

**Transcription of  
(Not so) Casual Conversations (two). Testimony X-2**

**Video image compilation of *first investigative journey* to Venezuela  
Audio from a conversation at the patio, eating area of the NARA  
Archives in Maryland, USA.**

**Conversation transcribed between:  
Livia/Artist  
Man**

**Man's voice:** I seem to recall the name of a town called Guarico, is that near where your father was stationed?

**Livia:** Yes, very close.

**Man's voice:** So basically what I found at the beginning, in August or September of 1965, the CIA started publishing these series of reports about every week called "Reviews of the Insurgency Problems". They were really frequent and intense reports coming out on a weekly basis covering basically the same five countries. I remember there was something about Congo, Peru, and of course, Venezuela [which] was always showing up in there. And it's always some kind of thing about what's going on with the insurgency, from August through December-January 1965, 1966. Were previously and then immediately after there's nothing of the kind [the reports], it's really just this five-month period where it's just this really intense reporting.

It has stuff like: Leoni's police force cracked down on the munitions centre from the insurgency and Leoni himself was so proud of it that he invited news crews he himself was shown parading through the captured munitions port.

Another thing was an assassination attempt on an *Acción Democrática* member. Someone delivered a statue of the Virgin Mary with a bomb inside of it and the congressional leader brought it home and it went off in his home and it killed his wife, and so [the reports] were saying these are the guerrilla. In Western Venezuela, there were all these captured government munitions trucks and seizures of towns including Guarico by the guerrilla, and kind of, for lack of a better word, pillaging taking of resources and arms from trucks traveling through—a lot of activity like that being recorded.

And then, on October 18th, 1965 is when Lovera was arrested. There's no report of his body. What's interesting though is that in general, from a broader view, these reports and activities have a microscope on Venezuela and what Leoni is doing from August to late December. [The reporting] starts abruptly and stops abruptly and then by February 1966, literally not even a month after what happened in Sanare with your father...Farias and others are released from prison releasing an official statement condemning the FLN's violent approach, so they renounce their previous tactics and are released from prison. That's February of 1966 already.

There are about a dozen reports like that tracing the activity that went on in the later half of '65 and early '66. That almost locks in the date, if there was any doubt, about when these events that we're looking at might have happened because they were watching. They were saying Leoni is having success clamping down in Caracas but he doesn't appreciate the amount of resources that the guerrilla has on the eastern and western territories he's underestimating how powerful the guerrilla really was in those territories according to the CIA.

**Livia:** Yeah, but I think that that power had to do with the participation of the 'campesinos', I mean that's the thing when you have the support of the people on the land. Because the guerrilla were not that many but it was the participation of the 'campesinos' that allowed them to mobilize.

**Man's voice:** But that's what's interesting too because the CIA says that one strategy that was being employed was that they were arming rural land workers and 'campesinos' to fight against the guerilla.

**Livia:** Well yeah that's when you start buying some of the people. But the problem, as I have found out, is that the participation of the people was really wide.

**Man's voice:** It must have been, yeah.

**Livia:** So, there was a real grassroots strategizing and organizing there. Which is in contrast to what the belief, even when you ask any Venezuelans now, is that they had no support in the rural areas. And I grew up with that belief because that is what was being said. The support wasn't actually from the communist party or the central office in Caracas, they weren't reaching out to those remote areas

but they had a life of their own. Otherwise, Leoni wouldn't have been pleading with the USA for that kind of secretive support at that kind of massive scale if it wasn't anything if it was just a little group of people prancing around as they are sometimes portrayed.

**Man's voice:** Right, and the nature of these reports seem to indicate this constant scrutiny for this six month period, that there was no way that the USA didn't have vested interest and wasn't going to clamp down themselves if necessary. I mean it seems like why would there be such tightened scrutiny at this point that there was some decision to nip it in the bud as they say to really bring an end to whatever insurgencies were really going on in 1965.

**Livia:** Fantastic, excellent [information]really, alright, ok.

**Man's voice:** Do you want anything else?

**Livia:** I'm going to have a coffee.