these activities. During all of the sessions of this trial, we were able to clearly prove that the initial charges concerning the trafficking of dozens of diamonds and other precious stones were not as we thought. It was learned that my client, following orders from defendant Ochoa Sanchez, had sent about six diamonds to determine their commercial value. When he learned from his brother, Antonio de la Guardia Font, that the stones had little commercial value, he gave up the diamond activity. An evaluation of the gold and emerald market did not take place, because it turned out that the gold and the emeralds were counterfeit and Patricio sent a letter to his brother telling him that if he received no authorization from his superiors to continue the market evaluation, he would not continue to carry out these activities.

This has been proven. We had the opportunity to prove this, and moreover the prosecution has not been able to disprove it. He stopped these activities when he failed to receive a reply from Antonio de la Guardia. Of course, he could not receive a reply, because Antonio de la Guardia was acting on his own.

In other words, we have considered it a fact that Patricio de la Guardia used his position to purchase certain items. This was proven beyond a doubt, and it has been admitted by my client. He purchased certain items and resold them. These items came from Cuba and were sold in Angola. He made it possible for Ochoa Sanchez to purchase ivory, and he also participated in the purchase and sale of ivory.

Another proven fact is that he used the money, the profits from this activity, both for the benefit of his mission there, and for his own benefit. In other words, these are the deeds—true crimes—that he committed; no others.

However, we believe that we have to mention Patricio's previous life. We must say that before committing these crimes—which we do acknowledge are serious and for which he himself has assumed responsibility—Patricio de la Guardia was a man who had devoted his entire life to the revolution. He was a man who participated in the guerrilla struggle. In the initial phases of the revolution, he worked hard in the construction of socialism. He participated in the mopping-up operation at El Escambray and in the confrontation with the mercenaries who landed in Playa Giron. He later participated in other activities, such as important internationalist missions. He had high-level positions in MININT, with a great sense of responsibility until the moment when, as he himself has admitted, he committed actions that were unworthy of a MININT brigadier general.

Nevertheless, these facts cannot be forgotten. He can be stripped of the countless decorations that he was awarded, but the intention of our code and our socialist legislation is that this entire background be considered when a man commits a crime. In other words, we cannot deprive this defendant, in my opinion, of the recognition of an entire range of extenuating circumstances that truly apply.

There is an important factor: Patricio's repentance, his attitude with regard to the investigation. In our initial interview with Patricio de la Guardia, when we took on his case, he told us that he had declared how he felt, how ashamed he was of the acts that he had committed. He even said that he was indefensible. In other words, this was true repentance, the conduct of a man who practically did not want to defend himself, because he is deeply ashamed of what he did. He even felt unworthy of the respectful, appropriate treatment that had been extended to him throughout the course of the preliminary investigations in the Counterintelligence General Directorate.

For this reason, I believe that the most important extenuating circumstance in this case is Patricio's repentance for what he did.

I believe that what is most significant, that is, what most clearly shed light on the aspect of Patricio's repentance that I wish to bring up in court was precisely the testimony rendered yesterday by Lt Col Pedro Alvarez Lugo, chief of the Investigations Department of the DGCI [Counterintelligence General Directorate]. Alvarez pointed out that, from the very minute of his arrest, Patricio de la Guardia displayed a good attitude in making his statements at the investigations office. In addition, here, at this solemn event before this tribunal, Patricio displayed the same frank, crystal-clear, honest attitude. At that moment we saw Patricio not as the person who had committed these reprehensible actions during his stay in Angola, but as the Patricio who had the long revolutionary record to which we have referred.

For this reason, we feel that a number of extenuating circumstances must be taken into consideration, such as having displayed good military conduct before the commission of the crime, which is embodied in Article 52-A of the law on military crimes. Article 52-C refers also to relevant services rendered to the homeland before committing the crime, and there is also the one we just mentioned, which is having shown sincere remorse through one's moral reprobation of one's criminal action. This is contemplated in Article 52-CH of the Law on Military Crimes as an extenuating circumstance.

We feel that the penalty that has been requested is extremely harsh. It has been our belief that we should somehow divide the conduct of this man, who violated ethics when he failed to report the activities of his brother after learning about them. There was a violation of ethics because it fell upon him to report them, but he was not legally bound to do so. However, as a communist and senior officer, and as an officer and member of the MININT, it was his duty to do so to safeguard the high interests of the revolution. He did not report the crime at that moment. However, as we said, this should not be considered a crime because the law exempted him from reporting it because his brother was involved. However, he did have an ethical obligation to do so.

We also feel that the punishment is harsh because it is an alternative to the death penalty. I think that when the public prosecutor asked for a 30-year sentence, this implicitly meant that Patricio should get a prison sentence. We ask this tribunal to bear in mind the extenuating circumstances provided for by our penal legislation and that Patricio be given a lighter sentence than the one requested by the prosecutor, in keeping with crimes that Patricio actually committed. Thank you very much. I have finished speaking.

[Espinosa] Defense counsel Ramon Aymeriche Salas, representing defendant Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan.

[Aymeriche] Comrade president and other judges of the tribunal, Comrade representative of the prosecution, Comrade officers who are accompanying me in this defense work, Comrade chiefs, officers, and civilians present here:

Allow me, before beginning my argument, to say thanks on behalf of my client and my own behalf for the broad opportunities this tribunal has granted to us to do our work and for the complete compliance with the procedural guarantees provided for by the military penal procedural law both concerning my client and our case.

Finally, it is now my turn to speak on behalf of my client, Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan, concerning the charges against him of abuse of authority while he was an aide to the chief of the Cuban military mission in Angola.

At the outset, we wish to stop a moment to consider the nature of the charges brought against my client. According to the provisions of the Military Crimes Law, from an objective viewpoint, the charged crime is one that is committed when a superior officer or official exceeds the powers conferred upon him by virtue of the position or function assigned to him, or when he exercises powers without authority. Three different forms of this crime are regulated and penalized: the repeated commission of the crime, its commission for personal gain of the individual concerned, or when it has produced serious consequences.

We ask: What powers has my client exceeded in the acts attributed to him by the prosecutor? What transaction, operation, or business did he carry out on his personal initiative during the time he spent at the mission? We have to say: None.

Ochoa himself said our client did nothing except on Ochoa's orders and that he doubted our client would have done so otherwise. Moreover, my client did not do anything involving an improper use of resources or illicit enrichment. Therefore, how did he exceed his authority? In serving as liaison between Captain Llicas and defendant Ochoa by picking up the money? At no time did he keep this money in his possession; it was kept in Ochoa's office, along with a small notebook in which he recorded accumulated amounts.

Comrade President and other judges on the court, we believe none of these charges have been demonstrated or proved in this court, because our client did not commit them.

To continue: What power did the defendant exercise without authority? Should we believe a person has exercised functions without authority when, in compliance with instructions issued by the chief of mission—the then Div Gen Ochoa Sanchez, hero of the Republic of Cuba, a general among generals, member of the Central Committee and a deputy of the National Assembly-...[changes thought]. Could such a man have the twisted, aberrant idea of carrying out transactions on the black market to obtain money that would make the functions assigned to my client illegal? Remember that my client went to Cuba on Ochoa's orders to request 80 million kwanzas for the construction of the airport. The deeds that are being discussed here occurred after that. Could he then have imagined this? Especially when he was later given for the mission—and other defendants participated in this—a total of 100 million kwanzas obtained in this manner for the construction of the airport?

In the course of these proceedings, it has been questioned whether or not this sum was enough for the construction of the airport. We are not going to question that; all we know is that it was a large sum to begin construction that had not yet been started and that was truly needed to pursue the course of action the Republic of Angola had taken. Was not my client trusting his superior at the time? Can this be considered an arbitrary exercise of his functions? Which of his functions did he exceed? He was a simple liaison in this activity.

Although in his interrogation of my client, the prosecutor said Captain Llicas had been chosen to deal on the black market, this has never been demonstrated here. The person who organized and ordered this mission was the accused, Ochoa. Therefore, what was Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan in this activity other than a mere tool?

In view of all the foregoing, can we say, as is stated in the prosecutor's summation, that my client planned and carried out the activities attributed to him along with his superior at the time? We are convinced that he did not. Ochoa himself, with extreme and clear frankness, said that he planned these operations himself without consulting with anyone.

Can we say that Rodriguez Estupinan participated in the purchase of elephant tusks or in the sale of cement, oil, or meat? It has been demonstrated by defendant Ochoa, by the witnesses, and by my client himself, that he did not participate in those activities.

Did my client participate in the remodeling and equipping of several houses on the outskirts of Luanda? We have to say no, because it has been proven and stated here that Rodriguez Estupinan did not participate in this activity at any time.

Can we say that he used subordinate officers to carry out different business deals in Angola? We also have to say no, because everything demonstrated here shows that my client was just another officer used by the accused, Ochoa Sanchez, to carry out this activity.

What serious consequences derived specifically from this activity? We do not want to continue repeating or reiterating everything that has been proven here in the case of my client, but the existence of abuse of authority, the charge brought against Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan, has not been proven over the course of this judicial proceeding, because the actual and legal elements of that crime have not been established or demonstrated over the course of this trial.

It would be appropriate here for us to ask ourselves: Of what is Rodriguez Estupinan guilty in these incidents? He is to blame for something very different from a penal infraction. His major crime is a political one. We say this because it was made very clear that my client—with 29 years of continuous service in the FAR, with the additional merit of having carried out four internationalist missions, including one as chief of mission, with full confidence in his work considering the positions of responsibility that he filled in the FAR, with positive results from his efforts, and with the status of being a founder of the PCC—allowed his revolutionary qualities, proven throughout almost 3 decades, to deteriorate through a lack of vigilance, critical spirit, and analysis.

That was my client's crime. It is quite different from the penal crime attributed to him here. He himself, over the course of his statement, demonstrated this when he said that his attitude—when called upon to cooperate in the clarification of these events by General of the Army Raul Castro Ruz, second secretary of the Central Committee and minister of the FAR—was an unworthy, ungrateful attitude undeserving of the slightest consideration, because he distorted the truth. In sum, he lied.

Let us recall at this point the words of the second secretary of the Central Committee and minister of the FAR on closing the fourth meeting of FAR party secretaries as long ago as May 1979. He said, and I quote: He who always praises us and tolerates what we do, does not help us. He is neither a friend nor a comrade, and of course, he is not honest, because the most dishonest conduct is the shameful behavior of he who does not criticize so as to avoid problems.

We have proved these principles were indeed violated by my client. By this action, he betrayed not only our most sacred principles but also, as he himself said, he betrayed himself. He betrayed our people, his comrades, and his family. As Justice Minister Dr Juan Escalona Reguera said only last month on receiving a group of internationalist fighters at El Cacahual, merits are attitudes in life and toward the people that oblige us to be better every day. Sadly, in this case, my client also failed to abide by this principle.

Comrade President and other members of the court. In the case in which I am serving as defense counsel today, in line with the ideological, ethical, and legal principles of our socialist state, I request you consider what I have said in my presentation and exonerate my client from the penal responsibility with which he is charged, because as I have said, his is a very different crime. It is a crime in which his conscience, as the maximum tribunal, will impose the most severe and just punishment that can be given to a revolutionary who has betrayed the confidence of his party, his top leaders, and his people. That is undoubtedly the true punishment Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan deserves.

Thank you very much.

[Espinosa] The defense counsels have completed their presentations.

Defendants: Do you wish to add anything new that has not been presented in your defense?

The oral proceedings have concluded.

Sentencing is to follow.

Prosecutor's Remarks

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["Text" of the prosecutor's closing argument against former military officers—recorded]

[Text] Comrade President, comrade members of the Honor Tribunal:

As of the moment of Ochoa's arrest, when the first results of the investigations were obtained, it became evident that we were confronted with a crime of treason. That is obvious today, not only by the overwhelming amount of evidence and testimony, but also by the clear disclosure of the nature of the facts that you must judge.

As trivial as it may seem, it is necessary to summarize once again who Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez was, precisely because his previous status of outstanding military chief, hero of our Republic, chief of several internationalist missions, and deputy of the National Assembly gives the exact measure of the enormous size of his crime. This is what it is all about, comrade president, a crime, a crime of high treason committed against the fatherland, against the people, against his superiors, and against the very idea of what a revolutionary, a military chief, and a Cuban internationalist fighter really is.

It is evident that beyond any legal technicalities, beyond the serious charges that have been raised and proven—and for which punishment is clearly foreseen by our current legislation—Ochoa's greatest crime is having betrayed his people.

During the trial hearings, it became evident that Ochoa's treason has placed our country in a very delicate situation, seriously harming the prestige of the Revolution and its international credibility that are, to say the least, the main and sometimes only weapons our country has for fighting against imperialist aggression.

With their actions, Ochoa and the rest of the defendants almost managed to deprive the Revolution of vital reasons and arguments for confronting the imperialist campaigns.

It has been said many times in this room, but it is necessary to reiterate: What would have happened if Ochoa's assistant—one of the most prestigious and outstanding Cuban military chiefs, chief at that time, of the Cuban military mission in Angola—had fallen into the hands of the enemy? How could we have then denied and proved the innocence of the Revolution? Using what arguments, what evidence?

However, this is not exclusively a matter of how difficult it would have been to prove our innocence before the enemy. How would we have persuaded our friends and how could we have convinced so many honest people throughout the world who live terrorized by the scourge of drugs? This is precisely the beginning of the treason of Ochoa and all the defendants, who know perfectly well the clear stand of our Revolution, which through its main leaders—particularly Comrade Fidel—has reiterated constantly that our country has nothing to do with narcotics trafficking and proclaims that the Revolution has the cleanest record.

If any of the defendants could claim in their favor the outrageous argument that they were confused by the double dealings of men of the moral nature of Tony de La Guardia or Amado Padron—who, accustomed to their double morals, behaved in a manner completely divorced from their official stands—Ochoa does not even have such a childish excuse. Ochoa was a man of confidence, close to Fidel and Raul. Therefore, he is an exceptional witness of all of their thoughts and he knows perfectly well the full correlation between those thoughts and the official and public stands of the Revolution.

First of all, Ochoa betrayed Fidel, who was in fact his commander in chief. Ochoa knows, more than anyone else, that he has betrayed a symbol, a history of integrity never tarnished by a lie.

In attempting against Fidel's credibility, Ochoa and all those implicated have treacherously stabbed the fatherland and the people.

Fidel is our voice, our representation, to whom we resort at difficult times. He has the authority before the public, foreign governments, and international organizations to clarify our country's real situation under all circumstances and at the most critical moments.

In disavowing Fidel, Ochoa disavowed Cuba and left the people at the mercy of the enemy's attacks, dramatically weakening the Revolution's defense.

However Ochoa, who stopped at nothing, also betrayed Cuba when he wretchedly deceived the Nicaraguans by stealing large sums of money from them, which he swiftly deposited in Panama. In judging Ochoa's infamy, it is not enough to say that he deceived who he was supposed to serve; he also deceived his friends, who loved him and respected him, not only for his merits, but because he supposedly represented the qualities a Cuban internationalist fighter should have.

Today we are distressed by the just reproaches we may have received from the Sandinists, the Nicaraguan patriots and fighters, who we thought we would help by sending one of our best qualified military commanders, who nevertheless behaved as a vulgar criminal.

No apology seems suitable for such shameful conduct. However, we are satisfied to know that his contacts through Martinez with Colombian drug traffickers outside of Nicaragua—as the investigations have revealed—did not involve or corrupt any of the Sandinist fighters who were close to him during his mission in Nicaragua.

Ochoa's treason to Cuba was even worse when he betrayed the Angolans, the heroic and noble people of Angola, to whom nearly 500,000 Cubans have extended a generous hand.

Nothing could be more shameful for our internationalist fighters than to learn from the participants themselves that the head of the Cuban mission in Angola engaged in selling sugar, wheat, fish, and salt in Luanda's black market [candonga] to obtain meager sums of money under the pretext of improving the living conditions of his men, which actually ended up in his banking account in Panama.

Such conduct is nothing but profitting from the hunger of the Angolan people, who are subject to much suffering due to foreign aggression. Many empty stomachs in Angola are aching for that sugar, wheat, salt, and fish, and thousands of children die simply because they lack those products. It is twice as criminal to speculate at the expense of such misery. Not even the infamy of his diamond and ivory trafficking is as condemnable.

How could the authorities in that country imagine that this man—who they admired and respected, who they trusted in military operations that involved thousands of men, and who frequently met with their president—had changed his military uniform for the attire of an illegal merchant? How can they accept today that his talent and time, which he should have entirely dedicated to the struggle against South Africa, was spent in operations involving food, wood, ivory, and diamonds?

Still more serious is the offense that Ochoa has committed against our people, against the thousands of Cuban mothers whose sons fought in Angola. What excuse can Ochoa give to the orphans and widows of those who fell and who he has offended with his shameful behavior? Ochoa has done too much to destroy a legend, a mystic courage and heroism, forged by thousands of men who fought and fell fulfilling what will be—despite Ochoa—a page of history that can never be erased.

Those men who fought in Angola, Mr President, are walking our streets, working in our factories and hospitals, making our land produce; they have been betrayed by Ochoa, and they are asking for justice. They are giving this tribunal the historic responsibility of clearing the offense and cleaning each and every one of the stones in the trenches of honor and glory that they forged.

Unfortunately, I cannot conclude this allegation that has become a string of infamies because, unfortuntely, not everything has been said.

Ochoa—who in many ways has appeared to be honest and one could even say courageous in admitting his fault and not trying to evade the sentence that awaits him—has tried in these days to present an image of being a simple and austere man. In fact, Ochoa is neither. He is not modest due to the very nature of his aspirations of wealth, and he is not austere because he never deprived himself of anything. He obtained everything he wanted and wished, not always—of course—in a legitimate way. When he reached the limit of wishing what he could not reach in this society, he did not hesitate to separate himself from this society, in seeking his own means, no matter how doubtful these may have been. This is how, to obtain money quickly and in fabulous amounts, he did not hesitate to take the unfortunate path of narcotics trafficking.

Where is the modesty of a military chief who is not satisifed with the living conditions of his own rank and conceives the sickly idea of building for himself a mansion in a remote jungle with the precious woods—also ill-acquired—of the African jungle where he had gone to fight? This plan was not distant; the wood was already in Cuba.

Of what modesty can Ochoa speak after he has enjoyed all human and divine pleasures? He was already going downhill in depravations, engaging in all manner of immorality, which have been amply exlained here by the defendant Patricio de La Guardia, but which have not been made public because—after all—they contribute nothing from a legal point of view.

Some lawyers, judges, and even myself wonder what became of the other Ochoa; that is, the hero, the competent military chief, the young peasant who came with Camilo [Cienfuegos] in the invasion? We went around in circles until this trial disclosed that this Ochoa does not exist, that Ochoa destroyed himself until he dissolved into the grotesque caricature that we have had before us all of these days. That Ochoa does not exist because, as he himself said in a moment of honesty, he became tired.

Hence, Comrade President, a question the answer for which can provide us with conclusive and enlightening conclusions. Of what did Ochoa tire? It was not the military service, because Ochoa is not a career military man [as received] or heir of a family military tradition. No military man would ever have tired of such an attractive service as his. Ochoa did not tire of the academies. Ochoa got tired of public service, he got tired of living dedicated to a cause, he got tired of struggling and working for others. He got tired of the people's liberation struggle. With total awareness and in a calculated manner, he decided to live another life, a life that began and ended with himself. Tired and bored of his life of revolutionary struggle, ready to undertake his own path, Ochoa chose other models and other paths: the

model of a Pablo Escobar, drug czar, uncontrolled millionaire, not subject to any discipline, principle, or ideology. He chose the path of easy money, that of drug trafficking.

Only in that way can one find an explanation for the crazed actions that he undertook and the plans that he conceived in his mind. Ochoa, as well as the guards and cattle rustlers disguised as MININT [Ministry of the Interior] officials, almost placed the country in a situation of moral defenselessness in the face of U.S. aggression, which with such proven facts would have earned the support of U.S. public opinion.

Ochoa cannot assess the extent of the damage that he could have caused the country by discrediting Varadero, which is our main tourist region, which the country relies on for the development of an important and legitimate source of income.

Comrade president, as if this were not enough, General Manuel Fernandez simply and dramatically explained part of the damage that Ochoa Sanchez caused by injuring the confidence of the citizens in basic institutions of the country, by obliging disclosure of the delicate work proceedings of the security organizations and by creating a climate of distrust inside these organizations.

Hereafter, we will have to continue to stage secret operations. Orders and assignments from officers will have to be followed without any guarantee other than the word of the superiors. There will be missions on which no one can be consulted and on which no one will be asked for advise. There will be many opportunities in which the combatants must act independently. Confidence and trust in words will have to continue to exist and some will only live alone with their conscience.

Comrade President: I have all the reason in summarizing in Arnaldo Ochoa the nature of the crimes and the denouncement of treason. Naturally, I also extend these judgements, or most of them, to the rest of the accused who were once also officers and, who in actions of service or protecting themselves behind those actions, committed the most serious of crimes. In order of responsibility, there is, for example: Antonio de la Guardia. He was the most responsible person for involving Cuba in drug trafficking. He took advantage of the trust given to him in heading a department dedicated to the noble effort of breaking the U.S. blockade. He used and abused his privileges and put them to the service of the infamous business of cocaine and marijuana. Tony la Guardia took advantage of his knowledge and training to carry out special activities and his misdeeds. It is difficult to believe that there has ever been a drug trafficker who has had such great advantages and resources. Tony de la Guardia made Cuba a hostage of international drug trafficking.

I confess, Comrade President, that throughout my life as a military and public service official, I never imagined what has been learned here.

Tony de La Guardia and any of the criminals sitting here were capable of paralyzing the action of the country's vital defense services. Antonio de La Guardia inhibited activities to repress illegal maritime and air navigation. He controlled the country's air corridors; he had authorization to violate all immigration regulations. He allowed renowned criminals to enter the country and to seek refuge in our territory. He could prevent action by the authorities.

De La Guardia and his gang staged all of these actions, sheltered by powers vested in him for legitimate purposes. De La Guardia resorted to deceit, bribery, and confusion.

Today it is truly difficult to establish how many of those boatmen were agents of the CIA and how many of their actions are registered in the special services of the enemy.

Tony de la Guardia cannot argue naivety. His crimes also include betrayal, and most repulsive disloyalty to his country, his people, and his institution.

Amado Padron, one of the most cynical and repulsive characters among the many who have been summoned here, represents the typical criminal: an opportunist, capable of any vile deed to make money. His confession and his lamentations serve as an excuse not to expand into additional arguments. However, it is impossible not to point out, once more, his low morals.

I could not mention him [former Captain Jorge Martinez]. However, it is impossible not to mention here that Martinez, a former Ochoa aide, who has attempted to convey here the image of the faithful servant who obeys orders, a robot, is no such thing. He was sort of a gray eminence for Ochoa, and probably the adviser and coauthor of some of his boss' projects.

Martinez, sent by Ochoa, perpetrated the greatest and most dangerous adventurous action among those mentioned here: He perpetrated the incredible action of an active Cuban soldier who traveled to Colombia to meet Pablo Escobar, with whom he dealt, not only about drugs but also about the possibility of providing antiaircraft weapons to this drug kingpin.

Martinez placed Cuba on the verge of a true catastrophe, and is among all of them—together with Ochoa of course—the most guilty, if such a category could be established.

I personally have no doubt that Martinez always acted—before Escobar and some of the members of De La Guardia's group—not only under the protection of his boss, but also assuming some representativeness of his own. Only this can explain that Pablo Escobar granted him credit.

I would like to avoid making references alien to the process, however, Martinez could only have impressed Escobar by passing as a representative of this country.

It is difficult to establish categories and responsibilities among the other members of the De La Guardia group. All of them—former Interior Ministry officers, some with heroic origins and important missions fulfilled during their long lives at the Interior Ministry—left aside their pasts, their shame, their prestige and their honor, and in an incredible manner have deteriorated until they became simple servants of international drug trafficking. They let themselves be coaxed by the glory Antonio de La Guardia offered them, by the excessive ambition to gain money, and by the desire to possess resources, and live above our people, our population.

What can be said about Antonio Sanchez Lima? Self-confessed of a large number of operations conducted with drug traffickers, of establishing links, of receiving gifts from the indecent hands of drug traffickers, of taking advantage of all these things.

What can we say of Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo, day after day participating in these actions, right-hand man of Amado Padron, a close collaborator of all the narcotics traffickers who went through our country, regardless of their country of origin and regardless of what they came to look for in our country?

How about Alexis Lago, a Cuban worker, who began as a stevedore, who later joined the glorious ranks of MININT, and who then exchanged, in an incredible manner, his attributes of a soldier for the attributes of a criminal?

How about Miguel Ruiz Poo? We have devoted many hours here to the deposition of Miguel Ruiz Poo. Mr President and members of the tribunal: I personally feel that at the end, whatever shame there was left in Miguel Ruiz Poo came out in the open and in one last moment of dignity, he tried to say everything he knew and get it off his chest. What happens is that this confession by Miguel Ruiz Poo takes place after having enjoyed years of a calm and sweet life—as all the others did—of elegant cars, of living above his neighbors. He was a man no one in his neighborhood really knew, as he was a powerful "lord" of narcotics trafficking. He did not have to experience any of the limitations, worries, and anxieties our people have today to solve our economic situation and develop our socialism.

I must honestly admit that I felt sorry for defendant Rosa Maria Abierno Gobin. I wondered for many hours at how she was a teacher and devoted 6 years of her life to teaching, to struggling with adolescents. Later, when she was alone and feeling discriminated against by Tony's group, when she had no ties, she desperately went out to seek a connection and went to Cadiz and found that connection. She then turned into a manipulator of boats. There begins the same process of corruption as the rest of the group; she began to define her position as nouveau riche through narcotics trafficking, to look for houses through illegal—absolutely illegal—means, and obtain a car, two cars, and do other similar or worse things.

I wondered, and I asked the defendant during this hearing: How could you do this, you, a teacher? Is it that none of you have thought of the consequences of drugs, and mainly the consequences of drugs on the youth of the world? How could you, then, be confused and evolved, to the point of going from teacher to assassin of children?

Jose Luis Pineda is an important "lord" of the international dealings of this group of narcotics traffickers. He has no qualms about meeting with Amado Padron, of talking about narcotics trafficking and becoming an important point in the negotiations of narcotics trafficking in Mexico. He has no qualms about contacting Colombians, Mexicans, Americans, everyone, in this unrestrained search for paths for drugs, in the unrestained search to poison the world, in the unrestrained search for paths walked by those who are no longer revolutionaries, much less officials of MININT.

Then there is Gabriel Prendes, who is part of all this mechanism. He confessed to us that he changed from six to one the exchange rate of the dollar for the peso and that later he kept half of it for himself. This is how he acquired 50,000 pesos, in addition to tens of thousands of dollars seized in his home.

Leonel Estevez has confessed his participation in these action in such a manner that there is no room for any doubt, the prosecution feels.

I do not want to abuse the patience of this tribunal by making detailed reference to these facts and mentioning all of them. However, I cannot fail to mention, in a very special way, the personality of Patricio de la Guardia, who was, until not so long ago, chief of the MININT mission in Angola, and before that, no less than the MININT chief of staff.

That man, like Ochoa, was serving in a country at war and he had the mission of leading men who, in one way or another, were involved in combat actions. He did not hesitate to set aside his responsibilities to also engage in illegal trade and the outrageous theft of resources from the Angolan people for his own benefit.

Chance brought Patricio de la Guardia and Arnaldo Ochoa together, and Tony de la Guardia joined them in infamy.

Comrade President: If I could summarize these introductory words, I would have to mention the deluge of slander and the strong campaign of infamy against our country that these heartless people have prompted. In his blindness, the enemy reached the senseless conclusion that Ochoa and even the other defendants had political motivations. Ochoa, De la Guardia, Padron, Martinez, and all of the others fall into the simple category of common criminals, and nothing more has to be said.

None of these men was ever moved by the tremendous damage their actions as narcotics traffickers were doing to the youth of the world, and none of them was horrified by the idea that they could harm millions of persons throughout the world.

Comrade President, comrade members of the court-martial:

It is absolutely necessary that we make a legal evaluation of the facts.

Mr President, please forgive me, but apparently in the report I forgot to refer to the behavior of the defendant Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan. It is not that he is exempt from responsibility. Unfortunately, it is the opposite.

Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan, an officer who had a dignified career in the FAR, with 29 years service in our ranks, who carried out missions abroad on several occasions, went as far as becoming chief of Cuban military missions in an African country. He was trained here, in this same building, and he went to Angola to fulfill very specific missions as Ochoa's assistant. Aware of Ochoa's virtues and defects, he did nothing to increase Ochoa's virtues and to help Ochoa develop his virtues, and he became the most "efficient" aide of his commander. He shared with him many of the criminal actions, the diamonds, the ivory, the dollars; he willingly turned over to Ochoa $23,000 that he knew did not belong to Ochoa and which knew belonged to the Cuban military mission in Angola. He received money from Capt Llicas, and he demanded that LLicas deliver to him the rest of the money from the damned television sets. Nobody knows from where these television sets came, because they did not come out of the Panama account, as this account was sealed on Ochoa's orders. He never told us why the account was sealed. In Cuba, Antonio turned over to Gen Ochoa $47,000, which belonged to the Cuban mission in Angola.

We have already reproached this "efficient" assistant who is seated here, because—and I must repeat this—if he had fulfilled with dignity the role assigned to him by the FAR, these narcotics traffickers would still be on trial, but Arnaldo Ochoa would not be among them. Rodriguez Estupinan should have told the FAR commander about Arnaldo Ochoa's corrupt behavior. Rodriguez Estupinan became part of this corruption, and that is why he, too, is sitting there, a defendant in this trial.

Mr President: We must make a legal evaluation of these facts.

I think it escapes no one that we are confronted here with a gigantic treason against the fatherland, and this treason has been the result of many crimes.

