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Dear Mr. Minister:

I am deeply appreciative for the candor of your letter on "Operation Intercept" and of the spirit of friendship and interest in the good health of the relationship between our two countries which inspired it. Please be assured that I fully understand your deep concern. As you know, we are prepared to hold bilateral talks with officials of your government to review the operation and the problems this has caused. This is the direct result of your suggestion to Secretary Rogers.

You will, I know, understand how seriously I view the problem of narcotics. Traffic in narcotics has reached such proportions that I consider strict enforcement of laws against it to be absolutely essential. I am convinced that this traffic must be stopped for the sake of both our societies, and it was for that reason that I stressed the importance of cooperation between our two governments when I met with your President at Amistad.

It is naturally not our wish to damage the economies of the border area, harm the tourist industry or disrupt legitimate border traffic. I am sure that the bilateral talks which will be held will be able to find ways to achieve the objectives of Operation Intercept with minimum disruption of this kind. I would hope, in addition, that such talks might be expanded to consider how cooperation between our two countries can be even more effective in combating this problem, and I ask your earnest support for such cooperation.

*Francisco Rodriguez*

*Gilchrist*

*Antonio Covilla*

May I express to you again my appreciation for your letter, and assure you of my complete understanding and good will as well as my profound desire to maintain the cordial friendship and mutual respect that have marked relations between our two countries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Nixon", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

His Excellency  
Antonio Carillo Flores  
Secretary for Foreign Relations  
Mexico City, D.F.