



Department of Social Development and World Peace

Office of the Secretary

3211 4th Street N.E. Washington, DC 20017-1194 (202)541-3180 FAX (202)541-3322 TELEX 7400424

March 8, 1990

The Honorable James A. Baker
Secretary of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In a recent visit to Panama on behalf of the U.S. Bishops Conference, I was struck particularly by two realities of this time: on the one hand, the stark poverty of so many, worsened over recent years by government corruption, our own economic embargo, and the devastation that attended the December invasion; and on the other hand, the firm hope, indeed confident expectation, that their circumstances would soon improve.

When Archbishop Marcos McGrath was in Washington at the beginning of February, he shared with several people in our government the mounting concern that the generalized relief at the end of the Noreiga regime was in danger of turning to frustration and anger if the promised assistance was delayed further. I think you will agree that there is no more authentic and eloquent spokesman for the genuine Panamanian cause than Archbishop McGrath.

I write today, fully aware that much is underway by our government in responding to the needs of Panama, to encourage you and the Administration to expedite this vital assistance in every way possible.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend Roger Mahony
Archbishop of Los Angeles
Chairman, USCC
International Policy Committee