The facts to which we have referred this afternoon, that have been confirmed during this hearing, and that have been amply publicized include the following crimes:

First, defendants Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Padron Trujillo, Martinez Valdes, Sanchez Lima, Lago Arocha, Diaz Izquierdo, Abierno Gobin, Prendes Gomez, Estevez Soto, Pineda Bermudez, and Ruiz Poo engaged in hostile actions against a foreign state, and this is established and punished by Article 110, subparagraphs 1 and 2 of the Penal Code. Second, they were trafficking toxic drugs, as established and punished by Article 190, subparagraphs 1, 3, and 4 of the same. Both crimes are covered by Article 10, subparagraphs 1 and 2 of the Penal Code, as they are the result of the same actions.

Both crimes are intentional, according to the rules established by Article 9, subparagraph 1 of the general part of the Penal Code. The trafficking of toxic drugs is a crime of mischievous intent, in view of the fact that the defendants were fully aware of the actions they voluntarily carried out and that they wanted the results they obtained.

These men are also guilty of probable malicious intent in the crime of hostile acts against foreign countries. Although the purpose of the defendants was not specifically to be hostile toward another country and endanger the security, prestige, and dignity of their country, it is evident and has been proved that all of them were aware of the risks of their actions but, nevertheless, took the risks.

All the defendants who participated in these crimes are considered perpetrators. Penal Code Article 18, Section 4, establishes that persons who participate in crimes against humanity, human dignity, and collective health or in crimes covered by international agreements are to be considered perpetrators, regardless of the degree of their participation.

Regarding the crime of drug trafficking, we do not believe it is necessary to expand our arguments about events that, undoubtedly, the court and all our people fully know.

The most serious crime is the one of hostile acts against a foreign country. We believe it is necessary to be more precise about the subject. What constitutes this crime?

Penal Code Chapter 3 covers crimes against peace and international law, as well as such serious and degrading crimes as genocide, piracy, apartheid, and hostile acts against a foreign country. The defendants were charged with this crime based on the following facts:

The defendants prepared and carried out hostile acts against a foreign country without the government's authorization. Acts of this nature, whatever they may be, are reason for war or retaliatory measures against Cuba, for international humiliation, for reprisals by another country against Cuban citizens and their property, and for the straining of Cuban relations with another country.

These facts have been clearly established in the events covered in this case. I, however, call to the court's attention the following: In addition to the damage done to our relations with the United States—which feels that its struggle against drug trafficking was harmed by the activities of the illustrious persons who are here as defendants—the defendants' activities also harmed Colombia, Mexico, and Panama. These gentlemen also carried out hostile acts against the Mexican Government: to enrich themselves, the defendants, headed by Ochoa, tried to find a drug route from Colombia into the United States through Mexico.

The most serious aspect of this crime is that listed in Penal Code Article 110, Section 2, which covers actions that might result in retaliatory measures against Cuba, international humiliation, reprisals against Cuban citizens, and the rest of the aforementioned actions.

The shower of insults, infamies, and slanders that are currently falling upon our country is basically motivated by the imperialist press agencies, using for an excuse the actions perpetrated by these accused men, which permits them to accurately confirm that Cuba—not this group, but Cuba—is linked to drug trafficking. Because of this, we have to suffer thousands of infamies and humiliations, solely and exclusively as a consequence of the actions and work of these men.

Over 10 million Cubans must patiently suffer the humiliation, the press campaigns, the horrors said about the Cuban Revolution, by the grace of these 14 honorable citizens who were born, accidently I think, in this country.

Could anyone have any doubt that the incidents in which the accused were involved have put in imminent danger the security, prestige, and honor of our country? We all know the enemy seeks the smallest occasion to justify all manner of aggression against Cuba. Who has today eased that possibility? Why are we the object these days of such a brutal campaign of discreditation and disgrace? In addition, there must be considered the phenomenon in which Varadero [beach resort] may become the tourist paradise of the country, and therefore, I would say nearly of the continent, in which the country is full of enthusiasm and about to make huge investments in Varadero to attain tourist development—which will allow us to provide and obtain the foreign exchange the country is clamoring for and demanding; when suddenly, in the international media, the paradise of tourism turns into a paradise of drug trafficking; when this country had based its tourist campaigns precisely on statements that this is a country without drugs, a country full of security, a country that decent families from around the world can visit assured their children will find no drugs here; when the Miami boatmen, or when the DEA, thanks to the information these men with their irresponsible actions have been capable of supplying—publishes information on how a famous grandfather [not further identified] lived 29 days at a house in Canimar protected by Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo and Amado [Padron Trujillo] and how drug traffickers came and went out of this country in planes and boats, because drug trafficking had its paradise in Cuba, in Varadero.

What do we tell the world? Come to Varadero to enjoy the sun, the beach, and the cocaine supplied by Tony de la Guardia?

How much harm can those fabulous businessmen—who were getting rich buying stolen boats and selling them at twice their price to the national organization that should possess boats to develop tourism—cause to our economy?

How concerned were these people for Cuba? How concerned were they for the country's development? How willing were they to break the blockade, to help Cuba in its development? Maybe once, in its early beginnings, the MC Department played that role and I am sure that it has been a long time since the MC Department has exclusively fixed its sights on the search for drug trafficking money. Over $1.23 million have been confiscated for these hard-working patriots, who have sought ways to solve the problems resulting from the blockade.

I ask myself, has that department ever been efficient, has it ever been useful, has it ever played an important role? How did it become a cave of drug traffickers and criminals? Did they forget about Cuba? Did they forget about the needs of Cuba? Even though they knew this country needed foreign exchange, these patriots preferred to establish a private bank and keep the money for themselves, just as Amado Padron's friends did, by making a hole in the cement until they had over $1.23 million, not including the money that is still owed to them or the money that our "dear" former captain Rosa Maria [Abierno Gobin] was to try to get, $500,000.

Therefore Cuba's credibility could be weakened, not only in the area of tourism, but in our trade relations. Happily, Ochoa was unable to get the participation of that messiah, who was supposed to promote the development of tourism in Cuba by giving us millions of dollars so that we could build hotels and buildings and develop this country.

The money laundering business in Cuba, invented by Ochoa and his friend, never became a reality because how could they make drug trafficking money compete with clean money obtained elsewhere through other means, the money we are currently using to develop tourism with great efforts from our people.

I would like to know how many hours of voluntary work these "distinguished characters" from the MC have offered.

Therefore, it is evident that these incidents have resulted in continuous and serious campaigns of discreditation and humiliation against our country, many of our citizens, and even against our commander in chief, the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, and other prestigious leaders of the Revolution.

Could you imagine denying our entire lives at all costs any relationship between General Raul Castro and drug trafficking and then, all of a sudden, the enemy points to an active captain of the Armed Forces saying: Look, here he is with Pablo Escobar.

How can a captain of the Armed Forces in any civilized or organized country leave his country, pass through Panama, go to Colombia, get to Pablo Escobar's house and talk to him? Could someone believe, after seeing that, that he was not sent there by Raul Castro?

But no, it had not been Raul Castro, but instead a powerful MININT department, chock-full of drug traffickers who—breaking all laws, taking advantage of all the privileges that I referred to before, scoffing at all of this country's immigration laws and all customs requirements—issued passports and allowed anyone they wanted to enter or exit the country. This is how Martinez managed to leave.

I ask myself: Does anyone believe the story that Martinez left without the authorization of the FAR Ministry? That is very hard to believe!

But the powerful contacts of Tony de la Guardia made possible all violations in this as well as in the other cases.

So that the comrade lawyers can have this clear in their minds, I consider that none of the defendants is able to claim before this court that he has simply been obeying orders. Section 2 of Article 25 of the Penal Code, which refers to exemptions falling under the call of duty, reads: "Due obedience is that which the law compels people to follow, as long as the action taken is within the purview of he who orders the action and within the obligations of he who accomplishes the action." Need I elaborate further? I do not think so.

Defendants Ochoa Sanchez, La Guardia Font, Padron Trujillo, Lago Arocha, Estevez Soto, Ruiz Poo, and Sanchez Lima are also considered guilty of a separate crime of illegally possessing and bearing firearms, and this is being stated here. This crime and its punishment are covered in subparagraphs 1 and 2 of Article 211 of the Penal Code. As investigator Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Lugo explained yesterday, more than 130 firearms were confiscated from the defendants.

Many of these gentlemen were collectors of firearms: They had 10, 8 pistols, 6 revolvers, and AR-15 and M-16 rifles.

Aside from what investigator Lugo was saying yesterday—that these homes were prime targets for burglars, as they contained several color television sets, videocassette recorders, and other items that attract thieves—the burglars would have found a stash of pistols and rifles. All in all, the burglars would have found 10, 12 pistols, 3 rifles. Who knows! They would have found more than 100 firearms.

All of these men were MININT officers until recently, and they know that no one is authorized possession of a firearm—except a regulation service weapon—without a permit. However, they considered themselves above everything: above the people, above the law. They felt that they were immune to everything; the position they held had gone to their heads. Why should they go to the trouble of getting a permit to carry a firearm? That was unnecessary; they were members of the MC.

Nevertheless, even though the facts are known to all and the amount of weapons seized from each defendant is listed in the record, this prosecuting office did not include or lodge charges and does not plan to request any punishment for this crime because the scope of the other charges against the defendants is serious enough.

Additionally, Comrade President and members of the court-martial, defendants Ochoa Sanchez, Patricio de la Guardia Font, and Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan are guilty of the crime of abuse of power that is outlined, along with its punishment, in Article 13, subparagraphs 1 and 3 of the code of military crimes. This crime is compounded by Article 37-D of the same law, because these actions were committed during a state of war. These gentlemen are guilty of this crime because they exercised functions without the authority to do so and overstepped the bounds of their posts repeatedly and for personal interests, causing serious harm to the interests of the FAR and the MININT.

Concerning Ochoa, and this extends to Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan, and to defendant Patricio de la Guardia—as hard as it is to believe this—as we explained in the introductory part of this report, these accused people forgot they were living in a country at war; they forgot about the thousands of combatants who were risking their lives to defend Angola, and to honor and continue the heroic tradition of our international combatants. Meanwhile, in Luanda there was serious concern for the elephant tusks, the diamonds, the timber, the oil, the salt, the Candonga. Luckily, these men did

not directly handle the operations. In the south, the FAR General Staff and General Leopoldo Cintras Frias were capable of leading our troops to the incredible Cuito Cuanavale victory to triumphantly march toward the Namibian border and force the South Africans to sit at the negotiating table.

Of course, had those troops been directed by these generals, we would probably still be in Huambo or returning from Luanda defeated, because one cannot have two heads—one to think about the war and a second one to think about the businesses, the Candonga, the salt, and so on.

The naive argument has been raised here that part of this activity had been carried out because the general in charge of the Cuban military mission in Angola was determined to build an airport, an airport by collecting pennies, an airport worth thousands, and tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands of dollars was going to be constructed with the results obtained from collecting kwanzas, from the businesses on the black market and with foreign smugglers. Such a statement is so naive that it is not even worth using as a justification.

Obviously, the actions of these two former generals, with the always efficient cooperation of assistant Antonio Rodriguez [Estupinan], made it possible to perpetrate this crime, to our shame.

They attempted to degrade 13 years of Cuban military activity in defending Angola. Luckily, Cuba's prestige is far greater than that of two generals who were incapable of fulfilling their responsibility. Perhaps that explains why neither of them is a general today, why neither of them belongs to the organizations to which they once belonged.

Mr President, it is our professional duty to recognize that there are extenuating circumstances for all of the accused, especially, their good conduct prior to the charges, as stated in subparagraph A of Article 52 of the law on military crimes. Even in the cases of Ochoa, the De la Guardias, and other defendants, other extenuating circumstances theoretically apply. These include heroism and actions that have benefited the fatherland. But at the same time, and as shown by overwhelming evidence, there are also aggravating circumstances from a moral and political viewpoint.

The high rank of Ochoa and the De la Guardias makes the situation more serious. The aggravating circumstance is that the crimes were committed while the defendants were superior officers, as established in Paragraph C of Article 53 of the law on military crimes.

Considering the extreme gravity of the charges, the serious threat to society posed by the defendants, and the penalties established for the crimes of which they are accused, I request of this court the death penalty for defendants Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Jorge Martinez Valdez, Amado Bruno Padron Trujillo, Antonio Sanchez Lima, Alexis Lago Arocha, and Eduardo Diaz Izquierdo. I clarify to the court that I exclude defendant Patricio de la Guardia Front from this, because in reality he neither committed nor was linked to the most serious crimes in this indictment, which are drug trafficking and treason against the fatherland.

On the other hand, we can charge Patricio with the aggravating circumstance that he learned of his brother's conduct, of the actions committed by Tony de la Guardia, and of the drug trafficking in our country, but he lacked the moral courage and integrity of a revolutionary general to denounce them.

I request 30 years imprisonment for defendants Patricio de la Guardia Font and Rosa Maria Abierno Gobin, 25 years imprisonment for defendants Gabriel Prendes Gomez, Leonel Estevez Soto, Miguel Ruiz Poo, and Luis M. Pineda Bermudez, and 15 years imprisonment for defendant Antonio Rodriguez Estupinan.

I also request, Comrade President, the additional punishment of the confiscation of all the property that was acquired directly or indirectly as a result of the defendants' crimes.

I have finished, Mr President.

State Council Examines Officers' Death Sentences

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[Council of State meeting chaired by President Fidel Castro in Havana on 9 July to examine the death sentence handed down by a special military tribunal for General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez and three other Revolutionary Armed Forces and Interior Ministry officers—recorded]

[Text] [Fidel Castro] Since we have a quorum, we declare this session open.

Comrades, in accordance with the provisions established by Article (?483) of the law on military penal proceedings, the Cuban Council of State will examine the sentence handed down by the special Cuban court-martial on 7 July for case No 1 of 1989. The sentence was handed down as punishment for the following crimes: carrying out hostile actions against foreign states, trafficking in toxic drugs, and abuse of authority.

Cuban citizens Arnaldo Tomas Ochoa Sanchez, Jorge Martinez Valdez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, and Amado Bruno Padron Trujillo were sentenced to death by a firing squad.

Lawyers appointed by the government filed appeals before the Military Affairs Court of the Cuban Supreme People's Tribunal because of that sentence. Through ruling No 14, discussed and issued between 6 and 8 July, the Military Affairs Court of the Cuban Supreme People's Tribunal rejected the aforementioned appeal.

It is our duty to listen to the opinion of each and every one of the members of this council present here to determine whether the Council of State will confirm the sentence pronounced by the special court-martial or whether it will decide to commute the death sentence by firing squad of all or some of the defendants sentenced to death to a sentence of 30 years in prison.

Comrade secretary will now call the names of the Council of State members for them to give their opinions and cast their votes.

[Jose Miyar, Minister-Secretary of the Council of State] Comrade Armando Acosta has the floor.

[Acosta] Comrade Fidel, comrade members of the Council of State: We have followed the trial proceedings closely, and we never had the slightest doubt regarding the gravity of the events that were described before the tribunal. We never doubted that the only alternative for the Cuban Revolution was to sentence these men to death by firing squad.

When Comrade Raul Castro [second secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, PCC, and minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces] delivered his first speech, I was in Olguin Province touring 10 municipalities there. Even then, we saw the angry masses and people demanding severe penalties for those who had committed such serious crimes.

Over the past few days, we have been listening to the people in our organization, and in the various cadres, zones, and municipalities. They all call for the carrying out of the death penalty by firing squad pronounced against these defendants. I am absolutely convinced that it is essential, fair, humane, and correct to carry out the death sentence by firing squad pronounced against the aforementioned defendants.

[Miyar] Comrade Severo Aguirre del Cristo.

[Aguirre] Comrade Council members: I am of the opinion that the death penalty imposed by the special military court should be applied to the following citizens: Arnaldo Tomas Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Jorge Martinez Valdez, and Amado Bruno Padron Trujillo. I believe that the State Council's final decision should be to carry out the death sentence.

The crimes committed by the group of criminals they led have been proved at the hearings held by the military honor court and the special military court. They committed grave criminal offenses against the fatherland, the Revolution's laws, and the Revolution itself. Those are errors that cannot be corrected with self-criticism or tearful lamentations. They have betrayed the Revolution, which gave them power to serve it with honesty and dignity. They mocked the Revolution, the people, and comrade Fidel's teachings. They respected no person or thing in this country. Their greed made them common criminals. They all became criminals against mankind.

[Miyar] Comrade Jose Ramon Balaguer Cabrera.

[Balaguer] Comrade Fidel, comrade State Council members: We would never have imagined having to express our opinions at the State Council regarding such a cruel, offensive, and painful act for any revolutionary man as this act of treason to the fatherland, the people, and Fidel.

We have always believed that our Revolution is so great—greater than ourselves—because it is in the people's minds, hearts, and actions, and because the people's morality, ethics, and human concepts based on Marxist- Leninist philosophy constitute its strongest defense. A legal process like this one has demonstrated responsibility before the people and the world, who have been able to follow day by day a detailed account of this crime and treason, leaving no doubts regarding the defendants guilt.

I believe that the court has acted with a great sense of justice and duty. I admire you and respect you.

During the past few days, as I heard the overwhelming evidence and confessions that categorically prove the crimes, what has been in my mind and has made my heart pound as a Cuban has been thinking what could have happened if this had not been discovered. Our borders would have practically been in the hands of drug traffickers, open to attacks from the enemy, whom we have held at bay for 30 years. What the enemy could not achieve in the Bay of Pigs with the uprising of bandits or with the attempts to kill Fidel and other leaders these individuals were offering the CIA on a silver platter. They endangered the Revolution's security. The Revolution's honor, dignity, prestige, and morality were questioned. They made the possibility of infiltration and attempts to kill Fidel feasible. The prestige and history of our defense institutions were at stake.

I also agree with what comrade prosecutor General Jaime Escalona said. Drug trafficking is inhumane. It is no different than the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki or the use of chemical or biological weapons. It is even worse, because it leads to degradation and loss of man's most precious possession: his dignity. When I imagine children and adolescents trapped by drugs, I feel greater pain.

Any real revolutionary man, any honest person with human feelings, will agree with this exemplary punishment. Our Revolution, the essence of which was expressed in the court's decision and throughout the trial, has provided an example of firmness, morality, and intransigence in the face of immoral, inhumane, or treacherous actions. Even if we must lose portions of our lives—or our entire lives—we cannot permit the trampling on and violation of principles.

For this reason, I feel and believe that my conscience as a revolutionary man tells me that what motivated us to take up weapons behind Fidel to fight Batista, what encouraged us for 30 years, what made us stand firm before attacks and difficulties, today motivates us to consider the court's decision just and to support it. This sentence not only has the signatures of the members of the court, it also has the signature of our people expressed through their rejection and condemnation of treason and infamy.

I agree with the death sentence the tribunal has imposed on Arnaldo Ochoa, Tony De la Guardia, Amado Padron, and Jorge Martinez.

[Miyar] Comrade Senen Casas Regueiro.

[Casas] Comrade President, comrade members of the Council of State: In my opinion, the gravity of the crimes, which have been proved in the legal process conducted in this case; the consequences these crimes may have had for the security of our fatherland—in fact, they have harmed the prestige of our Revolution—are enough to give one an understanding of the scope of the treason committed by Ochoa, De la Guardia, and the rest of the criminals. These men have shown that they are capable of any criminal action to achieve their repulsive goals.

I believe the individual blame has been assigned by the tribunal. Regarding the death sentences, they are duly justified because of the high treason committed by these men. To summarize my opinion, I would say the justice of our Revolution should ensure the purity of our Revolution. In this case and to achieve this purity, we must confirm the death sentences imposed by the tribunal on citizens Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Jose [as heard] Martinez Valdes, Antonio de la Guardia Font, and Amado Padron Trujillo. I have finished.

[Miyar] Comrade Abelardo Colome Ibarra.

[Colome] Comrade commander in chief, comrades of the Council of State: I will try to be brief because I understand that the case we are dealing with has been the most openly debated case in the 30-odd years of our Revolution to keep our people and the international public well informed. This case has greatly aroused the people. Therefore, I think we are all fully aware of the problem. Because of the characteristics of our Revolution, the enemy has always organized campaigns and launched all sorts of slanders against the Revolution, beginning with the first [words indistinct] the revolutionary laws, our relations with socialist countries, the Bay of Pigs, the October crisis, and continuing with many other examples that would take too long to mention here. Such campaigns, however, have never had much importance.

Unfortunately, this group of common criminals allows one to say that, in this new campaign, and regarding this embarrassing scandal in which our fatherland and the Revolution are involved, the enemy is partly correct. I say partly because the enemy has always evilly distorted the information they give the world. This has harmed us. This has harmed all of us and all of our people. This has caused moral, political, and physical damage. These people have damaged the prestige this Revolution has earned through much effort and sacrifice over 30 years. They have also harmed the prestige of the country, its institutions, and particularly of FAR [Revolutionary Armed Forces] and the MININT [Ministry of Interior].

During the few days I have been working at the MININT, I have been able to see the damage these people have inflicted on this institution and on the comrades who work there. I have also seen how much shame, bitterness, and sorrow we have had to endure over the past few weeks. We have seen how this group of irresponsible men ruined the efforts and sacrifices of thousands upon thousands of combatants over approximately 30 years. They have deeply hurt Fidel. They have caused him great harm and have made him suffer greatly. I believe this will forever affect his health because these men were not enemies. They were our own people, men with a history like Ochoa.

Again, I do not want to repeat what we already know. I completely agree with the basic arguments presented by my comrades at the court of honor. I agree with the sentence imposed by the military tribunal. I maintain that what these former comrades have done leaves us no alternative. The guilt of the defendants has been proven beyond doubt. I am convinced that, for the cases we are examining here today, the death penalty is actually the only just thing to do.

[Miyar] Comrade Pedro Chavez.

[Chavez] President of State Council Commander Fidel Castro and State Council Comrades: Over these past few days, we, like the rest of our people, have closely followed the development of this process. The process initially astonished us, but later it angered us. We have meditated on all the information we heard regarding the deplorable events that were disclosed during this process. We whole-heartedly agree with and support the court of honor's recommendations. We believe these recommendations are sound since they resulted from a process that reached the depths of our people's hearts and are an outstanding example of revolutionary justice and humanity. The process has greatly affected us, and we have all received a very educational lesson since the process reached every Cuban home through the national television network and through the extensive coverage given to it by all our media.

At the special military court, the state prosecutor totally and convincingly demonstrated the guilt of the defendants, and I agree with his conclusions and have no doubt that all the defendants deserve the most severe sentence for their shameful actions. We later saw in the sentence handed down by the special military court, which gave only the four most guilty defendants the death penalty, the Revolution's leniency. We have acknowledged our people's feelings about the case and they support these just and necessary, though painful, measures. The actions and behavior of each of these defendants conclusively demonstrated their high treason to the fatherland, the Revolution, the party, their comrades, the spotless and exemplary institutions they served, and Comrade Fidel, our commander in chief.

Furthermore, it has not gone unnoticed to any of us—including, at the end, the defendants themselves—the damage their actions could have caused our country and our Revolution if the enemy had uncovered these actions before we did and presented them to the world. They would have presented them as evidence that the Cuban Government was directly involved in these actions, and it would have been difficult to refute these accusations, although our government has repeatedly and firmly rejected these imperialist lies.

We and all our revolutionary people know very well that high treason is paid for with one's life. This process demonstrated, once again, the Revolution's strength and purity, and it is the example that we must pass on to future generations. It will show how a true Revolution is able to eliminate the mud and filth that can tarnish it and continue to advance with firm, determined steps. We know, because they are already doing so, that our enemies will distort and try to twist the significance of these exemplary measures. Never before has anybody applied such measures. It should also be clear to all of us that we will have to confront and deal with the confusion that will arise around this case and the questions that our true friends in Latin America, the Third World, and elsewhere will ask.

I would like to acknowledge the work done by the special military court, as it has had a strong and positive effect on us and our people as well. The court conscientiously applied and implemented our laws and each case was studied in detail. The prosecutor's role and his superb closing argument, as well as the role played by the defense, led to the irreversible sentence rendered by this court. The sentence was confirmed by the military affairs court of the Supreme People's Tribunal, which did not accept the appeal presented by the defense, as allowed by law. Thus, I reiterate that I agree with the court's sentence in every respect. As a member of this body, I have been called to state my position, and, as the comrades who have preceded me have done, will do so as follows: I do not believe that a commutation of the sentence—as set forth in the law—should be granted in this case.

This bitter process has taught us a lesson: that we have an urgent need to enhance our revolutionary vigilance and strengthen our control mechanisms, which must always be accompanied by our trust in men who are truly revolutionary. We are convinced that, once again, under the party's administration and you, Comrade Fidel, we will convert, as we are already doing, this setback into a victory and that the Revolution will come out stronger than ever from this ordeal to project the Cuban example to the world. I have finished.

[Miyar] Comrade Mercedes Diaz Herrera.

[Diaz Herrera] Comrade Fidel Castro Ruz, State Council comrades: We agree that Citizens Arnaldo Tomas Ochoa Sanchez, Jorge Martinez Valdes, Antonio de la Guardia Font, and Amado Bruno Padron Trujillo should be given the death penalty for the serious crimes they have committed, which have placed our fatherland in a dangerous and difficult position and damaged the prestige of our socialist Revolution.

This group did not hesitate to contact foreign drug traffickers, without considering for one moment how this might affect our country. As a member of the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba, I am quite satisfied with the actions of the tribunals that have participated in this case and with the work carried out by the comrade prosecutor, who at all times has imparted true justice. As deputy of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], I convey the feelings of

our people who believe that citizen Ochoa, De la Guardia, and their group must pay for this treason with the sentence imposed by our revolutionary tribunal, which carefully analyzed each case and imposed sanctions according to what is established. I do not want to end my brief participation without telling our commander in chief and those present that what occurred among this small group of officers does not prevent our people from continuing to have faith in you, commander, in our party, in our youth, in our women, and in all of those who are willing to continue on the right path. I have concluded.

[Miyar] Comrade Vilma Espin.

[Espin] Comrades of the Council of State: It is of the utmost gravity that precisely while holding his high post with responsibility to ensure fulfillment of the rules and regulations of conduct, the principles that are the basis of social balance, to maintain order and discipline, that he defrauded the confidence placed in him by his superiors, his people, in acts of supreme dishonesty; that he has been capable of violating such rules and regulations, all principles, and acted as a vulgar criminal, lying, deceiving, stealing, and falling prey to corruption, and moral debasement; the fact that with incredible insensitivity he engaged in such lowdown actions at a time when our troops, his troops, were waging decisive battles amid great sacrifices, showing the true courage of the sons of this country, who with blood and fire, won fundamental victories; that, while being a general of our glorious Revolutionary Armed Forces, to which he belonged, with colossal irresponsibility in his adventurous and corrupt conduct, he endangered the country's security by carrying out activities that could undermine the credibility of Cuba and its Revolution, have won Cuba....[changes thought] which Cuba and its Revolution have won by its position based on solid moral principles. The lurking enemy waited for the moment to show the world that Cuba did participate in drug trafficking and that Fidel lied when he repeatedly denied it. Fidel's word is always true, as is the policy of our party, our Revolution. It is a cornerstone in the moral structure that makes us strong both here and abroad.

In a situation such as this one, what would the U.S. Government have been capable of doing, in addition to denying what we said. The swift, acute, dynamic, effective action directed by Fidel once again saved the Revolution. The danger to which Ochoa and the others implicated in the shameful drug trafficking activities have exposed the country do not permit any other name. It has been a crime of high treason, as are each of the other aspects of the conduct of Arnaldo Ochoa to which I have referred.

It is very painful that the person to whom we are referring, who has been a courageous fighter who rose up from the rebel army, who had a long and heroic revolutionary background, who therefore was honored with the highest decorations, who was loved and admired by our people, by all of us, because of his conduct has left us no other alternative. He leaves us with the obligation to apply the maximum penalty. Regarding the other defendants, who also took advantage of the confidence placed in them, of the immunity granted by the nature of their work, and the channels available for this, absolutely violating professional ethics and the fundamental duty of safeguarding the security of our coasts and skies, they acted as vilely as vulgar criminals. They were supposed to defend and protect us from such criminals and from the imperialist enemy to whom they opened the doors.

I believe the sentence pronounced by the special court-martial must be confirmed. The clarity of the entire judicial proceeding and the dignity with which all the sessions of the impeccable honor tribunal were conducted are an example of respectful, humane treatment and of careful and fair actions. Let the sentence be confirmed and carried out. No one can doubt—today or ever—that above all a revolutionary must be an honest and worthy person, someone who abides by the law.

[Miyar] Comrade Jose Ramon Fernandez has the floor.

[Fernandez] Comrade Fidel Castro, president of the Cuban Council of State, comrade members of the Council of State: I wish to expressly state my position on this case.

The actions carried out by the convicted citizens we are talking about here are obviously unacceptable because they could have jeopardized the prestige and security of the Cuban Revolution through their repulsive drug trafficking activities. Those citizens reached the lowest levels of morality. The said citizens conducted various drug trafficking operations and were fully aware of what they were doing. To carry out those activities, they took advantage of the authority, power, and means the Cuban state had granted them because of their respective ranks, positions, and functions.

Some of those traitors betrayed the strong faith the Revolution had in them through their business dealings, trading activities, and the profits they obtained from the goods and needs of a fraternal nation at war. They irresponsibly neglected their duties. Their actions go against the deeply rooted internationalist principles of our country, which have been proven by our self-sacrificing people, who have contributed so many heroic combatants. Such actions are an offense to our martyrs. They also harm the feelings of those martyrs' widows, children, parents, relatives, and comrades.

In addition to the aforementioned crimes, those citizens carried out hostile actions against foreign states, conducted many operations and actions in Cuba to obtain personal benefits—for which they violated the law—and became involved with drug traffickers in other countries.

Those activities, which were vigorously and unanimously rejected, are a betrayal of the fatherland, of Fidel Castro, and of the Revolution and its highest principles, which are the pride of the Cuban people and the firm basis of their behavior.

Undoubtedly, those citizens not only jeopardized our people's safety, prestige, and honor, but also Cuba's credibility, which could have affected our friends, trade relations, tourism, and even the image of Comrade Fidel himself, the symbol of our Revolution.

