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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Prime Minister Major of the
United Kingdom (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Senator George Mitchell, Special Advisor for
Economic Initiatives
William J. Crowe, Ambassador to UK
Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Peter Tarnoff, Under Secretary of State for
Political Affairs
Nancy Soderberg, Deputy Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs
Michael McCurry, Assistant to the President
and White House Press Secretary
Mary Ann Peters, Director for European
Affairs, NSC (Notetaker)

John Major, Prime Minister
Malcolm Rifkind, Secretary of State for
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Sir John Kerr, Ambassador to the U.S.
Pauline Neville-Jones, Political Director
Rod Lyne, Private Secretary for Overseas
Affairs
Paul Lever, Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet
Christopher Meyer, Press Spokesman
Edward Oakden, Cabinet Office

DATE, TIME November 29, 1995, 11:00 a.m.
AND PLACE: 10 Downing Street, London

Prime Minister Major: We touched on Northern Ireland and one or two other issues in our private meetings. Given where we are on Bosnia, it might be a good idea to discuss peace implementation, and the details of troop deployments, such as how many, when, under what conditions, and who else might contribute. (C)

The President: There are two or three things we should focus on. First, the terms of the agreement are better than I thought we could get because many functions are left to the central state.

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Reason: 1.5(b)

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Because of what happened to Sarajevo and Gorazde I thought we would conclude an undefined agreement, but the details are pretty good and the annexes are well thought-through. Our military think the military mission is clearly defined and achievable. (C)

I hope the NAC will approve the NATO milop to take over from UNPROFOR to monitor the cessation of hostilities, establish the 4-kilometer zone of separation, oversee transfer of territory and redeployment of forces, and create a secure environment for a year to allow other functions to be carried out, including economic reconstruction, the return of refugees and elections. I have seen the map of British, French and American areas. Other countries will participate as well. (C)

It is important to give Russia a way to participate in the implementation. I had the most amazing conversation with Yeltsin at Hyde Park in which he said he would be happy to serve under us but he could not be seen to put Russian troops under NATO. He said that he trusts us but he would be blown away politically if he did that. I am confident we can work out the political side of their participation. They wanted a political veto, which is not possible, but we are working on how to characterize the relationship at NATO headquarters. (C)

All NATO members except Iceland will have troops there; the last time I checked there were 17 other countries, like Indonesia, that want to participate. There are two problems we have to deal with in the context of the military situation, one direct and one indirect. First, as part of the agreement, within 30 days all foreign military must leave. That includes Serbs and several hundred, maybe as many as 1300, Mujaheddin. This poses a bigger threat to us than to you. It could be explosive but we expect to have intelligence on whether they leave. (C)

Second is that all the functions other than those for the troops must be performed by organizations other than NATO, including the monitoring of any arms control agreement. We have lifted sanctions, but there is a provision for it to take effect gradually over six months, during which arms control talks are to occur. If an agreement is reached, it will be implemented with the help of the OSCE. If not, the parties will reduce their overall arms by 25% from an agreed ratio of 5 to 2 to 2. Within Bosnia the ratio is 2 to 1 in favor of the Bosnian Croat Federation over the Serbs. The problem is that those ratios do not exist today -- someone has to sure that at the end of a year, when the NATO mission concludes, Bosnia has some opportunity to defend itself. The important thing is that this will not be done by NATO but it has to happen. If there is no arms control deal

in six months, that is a potential point of tension even though all the parties have agreed now on the ratios. (C)

Another issue is whether we can work together to bring the benefits of peace to the people there in a timely fashion. I met with Congressional leadership on this and they agreed to funding in installments over three years. Where we are with the Congress is that this is a big issue in the country. Many believe that the people in Bosnia are going to kill each other no matter what and we should get out of the way. (C)

I apologize for attenuating my trip. Did I give a fair description of where things stand? (U)

Mr. Lake: Yes. (U)

The President: Your troops are at greater risk now than in UNPROFOR. (U)

Prime Minister Major: I will ask Pauline to comment in a moment. It was clearly remarkable to get agreement, but I am not blind to the problems in terms of maintaining it over the course of a year or how difficult it may be to get out after a year without leaving chaos. Some ministers from our own party object to the fact that we are spending this money in addition to our obligations elsewhere, and they are skeptical about the possibility of disengaging after 12 months. The fact that you are going to be there is key. British troops are always happy to serve with Americans. As I have said, we envisage a contribution of 13,000 troops for implementation with another 3000 perhaps at sea for a total of 13-16,000. This is not formal yet but the Defense Secretary does not disagree. He is in Brussels now on NATO business. We would envisage leaving at the same time as the U.S. does. The problem is to have a satisfactory exit. I would like to ask Pauline to comment. (C)

Ms. Neville-Jones: I agree that the agreement is rather better than we feared. The military annex is implementable. You have picked out one side, the military, but how IFOR implementation begins will affect the civilian side. The civilian side will be most important in determining whether military implementation is peaceful or not. The ability to hold elections which seal the status of Bosnia is crucial to whether you end up eventually with partition. The agreement creates institutions at the center, but not a military structure, with the result that you have three separate armies. If you do not have elections and you do have three armies, the likely outcome is clear. (C)

The role of the High Representative is important, as is the OSCE. But the OSCE will not go in if there is heavy fighting going on.

