

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Jean-Bertrand Aristide,
President of Haiti

PARTICIPANTS: The President
The Vice President
Warren Christopher, Secretary of State
Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Samuel Berger, Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Ambassador Larry Pezzullo, Assistant Secretary
of State for Inter-American Affairs
Richard Feinberg, NSC Notetaker

Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of Haiti

DATE, TIME July 22, 1993, 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: (Following the press pool spray.) I want to say how pleased I am regarding the Governors Island Agreement and the parliamentary agreement in New York and to reaffirm my commitment to that timetable. We are prepared to do our part to accomplish those objectives and to get it done. Particularly important is the appointment of the Prime Minister and agreeing on the details of the agreement on police monitors, trainers and military construction. I know you have some reservations regarding the arrival of the police force before you return. We know that you are interested in French speakers. We're with you to work to get it done. We must take the steps that are necessary along the way. ~~(S)~~

We won't let anything happen during that period to keep you from returning. We want to assure that you are safe, that democracy is safe, so that the process can go forward. ~~(S)~~

I want to emphasize that I am pleased with the Governors Island Agreement. There are always problems in any agreement. We will stick with you and keep to this timetable and we won't let any of the interim steps undermine our objective. ~~(S)~~

President Aristide: I am so pleased to be with you again. Thank you very much for everything. I will take the leadership to make the agreement work. ~~(S)~~

Let me share signs we are seeing of efforts to change the agreement. If I am the President, they can't stop the message I am sending to the nation. Finally, they broadcasted the message

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at 3 a.m. That was not good. They continue to arrest people, to beat people who are holding my picture. That is not good. It

would be good for the rest of the country to see that the press could be free, that the national television could not fight against us and that it would be necessary to respect human rights. Once we have those signs, it will make it easier for us. (S)

I don't call Cedras a criminal the way I used to. I am doing my best to cooperate with him. (S)

Regarding the international police and trainers for the army, it is a psychological question. I am with you and I know that I cannot return without you, that I am nothing without you. It is good for the Haitian people to hear there is something for the judicial system at the same time that they are hearing about the army and the police, so that it does not seem the same as in 1915. It is good for the people to hear about international aid. How can we talk about the four points together? (NOTE: In the press pool spray, Aristide referred to the four points: professionalization of the army, a new police force, reform of the judicial system, and the economic package having something for every single citizen of the country.) (S)

Politicians can use the international presence to talk against us, if they separate it from the other points. It is a psychological problem. (S)

The President: You believe that we can comply with the Governors Island Agreement if we can talk about the four points? (S)

President Aristide: Yes, it is a psychological matter, a very important one for me. (S)

The President: One thing we might do is to flesh out in more detail the kind of economic partnership we are planning and talk about it more. As a practical, logistical matter, we feel strongly, even if Cedras proceeds in good faith, that we need to be sure regarding your safety and the safety of all Haitians. We must go forward with the international operation. I see what you are saying regarding what the Haitian people must be able to see. (S)

Secretary Christopher: In our meeting earlier today, I emphasized that President Aristide must demonstrate leadership. It was reassuring that he has identified a Prime Minister and will present his name to the legislature. President Aristide is going to Miami this afternoon to speak to Haitian businessmen, and that is good as well. He will also meet tomorrow with members of the legislature, and so much depends on this. And then it is important to agree with the Aide Memoire on an international security presence. We have a number of aid programs to create jobs in Haiti. The international presence will take a month perhaps to get into place, so we must go to the

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UN quickly for approval. We don't want the October 30 date to slip. We had a very good talk today. (S)

Ambassador Pezzullo: Mr. President, all this is part of a return to a durable democracy under your leadership. If you want to deliver a speech on this subject, on what your new administration will do, we will make that happen. We can have it broadcast by Voice of America. (S)

Samuel Berger: There is a meeting at the World Bank this week to put together a program of at least \$1 billion over 5 years. We are working hard on the economic development piece as well. (S)

Secretary Christopher: Every day counts on this before October 30. (S)

The Vice President: I want to thank you for the way you have worked with us. We are totally committed to your return and to the restoration of democracy to Haiti. We are working hard on this, every day. I think it is fair to say that at every point in the process, when we have made a suggestion and you have considered to do so, it has worked out. Now, this is a critical moment. The forces that want to prevent democracy have only one last hope -- that you will choose not to follow through. If you go forward quickly and boldly, this will work and our prayers will be answered for Haiti. (S)

The President: Are you excited? (U)

President Aristide: I am a little happy and a little sad. I am glad to know you and to work with you. I am sad because Haitians don't see a sign of change. (S)

The President: Would it help if we could get the radio broadcast into Haiti? That won't be inconsistent with the Governors Island Agreement, would it? (S)

Ambassador Pezzullo. No, not at all. (U)

Secretary Christopher: Yes. You could also say that you met today with President Clinton, and with the business leaders in Miami.

The President: Yes, you should start to think about the radio address and we will get it put on. We would also like it played in Florida and New York. There is a lot of interest in this around the country.

President Aristide: I have prepared a reconciliation speech to deliver to the businessmen in Miami, in order to not hurt them. I have to show them that I am playing the role. The businessmen will be from the richest families. That will be an exciting time. If that speech could be broadcast... (C)

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The Vice President: Yes. (U)

Secretary Christopher: Yes. (U)

Ambassador Pezzullo: Yes. (U)

The Vice President: That will let your people share those feelings of joy. (U)

President Aristide: I am happy because I know that will happen. But I can't ask the Haitian people to believe...they share frustrations. That is why I share those concerns. Otherwise, there is a tremendous frustration. Many are not happy when I give amnesty to leaders of the coup. The people believe that the leaders of the coup will continue to receive money. Over 2000 people lost their lives in the coup. They don't believe that the international force will be there for them but rather to protect the army. The people fear they won't have jobs. I make them understand we aren't giving a gift to the military and the police. They have difficulty in trusting, because they don't see the signs. ~~(S)~~

Samuel Berger: I think it is 100 days to October 30. If we all work hard, we will celebrate together. ~~(S)~~

The Vice President: One hundred days to freedom. ~~(S)~~

President Aristide: The man I will select to be Prime Minister, Robert Malval, is from the bourgeoisie, a businessman, because I want to make that bridge between the poor and the rich. I can tell you, that will be done. It is my responsibility. If I didn't announce it yet, it is an issue of the Parliament where there are two presidents in the Senate and in the Chamber. Yesterday, the Chamber met and I will call upon them to move faster. On Saturday, I will get them to come to Miami and I will give them the name for the Prime Minister. Those consultations are necessary. About the Aide Memoire, I will do my best to go faster. Next week, we will get these solved. ~~(S)~~

Secretary Christopher: Mr. President, you should be very pleased with those two commitments. It has been a very good meeting. ~~(C)~~

The President: Have a wonderful trip to Miami. ~~(C)~~

- END OF MEETING -

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