Similarly, with their despicable activities, those citizens fostered the enemy's slanders and infamy, as well as the slanders of international press agencies and foreign officials, who instead of supporting and praising this fair action [the death sentence], which benefits their own peoples and contributes toward preventing drugs from increasingly becoming the scourge of humanity, take advantage of the situation and attribute the origin of the crimes to petty causes or nonexistent conflicts within our Armed Forces, government, and party.

More than a government office, the MC Department was a true mafia that carried out the lowest deeds we had ever heard of, in which fiction and nonfiction become one.

Comrades of the Council of State, the decision we adopt must be an expression of the firmness of the Cuban Revolution. Our decision must be an unbreakable barrier to prevent degradation and other forms of despicable behavior, especially in officials and public authorities.

For that reason, I believe the sentence pronounced against the convicted citizens—who are vulgar criminals, ungrateful children of the fatherland, and men who failed to maintain our Revolution's honor and dignity—must be confirmed as an effective example of punishment.

My opinion stems from my firmest conviction that the Cuban authorities and tribunals acted within the law, with a high humanitarian spirit, and in strict observance of the standards that regulate the administration of justice.

I support the sentence, because I believe it is fair. I also believe the sentence will contribute to the struggle against drug trafficking—the scourge of humanity—will help us save the lives of thousands of children, youths, women, and men, and will help us avoid the suffering of millions of human beings.

The Cuban Revolution sustained a harsh blow, but thanks to the way they acted, thanks to the measures adopted, and the reaction of the people, who understood the importance of these actions perfectly well, it will come out stronger and it will march clean and triumphant along the path of the great work carried out by our worthy, virtuous, self-sacrificing, strong, firm, and unyielding people.

Our integrity, honor, and truthfulness are the best weapons we have to defend against the enemy. Under the leadership of Fidel, the strength of the Revolution will undoubtedly wash off the stain. I reiterate my opinion that the Council of State must confirm the death sentence pronounced against Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amado Padron Trujillo, and Jorge Martinez Valdez. I have finished.

[Miyar] Comrade Guillermo Garcia Frias.

[Garcia Frias] Comrade President, comrades of the Council of State: The events that have gathered us here today are of extreme importance for the Revolution. Without a doubt, all of us present here assume a historic responsibility. It is to accept or reject, according to our laws, the death sentence handed down against four citizens, who by their actions have betrayed the tradition of noble and genuine struggle of our people and, at the same time, have greatly endangered the destiny of the country with the crimes, as validated by the special military tribunal, with the hostile acts against foreign states, trafficking of toxic drugs, and abuse of their post. In the 21 June extraordinary plenum, when the opinion of each one of the members was requested, I stated: We will not speak of the indignation of the immediate moment or of personal insults. We must start off on the principle: How does the Revolution stand to gain more—by executing the defendants by firing squad or not? I expressed myself by saying that I believed it stood to gain more by not executing the defendants. This was my sincere expression and I believed so honestly at that time. When comrade Raul spoke and referred to the very severe charges, I changed my mind. When the commander in chief made the summation, my initial opinion vanished. I then began to see each one of the views presented at the hearing where defendants and witnesses described such a shameful process, filling each one of us with shame. It was far beyond the imagination of a revolutionary man. We saw how two groups, starting from different places, met at the same point to fight over the drug trafficking leadership. They were united by an unprecedented ideological distortion, where the fundamental premise was money, personal gain, and power. They forgot one of the principles of our party platform which states: Cuba is a developing country that is building the material and technical basis of socialism and is constantly perfecting its sociopolitical life, basing itself on the principle that the Revolution will exist and will survive always, not only because of its material economic strength or its force but, above all, because of its morale, end of quote. After this analysis, we asked the following question: What would have occurred if this had happened without the physical presence of our commander in chief and comrade Raul? I have still not answered this question, because of its unforeseeable consequences. All of our people have had access to detailed information on the development of the hearings and each one of us has had the opportunity to make a profound, thoughtful evaluation of such shameful acts. This has constituted an exemplary lesson and signifies a

victory of our Revolution. For me it has been like an injection of oxygen to the revolutionary bloodline that aroused all the neurons that were asleep. The process we have witnessed has been characterized by absolute respect for legality and by utmost consideration of the defendants' human rights. These are the same rights that our enemies have been so intent on denying our country. Both the defendants and defense counsels have made this very clear. This illustrates once more the greatness of our Revolution.

I believe that this historic process has served, as never before, as an example for Cuban revolutionaries and for the entire world. I believe the Revolution has now sprouted new and stronger roots that ensure it a long life. The experience we have gained from this process shows the need for the state's central administration organizations to intensify the control of and demands upon the actions of their cadres. Incidents such as those we are facing today originate with a lack of controls, a lack of demands, buddyism, the desire to live a soft, cushy life, and in certain cases, trusting too much in others. Unfortunately, some officers have fallen into these ways. Our state must intensify its actions against such things so that in the future, we will not have to face similar situations.

Comrades: The commitment made with the blood spilled by thousands of Cubans defending their Revolution, or unselfishly struggling for the happiness of other peoples of the world, is sacred. The decision we must make today will be very significant for the future and the history of the Revolution. We, members of the Council of State, fully aware of the high responsibility the people have bestowed upon us, cannot have a moment of hesitation when defending the sacred ideals of our people. Therefore, I recommend the Council of State unanimously approve the sentence of death, by execution, issued by the Special Military Tribunal against four of those convicted: Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Jorge Martinez Valdes, Antonio de la Guardia Font, and Amado Bruno Padron Trujillo. Finally, comrades, I do not want to end my statement before presenting a personal reflection to you. I believe that, by this exemplary process, all revolutionaries from now on will make a self-examination and analysis of their actions and conduct. As for myself, I hereby want to confirm at this meeting my loyalty to the principles of honesty which the Revolution has taught us and to the commitments we have with our people, the fatherland, and Fidel.

[Miyar] Comrade Armando Hart.

[Armando Enrique Hart Davalos] Comrade President, comrade members of the Council of State: With sorrow, I want to say that since I became aware of the magnitude of the events, I have never doubted that the death penalty was the unavoidable end for some of the [words indistinct]. In many states around the world, including Cuba, crimes considered grave are sanctioned with the death penalty. For the customs and juridical tradition of many countries, this is perfectly normal. The pertinent tribunals in this case have said that it corresponds to enforcing this sentence. I have asked myself: What is the moral difference between the cases of those who have now been sentenced and the cases of common criminals in various countries, including our own, who are sentenced to death? The difference is that the latter have committed their crimes on their own, and the men sanctioned by the military tribunal committed their crimes supported by the authority and confidence society bestowed upon them, thus hurting the fatherland with highest treason. This circumstance makes it even worse.

In their demagoguery, the enemies cynically compared the decision by our tribunals with crimes committed in certain historic times in other countries supported by state power. The situation is completely contrary. We are now imposing the death penalty on those who used state authority in committing criminal actions. Cuba's political history cannot accept such conduct. The centenary generation [those who were born between the birth of Jose Marti in 1853 and the attack on the Moncada Barracks in 1953] was forged by fighting this kind of criminal. By carrying out the sentence, we are clearly upholding these principles for future generations.

As it is obvious, this is a group decision. Those who claim otherwise from abroad are slandering us and know nothing about the Revolution. Men and women who feel shame and who are meeting here are fully assuming responsibility and making their own decisions. I agree that the final decision should be made based on the best political criteria. However, what is our policy? I believe it should be a policy based on the ethical and revolutionary tradition of Cuban society. We must strengthen our ideologic and moral principles. We must attain this through essential fundamentals. The greatest severity must be imposed through a humane, just, balanced, flexible, and broad procedure.

This is the way these proceedings have been carried out and now that we have reached the end, we cannot act in any other way but in adherence with it. Such a decision will strengthen our Revolution because imperialism's only allies and influence in our country are the germs of corruption.

There is no possibility that a political or ideological program, consistent with our society and our history, could confront our socialist Revolution. There is no, nor can there be any, counterrevolutionary program that responds to treason or to changes in the history of the country. The only possible program is ours. The enemies of the Revolution's program are the antinational modern annexationists. At the domestic level, and as confirmed in the case we now study, imperialism can only support and promote the germs of corruption, disassociation, division, and moral relaxation. The Revolution's moral shield, ideological authority, and consistent revolutionary thought combine the necessary strengths to continue to challenge the people and confront the present difficulties and, more importantly, those we will face tomorrow.

We can only understand this group's criminal actions if they are based on their desire to bring about the defeat of the Cuban Revolution or, at least, that they believed that Revolution's main principles would be progressively weakened. The group's actions reached the point of high treason and must be sanctioned with capital punishment. This, as I see it, is a political necessity; it is a hard decision, but there is nothing harsher than justice. We have had an exemplary legal process that was preceded by an Honor Tribunal, comprised of the comrades-in-arms of the most important of the defendants. Tomorrow, the cancellation of our penal codes could be proposed if we do not apply the death penalty at this time. I do not know of any other cases that merit the death penalty more than those presently before us. I do not know of a crime that is more serious than theirs. The Constitution states that treason to the fatherland is the most serious of crimes and whoever incurs such a crime is subject to the most severe sanctions.

These men, supported by their positions, shamelessly established contacts with the Medellin Cartel and clashed with the most important of Cuban ethical values. The defendants, and we say this with sadness, hypocritically waved the banners of the Revolution and used its strength, but they incubated inside themselves the germ of people like [former Cuban President Fulgencio Batista's administration members] Rolando Masferrer, Esteban Ventura, and Rios Chaviano, the men most hated by our people since they gained political awareness. We did not make a revolution—that for more than 35 years has been carried forward in a historic struggle—for those who tarnish its highest symbols and cut its deepest roots not to be sanctioned with death.

It has been beneficial, as in the past, to reflect on the international aspect of this case. The world respects and listens to us. We have attained an important position in the international sphere because we have been consistent with our principles. Our enemies are going to or have already started to throw a barrage of lies against us and whatever decision we make, be it one or the other. The decision we make is going to make our enemies, even our most powerful ones, get to know us better and understand the type of persons they are fighting. We are not sanctioning those who presented a political program that was different from ours, but those who committed crimes that are completely immoral and that injure the feelings of all honest men, regardless of the political program they defend. The crimes committed by these men undermined the ethical fiber of Latin American and modern society in general. This fiber is essential to international order. The drug Mafia's powerful tentacles are corrupting Latin America's open societies and making it difficult for the necessary changes in the democratic process to take place. The drama can best be seen in Colombia where strong drug traffickers have linked their interests to those of the Armed Forces and created a situation that is socially unsoluble in which terrorism is rampant and the government's own authority has been rendered impotent.

The crime committed, harbored by the authority and merits granted by the Revolution, is one of the most dramatic and sorrowful problems of our history. It does not deserve to be pardoned by the revolutionary state. Comrades who assassinated Bishop in Grenada were also criminals for other reasons, and look at what happened to them. Criminals are those who have committed or who engage in actions of that nature in the future. We must establish these principles in the political culture of our America. Cuban society needs to strengthen and deepen a scale of ethical values. The definitive victory of these values are demanded, above all, for the future, when the principal figures with historic authority are no longer alive. By that time, the moral, ideological, and political principles will be even more necessary to guarantee the unity of our people. We must bequeath a scale of values, expressed in a moral tradition, which is what we have maintained thus far. Every penal law covers an ethical principle. The law in general is the first sign of ethics in a society. The violation of the law is the violation of certain social and moral principles. Society has penal sanctions for the violation of those ethical principles. If these principles are not respected, they cease to exist. What ethical, moral principle lies behind these crimes? Deep down, there is a transgression of the moral tradition bequeathed to us by Varela, Cespedes, Agramonte, Maceo, Gomez, Marti, and Mella, which prevailed until our days with Fidel. There is deep immorality that is present in the facts when we shockingly learned one day that a Cuban officer went to meet with one of the Medellin Cartel chiefs. What respect can the Cuban Revolution have before the best of the Colombian people, who are suffering the horrors of the organized mafia, if we do not condemn these facts with capital punishment? Our humanitarianism must be toward the people who are suffering the criminal plight of the drug traffickers. Comrades, we are forging the most difficult and the most free and democratic society that has ever been known. We are doing so at the doors of the most powerful empire that has ever existed, amid an economic crisis that the world capitalist system has turned into an ever-increasing exploitation of underdeveloped regions. Our only alternative is to increase our demands, to strengthen our moral standards. The first orientation of social morals comes by way of fulfilling the laws. This same matter has concluded with a legal process. We must start from there. The ethical formation of society is not a simple problem of a legal and political framework. It covers pedagogic and cultural aspects, in which the family, school, and political and social institutions play a decisive role. We must direct ourselves in that direction, stressing the role of the law, the family, the school, the political and social organizations, information, and culture on the whole. Lastly, Comrade Fidel, with the infinite admiration of all, I want to salute you, our commander in chief, Army General Raul Castro, our glorious Revolutionary Armed Forces, and its generals. Once again, during these days you made us relive the immortal spirit of the Sierra Maestra. It appeared, and so I felt when the military honor tribunal was in session, that at this singular moment, Cuba had to

go to the source of its own history, of its own morals, to the deepest roots of the Cuban Revolution to resolve such a complicated problem as the one with which we have been tasked. It is necessary to think how our problems of today and of any other nature are also resolved by returning to the moral and historic course of the revolutionary fighters of the Sierra Maestra and to the even deeper essence of the ethics of Marti and you, Comrade Fidel. I have concluded.

[Miyar] Comrade Carlos Lage.

[Lage] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, comrade members of the Council of State: I reflected for many hours prior to this moment, aware of the great responsibility I now assume before the people and my conscience. Without any hesitation I give my vote in favor of the decision reached by the Special Military Court, fully convinced that the death sentence must be carried out in the cases mentioned. It is a just decision, in accordance with the Revolution's morality.

No one likes to recommend the maximum penalty, not even in cases like this one, when it is entirely just and inevitable. This is always a painful situation. I am the kind of person who is moved by sincere and courageous repentance, which some of them sometimes showed. During these days I have thought of the tragedy that has fallen over their relatives and friends.

However, reason should always prevail over emotions. When the Revolution and justice are at stake, there is no room for vacilation. If we are faithful to our people, who have reacted with indignation and maturity; if we want to guarantee and increase confidence in the Revolution; if we do not want to undermine our defense; if we think about the future and the certainty we must have that such actions will not reoccur; we must act in absolute agreement with our principles. The crime of drug trafficking is condenmed internationally. However, in the case of a open revolutionary process as ours, it is even much more intolerable. I have tried to imagine a greater offense against the homeland, but I cannot. It would have been terrible if the Revolution had not caught this sordid plot in time to uncover and clarify it.

The authority of the MININT, one of the Revolution's most prestigious institutions, has deteriorated. We all felt indignation when we learned that FAR officers turned their backs on their important responsibilities at times when our internationalist fighters participated in heroic battles in southern Angola under the command of real generals, of the FAR General Staff, and of our commander in chief. Many comrades shared, and we could all imagine Fidel's sleepless nights those days worried about the fate of each of our soldiers who risked their lives away from their homeland defending a noble cause.

However, in the midst of setbacks like this, there are facts that strengthen us. It has been demonstrated once again that no one in Cuba who commits a crime—no matter how high his position or merits—will go unpunished. Simply put, in Cuba no one is above the law. It has been demonstrated to the world that if to punish the culprits and maintain the purity of the Revolution, we must admit our our faults, we will not hesitate to disclose them. That conduct, which has been demonstrated time after time since the Moncada attack up to today, is based on the example set by Comrade Fidel, who has taught us to face adversities with courage and with the truth. The Revolution has never lied, and never will. All of us on this island and any honest man on Earth knows that.

In judging these cases, we have acted with the fairness that characterizes our justice. The defendants have been treated with respect and enjoyed all the guarantees. They have admitted their guilt, which was demonstrated with enormous evidence and overwhelming testimony. The calumnies that some may try to invent will be useless. The Revolution's moral strength and the credibility before the world of the nation's highest authorities have clearly emerged from this process. We will profit from the past weeks' experience. Have we not turned our setbacks into victories during these 30 years?

It is true that our vigilance and revolutionary discipline failed, and that men, forgetting their ranks and positions, abandoned their people. It is also true that more controls and discipline should be exercised on those of us who have leading positions. We are on that path, particularly since Fidel called for a process of rectification, and I am sure that now we will advance more quickly, as many consciences have been shaken. We will never lose faith in men, but the necessary measures will be adopted and each revolutionary man must draw his own conclusions.

Work should play a dominant role in our lives, time, and thoughts. No one should abuse his authority, and everyone should clearly know what his responsibilities are. Being a leader should always be considered an aggravating factor when evaluating and punishing errors. Being efficient and loyal in performing one's duties is not enough—one must earn respect in all aspects of life. Honesty is an indispensable requirement for revolutionary cadres.

Our relatives are not only our loved ones but also a reflection of ourselves, and they should be part of the restrictions we impose on ourselves. Our children should be distinguished by their revolutionary conduct; modesty should guide all our actions, and we should never forget that the Revolution's greatest hero is always the people's humble and loyal worker.

I reiterate my opinion that the sentence passed by the military court-martial must be carried out. Let us erase this outrage, let us turn this shameful page in our history, and let us be proud of our clean and pure Revolution.

[Miyar] Comrade Orlando Lugo Fonte.

[Lugo] President of the Council of State, comrades of the Council of State: I believe it is not necessary to go over the details of the case we are discussing today, because all of us and our entire people have been provided with ample information from the very beginning of the trial.

The many reports I received provided me with information about the shameful, cowardly behavior of this group of traitors. Those who had the opportunity to participate in, hear, or read about the sessions of the military honor tribunal and of the special court-martial realized that these have been the cleanest and most exemplary proceedings ever conducted in any country. No details were hidden from the people. Comrades, I am sure a trial such as this one can only be held by a Revolution like ours.

All that said, I have sufficient facts to formulate an opinion as a member of the Cuban Council of State.

Comrades of the Council of State, I would like to stress another aspect. Because of the nature of my work, thanks to which I am in close contact with our peasants, I can inform you that since the morning of 14 June, when we heard the news of Arnaldo Ochoa's arrest, I have been meeting with various ANAP [National Association of Small Farmers] cadres, members of other organizations, and thousands of peasants and their relatives. I can assure you that they feel deep anger because of the wound that Ochoa, Jorge Martinez, Tony de la Guardia, and his henchmen inflicted on the Cuban people, the party, the glorious and undefeated FAR, the MININT combatants, and especially on you, Comrade Commander.

During those meetings, the peasants expressed their absolute trust and confidence in our party, in the Revolution, and in you, Comrade Commander. They believe the full weight of the revolutionary laws should fall upon those despicable traitors who have stained the fatherland's honor and dignity. Thus, comrades, I agree with and I am absolutely convinced of the fairness of the decision to confirm the death sentence by firing squad passed by the special court-martial against Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Jorge Martinez Valdez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, and Amado Padron Trujillo. That sentence is the only exemplary way to cleanse the outrage committed against our dear people. I have finished.

[Miyar] Comrade Jose Ramirez Cruz.

[Ramirez] Comrade President, comrades of the Council of State: We have been experiencing days of horror, anguish, shame, and even—why not—days of resentment and hatred toward the traitors. We have felt these things toward those who, stepping on their own revolutionary background and services to the new Cuban society, to the fair, socialist society we are building, offended and abused the patriotic and rebellious tradition of the Cuban people. They betrayed Cuba, Fidel, and Raul. They betrayed our martyrs and the martyrs of the internationalist movement.

We have experienced moments of tension and deep meditation because of the causes that led to the offensive and miserable betrayal committed by convicted citizens Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amado Padron Trujillo, and Jorge Martinez Valdez. Those men accumulated extraordinary merits throughout their lives. Those merits were eventually properly acknowledged by our country's top leaders, people, and even other nations.

Based on the evidence presented and the actions proved during the penal proceedings we are examining, we asssert that betraying the fatherland is not only fighting it with weapons but also giving the enemy ways to undermine its pillars. Leaving the fatherland without protection is the same as surrendering it.

Those traitors have betrayed the fatherland out of cheap and personal interests and total indifference toward the fatherland's interests and revolutionary and human principles. Those traitors reached the shameful limits of committing crimes such as abuse of authority, corruption, trafficking of toxic drugs, and other crimes that oppose the principles and laws of our socialist society.

As you all know, I am of humble, peasant origin. I experienced all kinds of abuses and outrages during the times of capitalist society. I grew up in the most horrible misery. I worked for 7 pesos a month during my youth or for 1 peso per 12-hour shift. When my father's small parcel of land was not enough to support me and my 12 brothers as we grew up, when I failed to find a job in which I could at least earn that miserable peso, I revolutionarily took over some land to work it honestly and make it produce. As soon as I did that, I was labeled a squatter, I was pursued, imprisoned, and thrown off that land. Without economic resources and amid the previously described situation, alone with my physical efforts and morale, I managed to harvest some products, but I could not find any buyers. At the end, I fell into the hands of unscrupulous and heartless businessmen, who, without moving a finger, earned more money than those who worked the land.

I could not go to school. My first few children also did not go to school. I saw relatives and neighbors die for lack of medical care. On several occasions, I saw my children at death's door, because I did not have money to buy medicine.

I knew about all this and endured these sufferings, and I endured the anguish and uncertainty. I was part of over 500,000 unemployed farm workers, who with optimism modestly contributed to achieving this grandiose and humanist Revolution that we have today so wisely directly by our commander in chief from the beginning of the assault on the Moncada Barracks to date.

I suffered and saw the people suffer the consequences of the monopolies and the unscrupulous large landholders of the past. We have devoted ourselves to political and

ideological work, for the unity of the peasants and of the proletarian to [words indistinct] with that nightmare that was the proimperialist bourgeoise society.

We supported and worked under the leadership of Fidel and Raul to achieve with the revolutionary victory of 1 January 1959 our true independence. We supported and defended the two agrarian laws of the Revolution that quickly ended the reign of the large and rich landholders who had dreams of becoming richer all the time as the people became poorer. We have fought for the achievement and development of the cooperative movement of our hard-working peasants, which helps them not only to implement science and technology but to humanize coexistance in the new communities with electrification and other social benefits and to educate them and promote a feeling of true comradeship, brotherhood, and solidarity among the peasants, thus eliminating the individualism inherited from the past society of bourgeoise landholders.

Having said all of this, Comrade President and other comrades of the Council of State, we wonder: How could we admit and pardon those who after having gained merit, rank, and power now trample on our people, our history, our martyrs, and offend and betray our just socialist society, internationalism, the power of workers and peasants, the party, and Fidel? As a citizen of [words indistinct] and as a member of this Council of State, I vote for the ratification and implementation of the death penalty by firing squad against the accused, Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amado Padron Trujillo, and Jorge Garcia Valdez [name as heard], according to the verdict issued by the military court of the People's Supreme Tribunal, case No 1, dated 1989, of the special court-martial.

Thank you.

[Miyar] Comrade Roberto Robaina.

[Robaina] Comrade Commander in Chief, comrades members of the Council of State: This is undoubtedly the most bitter meeting in which I, at least, have ever participated. We have always been asked to give an opinion on what to do to advance the work of the Revolution, and today we all share the duty of voicing our opinion concerning the regrettable events that the special court-martial has learned. We have written our opinion, because we do not want to make any improvisations. We have meditated for several hours on this issue, aware of the responsibility the council members have and how difficult and delicate our decision is.

We have just returned from the DPRK, and this topic has been discussed by the Cuban delegation that attended the youth festival. The delegation unanimously feels there should be severe punishment. I must add that in Pyongyang, many youths from throughout the world approached us—not to find out about the facts, as these were widely known by all—but to voice their admiration for a revolution capable of discussing this issue, which almost ruined the purity of our work, in a public and courageous manner.

Comrades, hundreds of thousands of youths were born the same year four of these men here disembarked at a place close to Las Coloradas. We were forged in a revolution born of the centavos earned by the men who formed the first vanguard detachment. This Revolution has never depended on ill-gotten money, not even in its most difficult moments. We have been trained with these principles, and we have followed this education. We flatly reject anything that damages this image we have from our childhood on the heroic modesty of those men.

Together with thousands of youths, I had the unparalleled opportunity to stay in Angola together with other humble and courageous men and women. We shared the barracks, where we wrote, read, and spoke around the only existing light bulb. We all experienced nostalgia for our remote homeland, and I witnessed many demonstrations of manliness, human solidarity, courage, and tenderness. We flatly reject with indignation anything that attempts to damage the image we have of the internationalist mission honorably carried out by hundreds of men and women. We flatly reject it, because the work of an entire people cannot be purposely discredited, and we would not be worthy children of our fatherland if we allowed it. This affront to the greatness of a people cannot go unpunished.

Those who favor a pardon have appealed to our party's generosity and to the defendants' repentance. However, let us all recall that in September 1987, Fidel appeared on television regarding a case of corruption and embezzlement. While he spoke, these men did not repent and did not have the slightest inkling of generosity, choosing to continue to serve as mediators in the drugs designed to kill thousands of people in the world. The greatest dishonesty was not feeling alluded to when Fidel stated time and again Cuba had nothing to do with drug trafficking, thereby harming the credibility of our Revolution, which has existed based only on its truth.

Millions of Cubans during these days have been keeping abreast of the 14 poor lives, so to speak. However, these 14 poor lives did not for 1 minute have a single thought of the millions of Cubans who were on the verge of suffering international discredit, shame, and the most unimaginable reprisals. We ask ourselves: How can persons emerge in the midst of our society who feel and act above this society? How can someone who risks his life for a noble cause and receives the love of his fellow beings later use his clean life to throw it down a lowly and shameful path?

As never before, I feel Che's lesson must be renewed daily. A leader must have and lack what is had and lacked by the common man. This must be true not only

of the leaders but must also apply to our party and our state. I am not advocating absolute and cheap egalitarianism, which leads us to no good. I simply believe inequality harms us a lot when it is unnecessary and damaging.

I have heard expressions such as: One can no longer believe in anyone. It is natural to hear such expressions at moments such as these. In the face of treason, wrath first always takes hold of one's feelings. However, socialism did not invent traitors. They exist since the time of the Bible. Even if they continue to exist, men will continue to trust in men. Our history is full of heroism, and among the hundreds of admirable pages we have written in more than a century of battles, only a few lines have been stolen by abominable persons. I think that regardless of how shameful the situation is, such actions can never stain the example of hundreds of thousands of true, authentic heroes of yesterday and today, who with their just, clean, and ever-increasing page of sacrifice, continue to be permanent sources of admiration, respect, and examples to follow.

I particularly consider this to have been a great lesson for Cuban youths. First, because it ratified the pureness of the principles with which we were educated. It clearly defines that nobody is above the people. Nobody can erect himself in a marble or diamond tower, much less export death with impunity from Cuban territory. I also think about, comrades, the sadness of the defendants' relatives, of their fate, because they will live in our society. This, of course, harms our decision. But alongside this thought, an even stronger thought prevails, which is the harm their actions were causing to the peoples and to their own family. I think of the mothers and children of those who offered their lives in Angola. I think of unknown families whose children have taken the drugs that, thanks to these individuals, reached the United States. I think of their disloyalty to the people. I think of how they betrayed themselves and, believe me, the balance leans heavily toward capital punishment. This, of course is the decision I share.

Thank you, very much.

[Miyar] Comrade Pedro Saez Jove.

[Saez] Comrade Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, comrade members of the State Council: Given the seriousness of the events involved in the case remanded to the State Council so that, in full use of the powers conferred upon it by law, it can approve or revoke the sanction imposed on the defendants Arnaldo Ochoa, Antonio de la Guardia, Amado Padron, and Jorge Martinez; given the fact that the Revolution's prestige has been affected, national security endangered, and that in an irresponsible and adventurous manner the defendants—neglecting the most basic principles that must govern a revolutionary's life—perpetrated hostile actions against a foreign state, trafficked with lethal drugs, and took advantage of their positions; and that these charges have been fully proven by the court that tried them; as a member of the State Council, I believe that the sentence of death by firing squad should be carried out. That is all.

[Miyar] Comrade Zeida Suarez Premier.

[Suarez] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, comrades of the State Council: When I heard of Ochoa's arrest on the radio and read about it in the newspapers, and later listened to our FAR Minister Raul Castro's speech, I was greatly disturbed and angered by the immoral acts that had been perpetrated, the drug trafficking, the illicit wealth gained, the immorality, and the ideological degradation by a group of FAR and MININT officers.

I followed the military honor court's work very closely. This group of corrupt individuals attempted to shake the Cuban people's patriotism, which was attained through heroic acts, sacrifice, struggle, and irreproachable morals. They cast doubt on the commander in chief's recent statements. He said—and has always said—that Cuba is free of drugs, that drug trafficking does not exist here. These inferior individuals, particularly their top leaders—Ochoa, Martinez, De la Guardia, and Padron—did not reflect for an instant on the interview Fidel granted a Venezuelan journalist regarding drug trafficking in Cuba. On the contrary, they continued their corrupt life-style. This is an outrage, an offense, an effort to deceive Fidel and the Revolution. These men dared to sully this free fatherland's sacred name, its only name: Cuba.

I can only find it in my heart to tell Ochoa, Tony de la Guardia, and his group that this combative, hardened, and internationalist people will not be betrayed. They will go forward with their banners of victory. Totally unchecked, this group found it easy to bring drugs into the country, and they succeeded in this repugnant effort. They were members of the (?government). Included were the chief of the Cuban military mission in Angola, the chief of the MININT mission, and the military mission chief's aide. This proves that they betrayed the fatherland and Fidel.

Comrades, as a member of the State Council, I approve the sentence of death by firing squad for defendants Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Jorge Martinez, Antonio de la Guardia, and Amado Padron for perpetrating acts of hostility against a foreign state, trafficking with lethal drugs, and taking advantage of their positions. They must wash away with their blood the stain they attempted to leave on our strong and dignified fatherland. This malignant evil must be destroyed at its very roots. We will never allow our principles to be destroyed. Fidel, I am with you and the party. Thank you, very much.

[Miyar] Comrade Lidia Tablada.

[Tablada] Comrade Commander in Chief, comrades of the State Council: We have been summoned to fulfill the duty of studying and rendering a decision on events which, undoubtedly, will constitute a milestone in our country's history. In my particular case, the Revolution's generosity has bestowed upon me the unpleasant privilege of being a member of the state's highest representative body, thus bestowing upon me the duty of making a decision on an exceptionally important event alongside this State Council's members, who are comrades of very high revolutionary standing.