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The first few months are crucial in how we handle the Bosnian Serbs. They have to come out, and not be holed up. The task is to get the Bosnian Serbs to be outward looking. The big problem is Karadzic and Mladic. We need to encourage responsible leadership to emerge so things can move forward. (C)

Foreign Secretary Rifkind: You mentioned 30 days. In addition to the Mujaheddin and the Serbs, the Croats have troops there. Relations between Tudjman and Izetbegovic are frosty. Military command and control is a political issue and an issue of coordination. The High Representative has to have a role. On refugees, elections and liaison with civilians, his role is crucial. More work needs to be done on his remit to liaise with the military. (C)

The peace implementation conference will be held in London December 8-9. We will start with the military but focus on reconstruction. This is not a pledging conference but we need to decide on the role of the World Bank. (C)

The President: I called Wolfensohn on another matter but I mentioned this. I think you will get a good response from the World Bank. Has the EU identified its contribution? (C)

Prime Minister Major: There is list of projects totaling 400 million pounds sterling. The EU will pay its share. We are trying to do this while we are continuing support to Eastern Europe and Russia and even a presence in sub-Saharan Africa. We are looking to the Muslim states and Japan to contribute. EU contributions vary -- though the German number is lower, we must keep in mind the 400,000 refugees Germany is supporting. Whatever the overall cost, and however generous we are, demand for funds will exceed supply. (C)

The President: I agree. We need to make sure whatever we do is done competently and helps solve the problems. We do not have to do everything within the first one or two years. The less money we have, the more creatively we need to use it. We need to light up the minds of the people and give them a better way than killing. We will do the best we can to contribute in a timely fashion. (C)

Mr. Lake: Equip and train is a difficult issue with the Congress. It is needed to bring the Bosnians in balance. To the degree it is not settled, then the entire thing is still in question. There are two main issues: if we do not do it, will Iran; and what about the mujaheddin? It cannot be done unless they are expelled. We must not appear to take sides against the Bosnian Serbs. We need to coordinate the best efforts with other governments. We can coordinate but we will not do it ourselves.

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If that doesn't work, we could use contractors, but not our military, for this purpose. (C)

Foreign Secretary Rifkind: You have the highest profile in NATO. We are also committed to ensuring it happens, but not to doing it ourselves. (C)

Prime Minister Major: No one doubts it has to be done. (C)

Mr. Lake: We need the cooperation of the OSCE on elections and arms control. (C)

Ms. Neville-Jones: We cannot be confident -- this will be a major qualitative leap in OSCE responsibilities. Like the UN, results will depend on what we put into it. It will require a huge contribution of non-existent resources. (C)

The President: This is the focus of your conference and of the OSCE's conference in Budapest. We will need to conclude whether it will work. An objective of the conference is to alert people to the need to do this. We need to look around the world for people to work on elections and bring them under the OSCE umbrella. OSCE is more appropriate than the EU because it includes Russia. This will be quite good if it works. At the moment the OSCE is an empty suit -- we need to put the body in it. (C)

Prime Minister Major: That is the best option. (C)

The President: We need to stay very closely in touch; that is self evident, including on implementation forces and military planning. We need to coordinate and stay together on this. (C)

Prime Minister Major: I would like to discuss another topic: Nigeria. [redacted] EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

An oil embargo is a difficult proposition; it would require a Security Council resolution. One percent of our trade would be affected; your percentage is larger. Our public position is that we have neither excluded nor encouraged consideration of it. It would be difficult to implement -- it would require a naval blockade and create hardship. [redacted] EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

[redacted] But we have not ruled it out, nor

given them encouragement to believe it will be done. In my conversation with Mandela I said I would discuss it with you. (C)

The President: Our position is exactly the same. Eight percent of our trade would be affected. To do it without the Security Council would be a mistake, and Chirac would probably veto it.

Foreign Secretary Rifkind:

EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

Prime Minister Major:

EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

Mr. Lake: We need to use our leverage, especially on restoration of democracy and the fate of the coup plotters, but we can only be effective if our actions are universal. Nothing has been ruled out. (C)

The President: Their reaction was that they hadn't killed the guy we asked them to spare, so what was the fuss! (C)

Ms. Soderberg: We are sticking with the measures we have taken. (C)

Prime Minister Major: Turning to Northern Ireland, I just want to say that I feel strongly that Prime Minister Bruton showed great courage. I don't know to what extent we have universal support. Bruton deserves credit for his hard work and willingness to take risks.

EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

On the preliminary talks track, one option is to have both governments meet with the parties, but it is doubtful that this will work. Instead the contacts may be bilateral. The chance of getting Sinn Fein and the UUP at the same meeting is negligible. The UUP view is consistent-- they will not talk until arms are turned in. But an elected assembly could have a mandate to negotiate.

EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

At the recent SDLP conference there was a sharp difference between the MP's and the activists. I hope they will be as open as possible in the political track. (C)

On the other track, we are grateful to George for taking it on. It won't be easy. We will be appointing the other members in a day or so and will talk later in the day. We hope that enough progress and momentum will be generated to enable us to build an agreement and see a way round the issue. It is not a case of British intransigence but we cannot have all-party talks without all parties. Trimble said there may be a way around, but we don't know what it is. You will be walking silently like a cat at night to find the way through. You will need progress in the political track and on dealing with Washington 1&2 by February to unlock the route to all-party talks. If we get there, I think we will get an agreement. I am grateful to you for walking into a difficult situation; it is in good hands. (C)

Senator Mitchell: Thank you, I am looking forward to it. I hope within a couple of days to contact the other members and commence work with all the parties, consistent with the commission's mandate. (C)

Prime Minister Major: That will be helpful. John Bruton and I wanted to do this; we managed to get the show on the road and we will meeting again in Dublin soon, and perhaps do something social as a visible symbol of cooperation. The third strand is East-West ties; the others are easier. The question is how to deepen the Anglo-Irish relationship. Going back six years or so, for the two prime ministers to talk was an event. But these last two weeks John Bruton and I earned lots of money for British Telecom. (C)

The President: I don't think we need to say anything else about Ireland. You and I talked about it. (C)

Prime Minister Major: We will have to make a statement on the basis of last night's agreement. (C)

The President: Let us turn to the question of Turkey's customs union with the EU. (C)

Prime Minister Major: The outlook is better than it was. Prime Minister Ciller was here recently. EO 13526 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9) We

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gave her public support for Turkish membership. We want this to happen for wider reasons. (C)

Foreign Secretary Rifkind: There is movement toward a majority in favor. (C)

The President: Turkey is very important. There are several reasons to support this: to support Turkish reform and to get a higher level of cooperation on terrorism. After all, the more successful we are at achieving peace, the more vulnerable we are to terrorism. (C)

One other thing -- we still have not reached agreement on the airline dispute. (C)

Prime Minister Major: Our position is pretty clear. We have made an offer that has not been picked up, of two slots at Heathrow and two at Gatwick. We are ready to resume talks at any time. (C)

One last thing, on Libya, what position will you take? (C)

The President: I don't know yet. We'll have an answer in a few days. I don't know if we will ever get those guys out. (C)

Prime Minister Major: They have made previous offers that never amounted to anything -- Scotland, The Hague. There are those who fuel conspiracy theories and say the Libyans are innocent. In Parliament I cannot defend myself because I could prejudice the eventual trial if I said too much. In our lawyers' view our case is against them is pretty good. (C)

Foreign Secretary Rifkind: There was a story that Libya would hand them over to a British embassy, which would of course mean to us, but there has been no confirmation. (C)

Prime Minister Major: Briefly on NATO enlargement, do you have any thoughts on timing? (C)

The President: We expect to leave specific decisions until after the Russian elections. Right now we have a continuing process to get everyone's input on how and why; we still need to figure out who and when. We will do that but in a deliberate way to maximize the chances Russia will look at it responsibly. Russian participation in Bosnia is important for that. (C)

At one point Yeltsin agreed with me, but over a year he modified his position. There is a difference between his public posture and his private talks with me; between his rhetoric and his

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cooperative action. That shows that he wants to build bridges without undermining his political base. (C)

Mr. Lake: It is terribly important that we not say we have delayed the Russian elections. (C)

The President: We set up the timetable to take care of that; it is imperative that it not be leaked. (C)

Prime Minister Major: It is not hard to keep it at bay publicly because Partnership for Peace provides the halfway house for prospective members. PFP has turned out better than many thought it would. (C)

Mr. Lake: Next year we will have individual conversations with individual countries; that will take awhile. (C)

Prime Minister Major: I'd be interested in your judgment on whether Yeltsin will contest the election. (C)

The President: He was hurt by those pictures in which he appeared to be inebriated. On the other hand, he seems to be up and around again. If he can stay healthy and sober he might pull it off. Perhaps I am biased because I like him. He is not perfect but it is hard to imagine getting someone better. It is possible a progressive could get elected, but... Yeltsin wants to be seen as effective. There again, if we have success together in a military venture in the real world, in the heart of Europe, I cannot believe that will not undermine the militant nationalists and help tip the scales. The economy is getting better, but there is a 10-month lag before the voters see it. (C)

Prime Minister Major: I agree absolutely. I like him and he is familiar. But this is his third heart attack and he is already 6 years older than the average male life expectancy in Russia. (C)

The President: When General Grant started winning battles, President Lincoln's advisors told him that Grant was a crude drunk. Lincoln replied, "Find out what he drinks and give it to the rest of them." (U)

-- End of Conversation --