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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #04128-84
19 July 1984

Att. ER84-2952

NOTE FOR: DCI
FROM: Dave Gries
SUBJECT: Tuna fish again

You will recall that on 8 June one John M. Barbieri, representing the tuna industry, called on you; at your request I sat in. Barbieri's purpose was to solicit your support in lobbying the Administration for temporary import relief.

Barbieri has just written a letter of thanks (attachment) and asked me to solicit your support for legislative relief on a tariff item. Since the letter does not require an answer, I propose to set it aside. Barbieri's request has nothing to do with intelligence and I doubt you would want to pursue it.



David D. Gries

Attachment:
As stated

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DAVIDSON INTERNATIONAL

John M. Barbieri
President

Executive Registry

84 - 2952

July 2, 1984

Mr. David Gries
National Intelligence Officer/East Asia
Room 7E47, CIA Headquarters
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Gries:

I apologize for the delay in writing to thank you and Director Casey for meeting with August Felando and myself on June 8th. Since our meeting Mr. Felando has been in negotiations in New Caledonia on a regional licensing agreement for American Tunaboat Association vessels for 1985. I had been stricken with colitis and am just now getting back to normal.

We have also had a couple of boat seizures around the Solomons. There are those who think that the migration of our vessels away from the "traditional area" (i.e., the Eastern Tropical Pacific) will solve the seizure problems. They are only kidding themselves. While we have made many friends in the central and western Pacific, the seizures of the Jeanette Diana and Cindy P reinforce what we former law of the sea-types accept as a truism: the worldwide movement toward enclosure of what had been known as the high seas will make it very difficult for all distant water fishing fleets to survive. The problem is particularly acute for the U.S. tuna fleet (the only remaining U.S. distant water fishery), which is why the industry fought so hard in Caracas, Geneva, and New York to exempt highly migratory species, such as tuna, from coastal state jurisdiction.

The next three months will determine the future of this fleet and this industry, which is why I am writing to you today. I will not repeat the points raised by Mr. Felando last month, except to say if our petition to the International Trade Commission fails, and if our attempt later this month to attain legislative relief fails, we are dead. Frankly, I am very nervous about the fate of this industry being determined by political whim.

I essentially want to point out two facts: first, the U.S. tuna fleet has a historical interest in defense. During World War II, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the entire fleet was requisitioned by the U.S. Navy and served as our coast guard. Some vessels were actually used during military operations on the Pacific islands.

Mr. David Gries

July 2, 1984

Secondly, a recent National Academy of Sciences study ("Defense Utility of Commercial Vessels and Craft," 1982) verified the defense capabilities of the modern purse seine fleet. The study revealed that the fleet was rated very high for use in Intra-Theatre Shipping, Search and Rescue, and Port Operations. Furthermore, the larger vessels (those of 1,200-1,600 ton capacity) can, with minor modification, be retrofitted for use in combat. Many of these vessels are equipped with helicopters (to spot tuna) which give the fleet a capability unique to world fishing fleets.

I also believe we should not understate the significance of "showing the flag" in an area where there is little U.S. commercial or military presence.

We do not know what, if anything, you or the Director can do to ensure the survival of the U.S. tuna industry. I see two ways to help, if you agree it is in the national interest to do so.

First, if the ITC rules favorably on the industry petition for temporary import relief, the President will accept, reject, or modify the ITC recommendation. The President has been aboard a few tuna seiners in his day, and we think he would be interested in the unmentioned defense aspects of our business.

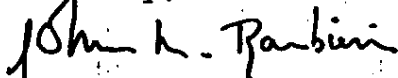
Secondly, beginning July 23rd (when the Senate reconvenes), Senators Ted Stevens and Pete Wilson will be pushing for immediate legislative relief to correct the anomaly in the current tariff structure affecting canned tuna imports. We need the Administration's support in these efforts.

Our feeling is that there are plenty of good reasons to support the industry position. For obvious reasons, we never discuss the aforementioned. Nor have we discussed with anyone our meeting with you.

Thank you again. I hope you have not minded me sharing these thoughts with you. Let me know if you have any questions.

With kindest regards.

Sincerely,



John M. Barbieri

JMB/ml

P.S. I am enclosing the testimony Pete Wilson gave at last month's ITC hearing. The situation has only gotten worse.

cc: August Felando (Confidential)