I will state my views, comrade commander in chief, bearing in mind our motto of commitment to the Revolution, and the honesty which you have taught us. People like us do not deserve nuisances such as De la Guardia, Padron, and their gang. Our people are the hundreds of thousands of generous internationalists, the courageous youths in the Turquino Plan, the builders working in the contingents, in short, the people who every day, anonymously, modestly, and devotedly confirm their dedication to socialism, to a rich future of growth nurtured by the blood and sacrifice of the fatherland's best sons. There is no room in that future for the defendants or anyone who lacks the dignity to deserve to be called a Cuban.

It is not easy to decide whether human beings should live or die. However, Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amado Padron Trujillo, and Jorge Martinez Valdez deserve the death sentence, even though I consider Ochoa a part of our beautiful and heroic history. I do not believe that the problem can be reduced to the execution of a handful of individuals, whose guilt no one doubts because of the seriousness of their crimes and the infamy of their disloyalty.

I will take the liberty of quoting Che Guevara: A counterrevolutionary is a man who fights against the Revolution; he is also the man who uses his influence to purchase a house, two cars, who disregards rationing regulations, who has all the things the people lack and flaunts them, or who does not flaunt them but has them. This is a counterrevolutionary. He must be reported immediately. Anyone who uses his good or evil influence to his own or his friends' advantage is a counterrevolutionary and he must be persecuted—but with fury—persecuted and annihilated.

I believe that the most important thing we should consider is how this small group—which considered itself to be all-powerful and above the law and which existed according to corrupt and shameful ethics—was formed, how it grew, and how this was allowed to happen. Corruption is not determined by a sudden whim or as a result of a particular set of circumstances, and this applies both to corruption within individuals and corruption as a social phenomenon. Corruption is the end result of a process. The events we are considering are not the result of the attitudes of a single man or a group of men; instead, these events were the result of a corrupt environment, a completely misguided view of life characterized by underestimating the value of ethical and moral principles and the Revolution's foundation. These events occurred as a result of personal and institutionalized delusions of grandeur, which led to a feeling of impunity and arrogance.

To believe that one is serving the Revolution by maintaining a certain attitude toward it is to put a price on the Revolution. When we overestimate our daily work, we begin to believe that we are above everyone else, and this leads us to live beyond our means. We should devote ourselves to the Revolution, not just serve it. We should devote our entire lives to the Revolution and do our duty. Any action or instrument that violates ethical, moral, and revolutionary principles of the people, for the people, and particularly existing among the people is disastrous and must be attacked with drastic measures.

It is not simply a matter of making this obviously guilty, small group take the stand. I believe that we are obligated to put them on trial and to condemn them for what they have done, for the lives they led behind the people's back, for their negligence, for their bureaucratic formulas and solutions, for their dishonesty, for their lack of strong, severe, and timely criticism, for their weakness in failing to truly follow the party as Raul and you, Comrade Fidel, have taught us. I truly believe that if these just measures on which we are to decide today are not followed up with measures to take care of the root causes, the possibility will be left open for such cases—possibly much worse cases—to arise in the future. I fully trust that these measures will be taken. I confirm that I vote that these convicted people be executed.

[Miyar] Comrade Ramiro Valdes Menendez.

[Valdes Menendez] Comrade President of the State Council, comrades: I would like to briefly explain why I believe that it is just, necessary, and inevitable that the four who were convicted by the court-martial of treason against the fatherland and the Revolution be executed by firing squad.

Throughout this trial, following our initial shock, we have all become increasingly aware of the seriousness of these events. First, there was the information that appeared in GRANMA, followed by the hearings, and, finally, the prosecutor's closing argument. All this has enabled us to see that we are up against an unprecedented case in the Revolution's history. Our Penal Code's most rigorous punishment—the death sentence—is fully justified in this case.

We now understand that this is not only a case of treason against the country's moral and legal principles; an offense has been committed against neighboring and friendly countries, which has caused serious damage to

the Cuban Revolution's credibility and international prestige. This case constitutes an attack against our fartherland's security. Moreover, a crime against humanity has been committed.

To help smuggle 6 tons of cocaine into any country—whatever the circumstances—is a crime against humanity. It means helping thousands of drug addicts—who lack willpower and most of whom are young—to destroy themselves. It means murdering youths and children, destroying families, and promoting theft, violence, and criminal activity associated with this great scourge of our time. Drug traffickers are committing genocide. If those who take part in this filthy business are also military officials who use their rank, position, and responsibilities to conceal their crimes, we must not hesitate to impose the maximum sentence.

The issue of illegal drugs concerns the entire international community and is one of the most sensitive issues in Latin America and the Caribbean today. Cuba's clean image and our government's clear position on this issue lead us to make combatting drug trafficking one of our goals for which we seek the area countries' cooperation and unity as well as Third World cooperation in general. These people have attacked our foreign policy's vital goals with their adventurous, corrupt, and irresponsible conduct. They have taken aim at our prestige on the continent; they have made it possible, for the first time, for Cuban officers to appear to the African countries to be vulgar neocolonialists and diamond and ivory traffickers.

Their filth has soiled the memory of all the internationalists who have died in friendly countries throughout these years and soiled the example of hundreds of thousands of fighters and civilian workers who have taken to other countries the Cuban Revolution's message of abnegation, selflessness, and solidarity. The trampling on and betrayal of these sacred values is an action that can only be paid with one's life.

The convicted have accepted that they have seriously damaged Cuba's authority and credibility before the world. They gave the enemy arguments to attack us and justify the miserable plans with which they try to isolate, weaken, and destroy us. Their most reprehensible behavior disproved the Cuban president's statements that our country was not involved in drug trafficking. They undermined the strength of the Cuban Revolution's position in every international forum. Thus, the full enforcement of the sentence issued against the four main culprits for these actions and the avenging of this offense has become an indispensable condition for Cuba to recover from the damage, restore its affronted dignity and morals, and counter our long-time enemy's threats.

To compound it all, these crimes have been perpetrated against a country that had and still has tens of thousands of fighters in a state of war on the other side of the ocean, a country against which new plans for aggression and intimidation are being planned by the U.S. Government. Under the circumstances, trying to corrupt and demoralize the country's armed institutions and casting filth and shame on the combatants who man the foremost positions of all the people's mobilization to defend the homeland and the Revolution is tantamount to endangering the country's stability and security.

If, as it has been said, these shameful phenomenona had provided the U.S. authorities with irrefutable evidence to report the issue on the international level, the campaign launched and the hostility unleashed would have been such that our nation and our revolutionary cause would have virtually been rendered defenseless; our fighting morale would have been undermined; and we would have even had to face a situation in which friendly nations and allied nations would be so confused that their solidarity toward Cuba would have been weakened.

There is only one name for this: high treason; and one sentence: death. Treason does not only involve acting in agreement with the enemy; treason is also doing what is more convenient for the enemy out of ambition, moral corruption, and disgraceful renouncement of military and revolutionary honor, which is what happened in this case. The convicted men have been brought to court in accordance with the state's law, but all our people and all of us are once more facing the court of history.

I feel, as on other occasions in our past, that we are facing a decisive moment for the Revolution. Now is the time to reassert our principles with serenity but unmovable firmness, without hesitation or fear of any new campaign the enemy may prepare. Let us fulfill our bitter duty. I vote that these sentences be carried out, because I am convinced they are absolutely just and represent Cuba's dignity, the Revolution we will deliver to our children, the morale and goals that inspire the Cuban people, the guarantee that events like this will never occur again, and the assurance that our cause will be much more lofty, pure, and clean.

[Miyar] Comrade Roberto Veiga.

[Veiga] Comrade President, Council of State comrades: All the people have followed with indignation and concern the shameful events that led to the process that resulted in this meeting being convoked. The events were discussed first at the Honor Tribunal proceedings and then at the Military Court.

The situation has been discussed publicly, broadly, and openly. It has been said and it is absolutely true that only a party, a government, and a country that are acting purely and honestly and that are in possession of tested ethics and morals can act this way.

I am certain when I say the seriousness of the crimes perpetrated by the people mentioned here, crimes that have been publicized and on which evidence has been produced, fully justify the sentence imposed by our courts. This is a painful sentence, but I support it.

While Fidel—on behalf of the party, government, and people—rejected continuous campaigns of slander launched by an enemy that tried to link our country to drug trafficking; while Fidel, justly angry, was acting this way, this group of unscrupulous and irresponsible people was dedicated to this dirty and revolting business, thus staining the honorable uniforms of the glorious FAR officers and soldiers and the brave Interior Ministry fighters. They engaged in drug-trafficking activities, thus circumventing their assigned mission, and they met with drug traffickers, even giving the impression they represented our official institutions.

It can be easily understood that this represents vile and unforgivable treason against the country's prestige and honor. This was a miserable stab to our commander in chief's credibility, to the credibility that a man who has always lived by the principle of telling the truth deserves. The enemy knows our main weapon is our morale, dignity, and honor. It is trying to weaken our strength with what it has been fed by a group of criminals. Sooner or later, the truth will win. It is already winning. The imperialists knew about the group's activities. You do not have to be an expert to realize this. However, they did not tell us anything, because it was more important to them to create conditions that would permit hitting the Revolution in its strongest asset and, if possible, to use such a sensitive issue to create in the United States and internationally an atmosphere that would justify military action against Cuba. This was more important to them than their blabbering about the struggle against drug-trafficking. The hypocrisy and the low moral level of the imperialists have been confirmed again.

These brief statements are sufficient to confirm the seriousness of the crimes committed by the convicted men. They did not only commit revolting crimes associated with abuse of authority, the violation of our laws, indiscipline, waste, illegal securing of wealth, and corruption, crimes that justify the most severe sentence; they committed more serious crimes. They acted against the country's dignity and honor and the security of the state. The convicted men irresponsibly involved themselves in a very dangerous game and endangered vital interests of the Revolution. There has been talk about extenuating circumstances, about the record, the merits, and the rank of some of the convicted men, but in our opinion, these are not extenuating but strong aggravating circumstances, because we live by the principle that the more responsibility a person has, the more serious a crime committed by that person is, and the more trust a person has, the more despicable his treason is. In addition to this, giving special consideration to the facts that could be viewed as extenuating facts, we have concluded the convicted men were fully aware of the political and military danger in which they were placing the country as a result of their ambitions, disloyalty, and corruption.

The courts have handed down capital punishment in the most notorious cases. They believe this will serve as a good enough example and lesson. I support the rulings of the courts, but I do not think that the state attorney's office was exceedingly strict by calling for capital punishment for seven [as heard] of the accused.

The offense against the fatherland was too big. This is why the people demand severe punishment. The enemy will criticize us for this decision. It would criticize us if we were not to make this decision. We are not going to carry out any action based on what the enemy may say but based on what our obligations and our conscience tell us, on revolutionary principles, on the responsibilities we have with the people we serve, on the legitimate right we have to guarantee the country's security and future.

We would not be acting humanely if we were not to act in a sober fashion in the face of these events. We would be acting against our people, whose dignity has been hurt and their calm threatened. We would be acting against millions of men and women, mostly young people and children, who in many places of the world, including the United States, are the victims of the cruel scourge of drug consumption.

We will reach the necessary conclusions from this experience. I repeat: I agree with the decision of the special military tribunal to apply the death sentence to Arnaldo Ochoa, Jorge Martinez, Antonio de la Guardia, and Amado Padron. We have no alternative.

[Miyar] Comrade Felix Vilar Bencomo.

[Vilar] Comrade Fidel Castro, members of the Council of State: Ever since we learned through the press and other news media that Arnaldo Ochoa, Tony de la Guardia, and his group were arrested, we realized this was a matter of great importance, which endangered the prestige of our Revolution. However, after learning of their wrongdoing, we believe they not only endangered the prestige of the Revolution but our fatherland's morals and dignity as well.

The party, the people, and Fidel, who has led this Revolution, trusted them. This Revolution has been so generous it cannot be tarnished by anyone, let alone by a group of criminals of this type, because our people are willing to defend the Revolution at any cost.

We have paid attention to the entire process to which the traitors have been subjected. As a delegate, I agree with the decision of the special military tribunal, because I believe it is fair and necessary. It is my people's decision. As a deputy, I believe they all deserve the death penalty, but our Revolution and our laws are so generous that some of them did not receive the death sentence.

As a member of the Council of State, I support the decision of the special military tribunal; therefore, I believe those involved should face the firing squad. I also believe it is necessary to implement forceful measures so disgusting incidents such as these are not repeated.

I have finished.

[Miyar] Jose M. Miyar. [calling himself]

Commander in chief, comrades: This process, which includes this meeting today, has had great repercussions both inside and outside the country, not only because of the seriousness and unusual nature of the crimes we are discussing here in Cuba, but also because of the open, brave, clean, and honorable way in which it all developed; because of its educational, ideological, political, and moral nature; and because of the careful way in which the process has been handled in strict compliance with the law.

The process and the way it was made public has served to completely clarify the incidents, the way it all began, the way it evolved, and the responsibility of each one of those involved, thus eliminating any doubts they were a group of individuals who betrayed the principles, morals, and ethics of the Revolution and became a gang of drug traffickers.

The Honor Tribunal has been unprecedented and of great historical importance. The great dignity, honesty, and sincerity, and the great moral and ethical strength that has resulted from its actions are a reflection of the morals and dignity of our FAR.

The people showed their support for Comrade Raul's report before the honor tribunal and for the attitude of the generals. The people greatly shared their viewpoints. The trial sessions at the special military tribunal and the open, clear coverage of the sessions allowed the people, who followed them daily, to participate in the process, analyze, and pass judgment. The charges documented and carefully reviewed during the trial were clearly proved. In his final report, the prosecutor described each one of the incidents very clearly.

However, I would like to point out one thing, which although it has not been discussed here does not mean it is not important. Even though for many years our enemies talked about Cuba's alleged involvement in drug trafficking, it was not until early 1988 that this campaign reached its highest, aggressive, and dirty levels. In February 1989, for the first time, they tried to involve top leaders of the country in drug-trafficking charges. This gross lie was flatly denied by our commander in chief. This disgusting campaign was tied to another campaign regarding alleged violations of human rights in Cuba, which coincided with the meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, where the United States wanted our country to be condemned. To do this, they exerted all types of pressures, threats, and blackmail against the member countries of the commission. The Revolution was able to defeat both of these campaigns. The list of lies in which the drug-trafficking charges against Cuba were based was proved wrong. Our people once again saw the flags of dignity and morals waving high in the hands of the revolutionary leaders.

While these incidents were going on, this criminal group's actions were endangering the credibility, honor, dignity, moral strength, and even the security of the country. In that same period, they conducted drug shipments in Varadero; in April, they held two meetings with different groups of drug traffickers; and in May, one of them even traveled to Medellin and met with none other than Pablo Escobar, one of the top drug traffickers in the world.

How can these incidents be described? They were a betrayal of the country, the people, the Revolution, and Fidel. Those involved in these dealings have tarnished the country's image. They have hurt the people and undermined the prestige of the Revolution. All these incredible incidents took place precisely during one of the most creative periods of the Revolution—when the people led by Fidel were conducting a process of rectification, the first objectives of which were to rescue man's conscience as the most important element of man's conduct.

A great effort was made to rescue and implement the most essential elements of Che Guevara's thoughts, the values he defended along with Fidel. Those individual and collective values have resulted in important changes in the attitude of workers. Impressive changes have taken place in the country, where the production of goods and services has increased and where organization and productivity have become the symbol of the process.

While the country was being transformed into a giant working place, these shameful events were taking place. These events were isolated and unusual cases, as we said before. When we ask ourselves how these events could occur and what led these men to carry out these monstrous acts, it is clear the main reason lies in their having lived outside our society; they did not participate in our problems and were not part of our people, their efforts, and their struggle.

They were unaware of the basic goals of the work of the masses. They did not know the goals of voluntary work or the work that contingents and minibrigades carried out. They disconnected themselves completely from the problems of productivity, organization, discipline, and control. They placed themselves at a cosmic distance from the Cuban people's and Revolution leaders' goals and essential interests.

Far from virtuous things like austerity, humbleness, respect, and hard work, those men characterized themselves with their arrogance, self-sufficiency, and vanity. All these things led them to the highest degree of corruption.

Those men consciously violated all the highest ethical principles of our Revolution. They also committed their crimes while our ideology is the first weapon socialism has to fight imperialism. They committed their crimes while socialism is facing difficulties and problems and while imperialists are already talking about throwing socialism into the trash can of history. Those men committed their crimes while Cuba unfurled the flags of struggle, which are its morality, dignity, credibility, and purity. Cuba was, is, and will always be an undefeatable bastion of socialism and the Revolution. For its defense, Cuba has people whose main weapons are those flags.

Therefore, this stain, this outrage, this abuse, this brutal blow on the prestige of the Revolution deserves the corresponding sentence.

During the development of this painful and traumatic trial, the Cuban people expressed their anger over those men's actions. They have expressed their unyielding faith in the Revolution, the party, and our commander in chief. That faith will not be undermined with discrediting campaigns or treacherous actions. The Revolution has always acted openly and cleanly. It taught the people to make conscious and fair decisions, which is how it was in the case we are discussing now.

I believe the sentence pronounced by the special court-martial is correct; I support that sentence.

Comrade Juan Almeida.

[Almeida] Comrade Fidel, comrades: On the night of the 27th [month not given], before leaving for Korea, I told a television reporter my opinion about the acts of corruption and drug-trafficking operations in which Ochoa, De la Guardia, and their group were involved. I told the reporter they all deserved exemplary punishment without any distinctions, because they had stained our people's honor and dignity. They had stained our martyrs, their fallen comrades-in-arms, Fidel, and the FAR's and the MININT's prestige. They committed a crime of high treason and a crime against humanity. I told the reporter the offense could only be erased by sentencing the main defendants to death by firing squad and by sentencing the other defendants to life imprisonment.

In view of the large amount of evidence presented in this case, I here and now express my support for the sentence pronounced by the special court-martial and confirmed by the military affair's court of the Supreme People's Tribunal.

I have concluded.

[Miyar] Comrade Osmani Cienfuegos Gorriaran.

[Cienfuegos] Comrade Members of the Council of State: During the last 3 decades and even before—during the times when we were at Sierra Maestra—the Revolution has given innumerable examples of its generosity. The Revolution has proved it can understand that human beings can make mistakes. When judging the behavior and actions of those who have even been its enemies, the Cuban Revolution has always rejected intolerance.

The sentence we are examining here has been a corrective measure rather than a punishment. This sentence has been a weapon to defend the principles of our society and its very survival.

Fidel told us that the Cuban Revolution would not be like Saturn, who swallowed his own children. The Revolution's attitude has been a source of pride for all of us and an example for the world. The revolution has been neither tolerant nor implacable.

The seriousness of the actions involved in the case we are examining goes far beyond the possibility of commuting the sentence pronounced by the special court-martial and confirmed by the Supreme People's Tribunal.

The recently conducted irreproachable trial, which was filled with guarantees, proved that a revolutionary, a general filled with glories earned in combat, his assistant, and a group of MININT officers betrayed the principles of the Revolution and let themselves be dominated by their ambition, moral degradation, and corruption. Those men jeopardized our revolutionary society's prestige, dignity, and moralilty. They endangered the security of our revolutionary state, itself.

Those men linked themselves with notorious, international drug traffickers and became vulgar and mediocre collaborators of such an unworthy and repulsive trade. Briefly, they committed a crime of high treason.

The four men sentenced to death by the special court-martial betrayed our people, our Revolution, our party, our history, their children and relatives, and Fidel.

Can we think of a more horrible betrayal of our people than Ochoa's betrayal? Ochoa was the chief of a military mission in a state of war. Instead of dedicating each minute of his life to his task, Ochoa dedicated his time to organizing drug-trafficking operations to obtain personal benefits. Is it not true that Ochoa also betrayed the troops who waged the heroic, epic battle in Cuito Canavale, which was commented upon by the entire world? Was this not treason to those who died during that war? Was this not treason to the FAR generals, officers, and soldiers who fulfilled their duty and were victorious in the southern front?

Can one imagine a more serious treason to the Angolan people than the treason committed by this man, who gave orders to carry out forbidden operations, damaged the Angolan economy through shady black market deals, and appropriated resources that had been delivered to him for defense purposes? Can one conceive of a more

despicable act of treason than the one committed by Ochoa against the brotherly Sandinist people, whom he also victimized with his lust for money?

Together with this man, Martinez, his aide, engaged in degrading activities related to drug trafficking—not in compliance with orders but as an accomplice. He acted like a vulgar criminal, traveled with false passports to pursue these ends, met with drug lords, familiarly mingled among these characters, and hinted or pretended his powers emanated from higher ups in the Cuban Government. Is this not treason?

Regarding Antonio de la Guardia and Amado Padron, both were guilty of the same, infamous crime. Shielded by the powers they possessed to circumvent the brutal embargo on Cuba, they established a system to protect drug-trafficking activities along Cuba's coasts and airspace, corrupted subordinates, and deceptively tried to cover up and erase the clues to their crimes. Incredibly, irresponsibly, they opened cracks in the shield protecting the security of their homeland, which is under constant harassment by imperialism.

By undermining the selfless work of the MININT fighters, who struggle day and night to stave off enemy actions against Cuba, they betrayed their institution and their people. All of them created a most dangerous situation. Without even the slightest doubt, their machinations were being gleefully watched by the enemy, which could have been able to substantiate, at long last, its vile, slanderous charges that Cuba was linked to international drug trafficking and the smuggling of drugs into the United States.

What records and evidence did the imperialist enemy lack? What could it be planning to try to punish us? Some day we will know whether or not, hating the Revolution as it does and with evidence in hand, it was preparing an armed aggression against our people. For decades, the imperialist enemy has used its major mass media to attack the Revolution. It has manipulated information and distorted facts but has not been able to throw mud on the Revolution with its despicable lies. Thanks to the reputation of the Cuban Revolution, this infamy has not prospered. The voice of the Revolution, expressed through its top leaders, Fidel and Raul, has been respected and believed because—let us recall here the times at the Sierra Maestra—truth has always been a strategic weapon of the Revolution. The treason committed by these men could have had catastrophic effects on this major weapon.

If the Revolution had not brought out clearly the rotten activities in which this group was involved, what monstrous infamy would have fallen on it and its leaders? It was not repentance on the part of these men that allowed the Revolution to uncover their villainy and thus demonstrate its grandeur, fortitude, and courage once more. Let us not forget it was Fidel's shrewdness and courage that brought out into the open this monstrous scheme, however painful it was. A substantial amount of evidence clearly demonstrated the culpability of the defendants, which was admitted by all of them.

As a revolutionary, I believe men can redeem themselves. Although at some points during the honor tribunal hearing some depositions sounded honest, the disclosures made throughout the trial led one to conclude that their actions involved incurable and unredeemable guilt. The one thing that gives meaning to a revolutionary's life is his status as such. This is where his honor lies, and they lost it.

For all those reasons, I fulfill my duty of bringing justice to our people and its Revolution and vote for the ratification of the maximum penalty: death before a firing squad. I think this exemplary penalty will serve as a warning so no one else in Cuba will wish to break the law. This bitter experience will not make the Revolution lose its trust in man; however, it will sharpen and strengthen our surveillance. This process and its outcome are not only a strong warning but also a lesson. No one can betray our people's virtues, trust, and safety—achieved at the cost of so much blood and effort—and go unpunished. Our people have every right to demand justice, and justice must be had.

[Miyar] Comrade Machado Ventura.

[Machado] Comrade President, Comrade Members of the Council of State: Regarding the penalty requested by the special military tribunal and by the supreme military court, I fully agree with the decision to request the death penalty for the four cases we heard. Even though I fully agree with everything said by my comrades who spoke before me, I would like to stress some points to support my vote.

The guilty parties have trampled the principles that have always guided our Revolution. They are guilty of attacking the prestige and credibility of the Cuban Revolution; they are guilty of betraying the trust bestowed upon them throughout the years by our leaders, party, and people. They abused the responsibility, duties, and rights the state placed in their hands, thereby disgustingly distorting the real reason for their missions. The accused have, to some extent, held several offices since the beginning of our Revolution. Therefore, it cannot be said their crimes are the result of lack of experience. They carried out degrading actions that express their moral degradation. They were disloyal to the people, the homeland, and the institutions they represented; in other words, they betrayed us.

We cannot deny we have been hurt; the accused did not stop a single second to think of the consequences that could result from their irresponsible actions. We cannot forget that with their crazy actions, they allowed the entry into the country of international criminals, thereby disregarding moral and revolutionary ethics. The crimes committed by the accused have endangered our national

security. They all show a high degree of social danger, and the common denominator is they have all betrayed the principles of the Revolution. That is the most important.

Because of the aforementioned, we support the punishment requested by the special military tribunal. To all their crimes we must add other serious crimes, such as committing hostile acts against a foreign state. The punishment must be exemplary. The Revolution has been able to take this hard blow because of its strength. Much mud has been thrown, but the Revolution's strength, cleanliness, history, and prestige—which cannot be separated from Fidel and Raul's teachings and personal example, which are always present—have prevailed. Recognizing the harm caused by the negative repercussions, locally and abroad, the Revolution will not lose a single ounce of authority, strength, or fighting power. The way our Revolution was born and has been led cannot but be described as impeccable, as this penal process has been handled.

The decision we adopt will not only be for the present; it will have future repercussions. We must learn the bitter lesson and avoid, at all cost, the repetition of incidents like these. We must also prepare the path for the new generations that will surely have to struggle, for many years to come, for the development of a socialist society in conditions of harassment by the imperialist enemy. The new generations will have a beautiful history and an excellent example of its predecessors to follow.

Comrade President, comrades of the Council of State: I conclude, reiterating that I agree that the requested sentence of death by firing squad, ratified by the appropriate tribunals, for the accused Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amado Padron Trujillo, and Jorge Martinez Valdez should not be commuted.

I have concluded.

[Miyar] Comrade Pedro Miret.

[Miret] Comrade president, comrade members of the Council of State: History has once again summoned us at a decisive moment. Within our people, but behind our people's backs, the germ of corruption, disloyalty, and treason, has once again emerged. The seriousness of these crimes is heightened by the fact that they were committed amid a process to correct mistakes and negative trends that began only 3 years ago. While the people with their bare hands built the wealth of the present and lay the foundations for the future, unscrupulous beings—removed from revolutionary ideology and the daily limitations that our people confront with dignity, cloaked by their offices, protected by the trust placed in them, and shaded by a lack of control [word indistinct] and the lack of revolutionary surveillance—attacked the ethics, morale, and principles of the Revolution. At a time when we asked of our people the biggest sacrifice—when hundreds of thousands of our best children share the honors of proletarian internationalism, while millions of men and women give the best of themselves with the winch and the furrow in the never ending activities of the minibrigades, building homes, day care centers, schools, and hospitals—a small group of corrupt adventurers sold themselves to the highest bidder, endangered the country's security, and turned our borders into safe passage for adventurers, drug traffickers, traitors, and who knows how many CIA agents.

Today we know that our skies have been repeatedly violated; that our coasts and cays have been repeatedly penetrated; that our streets, official houses, ports and airports, and cars have been used by the representatives of the international drug trafficking hoods to move in freedom, and like kings. Ochoa and Tony de la Guardia's almighty group broke the laws, mocked the established guidelines, and violated the highest ethical values of the Revolution. They created a grotesque empire masterminded by Ochoa's corrupt mind and run by Tony de la Guardia's devious group.

Our courts have proved their crimes beyond a doubt. There have been no strings left dangling. There is no doubt behind their real intentions. There is no vagueness in the shameful results. Once again, revolutionary justice has confronted those who, entangled and tempted by tinsel forgot their homeland; those who tired of serving a cause—now proved that they never had—abandoned themselves to the pleasures of the senses and to the vertigo of power.

With this process, the Revolution, party, and Fidel have given the people and the world a lesson in political courage, moral cleanliness, and faith in the masses. A son of this Revolution, and forever a follower of Fidel, I declare without a doubt that I have full faith in the future; I trust man; I trust the people and the party; I have a well-founded optimism in the path set in the indestructible strength of the Revolution; however, the Revolution must purge its ranks. The Revolution is not a bed of roses, revolutionaries cannot be chance adventurers, much less professional adventurers. I have no doubt that the punishment must be exemplary. There can be no half measures. A shot fired from rifles held by honest and firm hands must cleanse the stain of the traitors. Those who, because of lesser crimes, will not stand before the firing squad, must receive, together with the people's rejection, the full weight of the law. That is what the people are demanding and hoping for. We are sure that this heartbreaking lesson will serve as an example not only for today's revolutionaries but for the generations to come.

Therefore, as a member of the Council of State, I strongly express my support for the fulfillment of the sentence given by the Military Tribunal, that is, death before a firing squad for Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio de la Guardia Font, Amadro Padron Trujillo, and Jorge Martinez Valdez.

[Miyar] Comrade Carlos Rafael Rodriguez.

[Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez] Comrade chairman, comrade members of the Council of State:

I also favor enforcing the death sentence on convicts Arnaldo Ochoa, Antonio de la Guardia, Jorge Martinez, and Amado Padron. I think all those who were implicated in the drug trafficking could have been sentenced to death. However, one of the revolutionary tenets of our people has been not to be inflexible and the tribunal, which took exemplary action, has demonstrated once more its loyalty to the principles and rules of the Revolution.

I have always favored applying the death sentence to cases in which the convict apparently cannot be recovered by society; to cases involving crimes which are obviously repulsive and in which clemency cannot be granted because of the debasement of the culprits.

Such is the case at hand. As the honor court and Ochoa's fellow fighters have stated, Ochoa's previous merits cannot be regarded as extenuating but as aggravating circumstances. Ochoa is an intelligent man with an adequate political development and capable of weighing the consequences of his actions. It is true that he became morally degraded and this explains why he could sink so low politically.

However, corruption is also an aggravating circumstance. Arnaldo Ochoa not only betrayed but endangered the Revolution and its principles. As stated in the tribunal, he also endangered our Revolution's most powerful weapon: its moral strength. He demonstrated that he had become a most despicable being—all at once selfish, overbearing, and ambitious. He thought he was above everybody else and lost all of the values that should guide all of us revolutionaries. Like all of his associates, he traded on the lives of thousands of young people, forgot our dead in Angola and Ethiopia, and put Fidel's existence at risk.

Regarding the petty group that Tony de la Guardia directed, I do not think it is worth talking very much about it. It was a group of debased people who, before Ochoa, also endangered the Revolution. It also left us helplessly open to attack by the enemy. This group also deserves being put to death by firing squad.

What are the possible international consequences of our decision, which appears to be taking shape among the majority of those present here? What will be the reaction of those who are against the death penalty? I have the testimony of an outstanding international figure whose name I will not invoke. This person is a practicing Catholic who, when talking with one of our ambassadors, said that even though he was not an advocate of capital punishment he could understand why, in a case like this, the Cuban Revolution was resorting to it. The friends of our Revolution, those who respect us, know this is the most open trial in judicial history. They know that each and all of its proceedings have been watched by the public; that it has been watched by our national public opinion. They know that the prosecutor has shown care during every questioning. They know that the tribunal has fully adhered to the rules.

Consequently, we must not be afraid of international public opinion. Clearly, our enemies will criticize us when we execute them, and will also criticize us if we do not execute them. They will say that we are accomplices if we spare one who was part of our revolutionary leadership. I have here an article that was published in THE NEW YORK TIMES by the reactionary, ruthless watchdog who was placed by President Reagan in charge of Latin America years ago. What does Elliott Abrams say? He says, and I quote: The evidence has been available for years that the Cuban regime is involved in the traffic with the Medellin cartel.

Why did they not show this evidence to our Revolution? Why did they not relay it to us? They knew they had photographs showing the smuggler worm Reinaldo Ruiz in Varadero with Cuban intelligence agent [Miguel] Ruiz Poo. Yet, they did not make these photographs and this evidence available to us. Why? Because they were building a dossier against our Revolution and against Fidel. They were waiting to get some clue that would allow them to implicate Fidel Castro in all of these vile activities. Of course they could not do it. They were not able and will never be able to do that.

These are the heroes and martyrs they are proclaiming. They have pronounced Ochoa a hero. They are asking that he not be executed by firing squad because he is a hero to them, and they will proclaim him a martyr. We will let them keep these heroes and martyrs as a gift. If we execute Ochoa as all of us are proposing, we will have, in turn, the support of the Cuban people. Our people have very noble feelings. At a point during the process, when they thought that Ochoa would make amends and admit his crimes in shame, they hesitated for a moment and some of them thought that his life could be spared.

However, when our people watched Ochoa later during the proceedings and he looked arrogant, ambitious, and vile, our people supported the request for the death penalty. The Council of State is a political body. Without question, it must listen to public opinion. However, I am convinced that this Council of State would have found itself morally and politically obliged to convict Ochoa even if for some time the Cuban public had looked favorably upon a commutation of his death sentence. The crime was so monstrous and the effects of the crime would have been so devastating to our Revolution, that we would have found ourselves obliged to lead our people, to guide them, to transmit to them our experience in these cases.

We cannot be indulgent. It is hard for the Revolution to place before the firing wall someone who was a hero of our Republic. However, we are obliged to demonstrate to the people and to the world that a leader's duties cannot be forgotten; that none of us can forget them; that no one can place himself above them; that nobody can expect pardon if he betrays human beings, if he betrays the Revolution the way Ochoa and the wretched people who participated in this crime with him betrayed it.

The fact that we were friends of Ochoa, and the fact that we admired him the way we did further obliges us to understand how big his crime was. The Revolution has to demonstrate how ready it is to preserve its cleanliness. The punishment will serve as an example to all those who assume positions of responsibility in our country. We cannot hesitate. It is our duty and we must fulfill it. The Cuban people will know that we, the leaders of this country, are ready to pay with our own lives for our fulfillment of our duties. I have concluded, comrade president.

[Raul Castro] Comrade President, comrades of the Council of State:

On the occasion of the case that brings us here, my remarks of 14 June on the 28th anniversary of the Western Army and my report to the military honor tribunal 10 days later on 24 June—which, for obvious reasons, could not all be published—have been made public.

In addition, at the special plenum of the PCC Central Committee on 29 June, I also made a few comments that were not published and thus not made known to those present. Although I would like to be brief, as you know, and as we said on that occasion, I have supreme authority over the case. It is enough to say that today I, along with other officials, completed 26 days of living continuously at the FAR Ministry since the principal individuals involved in this case were detained, with the exception of a brief departure for insignificant health reasons and for another departure to participate in the previously aforementioned plenum. This does not include the two previous weeks, beginning 23 May, that we virtually devoted to the same problem. My mind and all my time, as has occurred with the dozens of comrade officials who dealt with this matter—especially those in military counterintelligence—had to be focused on this very delicate problem.

In reference to Fidel, I should say that in the MINFAR [FAR Ministry] alone and just from 12 June through dawn the day before yesterday, he has spent 153 hours in my office working on this same problem. This does not include the continuous 14 hours he spent in his own office in the Palace of the Revolution from mid-afternoon Sunday, the 11th [of June], through dawn on Monday, 12 June. This also does not include the immense amount of time he has spent on many other activities outside the MINFAR because of this bitter affair.

First of all, I want to stress that this Council of State meeting is the culmination of a process where each institution of our society that intervened or participated in solving the problem, including the newspaper of our party [GRANMA], has fulfilled its role without having Comrade Fidel make a public appearance until now. As everyone knows, he has been guiding the process through the institutions created by the Revolution and this process has been based strictly on socialist law.

At this time, each one of us who is a member of the Council of State and who must assume a personal position and responsibility has available to him all the elements of judgment to make an appropriate and completely conscious decision. We know the results of the investigation, the proceedings and recommendations of the honor tribunal, the complete development and results of the expeditious trial of the special military tribunal, the ratification of this decision by the Military Affairs Court of the Supreme People's Tribunal, and the activities that reflect the population's opinion which has been evident these past few days.

In reference to this, we have seen with satisfaction and legitimate pride, how the humanistic and generous nature of our own people has been demonstrated with their high level of political awareness and the comprehension that prevails today for the need for an exemplary justice for all, but primarily for those who are the most responsible for this barbaric act which is unprecedented in the history of the Revolution. I think that the lucidity of our people also includes the conviction that one of the inevitable measures to prevent a shameful act such as this from being repeated, is to not have the slightest hesitation in strictly enforcing the sentence.

Nevertheless, we do not ignore the fact that there are and there will continue to be people who are inclined to think that we should show clemency in the cases that have been submitted to the Council of State. I am not referring to the family members with whom we should have the greatest understanding and give them, as we have done without exception, all the support we can provide.

To all the arguments and reasons we have heard and which, in one way or another, have been expressed by the comrades who preceded me, I want to add the following:

If we do not apply the sanction approved by the special military tribunal and ratified by the supreme court in these four cases presented to us, then, as a comrade who preceded me said, in my opinion, this would lead to the consideration of the permanent abolition of the death sentence in our country. It would lack all the moral force expressed in one of the recently published GRANMA editorials which referred to the urgency for more severe

measures of all kinds and of a sensible increase in the strictness of our legislation, which, in my opinion, should include the death sentence for the most serious cases of corruption and drug trafficking.

If today we can maintain strict control and still show our solidarity and treat most humanely those who are ill or those who carry AIDS, which was introduced into our country, then we can fight mercilessly to prevent corrupted and dehumanized individuals from introducing the scourge of drugs in Cuba.

AIDS entered our country and it was impossible to avoid it. We received foreign visitors; Cuban citizens went abroad. However, drugs will never enter. They can only enter by iron and blood [solo a sangre y fuego podra entrar]; only capitalism can introduce it. As we said publicly, if I recall correctly, on 14 June, expressing the feeling of my own family, which is the only opinion I can give in this case, it is preferable for our beloved and beautiful island to sink into the ocean like the legend of Atlantis than to let the corruption of capitalism prevail here again.

For those who ask for clemency because of Ochoa's merits, what I say or will say is nothing new. Comrade Carlos Rafael Rodriguez has just said the same thing. This was also opportunely stated by the soldiers, officers, and generals in Angola. They said that Ochoa's merits should not be treated as extenuating circumstances; instead, they should be considered aggravating circumstances.

To those who appeal to emotions and pity and for the benefit of those who did not participate in the PCC meeting mentioned earlier, I should once again repeat the reasons previously cited. In 1988, in view of the increase and complexity of the war in southern Angola, we proposed that the chief of the Cuban military mission in that country be given the authority of frontline chief in war time. He was thus allowed to hold summary trials. This gave him the authority to sign death sentences according to the crimes they committed.

Through the justice minister, the president of the supreme tribunal and the attorney general of the Republic, the appropriate measures were taken from a legal stance to bestow the authority of frontline chief in war time upon Ochoa, who was then a division general. He signed three death warrants for young Cuban soldiers for violating and murdering female Angolan comrades. Even under those circumstances, so that no one's life depended on a single person there, the legal instruments were established, which were approved for that situation, so that I had to ratify the death sentence here.

Ochoa subjected the three soldiers to an expeditious trial. They were condemned to death. He signed their death warrants. I ratified them here. At that time, my hand did not shake to sign them because they were just decisions. Today, my hand will not shake either as I sign the death warrant recommended by the tribunal in the four cases that have been presented to us here at this Council of State meeting.

The mothers of those three youths also could have asked for clemency. If we do not carry out this sentence, we will have to ask them to forgive us.

As I also said at the PCC plenum, you know me. You know I am not an overly-sentimental man. One morning, just before the sun came up, at the end of an extremely long session presided over by Fidel, after we realized the seriousness of the problem once the topic of drugs was discovered, with my head tormented, as I imagine the rest of the comrades felt, with a lack of sleep, while I walked around my own office; I went to brush my teeth in the bathroom that is behind my office. I looked at myself in the mirror in the bathroom and I saw that tears were streaming down my cheeks. At first, I was angry at myself. I immediately composed myself and I understood then that I was crying for Ochoa's children whom I have known since they were born. I cried for the children of the other people involved who would probably be sentenced to death or to long prison terms. Even though I did not know them, I cried for their mothers and for the rest of their family. But above all, I cried for our people, for the ton of mud [tonelada de fango] that would be thrown at them if this sentence would not be fulfilled because of his historic merits.

If the sentence is not fulfilled because of historic merits, we will be creating an ill-fated precedence of impunity for all those in this country who, in one way or another, enjoy the recognition of the people as some of us in this meeting do. If we allow ourselves to be intimidated by the campaigns of the enemy, or if we give in to pressures from others, regardless of their motivation, we will make a grave error of immeasurable consequences. On more than one occasion, for fear of those campaigns or giving in to pressure, we have not taken measures that would have been very opportune and beneficial to us.

Let us not forget that the people know it all. Many times, they know it before we do and they almost always know more than we do in reference to what is not well in the country. Let us not forget that it benefits the enemy when we are hesitant and indulgent with this type of corrosive behavior. Let us put an end to the mediocrity and cowardice of those who seek shelter behind the unfounded or real threat that the enemy can use our errors against us and thus they preach tolerance and weakness in response to this behavior.

Because of all this, I add my vote to those cast by all others who have called for the fulfillment of the sentence imposed by the special military tribunal which was ratified by the Supreme People's Tribunal. Last of all, I

think, and I do not wish to exhaust the topic at this meeting [taps table with finger], that we should ask ourselves: What do we do immediately after this painful and bitter process ends?

Perhaps the best response was given by a man of the people, a simple military man of the grass roots organization when he said: Now the rectification of errors will advance 10 years.

However, to attain this, it is necessary for us to reach conclusions and to extract from our experiences without extremism, without making room for the gossiping that tends to flourish at times like this, and without conducting a witch hunt. This will help us suppress the most minimal demonstration of depravity [relajo] and will help us begin a continuous and systematic national cleansing in all instances of our society down through the grass roots because, unfortunately, there are also cases of corrupted workers. But this cleansing should begin with our own organs of leadership at all levels and we should conduct it ourselves.

I have concluded, Comrade President.

Castro Addresses State Council on Drug Trial

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[Speech by President Fidel Castro Ruz, at the Council of State meeting in Havana on 9 July—recorded]

[Text] Comrades of the State Council:

We are witnessing a unique situation and for this reason the State Council has found it necessary to adopt a very important decision.

Realizing that this had to be done, I reached the conclusion over the course of the process—and most particularly in its final stage—that it was necessary that all State Council members be present during this historic decision. For this reason, we made special efforts to enable Comrade Almeida [Juan Almeida Bosque] and Comrade Robaina [Roberto Robaina Gonzalez], who were in Pyongyang, to urgently travel back to Cuba and be ready to participate in the meeting of the State Council.

Comrade Fernandez [Education Minister Jose Ramon Fernandez] had been designated to attend the inauguration of the Argentine president and we decided to make a change and replace him with another comrade so that he could attend this meeting. Therefore, all the members of the State Council are present.

I will need to speak somewhat at length to refer to certain background data; to sort of recount what has happened; to give my points of view on the way you have expressed yours; and also to perhaps contribute some elements that may be helpful in adopting a final decision with regard to this case.

I feel that this case has been characterized by its exceptional honesty. I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that there has never been a judicial process that involved such large participation, so much information, so much clarity, and so much equitability. I think that never before have so many people been able to express their views in a process like this. Possibly, there has never been so honest a process. I think it is advisable to make a few remarks about this.

This has been an extremely brief trial, but the measures that were adopted for this trial to be carried out with full objectivity and full justice have also been exceptional. I must say that even though the court was a special military court—and military activities are characterized by discipline—there was at all times absolute respect for the criterion of the court and of the members of the court.

I was in close contact with the prosecutor. I was also in contact with the tribunal members throughout the process, but had no influence whatsoever on the decision they eventually made. Once the hearing had concluded I asked the tribunal members about their views—first, out of respect for those dignified, serious, and responsible comrades; and second, because we believed that it was most important to hear what they thought about everything they had ascertained and learned throughout the trial.

They came to a decision with absolute freedom. Logically, we could exert our influence on the prosecutor and his views because he is part of the state, and he has to make sure that the law is enforced because that is his mission. However, the tribunal's mission was to judge and decide, and the tribunal members took into consideration the prosecutor's request, but they freely decided what sentence should be issued based on the gravity of the case.

They decided to reduce the number of death sentences. They even decided to increase the sentence, from 25 years to 30 years, for one of the defendants, Miguel Ruiz [Poo]. They decided to reduce the sentence of one of the convicted persons—from the 15 years that the prosecutor requested to 10 years. This viewpoint prevailed throughout the process.

We never tried to exert any influence on the investigators or their viewpoints; and we did not try to exert any influence on the witnesses or the defendants. Therefore, this trial has been characterized by truly exceptional cleanliness. Also, and you know about this, during the exchange of views we had at the Politburo, Central

Committee, Executive Committee, and Council of Ministers I said that the ultimate decision would be made by the State Council—regardless of what the Politburo and Central Committee members thought.

The State Council had to exert its constitutional rights and make the ultimate decision if the final decision came under its jurisdiction, meaning, if a death sentence might be issued or when a death sentence had been issued against several of the accused. Thus, it was clearly stated that the ultimate decision of what should be done would not depend on the Politburo, or the Central Committee, or the Council of Ministers; and that the State Council would be absolutely free to carry out its duties.

You are the best witnesses to the fact that no one talked with any of the State Council members; that I have not talked with any of them about their views; that Comrade Raul nor any other vice president of the State Council have even talked about the decision that must be made in today's meeting in a truly free way. Not all the State Council members are members of the Politburo, but those who are, knew that they were completely free to decide. Not all are members of the central committee; we have here several comrades who are members of the state council, but not members of the central committee. Not one of them was asked about his opinion; not one was asked to state his views in advance, so we have respected—to the smallest detail—the principles of equity and justice; and you have stated your views accordingly.

It was also our idea that if all has been divulged—at the honor tribunal and the trial sessions—then we also had to divulge what each one of us said here. Thus, the people would hear what each of us said and how the state council meeting was carried out. I believe that this will give the people the opportunity to learn about all the views, arguments, and criteria—although there is another issue that we have reasserted throughout this process. We said that the decision we adopted would not be determined by public opinion or polls of people's opinion.

It could happen that most of the population had an opinion and we might have to adopt another opinion. Comrade Carlos Rafael [Rodriguez] talked about that this evening, when referring to a leader's responsibility. A leader cannot think only about today or the near future; he must think in the long term, meaning what is most convenient for our homeland, our people, or the revolution—not today or tomorrow, but 10, 50, even 100 years from now. If it were a matter of basing our decisions on simple polls, then no meeting or state council decision would be necessary.

We know about other opinions and we know that the people think, but it is my duty to say that this does not represent a determining factor in circumstances like this. It is best for us to coincide with what the people think, but it does not necessarily mean that we have to do what the people want or what the people think. Our duty is to judge these events with a lot of serenity, calm, reflection, and cold blood.

I think I am pretty well informed on the events that occurred. As Raul explained, I spent over 150 hours at the MINFAR [Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces] alone since the main people responsible for these events were arrested. I have much information about what was discussed at the honor tribunal and the oral hearing; about everything that was publicized, and the publicity was very extensive. Only a few things were not publicized because they were too unpleasant. These are things that have to do with moral matters that could affect innocent people and turn out to be too scandalous. We decided that those things would not be publicized.

Errors were made, particularly in Ochoa's case. There were violations of certain revolutionary principles, and there were errors on an international level that could have done our country a great deal of damage; these errors involved very sensitive issues that were analyzed at the court of honor and the oral proceedings, but were not published because they could have created further problems and difficulties, even though they would have had no impact on the decisions that had to be made.

There are certain quite important issues that must be raised, issues that concern the revolution's history and struggles, its internationalist spirit and missions, which were not mentioned because the comrades wanted to be brief. Brevity was necessary because there was not much time available.

One of these issues is what the Cuban people may think of our sending thousands, tens of thousands of our soldiers on internationalist missions under the leadership of an irresponsible, uncontrollable chief, under the leadership of a chief capable of any adventure? I believe it is very important to explain this point, because a mistake in that direction could make the Cuban people lose confidence in the party directorate, and in the FAR [Revolutionary Armed Forces] directorate. This is not, nor can it be the case [with our chiefs]. All the military unit chiefs and the mission chief are necessary elements, but it must be clear that, in fulfillment of these internationalist tasks, it is impossible, it is inconceivable to delegate to any military chief—regardless of how brilliant and capable he may be—the power to make important strategic or tactical decisions in fulfillment of those missions. Not even if he were a Clausewitz [Prussian general], the famous theoretician in military strategy, or a Bonaparte, the famous warrior who is said to have been very capable in his time and his era, our party and our revolution would not delegate such power to its mission chief. On each of these important internationalist missions, in which the lives of thousands of men are at stake, these powers are and have been exercised, I repeat, they are and have been exercised by the party's directorate and the FAR High Command. The lives of our people's

sons, our fighters, are so important that they cannot be placed in any hands but those of members of the party directorate and the FAR High Command.

The world has witnessed brilliant generals, who have won wars at the cost of many lives, of the sacrifices of many men. One characteristic of our revolution, since the days of Sierra Maestra, is its achievement of many great victories, not the way those famous generals achieved victories, but by making a minimum of sacrifices and experiencing a minimum of losses. A general might say: I am going to win that battle at the cost of many thousands of lives. This has never been the revolution's philosophy or doctrine. The revolution did not take shape based on a military academy or reading history books or books on strategy and tactics. Our revolution took shape alongside our men, during the days when we were just a handful. We had this kind of experience for many years.

This is why I say that all the missions—those in Angola, Ethiopia, everywhere—have been the responsibility of the party leadership and the FAR High Command. If anything went wrong, we would have been responsible for that—absolutely responsible. We were not going to blame any military commander or leader for that. It could not be any other way. There is a tendency throughout the world to credit individuals for achievements. Often I am credited with all the revolution's achievements and people speak about Castro's achievements and Castro's decisions when referring to the achievements of the people and of the leadership as a whole. I prefer being made responsible for setbacks rather than for achievements. During wartime there is also a tendency to see the merits of the commander and to forget the merits of the soldiers, the sergeants, the lieutenants, the captains, and others.

The last phase of the Angolan War was truly heroic, extraordinarily heroic. We know very well each person's merits during those heroic deeds. We have not forgotten for one second what our pilots did. They carried out thousands of missions and played a decisive role in Cuito Cuanavale. We have not forgotten our sappers, who laid thousands of mines and dismantled enemy mines. We have not forgotten our infantry men, our tank personnel, our artillery men, the antiaircraft defense units, the explorers, and the engineers, who also performed heroic deeds. We are special witnesses of their efforts and merits because, at that time like today, we have spent a lot of time with the staff and have worked long hours for nearly 1 year during which time the last phase of the Angolan War ended in victory.

This is why it is impossible not to consider this aspect when discussing a case like this. What were the circumstances under which those events took place? Amid a war, amid a war on which our country gambled—we might say—everything. It sent its best weapons and 50,000 men to that war. If you want to have an idea of what 50,000 men represent, let us multiply this figure by 24. That gives us 1,200,000. It would be like the United States sending 1,200,000 men to a theater of operations, or like the Soviet Union sending 1,400,000 men.

The USSR is 28 times larger than Cuba, and this small country—which had a military mission in Ethiopia and another military mission in the Congo, with a relatively large number of men—was able to send 50,000 men to a territory that is more distant from us than Moscow—and one must not be guided by the map but by the flight time between Cuba and Angola. Consider the distance. Our revolution, with its internationalist spirit, its combat morale, its capacity for mobilization, was able—I repeat—to make a great effort. We sent this last reinforcement exclusively with our own means, such as when the internationalist mission began in Angola. Our ships were the ones to carry the men and equipment. On this occasion, we alone sent reinforcements with our ships and our aircraft. We sent the required number of men and the means to solve the problem in that country.

It was precisely when this great deed was being accomplished—the biggest internationalist feat Cuba has carried out—that these shameful and hateful actions took place. I asked the comrades on the General Staff to put together a file of the messages we sent to Angola during that period—the critical period. Of course, they put together over 100 messages which I had addressed to Ochoa. I decided to go over all that material in order to become familiar with what was happening there at every instant and to compare it with everything that they were doing here, everything they were doing here in connection with this problem.

Ochoa was named chief of the mission in Angola during early November 1987. Everybody knows that Comrade Polo [Division General Leopoldo Cintra Frias]—this is the nickname I gave him—had been in Angola for many years. When the situation became more complex, the High Command comrades thought that it would be inconsiderate to send Comrade Polo back to Angola and so they decided to send Ochoa. The situation was not very critical; it was getting worse but was not very critical.

I traveled to the USSR to attend the [celebration of] the 70th anniversary [of the Soviet revolution] in those days. The anniversary that year occurred on the date 7 November. I returned 2 to 3 days later, and between the 7th and the 15th, the situation grew extraordinarily worse because of the increasing South African onslaught and the danger that the concentration of Angolan troops in Cuito Cuanavale would be destroyed or annihilated.

At that moment, it was decided to send our best pilots as reinforcements. We decided to reinforce the troops on 15 November 1987. Everybody was asking us to help overcome that situation, which was very critical. Everybody was asking us to do something. We ourselves understood that even though we were in no way responsible for the errors that had led to that situation, we could not sit still

and allow a military and political catastrophe to occur over there. It was for this reason that on 15 November 1987 we decided to reinforce the troops in Angola and to take adequate steps to resolve that crisis.

At that time, we already had Ochoa as chief. However, we understood that the most adequate man for that mission was not Ochoa. He was not the most adequate man for the mission because of his character, lack of sufficient knowledge about the Angolans, and of relations with the Angolans. We looked for a solution which, to my judgment, was quite correct. Perhaps it would have been humiliating for Ochoa to be replaced by Polo; perhaps it would have looked like his qualities or capabilities were underestimated. What we decided to do then was to send Polo as chief of the Southern Front. The Southern Front is where the bulk of our forces were going to be accumulated, where combat would be held, and where the main operations would be carried out. We left Ochoa as chief of the mission and assigned Comrade Polo the task of heading the Southern Front because of its importance.

We therefore established direct contact with the Southern Front to exchange news and information and to send the High Command's instructions directly to the Southern Front. Nevertheless, we complied with the rules. Cables were sent to the chief of mission with instructions on what to do. The cables were later sent to the chief of mission and to the chief of the Southern Front. The cables were initially sent to Ochoa, but were later sent to Ochoa and Polo. I believe it is very important for all the State Council members to know about it, and you do, but—above all—it is important for the people to know how all the missions have been carried out.

I carefully went through the messages because I wanted to assess Ochoa's level of corruption—which we now know about—and his moral degeneration, [not to mention] the fact that when he went there he already had drug trafficking in mind; Jorge Martinez Valdez had already made a series of contacts and was already trying to get his Colombian passport. Ochoa knew all about this. How could this have exerted an influence on Ochoa's behavior? I sincerely believe that this had already exerted an influence on Ochoa's behavior.

When I considered the material that I was looking over, I realized that he deserved some criticism for the way he carried out his mission. I am obviously referring to the criticism that every chief must face. That is always necessary. There will always be problems and it will always be necessary to analyze everything and say: This was not done correctly; this should have been done this way instead. Any General Staff will always provide reasons for complaints.

I have been scrutinizing those messages, but I do not want to expand on this too much because it is not a matter of telling a story; it is a matter of reviewing what happened at the time and analyzing events to ascertain the gravity of what was being done in other sectors. It was known that Ochoa did not like to write reports during his missions. He was too lazy to write reports—that is the truth. There were complaints—and he was always reproached for this—that he seldom sat down to dictate a report during every mission that he carried out.

I remember that I sent him a cable on 2 December, when he had been there only 3 weeks. I will read paragraphs of the cables I have here, which contain a lot of material. There are more cables, but I will only read the essential ones so that the problem will be better understood. In one of the paragraphs , I asked him if he had sent some information regarding the instructions sent on the 30th; I was told that nothing had arrived, that he generally sent little information. I hope that such a custom will not prevail in this situation. That is what I told him on 12 December [date as heard.]

There is something else. Even though Ochoa was not in charge of directing the troops in southern Angola, where most of our men and our weapons were located, he did play a key role because he was in Luanda. The war was being waged by two Armies, the Angolan and the Cuban Armies, and many issues had to be coordinated with the Angolans, many problems had to be solved. A Center for the Direction of Operations [Centro de Direccion de Operaciones, [CDO] was established at which Soviet advisers, Cubans, and Angolans worked.

Obviously the Cubans, as can happen under any circumstances, did not always agree with the CDO's decisions. Ochoa was supposed to be there. One day, amid the crisis, it was reported that agreements had been reached at the CDO when the situtation at Cuito Cuanavale was critical. The report involved the movement of certain units, which were being taken from Cuito and Menongue because a new situation had arisen in central Angola caused by UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] actions supported by South African advisers.

In a cable dated 20 December, there is a paragraph where Ochoa is told: I am very angry over your unexpected, inexplicable ideas that clash with my concept of the struggle in the south against South Africa, which is fundamental in solving the problems created in Angola. On 21 December I sent another lengthy message. I believe that the release of all this material should be authorized when the history of this problem is written. The time for that has not yet come. However, in one paragraph I told Ochoa: I am unable to fully understand the reasons for your failure to attend the CDO meeting, which I have inferred from your cable. Important decisions were made at that meeting and Ochoa, apparently, was not present. This was on 21 December; complications in Cuito persisted, and our airplanes flew missions every day.

At about this time, a certain theory emerged—the theory was Ochoa's—that the South Africans had withdrawn, that there was no longer a crisis situation in Cuito, and that certain troop movements could be made. This was on 2 January 1988. I rejected this, Ochoa's first strategic proposal. I must also add that during his entire tenure as chief of mission, he made four strategic proposals, and they were all rejected. I have maps and plans with arrows pointing out directions; his four proposals were rejected by the General Staff. On four occasions he made strategic proposals, and none was accepted. One of these proposals involved Cuito, another involved the central part of the country, another involved advancing through the south, and yet another—made toward the end of his term as chief of mission—involved the establishment of positions. All four were rejected.

This one—and you can see the paragraph of a message sent on 12 January 1988—was his first proposal. In the message I told him: The situation in Cuito Cuanavale has not been resolved as yet, despite the optimistic signs you report. If the 58th and 10th Brigades are transferred from Menongue to Cuanza, only Cubans would be left in Menongue to make their way toward Cuito if the 58th Brigade suffered serious problems with its logistical mission. As long as South Africa's intentions are not totally clarified, there must be no thought of moving the 58th and 10th Brigades.

We could participate with the tactical group in the direction of Cuemba. This would force us to place another tactical group at the bridge crossing and to place the third group in Bie. None would be left in Huambo and we would be endangering the troops in two directions in the south.

Aside from the measures to be adopted in Luena, a difficult situation had also arisen in Luena, which grew worse after the idea was adopted to remove the two FAPLA [People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola] from Menongue. One has to be very careful about taking steps that may destabilize what we have created in the south. Of course, there are other instructions here.

This was on the 12th. And do you know what happened on the 13th? A strong attack. It was the 13th or the 14th but this has to be precisely determined. It was an extremely heavy South African attack east of the river, along a very extensive front defended by three Angolan brigades—the 21st, the 59th, and the 25th—with a 5-km distance between the brigades. I must make it clear that up to the moment of the attack we did not have a single man in Cuito. That was when the crisis arose and the first thing we sent was advisers—experts in artillery, tanks, and other weapons—to help the Angolans to use those combat means at that time. We had not yet sent any units. The problem was very serious because there were 200 km of woods between Menongue, where our troops were located, and Cuito Cuanavale.

In view of this situation —the enemy having attacked and dislodged the 21st Brigade from its positions and threatening the two other brigades—we decided on the 14th to send a tactical group with a tank battalion, artillery, and the other weapons to cut directly across those two 200 km and reach Cuito Cuanavale. That was the day... [changes thought] The telegram I mentioned was sent on the 12th.

The force advanced and we sent a telegram on the 17th, which read in some paragraphs as follows: Here are some ideas about the defense of Cuito. You must analyze and try to either apply them the way we suggest or with any changes you may want to suggest. With the reinforcement from the tactical group and the 10th Brigade, that brigade advanced with our tactical group from Menongue to Cuito. With the reinforcement from the tactical group and the 10th Brigade we do not intend to cross the Cuito River to the east. The defense ring east of the river must be reduced, by withdrawing the 59th and 25th Brigades to well fortified positions closer to the river. These two brigades must cover the east flank in order to allow the 8th Brigade to resume its mission of carrying supplies. The 8th Brigade was Angolan.

Currently—we told them on 17 January—the positions of the 59th and 25th Brigades are very unsafe. They risk having their lines broken in the direction of the position where the 21st Brigade was located. We must stop running these risks. This was on 17 January, when what we might call our battle to readjust the lines east of the river began. Cuito Cuanavale... [changes thought] The true Cuito Cuanavale lies west but there were a number of brigades east of the river which depended on a bridge and we began fighting on the 17th to readjust the lines. I must point out that when we sent the tactical group we asked the president, we asked the Angolans... [begins again]. Actually, we asked the Angolans—this was supposed to be handled through the Angolan General Staff—to allow us to assume responsibility for defending Cuito.

Our Air Force was already playing a decisive role. We had already sent a tactical group by land. We had already committed our forces in that battle. We asked the Angolans to give us the responsibility for that battle. Our mission received instructions and reported that we were already responsible for the defense of Cuito. On 26 January 1988, we sent a cable. We sent cables almost every day. I have just selected some. In a portion of a cable we told him: I do not understand what is being done in Cuito. Who has the highest authority in Cuito? Often you do not bother to explain to us what is being done, despite the fact that we are not inflexible in our points of view and that we are always prepared to hear your opinion.

Those instructions were sent on the 17th and by the 26th nothing had been done. It was exasperating. It was decided that Ochoa should travel to Cuba. He arrived in Cuba on 31 January. We called him specifically to

discuss the situation in Cuito and everything that had to be done there. He left for Angola on 4 February, and he arrived there on the 5th. He was supposed to immediately exert efforts and overcome any resistance—if there was any—from our Angolan allies or from other advisers in order to readjust the frontlines. Days went by and the frontlines were not readjusted.

Meanwhile, we kept sending resources to Cuito Cuanavale. Listen to this: From here we were able to guess what was going to happen. On 12 January, I told him that the situation was not clear, that the danger was not over. On the 14th, the enemy launched a big offensive. In Angola the theory was that the enemy had already withdrawn. Ochoa returned to Angola on the 5th. He had instructions to readjust the line of battle east of the river, the line that was 18 km east of the river, almost beyond the reach of our artillery, with a 5 - km gap between brigades. Almost 1 month went by and the lines had not yet been readjusted. He returned on the 5th with the task of solving that problem. On 14 February, Saint Valentine's Day, the South Africans launched their big offensive. It was carried out against the 59th Brigade. The attackers broke through the lines and marched along the 5-km gap between the 21st and 59th brigades. The attackers began to surround the 59th Brigade. A very difficult situation emerged. They could have gone as far as the bridge and cut off three entire brigades.

This situation was prevented as a result of a violent counterattack by a combined Cuban-Angolan tank company. The enemy had to use more than 100 vehicles against this counterattack. This counterattack stopped the enemy. However, the company lost the seven tanks it had and 14 Cubans died as a result of this action which, of course, was nevertheless not in vain because it prevented a catastrophe and gave the 59th, the 25th, and the 21st brigades time to retreat.

On the 15th we sent Ochoa a message: We are awaiting news and more detailed information on what happened on the 14th east of Cuito. We want a report on Cuban casualties, and, if possible, on Angolan casualties, from the three brigades that retreated. We also want a report on the possible loss of equipment, artillery, etcetera. Further on I told him: Following the errors that have been committed and the time that has been wasted in making adjustments for the defense of Cuito, it is now necessary to have a cool head. One consistent attitude of yours has been to underestimate possible enemy actions. We must be more alert and more aware to avoid surprises and errors. I will not hide from you the fact that here we are bitter over what happened, because it had been foreseen and words of caution were issued on several occasions. We insisted on the readjustment of the frontlines for almost 1 entire month. What happened forced, of course, a readjustment.

On the 20th I sent him another message informing him: We have not received an answer to two important questions: How many tanks are in good enough condition to move east of the river? How many Angolan tanks are in good enough condition to move to the west? I am asking this because we are considering the suitability of reinforcing the east side with some Angolan tanks that have stayed west of the river so that the small force east of the river will have at least 10 or 12 tanks. You must be fully aware of the dangerous situation that exists east of the river. If the enemy breaks through the lines of defense, the Angolan forces will find themselves with their backs to the river and will face casualties from drowning, attacks, and the prisoners could be countless. This would be a catastrophe. If this happens, it will be very difficult to defend Cuito, and the political and moral consequences for the Angolan Armed Forces and the Angolan Government would be terrible.

The bridge that joined the east with the west had been destroyed. The enemy used unmanned aircraft [aviones automaticos] to destroy the bridge. On 21 February, we sent him another message which, among other things, stated: We cannot understand why things were going so slow in Cuito Cuanavale. A complete week has passed since the 14 February events, and, with the exception of only two battalions from the 21st brigade, we still have not gone to the west of the river. According to our estimates, approximately 3,500 Angolan soldiers remain on the other side of the river and a large amount of equipment has to be transferred to the west. The worst part is that, according to news received today, the bridge has been rendered totally useless because several sections have been destroyed, making the bridge virtually impossible to cross. We were also informed that three rolls of rope are going to be sent to Cuito tomorrow, Monday. What will happen if tomorrow the enemy breaks through the lines and uses all its strength against the river area?

We have lost many days and cannot understand how our instructions or simply our points of view are conveyed to our people in Cuito. We do not know who the person responsible for receiving and implementing our instructions is. We do not even know if our instructions or points are view are known over there. Something is wrong with the line of communications for passing on our orders. I am basing my instructions on your information that whatever happens there is our responsibility.

It also seems to us that adequate precautions are not being taken in the area. The area commanders are not aware of the political, military, and moral consequences that a disastrous confrontation with the forces that are to the east of the river could cause. These forces would not even have a few ships to do something comparable to what the British did with its fleet in Dunkirk. Under these conditions, I believe that Polo should remain in Cuito until the most serious problems are resolved. I sent him an urgent message giving him these orders.

It is my belief that the formula proposed in the message I sent yesterday should be adopted without any hesitancy, that is, a heavily fortified defensive position using an amount of soldiers not to exceed the size of a brigade,

which should be maintained at the eastern section of the river. The lines of defense should be widespread and the available tanks should be positioned at the rearguard. I hope that tonight the artillery, the scant transportation vehicles available, and the remaining personnel from the 21st and 8th Brigades will start to be passed to that side of the river. We insisted and insisted that the equipment be passed to this side, that all the artillery be sent to the east side of the river, that our lines be reduced there, and, in short, that all the necessary measures that had to taken under those circumstances were in fact taken.

Polo, in fact, went there and solved the problem. He adjusted the lines, and, from that moment on, all South African attacks came up against the defensive position along the east side of the river. As soon as they began to get near, they would be hit by artillery—which was located to the west and could be supplied with ammunition more easily—they would encounter antiaircraft attacks, they would walk onto mined fields, and they several times crashed headlong into the defensive position which they were never able to conquer. During this period we had almost no casualties. The casualties were minimal and the enemy crashed against our positions. Cuito Cuavanale became a trap for the enemy.

What was happening at that time? Martinez was taking steps to put his travel plans in order. He was getting his passport. He was making contacts at that time. Well, how long did this critical situtation last [in Angola]?

General Lorente was sent to Cuito Cuanavale on 6 March. He was to take command of the Southern Front in Lubango. On 6 March, our forces were ordered to advance south along the right flank. The most important of all strategical operations had begun while the enemy was launching attacks in Cuito Cuanavale. I must also note that all these actions carried out in Cuito Cuanavale took place under constant bombing of South African long-range artillery, which fired thousands of projectiles at that location during the months Cuito Cuanavale was under siege. All the actions I mention were carried out amid the incessant bombing of South African artillery.

However, we had already successfully prevented the enemy from occupying Cuito Cuanavale, stopped them, wore them out, and had begun our advance toward the right flank. The order to advance was issued on the 6th [corrects himself], rather on 10 March; the troops started to march south. That was also a very important and critical period, because our scouting parties began to fight against South African scouting parties. There were a number of clashes, and I recall that we waged another battle during that period: in Cuito Cuanavale it was to readjust the lines of battle; in the south we were going against Ochoa's idea that infantry or scouting parties should advance on foot.

After analyzing certain aspects of the terrain, including the lack of water and the long distances involved, we advocated using vehicles in our scouting operations—that is, that we should not send troops 50 or 60 km from their bases without a vehicle being at least 8 or 10 km away from the troops in the scouting parties, because traveling in vehicles offers advantages and disadvantages. I argued that we should seize both the advantages of exploring on foot and in vehicles. At any rate, that is another long story.

Regarding this period, I will refer to something that was happening in June. What was happening in June? June was a critical month. Our troops were approaching the border. Our closest airfields were in Lubango and Matala, 250 km away. They were hardly being used then; they could not be used. That is why on 22 March we began to build an airport in Cuito Cuanavale [corrects himself], rather in Cahama. That was on 22 March. We sent Ochoa a very brief cable that read as follows: What is needed and how long would it take to make the Cahama runway operational for fighter planes if we worked at full speed? The battle then began. Polo took control of the undertaking and collected all the equipment he could. We sent him new equipment from Cuba, including trucks, bulldozers, and haulers, that is, all the means necessary to build this aiport rapidly and at full speed, which was another great accomplishment. We built it in a few weeks. The airport's first runway was ready and a second one was being built by June. In June, it was already operational. I will further elaborate on the airports later because an important issue pertains to the airports.

What was the situation on 7 June 1988? I have a cable that summarizes everything. I was hesitant as to whether I should read it because it contains some plans we had at that time. However, I believe that I will read it because it demonstrates that the peace process had advanced significantly and had become irreversible. We had received word about a possible massive South African surprise air attack against our advance units. I sent a cable to Ochoa and Polo: News of a possible South African surprise air attack against Cuban - Angolan troops should not be underestimated. It made some sense. Our troops must heavily protect their shelters. Antiaircraft units must be in a state of maximum alert, particularly at dawn, at dusk, and during the daytime. Study possible defensive actions by placing Air Force planes on guard duty in Cahama. Be ready to counterattack with as many aircraft as possible to completely destroy Ruacana water reservoirs and transformers. This must be implemented as soon as possible after an attack.

Plans also should be prepared to hit (Ochicata) and nearby air bases as a response to the attack and according to the size of the enemy action. The Cahama group and everything that is available will have to be used for this. Do not wait for orders—just look at the powers he had—to carry out the action if there is a strong enemy attack against our troops. Our attack must be sudden and quick. I reiterate the need for the troops to be on maximum alert and protected; make maximum use of antiaircraft weapons. The Pechora de Matala Regiment

should get there as soon as possible, preferably at night so that there can be groups in Humbe and Cahama. Keep the tactical group at this point. The Tchipa personnel should be particularly on the alert. The planned movements should be carried out bearing in mind these risks. Decisive events may soon be taking place. I repeat: Decisive events may soon be taking place. This was on 7 June.

That same day, I wrote Jose Eduardo [Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos]. There was always—and this is something I must stress—there was coordination, an exchange of letters, between Jose Eduardo and myself. There was close coordination. Every step taken by our troops was reported to him. Every strategic operation was coordinated with the Angolans. I had already sent him other letters on this issue.

I told him: Dear Comrade Jose Eduardo: As you know, our intelligence services have received reports that the South Africans are planning a massive surprise air attack against the Angolan-Cuban troops in southern Angola. There is a certain logic to this report, if we take into consideration the despair of the South Africans in the face of the defeats and failures they have sustained, both in the military as well as in the diplomatic fields. They might try their luck in changing the correlation of forces by using their Air Force so they will sustain the least possible number of white casualties. Early this morning, we sent a message to Ochoa and Polo warning them not to underestimate the reports. We told them to place all the forces on a state of maximum alert, to take all security measures, and to have our aircraft ready to take off and repel the attack.

We notified the Soviets of the intelligence reports indicating that there could be a quick and immediate response to any sudden, surprise, massive air attack launched by the enemy. We were warning everyone of the danger of the possibility that we might have to launch a strong attack in northern Namibia. All possible measures were taken to protect the personnel and the technical equipment; all air defensive measures were taken. As the troops advanced toward the south, more and more groups were being sent from Cuba, full regiments with antiaircraft rockets. Therefore, we became completely superior in antiaircraft rockets and we became superior in air attacks. What happened? What happened [repeats himself]? The South Africans began to move forces. At a certain time they tried—just like they were doing in Cuito with their artillery—to begin shooting cannons.

One day—I believe it was on the 26th, yes, 26 June—they launched 200 missiles against Tchipa, where our forces were. We then sent a cable to Ochoa and Polo: We must respond to today's artillery attack against Tchipa. We believe that the first step must be a strong air attack against the camp, military installations, and South African personnel in Calueque and its environs. We must do the best we can to prevent the loss of civilian lives. If the enemy's artillery can be located, strike it harshly. Other kinds of attacks must also be prepared in the event that circumstances dictate other types of responses. As a possible future step, we must decide whether to strike the military bases first and leave the Ruacana hydroelectric complex for later, or vice versa. Troops should also be on the alert against any land attack against Tchipa. Let us know what you plan to do with the 85th Tactical Group, and under what conditions you would send it to Tchipa. You must accelerate the construction of shelters in Cahama and the new landing strip. This happened on the 26th.

The attack against Calueque took place on the 27th, and it was quite a destructive attack. We were waiting to see what would happen next. I sent Ochoa and Polo a cable on 27 June: Within the next few hours or days, we must be on a maximum state of alert, awaiting any possible response from the enemy. You must be ready to strike hard against the enemy bases in northern Namibia. In other words, you must have a response ready in the event of a massive enemy air attack. In this regard, you must analyze how, with more forces, you could annihilate the enemy. There must always be a point at which you will simply use the most available means. The Ruacana hydroelectric complex will not change location. Therefore, it will be there when it is its turn, sooner or later, depending on the various situations that might arise. However, it is logical to believe that if the enemy action is serious, we must first attack the military targets.

We have given them our initial response. Now it is up to them to decide what to do and if they should continue the escalation.

On the 27th the South Africans raised a big fuss over the attack, but they restrained themselves militarily. Our response had been quite strong. We felt that the hydroelectric complex was going to acquire strategic importance. They did not have water from Calueque, but they had water from Ruacana. We had drafted the plans according to the situation. We would hit them at one or the other point, depending on the enemy action. This was on 10 June.

In September or October, when it is said that we were engaging in all those black market operations, what happened? Had peace arrived? Peace had not arrived.

Here we have a message dated 10 October 1988 in which I told Ochoa and Polo: The negotiations have reached an impasse. The South African demands are unacceptable. Because great concessions had been made in Brazzaville, we took an inflexible position in New York. Although there is talk of new meetings in Brazzaville, we must not lend too much importance to the matter. We must prepare for the impasse, although I do not think the South Africans want to resume hostilities. We must remain alert, especially to guard against the risk of air attacks. We must prepare for rainy season. Just as we told Ochoa and Polo, the frontline units must remain in

Calueque and Ruacana. The brigade in Donguena and the brigade located between Tchipa and Ruacana must be withdrawn. A joint Cuban-Angolan unit can remain in Tchipa. The remainder of the troops must retreat to the Cahama-Xangongo line. The antiaircraft units must be deployed along the Cahama-Mucope-Humbe-Xangongo line. We must not lose time. Our aircraft must be prepared to support the frontline units in Calueque, Ruacana, and Tchipa. The Calueque and Ruacana Dams must be blown up if the enemy attacks our frontline units. We did not leave many troops there, as supplying them was difficult, and it was almost rainy season. Frontline units remained there, but they were instructed to blow up the dams if they were attacked. The political work must be directed at increasing the troops' combat readiness and at preparing for the impasse. According to reports by Western diplomats, the South Africans have concentrated large military forces in Namibia. We must try to confirm this. Our duty is to be prepared for any outcome. This struggle will be won by the side that has the best ability to resist.

These messages will give you and the people an exact idea of what was happening in Angola all those months, both in the initial phase of the crisis and in the final phase. All of those messages I am referring to discussed the fighting in the south and the movements of Cuban personnel—Cubans mixed with Angolan and SWAPO [South West African People's Organization] fighters. Sometimes they were Cuban-SWAPO units, and at other times they were Cuban-Angolan units when we expected decisive, large battles.

In fact these large battles did not occur because our troops were quite strong. The enemy realized that we were very powerful and had taken security measures such as the construction of the airport and the reinforcement of our available air strength and antiaircraft weapons. I believe that this was the key to success, the achievement of the fundamental objectives without sacrificing thousands of lives. If great battles had to be waged, they were waged because there was no other alternative. The idea, however, was to achieve objectives with the minimum number of casualties, which we were successful in doing. The idea was to always be in a state of readiness, always foreseeing all dangers, and situations that might arise.

At that time, comrades, we must not forget that when these things were happening, when thousands of projectiles struck Cuito Cuanavale—because the siege of Cuito Cuanavale lasted many months—when the men were preparing for decisive actions, when approximately 40,000 Cuban troops were mobilizing in the south and preparing for that decisive battle, Martinez was meeting here with some Colombian drug traffickers, later with some Mexican drug traffickers, and finally with de la Guardia's people, and the people in his group, organizing drug trafficking operations. In April and May he was meeting with Escobar in Colombia. In June—which is the time to which these cables refer, this was the time of the Calueque events—they were waiting for a ship with 2 tons of drugs, a ship that was supposed to arrive 2 months after the meeting.

It is impossible to forget this. It is difficult for us to forget this because we experienced this drama, these risks, this struggle; we lived it day by day. We received the news of every man that fell during a battle or during a mission—people who died in battle, or in a mine field, or in an accident. We heard about this every day. We felt responsible for each of those men's lives. We felt responsible for all of those men, for each one of them, for the 50,000 men.

We were virtually in charge of the government [not further identified] in 1988. We were in charge of the government from mid-November until the end of that year. We devoted all our time, all our time [repeats himself] to that struggle, to the war. It could not have been otherwise. We had to take responsibility for whatever happened there. Even the revolution was at stake there, because if this was a decisive battle against apartheid representing a defeat of large proportions, it was also a battle for the revolution, which could have meant a huge defeat for the revolution no matter how noble, just, or altruistic our cause. I think that even the revolution was at stake in that battle. We did not even attend to government affairs; at least I did not attend to them. The central government was also working on this. I devoted at least 80 percent of my time to this battle. We set aside fundamental matters in view of the graveness of the situation that had arisen there.

There is no doubt—and this will be historically documented for the glory of our fatherland, our party, and our heroic combatants—that a situation that had seemed hopeless was mastered and peace was attained. This is precisely why it happened: Because the efforts of the party and the Armed Forces High Command were completely devoted to this task. If it became necessary to send a ship, to load a ship, the High Command took less than 2 hours to get that ship ready. If it became necessary to deploy a group of missile experts, they would do it. We must point out that we had a wonderful commodity: our people's enthusiasm, our people's heroic spirit, our people's generosity. These are the same people who today demand justice. All of them went there—workers, peasants, those who were part of the Armed Forces reserves, conscripts who volunteered. Each combatant who went to Angola went there as a volunteer.

At the same time that we were inscribing the most glorious page in our history, the most shameful page in our history was being written precisely by the chief of the military mission in that country. There is a factor that must be analyzed here, by which I mean the history of the black market deals, allegedly made to help the troops. Gentlemen: Do you believe that it is possible to help an army of 50,000, to build an airport in 6 or 7 weeks by collecting kwanzas at the candonga [black market]? Who

would believe that story? That is the most ridiculous thing one could ever hear. Here is a message that was once sent: What would be required and how long would it take to convert the Cahama landing strip into a runway for fighter planes if we worked at full speed? That was just a question. Just tell us what is necessary and how long it will take and we will send all that we have here, as we did so that the Cahama [landing strip] could be built.

If it is a matter of building the Catumbela and Cabo Ledi [landing strips], we will also use every means and resource the country has available, because the country gave top priority to the war in Angola. We even sent candy to the soldiers. There was not a single day that I did not ask the High Command how many tons of candies, cookies, or chocolate had been sent to the soldiers, how were the soldiers doing, what kind of nylons [as heard] they had, how were they sleeping, what kind of mattresses they had, what kind of food they ate. Everything the country had was available to them. How many bags of cement? Sixty thousand.

I still remember when the High Command asked about the ship, how many bags were on each ship, when the ship was leaving, and whether or not there was enough paper for the bags that had to be sent to Angola. We also asked how many ships were leaving, as well as many questions pertaining to Angola. We wondered: Would it be better to send asphalt from Cuba or buy it in Portugal, Europe, anywhere where we could get it faster, paying for it what we could.

If everything we had was available for that front, for the battle, and if I said: We must set up an ice cream factory in southern Coppelia, then we set up an ice cream factory in southern Coppelia so that the troops could have everything they needed. Right, that was our concern—Did they have medicine, equipment, shoes, everything? This was the High Command's main concern. We were worried about the material needs of the troops, and we were willing to send the entire resources of the country to Angola, what we had and what we did not have [as heard].

How can one fight a war by gathering kwanzas? That was simply a pretext to cover up the theft of money and resources. This, unfortunately, is the truth; it is very sad, but it is the truth—the front's needs were used as an excuse. In the zones of operation, they were authorized to barter, but not to engage in black market activities. The zones of operations were the cattle areas. Peasants had their herds there. However, because of the war, they had no resources. Peasants were not interested in money; they were interested in obtaining merchandise.

Consequently, the command was authorized to barter in that area. It was legal and the Angolans knew that; everyone knew that. Bartering could be carried out on the battlefront. In the south, troops bartered sugar, salt, or any other foodstuff for other things that the peasants had. We did not steal a single lamb, goat, or cow from any peasant in the area. We paid for everything, but we paid in the only way we could—with merchandise. What Ochoa did, in a subtle way, was to barter, using the excuse that he had to solve problems or meet needs. He did this based on the idea that he was authorized to do it in the zones of operation.

This probably did not draw too much attention. It is understandable that some officers would be confused if he told them that his bartering was to cover troops' needs or to build the airport. Had he truly done that, he still would have been wrong. It was incorrect to have engaged in black market activities. It was incorrect to have sent an officer, or a captain to carry sacks and sell them for kwanzas on the black market. It would not be so bad if this money was to be used in the war, but that was not actually the case. Saying that this was done to help the troops was merely a pretext. It is possible that Ochoa turned in a few kwanzas, but in an amount insufficient even to build a square meter of the airport. We know how an airport is built and how it is built during a war. The airport was used as a pretext to engage in more operations. We saw how the money from these operations wound up in Cuba, and, from Cuba, in an account in Panama.

There is no justification for this. How could we get involved in black market operations there, even if it were for the troops' sake? How could we get involved in the black market if we were receiving $20 million per year for technical civilian cooperation? This cooperation was being paid for at a very high price. We had thousands of men over there. We received $20 million for civilian, not military, cooperation. Nothing was ever paid for the military cooperation. We had thousands of workers there, including teachers and doctors. The country received approximately $20,000, charging a good price... [corrects himself] $20 billion... [corrects himself] $20 million. That was a low price; foreign experts in Angola charged four or five times more than our experts charged.

However, considering Angola's economic problems and the difficulties it faced in 1983, in the wake of Cangamba and after Cangamba [not further identified], when Jose Eduardo [Dos Santos] visited Cuba, we asked him not to pay us anything for the technical cooperation. We told him that we would continue to offer technical cooperation. In the past 6 years, we have not received $120 million to which we were entitled. [This shows] how a country makes sacrifices in its internationalist efforts. This shows how sacrifices were made in the area of technical cooperation. I am not speaking of sacrificing a life; I am not speaking of the blood of our nation's children, which cannot be repaid with any amount of money in the world. If we were even donating civilian cooperation, how can it make any sense to have engaged in black market operations in Angola? This cannot be explained. This has no justification whatsoever.

Well, later on, things were happening here. There was this business concerning the account in Panama—this is very important; this is very serious. How was the Panama account opened? It was opened with ill-gotten money. The Panama account was opened with stolen money. The $200,000 Martinez had was ill-gotten money. Money was stolen from the Nicaraguans, and money was kept there; that was how the account was opened. Money was stolen from the Angolans, for they handed over money to buy communications equipment. The communications equipment was obtained at a lower price and they [the defendants] kept whatever was left and placed that money in the account in Panama. They stole from Angola on the black market, but they also stole from Cuba. If they were trading cement for anything there, that cement still belonged to Cuba.

Moreover, when one is at war, a sack of cement cannot be sold, because one does not know when cement might be needed to build fortifications, bridges, and so on. Cement is a strategical resource. It should not be sold. Sugar was sent from Cuba and exchanged for certain things. Some sugar was indeed delivered, because that was the way to cover up certain activities, but proceeds from the rest were pocketed. In other words, they robbed Nicaragua and Angola in two ways: through communications equipment and the black market. They also robbed Cuba, because the products involved belonged to Cuba. Therefore, the bank account in Panama was the result of four robberies.

There is something else: We did not know why Ochoa sent arms from Angola to Panama. We asked ourselves: That is strange. Why did he send, among other things, rifles to that country... [corrects himself]. Excuse me, I meant to say from Angola to Nicaragua. We asked ourselves: What does that mean? We were unable to come up with an answer. However, we recently received a report from the Sandinist People's Army [EPS] explaining why Ochoa sent those arms. You will fully understand why.

I hope that I will cause no harm to the Nicaraguans by revealing certain information contained in this report pertaining to arms operations. The confidential report reads as follows: In early 1987, Ochoa told the EPS chief of General Staff that he was fully capable of supplying any Western military equipment—his deviousness is obvious here—that the EPS might need to strengthen military operations against mercenary forces. He apparently managed to obtain certain pieces of small equipment. When he did so, Ochoa claimed that he was able to supply any Western weapon required.

The reports adds: In this context, on 12 March 1986, Major General Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo agreed with Division General Arnaldo Ochoa, who was Cuba's FAR representative in Nicaragua at the time, to purchase 100 German-made M-79 grenade launchers and 12,000 projectiles. Ochoa accepted the order. The report continues: Maj Gen Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo, through the EPS finance office, handed over $120,000 to Ochoa's assistant, Jorge Martinez Valdes, who was a FAR captain at the time. On 5 March 1987, Martinez received another $41,000, that is, a total of $161,000.

The EPS report states: Months later, following Ochoa's instructions, Martinez told Maj Gen Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo that the transaction was canceled, because prospective suppliers were facing problems delivering that order in Nicaraguan territory. This agreement never materialized, and Maj Gen Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo understood that the deal had been temporarily suspended when Martinez told him that it was impossible to honor the deal, that the advance payment had been lost, and that he could not return that payment due to problems inherent to this kind of transaction.

The report adds: On 22 September 1988, Arnaldo Ochoa, in his new capacity as head of the Cuban military mission in Angola, told the EPS through Brigadier General Nestor Lopez Cuba—who replaced Ochoa as head of the Cuban Military Mission in Nicaragua—that Ochoa would send the following weapons from Angola to Nicaragua: Fifty Yugoslav AK rifles, 200 rifle magazines, 50 magazine clips, 50 bayonets, 50 belts, 50 accessory containers, 50 oilers, 4 60-mm mortars, 2,664 50-mm mortar shells, 560 antipersonnel grenades, and 2,016 40-mm ammunition for M-79 grenade launchers. Nicaragua received all these armaments in 1988, which the EPS believed Ochoa had sent them in partial compensation for having failed to honor the aforementioned agreement.

We must add that 2,016 grenades must cost a lot on the arms market—on the arms black market. They can easily charge $100 each. Thus, 2,016 grenades can cost about $200,000. Mortar shells are also expensive. To tell the truth, the value on the black market of the weapons he sent was equal to or perhaps even more than the money Ochoa received for them.

This report ends with the following paragraph: We were never informed by Ochoa or Martinez that the money was safe and had been deposited in a bank account in Panama. We had already given it up as lost. The report says: We were never advised that money had been placed in a bank account.

Everything is very clear here. What happened? They were given $120,000 and then $41,000. The initial $120,000 was given to the supplier, who, at the end, told them he could not carry out the operation and returned $75,000, leaving them with a $45,000 loss. But, the would-be supplier did return $75,000 which, when added to the $41,000, amounted to the $116,000 they had in the account. What did they think up then? They got the idea of obtaining in Angola—I do not know if they requested this materiel, if somebody gave it to them, or if they stole it—mortar shells and M-79 grenades; they sent the arms to Nicaragua to partially fulfill the commitments they had made; and they kept the

money. They kept $116,000 from this operation and they had about $40,000-$50,000 they had to return to the Angolans. They then had about $160,000 in the account, and they increased the amount to $200,000 by adding money obtained from their black stockmarket operations.

We can clearly see where the money came from. They were stealing from everybody to increase their bank account. The money had not yet come from drugs.

It is not necessary for me to repeat information everybody knows, such as the operations carried out by Martinez, his trip to Colombia, and the meeting with Escobar. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that one of the most serious actions—I would say even more serious than the story of the account in Panama and the origins of the money deposited in that account—was to have sent a Cuban Armed Forces officer to Colombia with a false passport and placed him in enemy hands. This occurred when we were on the verge of decisive battles in Angola. We were risking everything over there; we were risking the revolution. This action was extremely serious.

What other action is so serious? It was not precisely discussing and organizing plans for the shipment, initially in commercial ships and later in planes, of large amounts of drugs through Cuba. He conspired to do all this, but he never managed to carry out any of these operations. This is what is so serious: Knowing that a mafia had been formed in the Interior Ministry's [MININT] MC Department [department in charge of contravening U.S. embargo] that was drug trafficking, he joined this mafia and asked for its cooperation in everything: to help Martinez travel to Colombia, to help Martinez ignore all MINFAR regulations, and to help Martinez come and go whenever he wanted and without anybody's knowledge.

He also asked him for cooperation to engage in large-scale drug operations. He joined the group and, in the end, wound up receiving $50,000 from the group from the last drug-trafficking operation. He requested $100,000 and was given $50,000. It is very serious that a hero of the republic, a member of the Central Committee, a division general, a chief of the most glorious mission being carried out by the country abroad, should join that mafia, that group of gangsters, without immediately reporting it, but instead joining this group..

One asks why this group became so bold? This group started out with operations that were spaced out; they were cautious. In 1988, the group suddenly carried out 50 percent of the operations in 4 months. In a single month, it engaged in five or six operations. Why? Undoubtedly, when these people saw Ochoa return from Angola—Ochoa, who was on his way to becoming the commander of the Western Army; Ochoa, who demanded as a defense necessity that the DAAFAR [Antiaircraft Defense and Revolutionary Air Force] and the Western Navy be assigned to him, as is the case in the eastern region—these people must have felt they were the people with the most impunity in the world. It must have stimulated and encouraged them a lot that a member of the Central Committee, a hero, a division general, and a man with Ochoa's prestige was involved in this. I believe this is extremely serious.

Despite the difficulties, Ochoa did not let up; he did not let up in his plans. He had plans to carry out operations until April 1989. We learned this from all the evidence we have gathered. He persisted in the idea of large-scale operations. He persisted in the idea of using a merchant ship to go to the northern coast carrying 10 tons, which would later be picked up by boats. He talked a lot with Tony de la Guardia. Tony de la Guardia, who had been cautious, conducting spaced-out operations until 1988, told him that it was impossible to carry out that large operation with the boatmen—who are not very serious people, who come and go, who immediately begin enjoying any money they collect—and that it was impossible to transfer 10 tons of cocaine. He argued a lot with Tony de la Guardia about all these problems. He insisted a lot on it; it was an idea, which if we look at it, was totally crazy.

I tried to figure out how much was needed to obtain the sum he mentioned. In his fantasy, he spoke of billions. I tried to figure out how much was needed for him to obtain $4 billion, which he said he was going to obtain and then invest in Cuba from abroad. This is what our prosecutor called a big plan, a big money-laundering operation. I figured he needed to have 400 ship voyages at $1,000 per kilo. He needed 400 ship voyages and 8,000 boat voyages, supposing that each boat carried 500 kg—these figures reminded me of the foreign debt figure—to amass $4 billion. It was a fantasy and there was a lack of reality. But those were his ideas. What is serious is that he harbored these ideas while he knew he was going to assume responsibility for the Western Army.

Naturally, when Ochoa returned from Angola, very few things about him were known. However, I must stress that if there is one institution that knows what people are doing, it is MINFAR, because it has the means and the necessary organization to control the men. I already explained before how the operations in Angola were disguised as war necessities and how he had confused his closest collaborators.

When Ochoa came here, he began to discuss business. Everytime he met with Raul, he wanted to talk about business. He was constantly given the same advice: Do not do it. He kept talking about allegedly serious business deals. Sometimes he would say some foolish things. Everyone took it as a joke, because he had made a habit of talking seriously and of joking. Whenever he said anything foolish, the people laughed. MINFAR and Raul would tell him: Just go about your military tasks and forget about business. That is not your task or mission. You must devote yourself to your military tasks; that is what you must do.

However, when it came to the drug problem, Ochoa told one, only one, of these officers. He told only one officer about that grave and serious activity that caused repulse, scandal, indignation, and concern. It is quite possible that if he had told four officers about this, it would have been inevitably known, because MINFAR has its organization—the military counter intelligence. I know for a fact how military counter intelligence works. Ochoa talked with only one officer. Very little was known about Ochoa, just some moral aspects and no criminal aspects. At any rate, these were not penal crimes but moral crimes. Reports about Ochoa's behavior were starting to come in from various sources.

The more serious thing is that he told only one officer about the drug involvement. He had corrupted this officer and won him over for this bad cause. The rest of his actions or his plans were supported by the Tony de la Guardia group. However, at one time he said this group was not capable, that they were stupid, that he was going to act on his own, etc. However, he insisted on carrying out the big operations with drugs up until this group practically disintegrated. In other words, he insisted on this from 1986 through nearly the middle of 1989, and that is the truth of the matter we have been able to detect.

As someone said here, the Tony de la Guardia group is a different case. Tony de la Guardia is not a hero, a member of the Central Committee, a division general, or someone who had Ochoa's responsibilities. Tony de la Guardia's case is extremely grave. I do not mean to say it is not as grave as Ochoa's case. What I am saying is De la Guardia's case is different from Ochoa's case; it has very grave conotations and is very treacherous and dangerous. If Ochoa was not able, did not have the time, was not successful, or did not manage to carry out any of his drug operations, these people had already carried out some of them. When Martinez visited Escobar, Tony de la Guardia and his group had been carrying out drug operations for 1 and ½ years.

All of this has been publicly debated, and it has been proven. They claimed they had noble purposes. All of them claimed noble purposes. Ochoa said he wanted to solve the development problems—that has nothing to do with what he did with the money—and the others said they wanted to help the country. To help the country in that way—as they have said—was to stab a knife in the back of the country. All of you have referred to that topic here. There is no reason for me to expand on this point. Later I will refer to this for other reasons.

Tony de la Guardia formed a totally repulsive gang within MININT. How it was formed is truly incredible, inconceivable, and very difficult to explain. How was all this possible? They were very secretive, of course. They knew what they were doing was very serious, but the way they carried out their actions was also very treacherous. The fact is that the cancer was formed. How was it discovered? It was discovered through the Ochoa case.

Who could imagine Ochoa would be involved in this type of activity? Who could imagine a MININT department was involved in these activities? However, it was already being investigated. Why was it being investigated?

As has already been proven, these people apparently carried out very few operations—only five in 1987. These operations were spaced out and held every 2 or 3 months. In 1988, they carried out two successful and three foiled operations. In 1989, I believe they carried out nine operations, one of which was a marijuana operation near the northern coast of Pinar del Rio.

Campaigns against Cuba had been ongoing, as Comrade Chomy [not further identified] has recalled. Naturally, our first reaction—accustomed as we were to all the lies, defamations, and slanders we have heard in this 30-year span—was simply to reject them as another invention, another lie by the United States, and not to pay any special attention to them.

Chomy recalled that some time in February 1988, there was a big campaign against us with charges and statements that even mentioned Raul. They made charges against him, which really angered us.

At that time, we were already in the phase of making contacts for these Angolan negotiations, and Cuba was actively participating in the Angolan peace negotiations. Therefore, a few comrades had made contacts with U.S. representatives during these events. I recall that I instructed Vice Foreign Minister Comrade Alarcon to strongly protest to one of the U.S. officials about the anti-Cuban campaign being implemented. I have the report here. If you want, I will read a small part of it: the part that says what Alarcon told the U.S. high official when he protested the charges against Cuba and the charges and attempts made to mix Raul in this rubbish. I am only going to read a paragraph and will say a very harsh word, because I have no other choice but to say it. I did not say these words, but I told Alarcon to say them.

The paragraph in Alarcon's report says: Following instructions from the commander in chief, I told this official—I am not going to give his name—that those who promoted and implemented these charges against us were sons of bitches. This was the diplomatic word used in the conversation between Alarcon and the U.S. official. It reflected our anger over this campaign which we believed to be totally slanderous. They were partially slanderous because they used names of persons who are government leaders. In this case, since we were involved in the Angolan negotiations, we believed this was an ill-intentioned campaign.

The U.S. State Department officials stated that these campaigns were not being carried out by the State Department but that the reports had come from the Justice Department. They stated they really had nothing

to do with this campaign and did not want us to believe it was an ill-intentioned campaign carried out by the State Department or the U.S. Government.

Today we know these gentlemen had been carrying out operations since early 1987; they had been operating for more than a year. Although everything seems to point to the fact that the first air shipment was made in April 1987, they had begun preparatory trips to coordinate these operations since January.

I thought the reason for the charges against Raul was the presence of an Armed Forces officer during a meeting with Escobar. Whoever Martinez represented during the meeting with Escobar was left up in the air. However, from what he said, it would be surmised—without his clearly specifying that he represented this or that person—that he acted in such a way that he was a representative of the Cuban Government. We have evidence that at the meeting there, they believed Martinez was a Cuban Government envoy, although they were not sure. They were not certain of this. However, Martinez attended the meeting, thus leaving that up in the air. I thought the presence of an officer was the cause for those charges. Afterwards, when we were studying the trial, and when we later were studying the documents, I realized that these charges were being leveled even before Martinez visited Colombia.

This is perfectly logical and clear. Why? If these people met the plane together with the so-called Ruiz—a relative of Miguel Ruiz Poo—in Santa Clara, which is a military base; if the first cocaine shipment was unloaded at the Varadero airport, and they went to the small military area at that airport; and if the landing of a plane had to be authorized by the antiaircraft defense, one sees all these things are possible, perfectly possible.

If these people arrived there and reported they were going to receive someone, perhaps a prominent businessman, or if they said someone very important for their activities at the ministry is arriving and requested the FAR's cooperation, it is logical for the FAR to immediately provide such cooperation.

The plane could have landed in Holguin, Guantanamo, or any other place. Flight permits are automatically granted; in fact, we do not know how many planes fly over our country. Procedures must be followed and authorities must be notified. When these people notified others that they had to welcome someone, perhaps a prominent businessman, and that a plane was going to land, they were automatically given the permit. Who was going to think these bandits were actually requesting landing permission for a plane trafficking or bringing drugs?

However, if they came, they did not come through the Rancho Boyeros airport; they came through Santa Clara on the first trip and landed in the military area on the second trip. Thus, it is logical for the Yankees to think that the Armed Forces had to know something about that operation and, with evil intentions of course, had to involve Raul's name in this problem. Those charges were made long ago, based on the activities by Tony de la Guardia's group.

Before we continue, it is also necessary to reflect on this. What was the U.S. attitude? Today, we already know the United States had the names of at least two people, which is something these two people have already admitted in their own testimony. One of them was Tony de la Guardia and the second was Miguel Ruiz Poo. They themselves said they had recordings of the talks held in Panama between one of their agents and Mr Ruiz Poo. It is possible they may have had more names of officers involved in this activity. If they saw the coastguard and the various movements, perhaps they thought this activity was authorized by the government.

More than the accusation itself, what is irritating is the idea that this country could sell itself for the few miserable dollars Tony de la Guardia and his group collected. For a group of people it could be enough, but for a country it is something insignificant. It is tiny. It is complete filth. The U.S. Government's opinion on the Cuban revolution does not matter. It is not possible that they believe Cuba could solve any problem with that filth. How much did they collect the 1st year? A million and something dollars. The 2d year they collected another million and something. The 3d year they had a higher rate, perhaps 3 million.

It is estimated that these gentlemen collected approximately $3.5 million. They still owed them money, which I suppose always happens in this kind of activity.

What does $2 million represent for a country that exports billions of dollars in sugar, nickel, farm and industrial products, etcetera? We are talking about billions of dollars per year. Consequently, regardless of what the Americans think of the revolution, it is not possible for them to have believed that this country could be sold for 4 [figure as heard] miserable dollars.

I know that the country cannot be sold for any amount of money. It is unfeasible and unacceptable to have a revolution that is dependent on drug trafficking. Even it if were thousands of millions of dollars, it would be unacceptable for a revolution in this hemisphere, 90 miles away from the United States, that maintains itself on its principles, morals, and seriousness to do this. If they want to, let them accuse us of being revolutionaries, of helping revolutionary movements, and of carrying out internationalist missions. Let them accuse us of whatever they want to in the revolutionary area. But to think that this country is a country of such little ambition that it would try to solve its problems with that miserable money is almost an insult to the common sense and intelligence of the leaders of our country and revolution.

What the Americans did was not right. They could have somehow sent a message to us. They could have said: We have the names of two people who are involved in drug trafficking. But they kept quiet. If it was a charge made at a trial, we would not have paid much attention to it, because those are charges made by criminals who are going to be convicted. These criminals are offered anything, and they will make any statement, so that is not serious.

Since we have talks, the Americans could have perfectly well and discreetly told us: Listen, this was not a charge in any court, this is no propaganda: We have proof that two Cuban officers are involved in these operations, and this is how they are doing it. The truth is that they could have tested us had they acted this way. I do not think they would have burned any agent. Perhaps they will claim we were going to ask how they knew. Well, they did not have to burn any agent. All they had to say was: We have reliable reports that these two people are involved in this and are carrying out their operations this way. This would have been discovered a long time ago. I do not know how long they had the names of those involved. However, they had Ruiz Poo's name very early in the game. They had known for a long time that the planes carrying drugs were landing in Varadero and that the drugs would then be shipped by boat.

We are not trying to blame the United States now. That is not our intention. However, I can cite an example that occurred not long ago. Through intelligence information, Cuba got word that a group of reactionaries in a U.S. state—I do not recall the exact details right now—were considering an attempt on Reagan's life. They were considering an attempt on Reagan's life, and we got the information. However, the information we had was not too clear. To make it clearer, we would have had to conduct an investigation in the United States. However, not 48 hours had passed, not even 24 hours had passed, when I had already ordered the Interior Ministry to report to U.S. authorities that there were certain people in a southern state who were considering an attempt on Reagan's life during an upcoming visit he had planned to that state. We reported this to them immediately. We did not waste a minute investigating or confirming this. We did not care that Reagan was a sworn enemy of our revolution and that he had a very aggressive policy against Cuba. We believed that it was a basic duty to report such a serious matter.

I think the only two times we made a kind gesture toward Reagan was when he was wounded, and we expressed our concern and rejection over what happened to the U.S. Government, and on this occasion, when we learned that people were plotting against the U.S. President's life. We did not hesitate. We did not disclose this. We are mentioning this now. This must have happened 2 or 3 years ago. It is being mentioned now because we have no other choice than to recall this precedent.

In the same way that we conveyed that information to them, they could have conveyed the information that they had available on this drug trafficking in a confidential manner, as we did with them. That is what really hurts us. In spite of everything and all the secrecy, we began to investigate this drug trafficking. What prompted the investigation? It was prompted by this campaign, by rumors that reached us through our friends and through what was mentioned in these drug-trafficking circles that there were Cuban officials cooperating with them. In fact, they even said that some Cuban officials had stolen certain amounts of drugs, certain shipments, from the drug traffickers.

On the one hand, we saw the campaigns by the United States. On the other hand, we heard rumors on what drug-trafficking leaders had said, rumors that reached us by diverse means, without mentioning names, of course.

To this situation is added a 6 March 1989 cable. What did the cable say? It said: Two drug traffickers declared themselves guilty of transporting over 1 ton of cocaine through Cuba, with the alleged assistance of officials and military men of that country, the Miami office of the Federal District Attorney reported today.

Reinaldo and Ruben Ruiz admitted their guilt on the 17 counts presented against them and they could face a life sentence, a spokesperson for the District Attorney's Office stated.

The two men who were indicted in February 1988 transported the cocaine in an aircraft from Colombia, which made stopovers in Panama, Cuba, and Haiti, the charges read. The band was infiltrated by secret agents who posed as buyers and who made audio and video recordings of their meetings with the drug leaders, the District Attorney's Office explained.

In dozens of recorded hours of meetings that the court admitted as firm evidence, Reinaldo and Ruben Ruiz declared they had broad, high-level contacts in Cuba and boasted of smoking Cuban cigars that, according to them, were from Fidel's drawer.

The dossier gives details of the cases in which Ruben Ruiz had flown from Cuba to Colombia...[corrects himself] had flown from Colombia to the military airport in Varadero, Cuba, carrying 1,000 pounds, 500 kg, on each flight. On the next occasion, in April 1987, the drug was unloaded by military personnel, taken to a dock, and loaded on a ship named "Florida," which was escorted by Cuban coastguard vessels until it left Cuban territorial waters, the dossier read.

Of course, when I saw this, especially the part about the drawer, I had the slight impression it was another lie—especially, gentlemen, because I have not smoked for 4 years. Therefore, there cannot be any cigars in my

drawer. I no longer smoked by 1987. The way the report was phrased, it appeared to be what I was talking about earlier: A prisoner who is condemned is lost and will say what they want him to say.

In any event, this was a little bit like what happened to me when I realized Eutimio Guerra was betraying us in the Sierra Maestra. What they said, the rumors that reached us, the news concerning what mafia leaders had said, and the previous campaigns with all these details appeared a little strange. Then I spoke to Interior Minister Comrade Abrantes and told him an investigation had to be carried out.

I confess I was far from imagining there could be an entire gang inside the ministry doing this. But I said there is someone involved in this; someone is doing something; there is even someone who actually might be swindling these drug traffickers. I reached the conclusion that this had to be investigated; it could not be dismissed as a simple rumor, as mere slander; it had to be investigated. This happened in mid-March. It must have been a few days after this cable arrived.

This does not mean press agency reports are serious ones, as a rule. Sometimes—this was an exception—they tell the truth.

I was just reading a UPI report that states that a small aircraft was being chased by Coast Guards and that it entered Cuban territory, that MiG planes had taken off to prevent the Coast Guard planes from entering our waters. This is what a wire report said. That is a big lie, and the Americans themselves should know the truth, because they were told about this. Three small aircraft almost crashed. Their flights are not very easy, because they fly by night with their lights switched off and at low altitudes.

However, the truth is that 2 nights ago, a small plane was being chased by Coast Guard planes that entered our national territory. Two MiG-23 aircraft immediately took off to intercept the small plane and to chase it; it was flying from north to south. Two more planes took off because the first two had run out of fuel; it was nighttime and the planes were even given the order to open fire on the small airplane. Three orders had been given to open fire on small aircrafts that were taking very irregular flight paths.

That is what happened. The planes took off and chased the small aircraft. Then two more planes took off and the small aircraft flew across and got away. I do not know at what altitude it was flying; it was approximately 2200 [not further identified]. The Border Guards were instructed to report what had happened at that hour of the night. Now look at how evil these people are. Just look at how evil they are and how they wage their campaign: The wire report says that the planes took off to intercept the Coast Guard planes and that the small aircraft flew into our national territory because it felt protected while flying over Cuba.

These are things we must discuss with the Americans, and we have exchanged some notes on this. Actually, we have exchanged more than notes; there are reports and something has been said. We must have discussions to see how we will handle this kind of situation. We were serious when we said what we did about the planes violating our airspace. That statement was very serious. Of course, we want to take all measures because we do not want any innocent person or the wrong person to suffer the consequences. This requires very precise pilot training to prevent any such accidents from taking place.

Therefore, this will have to be regulated in some way. Some means of communications between the United States [and Cuba] will have to be found in this common battle. We say common, because actually many times—the Americans know this, and I have explained this in some interviews—these planes were overflying [our territory] and were ordered to land; and they scoffed at the order to land. They were not shot at, but the decision on whether to shoot into the air at one of those planes that was not obeying was a very difficult decision. The pilot might be a drug trafficker, a journalist, a U.S. senator—lost somewhere over there—or a private citizen who, when ordered to land, does not want to land in this hell the U.S. propaganda has portrayed.

In other words, we have always thought about this, but we have told them on more than one occasion: We cannot tolerate this situation, which now, of course, it is completely intolerable. We cannot allow our airspace to be mocked. For many years, the United States has been mocking our airspace. While the drug traffickers mocked our airspace to do their business, the United States sent their planes to spy on Cuba and to violate our airspace. So there have been two violations—one by the drug traffickers and the other by the United States. It has been a long time since airspace violations have occurred involving the use of this special U.S. plane. However, violations by groups of drug traffickers are frequent. Often, these are not technical violations because they fly along the flight paths and fulfill all requirements. It is very difficult to search a small aircraft using a flight path to determine its cargo. However, when planes stray from the flight path or deviate from the required altitudes, it is possible to detect any irregularity, and of course, that must end.

Are we anxious to fire at those planes? No, we are not anxious to do so. Our pilots have been very cautious. However, if we want the country's sovereignty to be respected, if we do not want them to mock our laws, we will have no other alternative but to fire at aircraft that violate our airspace in strange and very irregular ways. Of course, we would take measures to ensure that under no circumstances will a plane which is obviously carrying civilians be involved in an accident of this kind.

I have already commented on how propaganda works in the United States. They were already accusing us or trying to suggest that we had offered protection and that our fighter planes had been deployed to keep U.S. Coast Guard planes away. This has created a very irregular situation that must be regulated in one way or another.

I said this reminds me of when we discovered a traitor. I said: We must investigate this and, sure enough, an investigation was begun in mid-March. I have an important report here.

They gave the first task to radio—how do they call it?—radio counterintelligence to monitor all communications from Miami and Colombia and to monitor planes and ships. What did counterintelligence discover? It is contained in this report.

It states: Beginning on 16 March 1989, radio direction-findings [ubicaciones radiogoniometricas] indicated that the callsign The Fat One [gordo], which is frequently used by a network out of Miami and by vessels, was detected northwest of Havana, near the coast; therefore, that became the target of priority attention.

On 27 March, during his radio conversations with Miami, The Fat One said he could not carry out any activities until after the 5th [month not given]. On 27 March 1989, The Fat One changed his call sign to 13. I am only reading the paragraphs that give you an idea of what was going on.

The reports says: The first results indicated that the O was in Havana—O means objective. It says the O was in Havana, northwest of El Morro [an area in Havana]. The Intelligence Department discovered someone was transmitting from that area.

After that discovery, there was a change in the behavior of the objective. At that time, call signs 35 and 20 came into the picture. There were constant changes in frequencies, and the radio transmissions were very brief, thus making our investigations more difficult. Despite that, we succeeded in determining the transmissions originated in various points in the western end of Havana, especifically within the area between the Almendares River and Barlovento. Barlovento is the area between 5th and 7th Streets and 62 - 66 Miramar...[corrects himself] the area from 5th to 7th Streets—these are two areas—to 210 Miramar, the Triton Hotel. [sentence as heard]

The report continues: During that period, we noticed an increase in their methods to disguise their transmissions. On 23 April 1989, call signs R-1 northern Matanzas Province and R-2 in Florida State established radio contact. During their conversations, they hinted that an operation would take place in which drugs would be dropped from a plane. We decided to send our units to Hicacos Peninsula.

The report adds: The drug operation began at 2200 on 23 April 1989. The drugs were dropped from a plane named Tocayo. According to the radio conversations, the plane dropped 25 packages in an area near Key Cruz del Padre. The drop took place at about 0500. One of our units located R-1 no farther than 20 km northeast of Punta Hicacos. At 1245 on 24 April 1989, another drug operation began in the same area. This time, the operation was coordinated by callsign 130 in Florida State, call sign 57 on board the plane, and call sign 125 between Varadero Beach and Key Cruz del Padre.

The radio counterintelligence reached the following conclusion in their report: In light of the information obtained through the radio transmissions and the radio direction-findings, it is clear the activities carried out by The Fat One and the other call signs are linked to drug trafficking. In addition, the radio transmissions reveal that the drops take place in Cuban territory and jurisdictional waters.

This is the conclusion reached by counterintelligence in a report sent to the ministry on 25 April, to which we must add two reports from 24 April describing each of these events. Moreover, through radio counterintelligence and by intercepting communications, they were able to have an idea of what was going on. A meeting was held on 27 March...[corrects himself] April, at the MININT high command—with all this information in hand—to investigate what was going on. In other words, to proceed to seize some of the boats. However, what happened? Tony de la Guardia attended this 27 April meeting. His group was already aware of radio-counterintelligence operations in Varadero and the 27 April meeting, which gave instructions to various directorates on this matter. Tony de la Guardia attended this meeting. He was asked some questions regarding the radio, about the messages being sent. Of course, he responded negatively to the questions.

The radio-counterintelligence operation was working so accurately that the radio was located precisely in the zone mentioned in the report. The radio was located precisely in this area, although they moved around and sometimes went out in a boat off the coast. They they did not remain in a fixed point, but Amado Padron's offices were located precisely in this zone. Therefore, an investigation was under way, and the culprits immediately realized the investigation was being conducted, so they suspended all operations. They suspended all operations. My question is: Would we have discovered through this investigation what was happening and who was involved if the Ochoa problem had not happened? The fact of the matter is May passed calmly, June was passing by, and no results had been obtained from the investigation we had ordered. We discovered [Fidel pounds on the table] the problem of Tony de la Guardia's activities precisely while we were conducting an investigation on Ochoa's activities. We were far from supposing these two activities could be linked.

We acted very carefully regarding Ochoa, with all the necessary cautiousness, starting from reports on moral matters, linking them to other reports that had been received at various times. We added all that and were clearly able to see that various irregular activities were going on. We had already decided to appoint him chief of the Western Army after he had returned from Angola.

These reports and analyses led to the postponement of Ochoa's designation to the post. He could not be designated unless some of these issues were cleared up and explained. We had to be very careful. When MINFAR informed me of these activities, particularly the moral ones, they were indicative of such deterioration that they precluded Ochoa's designation as chief of the Western Army.

Nevertheless, there was still hope that an in-depth discussion could be held with Ochoa with a view to correcting the irregularities. At the time, I considered all of his achievements, his rank, and his position as a hero of the Republic of Cuba. I thought of the speculation that would be unleashed worldwide, the scandal that would ensue if, because of these problems, Ochoa had to be stripped of his medals, degraded, fired, expelled from the Armed Forces, or incarcerated.

At that time, there was nothing as serious as what was learned later. Investigations had to be carried out very carefully, because some people had to be interrogated. How could we interrogate some of his collaborators, some of those who worked with him, like Martinez, the others? It could become evident an investigation was being carried out. If any of those moral issues were serious, anything could happen, because when there is moral deterioration, all ethics are lost, and when all ethics are lost, one cannot trust anyone, because all principles have been lost. A revolutionary is a revolutionary by virtue of principles, by virtue of ethics.

We were not going to arrest Ochoa just so he would not escape and then conduct an investigation. That cannot be done, and it is generally not done with anyone. We must admit that counterintelligence worked very hard and very carefully to obtain information without Ochoa suspecting that he was being investigated. That type of investigation normally requires authorization, as he was a member of the Central Committee. In other words, in our country there are principles and norms that are complied with in dealing with people. One cannot humiliate a person and imprison him because there are rumors about him. That is not and cannnot be the style of the revolution.

However, that became a headache for us, because of the precedent set by people who were corrupt and later fled, and became heroes of the other side; then they became parrots and repeated everything the imperialists put in their mouths. That was the main problem we had that week and to which Comrade Raul has referred.

We continued to gather information, then we decided to have the first conversation—which I believe was on 29 May [year not specified]—with him. Raul had a very serious 3-hour conversation with him. Raul had notes with him, he had everything, and he talked about a number of things that had been confirmed up to that moment and other things that had not been confirmed. He was warned, he was told why he was not going to be appointed. We waited for him to react, to cooperate, to show concern, to tell the truth. Actually, he was very evasive in that conversation.

A few days went by, and we knew he felt very depressed over the conversation, that he was ashamed. Then he reacted, and there is a second conversation. That was on 2 June. I thought that inasmuch as he had requested a private meeting with the minister, he was going to speak and be frank. The previous meeting was with three comrades: Raul, Furry, and Ulises. He wanted a private meeting, and we thought he was probably ashamed to speak, but he was going to speak out.

While this was going on—and although we had evidence—it was decided not to speak about those serious moral charges, because two things could happen when you speak to a man about that. He might shoot himself, and we thought that would be so unfortunate that we decided not to include the topic in his conversation with Raul. So we decided to set that aside, and we were going to speak about everything else. Why? It is almost impossible to make an arrangement with an individual when you tell him: Look, we know this. We decided to cope with that problem only in an indirect manner, with an attitude of rectifying what he was doing.

I must admit that at that moment—although we were aware of a number of irregularities—we were unaware of others. For example: The money in Panama, the account, nothing of that was known at that time. Elements of judgment are gathered in a very careful and shrewd manner. We were always wondering what to do with him: Leave him in the Armed Forces? What task could be assigned to him? What would his reaction be? At the time of the first meeting, we were still considering leaving him in the Armed Forces, giving him treatment [as heard], giving him an opportunity.

I remember that on the eve of the second meeting, I told Raul—a group of comrades used to meet to analyze the problem; very few problems have been so carefully analyzed—ask him if he has any accounts abroad. Judging from all the other elements, I started to think that he must have an account abroad. Raul asked him: Do you have any? Ah, yes, but a very small amount. But how much do you have? Just a little something [una boberia], he said. That was the answer he gave. I cannot even remember, he said, a little something. All of this happened between the 29th and the 2d, between 29 May and 2 June.

We got together on 11 June. No, the 10th was a Saturday. We got together on Friday. On Friday I knew that the comrades from the MINFAR, the MINFAR's High Command, who were studying this situation had reached the conclusion that Ochoa's activities were grave and that there was no other alternative but to arrest him.

We asked Polo to return from Angola. We wanted him to give us some information about all this. We wanted to know whether he knew anything about it. That same day, 11 June, was the day of the 14 hours—I am not sure if it was 14 hours . We met for 14 hours. 11 June was a very important day. On that day, we examined some of the operations in which Comrade Diocles Torralba was involved. Torralba was closely linked—not with those operations we were examining—but closely linked to other activities, especially through the De la Guardia brothers.

While investigating those operations, we came across some of the activities in which Mr Diocles Torralba was involved. The people we questioned said various things, such as: This and that was done; they often said vague things. During the search at Hidalberto's [not further identified] house, we discovered Diocles was living there and discovered some of the activities in which he was involved.

On 11 June, we examined a series of documents proving Torralba's involvement in some of those activities. Those documents were irrefutable and unquestionable evidence of the immoralities in which Ochoa and one of the De la Guardia brothers were involved.

We found out that one girl who had attended one of the parties was disguised as an internationalist combatant, as a MININT member. We found out they sent her to Luanda, where she stayed almost 1 month before returning to Cuba. This happened in September 1988. In February 1989, the girl began talking about certain things. That was one of the clues leading to our discovery of important activities.

The decisive day, however, was 11 June. On that day, I met with some comrades of the MINFAR at my office. They had already decided what had to be done. I requested more facts to formulate an opinion. We learned important facts from our conversation with Polo. We were unaware of those facts. On that same day, we received several intelligence reports about deals involving money. On that same day, we received information about the bank account in Panama.

I then asked each comrade to give me their opinion, as we did here today. Each of the chiefs gave their opinions and views. They said that regardless of the consequences, we had to do something then. I agreed with them, and we unanimously decided to arrest Ochoa immediately. We had been watching him closely 24 hours a day, but that was very difficult. Sometimes he disappeared for 2 hours around the area of Santa Fe. We thought perhaps he could get on a boat or something, because nobody knew what he could do. The activities in which Ochoa was involved were already very serious. It was necessary to arrest him. There was no possible justification.

It was absolutely necessary to arrest him and try him for his involvement in those activities. We knew the situation was not easy. We know what happens when such a high-ranking official is arrested. We knew the kind of campaign this action would spark. However, we decided to face all those things.

What we could not imagine is what we later discovered. Our subsequent discoveries surprised everybody. The new discoveries began with a letter, which did not specifically address the topic, but did hint toward Jorge Martinez' involvement in drug trafficking. That letter discussed a book on the mafia. There was also a very small card related to a hotel in Colombia, in Medellin. That is how we began investigating the drug link.

We arrested Patricio and Tony de la Guardia for the operations carried out in Angola and for their link with Ochoa. We arrested the De la Guardia's for their participation in ivory and diamond smuggling. That is why we arrested them. We realized they were not only involved in hosting big parties or things like that but also in illegal activities such as smuggling. That is why we arrested the two of them. We arrested each of the De la Guardia brothers at the same time but in different ways. We arrested one brother at a certain hour and the other brother at another hour. We adopted all the necessary measures so none of them would take off.

We proceeded to arrest them, and the investigation began. This occurred on...[unidentified speaker prompts him: "12 June"] On 12 June, we arrested them, and on the following night, we already had the main information about the drug case. This is what I can report about these events; I have provided it so you can have a broader perspective—not only you but, if we are going to broadcast this event, all the people—of the case.

Now, we have to get to conclusions. We have to broach the subject for which we are meeting. All I have said about the subject up to now has been to provide more facts on which to make a judgement. It is true our decision is important; it is true our decision has to do with human lives and is a decision that cannot be taken rashly. I do not believe any one of us will take it rashly. We are all very conscious of the importance of this decision, because it is a function attributed to the State Council in the Constitution.

The perspectives that lie ahead of us have to be taken into account, which I believe has already been stated here. We have to be aware of the impact the decision made here will have on our future.

Did Ochoa have a chance to save himself? I mention Ochoa because he is the most important person in this case. Did Ochoa have a chance to save himself? Yes, Ochoa really had the opportunity to save himself. I have given this a great deal of thought. He was given many opportunities, at least several opportunitites. Ochoa could have saved himself in the first conversation he held with Raul if he had been frank, open, sincere, responsible, and truthful.

Just imagine if on 29 May, Ochoa had told Raul everything—what he did, the activities, the money, the account there, what these individuals were doing. This would have been so important and worth taking into account! Of course, Ochoa could not have remained in the Armed Forces, but had he rendered this service, we could have even discussed whether to take him to court or not. Just imagine! We could have discussed it. If this man had come and opened his heart, told everything, and rendered the country the service of saying this gang existed, he could have spared us the surprise. This could have been discussed if the man had been truly repentant. It would not have come to the point of discussing whether or not to execute him. That was one opportunity.

I have asked myself many times: Had he done this, what could have been an appropriate action to take regarding a man who did something like that? We would have had to take this very much into account. It would have been possible to release him from prison, to recover the money, to learn everything. There was a real opportunity at that moment. We would have had to take his attitude into account.

He had another opportunity the second time he talked with Raul. He himself said he came close to confessing everything but did not dare or did not have the moral fortitude to confess, and he did not. This was a second opportunity.

He had a third opportunity on the day he was arrested. He could have said: Let me talk; I will explain everything. He could have done so a few hours after his arrest, or the next morning. He could have said: I am going to cooperate; I am going to explain everything I have done, all of the terrible things I have done. If he had confessed before anybody, if we had not had to discover what they had done, we could have had the option of sparing his life and giving him the harshest possible sentence save for capital punishment.

He did not have this attitude. He did not cooperate in any way. We had to inquire, investigate, and work hard to discover everything without Ochoa's cooperation.

All of this was discovered. His involvement in drugs and his complicity with this de la Guardia gang was discovered. All the operations they had been carrying out were discovered. And all, or almost all—I think we learned the major part—of the facts were discovered. However, I believe that by then it was certainly too late to have avoided the most severe penalty.

We were all impressed at the honor court. This does not mean we have changed our viewpoints. However, we believe he was honest and courageous. We were even satisfied he had acted in that manner. Although I felt a point of no return had been reached, it could serve to leave something to the closest relatives. It could serve to leave some sort of positive image amid that drama, amid that painful incident. But at that point, in those circumstances, and at that moment, we had no alternative. We faced a situation with no alternative. However, at least we saw his testimony was positive, that it contained a vestige of the qualities that had earned him the honors of a hero, why he received his stripes, why he became a member of the party's Central Committee, why he was a division general of our Armed Forces. I think that day he was sincere. I think that day he sincerely repented. I think he was, of course, courageous. Our people admire courage.

Above all, our people appreciated the contrast between the attitude assumed by Ochoa at the honor court and the attitude of the others, the ones who had organized the mafia inside MININT. They appreciated it. Our people suffered. We all suffered a lot with the testimonies of other MINFAR officers. I particularly was indignant, irritated, hurt to see how those men had destroyed their careers—men who had studied in the academies and received their ranks for their service. I told myself: If they had had other superiors, these men would not have been corrupted as they were. This is not an excuse for whoever commits a certain wrongdoing, but at least it helps to explain and perhaps even mitigate it.

But it hurt us to see that situation. The honor tribunal had 2 days, 1 of them very sad, this was the day when many people testified, and 1 day of glory. This latter day was when the members of the honor tribunal spoke with great eloquence and force, as well as with great pain, but firmness. However, Comrade Ochoa's attitude, as was said here by Comrade Carlos I believe, influenced the honor tribunal's opinion. Of course, that could complicate the solution to the problem, not change it. It could produce a contradiction between what the tribunal did, what the Council of State said, and the people's opinion.

I have already mentioned the firm opinion that this matter could not be decided by public inquiry nor anything like that. Thus, the difficulties a determined situation can have, is something that must be analyzed from another angle, politically. Ochoa was sincere in front of the honor tribunal, but he was not sincere with the judicial tribunal, he was not. He was different. He was another man. He was empty. He did not want to assume the responsibility, he lied. He said he ignored Tony de la Guardia's activities. Tony de la Guardia and Ochoa spoke frequently in Angola. In 1988 Tony de la Guardia made six trips to Angola and on all of the trips

he spoke with Ochoa about this matter. Martinez was a frequent contact for this group, and Ochoa denied that he knew about Tony de la Guardia's activities.

He said that he was leaving that, he said he was looking for a foreign friend to give him all the contacts and forget about this. He said that since he just wanted to help the country, all he wanted was his friend to carry out the big operations and then invest the money as if it were capital from a foreigner, a foreigner's property to be invested in tourism; as if the country needed that type of money. What the nation needs is arms to build all it can build with the capital offered, capital that has nothing to do with drug trafficking.

Martinez' argument, as much as Ochoa's, was that they had the account in the name of the friend and later changed it because the friend could die. If you consider that a foreign friend can die, that a foreign friend can die [repeats himself], and you have to take measures with an account that has $200,000, I ask myself: Why can the friend not die if the account had $500 million, $1 billion, $20 million, or $50 million? Here we have been talking about the foreign friend and we have not mentioned him. We know that the foreign friend... [changes thought] We have the opinion... [changes thought] We have tried not to involve people who we believe were tricked into these activities. It was not the foreign friend who led Ochoa to these activities, it was Ochoa who insisted to the foreign friend that these activities had to be carried out. This is why we have been careful with some names and why they have not been released to the press. There is no other reason for this.

Anyway, there are strange statements saying they did not want anything more to do with that. It has been proven that during the first 3 months of 1989, Martinez travelled to Panama to make contact with his associates, with his friends, to carry out drug trafficking plans. Something else, until April of this month, Ochoa had been insisting on a big operation, or big operations, of a ship with 10 tons of drugs. He wanted the ship to stop on the north part of the island and then load the drugs onto launches. Actually, he did not have the same seriousness, the same honesty, during the oral hearing.

I believe a series of serious arguments have been discussed here. They have been serious and solid arguments to explain why we do not have an alternative in this case. Who would be able to believe in the revolution? Who would be able to believe in the seriousness of the revolution if, for such serious faults, the most severe penalties established by the nation's laws are not applied? As has already been stated, all of these events have the elements of treason. What is treason? Treason is to sell your country, and they sold the country. Treason is to put the nation in jeopardy, and they placed the nation in serious jeopardy. Treason is to undermine the nation's morals and the revolution's prestige. They have been doing things that undermine the revolution's morals and prestige. They weaken it in every sense.

Here, the revolution and the laws dictate capital punishment for spies. A CIA agent can be shot. I ask myself: Could a CIA agent cause the damage that these gentlemen were causing? A CIA agent can get information on the economy, something military, or something. I ask myself: Could 10 CIA agents cause the damage these people were causing? Could 50 CIA agents cause this damage? Could they expose the country the way these people were exposing the nation? CIA agents are judged and shot. If an exemplary punishment is not imposed in this case...[changes thought] Someone said: Who else could deserve this punishment?

I ask myself: How can we guarantee discipline in our armed forces and in the Ministry of the Interior if the chief of an army, the chief of tens of thousands of men in battle, in war, takes the luxury of devoting a single second of the time dedicated to his duties to these activities? What can we demand from a military chief? What can we expect from future heroes and future chiefs? What can we expect from bosses, men who put themselves above the law and morals? What can we expect from men who put themselves above the nation? I think that one of the things that gives us the most pride is our officers' and military chiefs' modesty; the honesty of our officers and military chiefs. We are proud of their conduct, of which we had proof during the honor tribunal. What could we say to the future chiefs, the future heroes if an action of such great severity is not punished with the most severe penalty our laws establish?

Our army is characterized by its discipline, by its unconditional loyalty to the revolution, to the principles of the revolution, and to the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC]. This is one of the things that most satisfies us about our army and our chiefs. We can say that with his insolence, Ochoa put himself above the laws because he was a hero, a general, and a member of the PCC Central Committee. It would be an ill-fated and demoralizing precedent if we do not apply the most severe penalties. For others like Martinez, who consciously did what he did, we would not be showing that there are actions that cannot be approved, such as doing these things under the pretext of carrying out orders. If we do not punish the two main people from the Ministry of the Interior, how could we rebuild the Ministry of the Interior? How could we regain that institution's prestige, a prestige which has been seriously damaged by these events. How could we someday hope to have discipline in an institution which is so fundamental for the nation, a nation in revolution, for a nation that is 90 miles away from the United States? How could we have discipline in that institution? How could we speak of rectification? Who would speak of rectification again if the most incredible joke played on the principles of the process of rectification are not punished? Like someone here said, when we were in the middle of that battle, the battle of rectification, the most atrocious things are done. They laughed, they made fun of the principles. Remember what was said on 19 April 1986? Then all of this happens from 1987 to 1989. What future could the process of rectification have if a simple

prison sentence is issued? Would it be enough to constitute an example? Would it be enough to save and preserve the values we are protecting?

In every sense, we must examine the great damage suffered by the nation. We have to examine the political damage. We have to review many cables and declarations. We have to see how they impute the whole government without excluding anyone. We have to examine more than just what they placed in danger, the revolution's prestige and credibility. However, this has already been stated. We are going to recuperate the prestige and credibility and it will be stronger than before. We are going to recuperate it and make it stronger, not by virtue of the actions committed by those sanctioned, we are going to recuperate and make it stronger despite their actions. This is based on how the nation gave face to what they did.

Many people in the world are astonished. Some people say we have given this too much importance. The problem is that in many parts of the world this does not have much importance. Embezzling, robbery, indiscipline, impunity, and dirty dealings do not have any importance in some places. However, to us it has great importance and we have given it the importance it deserves. Of course, as has been said, we will turn this setback into a victory. This will depend on the attitude the nation takes, as well as on the measures taken. It will not just depend on the sanctions, it will also depend on what happens after the sanctions. Here I am referring to all of those who may be potential followers of this conduct.

No, I do not believe that the process of rectification is going to lose, it is going to win. As Raul said; he said a peasant said that the rectification process can now advance 10 years. I think rectification will now be understood more. The PCC is now going to have more force to demand and impose rules. It will also have more force to sweep away with everything that smells rotten. So then, basing ourselves on the revolution's credibility and prestige, I think that the punishment should be exemplary and the sanctions should be the most severe.

Among the damages done, they were weakening our defenses considerably. They were morally disarming us, as we have already said. They were handing the enemy on a silver platter the opportunity to gather proof to discredit Cuba. What would revolutionary Cuba be like without international credibility?

What would revolutionary Cuba be like without prestige? What would revolutionary Cuba be like facing the imperialist enemy without morals? What would we be like facing that enemy that hounds us so much, that enemy that wanted to place us on the bench of the accused with regards to human rights. They were not able to get a sanction against the nation because of our morals, prestige, and Cuba's credibility. These men attacked all of this. They said they were going to help the nation collecting $2 million, which they in fact pocketed, squandered, and used to corrupt everyone. They used $2 million to corrupt many people with their genial way of helping the revolution. They themselves did not believe they were helping the revolution for a single minute.

The nation spends no less than $1 billion in defense. It spends over $1 billion on the Revolutionary Armed Forces alone. Calculate how much all the steel, wood, iron rods, and material resources we invest to prepare the operations sector and defense sector are worth. They are worth over $1 billion. The nation spends 500 times more than what these miserable people were collecting. The nation spends this amount of money with great sacrifice, and these people, for $2 million, were weakening the nation's defenses, selling the nation. I have not included in this figure the hundreds of millions the nation spends on the Ministry of the Interior. This money is used for internal order, as well as for state security. The nation spends hundreds of millions on security and these miserable people were corrupting and scorning us with a few miserable dollars. The damage they have done to the national economy... [changes thought] Who knows how much damage they have done to the national economy. The prosecutor spoke about this in his concluding statements. Varadero, what reputation would Varadero have in the world as a result of this mafia's activities?

The nation which has some of the best possibilities with regards to tourism, the nation that has the most immediate possibility to obtain the needed resources, especially in convertible currency, has tourist possibilities that could yield $500 million, $800 million, $1 billion every year, and this mafia, with their filth in drugs, was placing the country in danger. They were throwing everything to the ground. One of the things tourism likes is the security and tranquility they can find in our fatherland. What damage have they done to legitimate activities, legitimate and clean commerce carried out by the nation? They have made a mess, they have compromised things. They have involved activities that have nothing to do with them, activities that are legitimate and clean. Someday, we will have to see the level of damage done to the nation's legitimate activities. We will have to see the damage done to honest activities of a commercial nature. There are activities that are morally unobjectionable. How much damage have they caused our enterprises abroad?

They have caused terrible damage to the Ministry of the Interior. You could almost say that they have morally destroyed the Ministry of the Interior. The Ministry of the Interior must be reconstructed. It has to be rebuilt. Let us say that the accused alone are not responsible, this is the truth. Let us say that the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior has some culpability, and this has to be said now, because of its insensibility with regards to the conduct of these men whom everyone knew were potentates. Everyone knew they spent and flaunted money and that they lived differently than everyone else. It is

incredible! In the trial, it was stated that one of the men had 10 cars. That man, Amado Padron, almost certainly had been mentioned to everyone here: He was mentioned here; they talked about him there. They probably heard the same thing of the de la Guardia brothers. People heard about their lives and their conduct. The ministry was insensitive, despite the efforts we have made in the ministry, despite the efforts we have made [repeats himself] and despite the guidelines the ministry has, it was insensitive.

The ministry, among other things, was told—and it was stated in the report to the Third Congress—that they had to be unblemished because they are the ones who have to demand respect for the law and adequate conduct from the others, from the ones who have to clash in the streets with others. It was proposed that there not be clinics for the combatants of the Ministry of the Interior because this would separate them from the people. They were to go to the clinics the people go to. There were already Ministry of the Interior clinics in Pinar del Rio and other provinces, we said to return them. It was proposed that they not have restaurants nor recreation areas. In some places, these installations were already being built. We said: Return them, turn them over to the people. There was also military commerce. We listened to the complaints and said: Cease military commerce. One of the serious problems in the Ministry of the Interior was that they tried to equate themselves with the armed forces. The armed forces have different tasks, different missions, and different functions. Do not believe that the measures adopted were little things.

These measures were taken to make certain that the Ministry of the Interior did not separate itself from the people. The times I spoke about this were not few. If I heard about a party that cost several thousands, what were we to do with the responsible person? I said: No, I do not want a scapegoat. What I want is for this never to be repeated again. Unfortunately, it was not to be like so. This gang corrupted people; they made many gifts, and not just trashy gifts, to use the expression the people use. They have been doing it for some time. Why was Tony de la Guardia and the entire group of the CIMEX [State Enterprise for Import Export] Corporation removed? Because they had established a style. They imported all the imitation jewelry they could find. They imported white-walled tires, crystal of a certain type, little telephones, tape recorders, video cassette records in the cars, all kinds of things. They were removed from there.

Those people should never have been in the MC with the prerogatives they had at that point, much less organize multinationals under the pretext of breaking the blockade. That was prohibited. [pounds podium 3 times] That was conducted by not following precise and concrete instructions that were given to the ministry. All kinds of resources appeared in the hands of a small group of discredited people. Not only did they give away costume jewelry, color television sets, video cassette recorders, but they even gave away yachts that were valued at tens of thousands of dollars. They stole those yachts or lost them with the boatmen as their accomplices. The owners were delighted to collect from their insurance. The yachts were sold and resold here, or given away as gifts. Who knows how many people received gifts from this gang.

They created a system of relationships, of friendships that corrupted and, in my opinion, created a neutralizing effect which has caused terrible damage to the Ministry of the Interior. The ministry has such large functions to carry out. There is now a climate of bitterness. This is not the moment to forget the extraordinary services that the men and women of the ministry gave to the revolution during these 30 years; these are services that the country has needed, needs, and continues to need until who knows when. It is not a time to forget the heroism, courage, and the sacrifice made by so many men of the Ministry of the Interior. They rendered so many services to the country, especially the men of the state security organs, not to mention the services of the firemen, or the services the national police have given to the country. Like it was said during the oral trial: How difficult is it going to be, and how much time will it take to rebuild the trust and the abilities of some of the organs of the Ministry of the Interior? However, we will rebuild them, I do not have the slightest doubt about that.

There are some who have compared the FAR to the Ministry of the Interior, and I say that is very unjust. We must reiterate it whenever necessary. There is no possible comparison between the role of one institution and the role of another, although they are both important. The Ministry of the Interior was created from the rebel army. The Ministry of the Interior was created from the FAR. The Ministry of the Interior is the son of the rebel army, and, first of all, we must put each institution in its place. Especially now, the FAR has to again help the Ministry of the Interior. I say that the comparison is unjust, because I am saying this with my heart in my hand. If there is an institution that has been demanding in this country, if there is an institution that has had standards, if there has been an institution that has been, par excellence, an educating institution in this country, it has been the FAR. If there is a comrade who has been a struggler and demanding, that comrade is Raul. [pounds on podium three times] That is why we must indignantly deny the suggestion that comes from the enemy [which is] that if there was change in the Ministry of the Interior, there must also have been change in the FAR. That is an intrigue of the enemy. If we have discovered this cancer, it is precisely because of the FAR. [pounds on podium three times] If today we have many cadres with which to help the Ministry of the Interior, it is because of the cadres we have in the FAR.

Our FAR is comprised of two essential, fundamental institutions that are basic to our revolution and that have different problems, of a different nature. There was

really no Mafia in the Armed Forces. Two different groups were involved in these activities. When it came time to say things, they had to be said clearly.

How much time have all of us had to dedicate these past few days to this problem? How much time has Raul had to spend on this? How much time have I had to spend on this problem. What was I doing? What did I devote myself to? I made an enormous effort in all areas through the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers.

I had begun to develop plans for transportation in the capital, which was then at about 25,000 trips a day and is now at 30,000 trips a day. I didn't even want to hear about it. I didn't want to hear about the result of the work done on transportation in the capital until it was already super-consolidated. There was no need to talk. What we needed to do was to get it done. We were committed to programs for constructing bus terminals, central markets [mercados concentradores]. We were committed to raising the productive and constructive ability of the Construction Ministry. We were committed to radically change and sweep away bad habits, negative habits that were created in that institution. We had committed ourselves to the recovery of water resource management and to promote the construction of dozens of dams. We were committed to fulfilling plans for the drainage of sugarcane plots, engineering systems for the rice industry, construction programs for cattle processing centers, construction programs for pig and poultry processing centers. We all dedicated ourselves to increasing the production of food in our country, to resolve very important problems in every area, to inaugurate hospitals, child care centers, polyclinics, to carry out a vast number of programs in all areas of construction and agriculture. We committed ourselves to organizing contingents that now have the productivity that no other construction group has in any other country. They work longer hours than workers do in any other country to confront our underdevelopment and problems during the most difficult times, at a time when we have had less resources in convertible currency.

We have even had problems in receiving supplies that were constant for almost 30 years from the socialist area. We have also begun to have difficulties [pounds table] as a result of the changes and reforms they have applied. This makes it more difficult to obtain the supplies agreed upon for each year.

Conditions have been more difficult. We have all devoted ourselves to that work. We have been taken away from all that work. We have been forced to take a month off from this work. We suspended the meeting of the executive committee, three meetings, to dedicate ourselves to this problem because we feel it is important.

I thought that this year I would be able to devote much more time and be more dedicated to all these tasks. Last year, as I said, I had to devote almost the entire period from mid-November 1987 to October 1988 to the war in Angola until we achieved peace there, when our combatants returned victorious and laden with laurels. Just when we were trying to intensify the ideological battle, when a great enthusiasm for work developed throughout the country, a great exhilaration for work, just when we all dedicated ourselves to preparing the people for the war; we had to put it all aside to dedicate ourselves to these gentlemen, these rich little boys [senoritos], who lived the sweet life.

I talked about the contingents. How embarrassing it is that there are people dedicated to that! How embarrassing that there were people living like they did while others worked 14, 15, and 16 hours daily! The workers are forming, developing our country. They are creating a true miracle in the difficult moments of socialism. As it was said here, these are moments when socialism is being questioned, and in which they want to send it to the trash heap of history. Our country and process are a model not only of honesty, seriousness, and truthfulness, but it also tries to follow its own path, its own way of building socialism, while being aware that we are 90 miles away from the empire [sentence as heard]. With more pride, trust, and certainty than ever we fly the flag of socialism. They were threatening us with a terrible stain. They were threatening to drown us in mud and discredit. But the revolution is, was, and will be a serious matter. The revolution knows how to face all these problems like it should. What does the life of the gentlemen have to do with our working class? The habits of these gentlemen and the habits of our workers are two different worlds. We cannot rest until we have one single world—and not the world of the bourgeois, and the small bourgeois, but the world of the working class, our workers, our farmers. [pounds on podium twice] These...[rephrases] Our workers do not go around thinking about shoddy goods, a few cents, and luxuries. I have not seen that in any of those men who I admire so much. They wake up at dawn and work until 2200 and 2300 in the evening.

I recall a precedent that occurred in the Sierra Maestra. We still had a column, or two columns. We had made a long trip toward the east. While being very far from La Plata area, we received news about an outbreak of bandits among people in the 26 July movement, among some combatants who were isolated. They had robbed a store and committed several crimes; and that concerned us terribly. We said: That is not possible. If this is tolerated, permitted, and continues, this could be the death of the revolution. We walked countless hours, whole days. We carried out an extraordinary march. We sent Camilo [Cienfuegos] ahead of the soldiers so he could try to arrest all those people. So, we arrested the principal culprits. How painful it was to judge them! Some of them had been our guides. They had helped us, they had brought us food. However, the distance of the troops, the poor judgement of some people there, and irresponsibility, led them to commit actions which, under those circumstances, were very serious—acts of assault, robbery. We had to judge them, and we did. We sentenced them to the highest punishment, and we

executed them! I remember that, and it still hurts me. Those humble comrades of ours, some of them had several brothers in the troops, but they continued with us in the column. Tell me whether or not that was difficult for us. I remember that man who was called "the teacher" because he used to pretend to be one. He rendered some services. We received the news that had been [word indistinct] women, and saying he was Che. He was arrested. The same tribunal judged him and executed him immediately. We were not trigger-happy people. A whole story could be told about how many people our victorious army executed throughout the war, and there were very few. I do not think that any other revolution in the world, under war, has executed fewer people in that amount of time.

What kind of crimes had been committed by those, and I dare call them comrades? The revolution was not as developed yet as it is today. It did not have it norms and everything it has now. They made a mistake which under other circumstances would not have been so serious, but under those circumstances, it was extremely serious. No other alternative remained but to apply the highest punishment. What did those combatants do in comparison to the things these gentlemen have done, in comparison to the things done by Ochoa, de la Guardia, and his group? What was the seriousness of that action in comparison to this one? Today, we find ourselves in exactly the same (?situation). Those are such serious things—and things of this nature could threaten the future of the revolution—that there is no other alternative but to apply drastic punishment, exemplary punishment.

Various international personalities have addressed us expressing their concern, asking, urging that capital punishment not be applied to the accused. Naturally, we have also received messages from the relatives; this is probably the most difficult of all. Raul, spoke about that with much sorrow—when the children, brothers, parents address us asking us to not apply the maximum punishment, asking the Council of State to commute the sentence.

It is difficult for them to understand what they are asking of all of us, not just me. Because there are many who think that I am the one who decides whether or not one thing or another is done. I am not avoiding responsibility. If I was the only one who had to decide on this, if the Council of State president had that authority, I would adopt exactly the same decision. This is not a matter of avoiding responsibility. This is a collective decision. The world does not even know that; they think that the president of the country has the prerogative of pardoning. Everyone says: Now Castro will have to decide one thing or another. That is what is said abroad. Even in our country, many people think the decision is mine.

In reality, it is logical for these relatives, beloved ones, children, and closest relatives to ask what they are asking. However, they are asking for something which is beyond our prerogatives. They are asking for something which is beyond our duties. We hear of some cases, precedents. There was a time when the revolution could have been generous, and it was generous, without causing great damage to itself. Today, we cannot be generous...[rephrases] Today the revolution cannot be generous without causing great damage to itself. The revolution, always noble and generous, will never discriminate against the children of the responsible persons. We also suffer for those children. Like Raul said, that while thinking about this, one day he caught himself crying.

In conclusion, comrades, I believe there has never been a cleaner process in history, in our country. When I say history, I am talking about any history; and when I talk about our country, I will say that there has never been a process with more participation by everyone. I have already explained how the whole process took place, and how there was not the slightest influence on the decision of the judges, tribunals, and witnesses, or the accused, or anyone else. Furthermore, although it was our responsibility to make the final decision, here in this Council of State, practically all the comrades who hold important leadership posts in the country were consulted. First of all, I asked the opinion, one by one, of the Politburo members. The answer of each one of the Politburo members—it was not a one by one meeting, but in a meeting with all of them—their answer, unanimously, was that the most severe punishment should be applied to those who were principally responsible for these actions. Afterward, I asked the opinion of the executive committee, and of the Council of Ministers, one by one. Only two of them thought that the most severe punishment should not be applied—they used various arguments. We consulted the members of the Central Committee. Of the 162 members present, 10 argued against the application of the most severe punishment. They analyzed it, and for different reasons, arguments...[does not complete sentence] Eleven of them said that they would support whatever decision the Council of State would take; and 141 of them said that the most severe punishment should be applied. I must clarify that this was not done in 1 day. It was done at different times while the process was going on. I have already explained, and we were happy, that there were different opinions. Once the oral trial was finished, and the sentence handed down by the special tribunal was published, we requested that all the delegates of the National Assembly [of the People's Government] meet, because it is our higher organization, since we are representatives of the National Assembly. Out of the 402 delegates present, which was the total sum of the number that met in each one of the provinces, one person said he was in favor of commuting the death sentence, and 401 said they were in favor of the ratification of the sentence by the Council of State. Furthermore, many said that more of the accused should have been given capital punishment. There were many who thought that. Many even complained that one 15-year sentence proposed by the prosecutor was reduced to 10 years.

I believe that the military tribunal was generous. I believe that almost all the accused could have been sentenced to capital punishment. However, I also think that the tribunal was just in its decision.

We could add that it was a wise decision. It is better that a lot of people complain that the sentences were not drastic enough, than to have them some day complain that they were too drastic. However, I think the decision was very wise. I think our tribunals have simply sent out a warning; undoubtedly, if actions of this nature would ever be repeated, the measures would be much more drastic.

It is difficult to think that some men are going to die as a result of all this, and as a result of our very own decision. Yes, it is difficult, it is bitter. This could not be pleasant for anyone. However, I also think about others who have died. I think about those who fell in order to build a decent country, and not those who fell today [pounds table twice], but those who fell 120 years ago. I think about those who fell at that time in order to create a republic where justice and law would prevail—a decent republic where there would not be corruption, impunity, dishonesty, embezzlement. They fell for an honorable, respectable country. They fell in two wars of independence, and they have fallen throughout this century. They are the ones I think about, the many, and many valuable comrades who fell. I also think about the loved ones who lost them. I think of those who have died carrying out internationalist missions, honorable internationalist missions. It is on behalf of them, that we do not have any other alternative but to do what we are doing. It is on behalf of the ideals and of the fatherland that they loved, that we feel obligated to be severe.

Therefore, comrades, I believe that with the points of view having been amply expressed, I add myself to the opinion that all of you have expressed this afternoon.

In any case, although we have heard that opinion, I ask that we officially vote.

Those in favor of the ratification of the sentence handed down by the military tribunal raise your hands. [video shows Council of State members as they vote]

Those opposed [raise your hands].

By unanimity of the Council of State, the sentence of the special military tribunal is ratified. The session has ended.

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