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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

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PER E.O. 13526
2015-0363-M (1.01)
5/11/2018 KBH

September 5, 1995

MEETING WITH HAITIAN PRIME MINISTER MICHEL AND
FINANCE MINISTER REY

DATE: SEPTEMBER 6, 1995
LOCATION: ROOSEVELT ROOM
TIME: 1:10pm -1:40pm

FROM: LEON FUERTH

I. PURPOSE

To meet with Haitian Prime Minister Michel and Finance Minister Rey to urge them to stay on course with economic reform, to come to agreement with opposition parties on the current round of parliamentary elections and give priority attention to a number of pressing supervisory and administrative concerns with respect to the deployment of the new civilian police.

II. BACKGROUND

Strobe Talbott has written a memorandum to you which is attached at Tab A. It very eloquently outlines our priority concerns with Haiti: economic reform; the elections process and justice and security.

You should know that both Michel and Rey are extremely frustrated with President Aristide and the opponents of economic reform within the government. Michel's advocacy of a more aggressive pace has consistently been called into question by the more populist leaning members of the government and by Aristide himself. This frustration has resulted in several private threats on the part of both to resign, and, most recently, a public threat to do so by Madame Rey. Prime Minister Michel remarked to a World Bank official last month that he has absolutely no political power within the Cabinet. Michel resigned from the pre-coup Aristide government, where he was the Commerce Minister, over similar frustrations. Yet, on a personal basis, he remains a close friend of Aristide who presumably listens to him in private.

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Although our messages today should unmistakably reflect strong USG concerns, you should recognize that these messages are not directed at the Prime Minister or Madame Rey personally, who probably agree with us, but rather through them at President Aristide.

You are being asked to convey the following messages:

- **Congressional Support.** The Haitian government must act expeditiously on a number of fronts to maintain Congressional and public support for continued USG support.
- **Economic Program.** While we are aware that Michel and Rey personally have been strong supporters of economic reform and privatization within the Haitian Cabinet, there is perceived backsliding as Aristide gives an ear to the more radical elements within his government as the GOH moves in fits and starts to implement sound but difficult and unpopular economic policies. This is causing disquieting signals within both the business and international donor communities. You should stress that both he and President Aristide must continue with the reform package to maintain the credibility of the international financial community.
- **Elections.** The Haitian elections have not gone particularly well, with allegations of both fraud and pro-Lavalas bias in the Central Elections Commission, and an outright admission of administrative shortcomings and incompetence on the part of the GOH in executing the current round of elections. The net result has been wrangling among the parties about participation in runoff elections and continuing delays in their scheduling. Lavalas and very probably Aristide personally have been unwilling to make concessions designed to draw the opposition parties back into the process and to get them to accept the results of the current round of elections. You are asked to urge Michel to impress on Aristide that a visible agreement between the opposition parties and the GOH is necessary to restore credibility. Among other things, Senator Helms has put a hold on \$7M in USG funds to support the elections because of questions about the electoral process.
- **Police and Justice.** Urge the GOH to come to terms with the inadequate supervision and less than satisfactory administrative support (pay, vehicles, uniforms, equipment) of the newly deploying Haitian National Police which the USG is training. Urge the GOH to empower a special investigator to look into what appear to be politically motivated killings of opponents of the Aristide Administration.

Your talking points are at Tab B.

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III. SEQUENCING

- Michel and party enter West Wing Office.
- Photos
- Discussions
- Depart

IV. PARTICIPANTS

The Vice President
Leon Fuerth
Tony Lake
Asst Sec Alec Watson, State
Bill Wise
Dick Clarke, NSC
Rich Wilhelm(Notetaker)

Prime Minister Michel
Finance Minister Rey
Jean Edouard Baker: President of the
Presidential Commission on Economic
Modernization & Growth
~~Franck Lanoix: Chief of Staff, Cabinet
of the Ministry of Finance~~
Ambassador Casimir
Philippe Rouzier - C. of S., Cabinet
of the Prime Minister

V. PRESS PLAN

Staff Photographer

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Tab A - Strobe Talbott's Memo
Tab B - Talking Points
Tab C - Biographies

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

September 5, 1995

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DECL: 9/7/2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE VICE PRESIDENT
FROM: Strobe Talbott, Acting
SUBJECT: Your Meeting with Haitian
Prime Minister Michel,
September 7, 1995

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PER E.O. 13526
2015-0363-M (1.02)
5/11/2018 KBH

Haitian Prime Minister Michel will call on you Thursday, September 7, accompanied by Finance Minister Michelle Rey. The two are in the United States to brief the Administration, Congress, and international financial institutions on Haitian economic accomplishments and the Government of Haiti's blueprint for the remaining five months of President Aristide's term.

Michel shares our perspective on key issues and is the type of leader we want to encourage in Haiti. He has had a moderating influence on Haitian decision-making and deserves much credit for progress the country has made since President Aristide's return. Although not a player in the current inter-party elections debate, Michel's central role in the GOH hierarchy will ensure that any message he carries back will be heard clearly.

The message we want Michel to convey -- and, we hope, support -- is that Port-au-Prince must act urgently if we are to maintain Congressional and public support for onward Administration assistance to Haiti. Unless the GOH takes decisive action in several areas, Congressional cuts in our assistance requests are inevitable.

The first problem area is economic policy. Michel has been personally responsible for much of the Aristide Government's success on the economic front. He was an eloquent spokesman for Haiti with international donors last January in Paris, and was rewarded with one billion USD in pledges. This summer, he was steadfast in defending GOH privatization initiatives in the face of fierce domestic opposition, and saved this key component of the Government's recovery package. You should commend him for his singular contribution. But now there is

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growing concern that Aristide will give ear to radical elements in his Government who want to roll back the GOH's commitment to sound -- if difficult and unpopular -- economic policies. You should stress that he and President Aristide must carry through on reform in order to rebuild Haiti's credibility with the international financial community.

On elections, you should impress on Michel that we need a visible agreement between the Government and opposition parties which ensures the parties' participation in the Presidential elections. Senator Helms already has put a hold on seven million USD in funds to support the critical elections in Haiti because of questions about conduct of the electoral process. We want Michel to urge the President to make a renewed effort to bring the opposition on board.

In the areas of justice and security, the GOH must tackle two urgent problems. We have made a good start in assisting Haiti to deploy its first professional, civilian police force. However, the ability of the Haitian National Police to perform effectively has been hampered by inadequate supervision and resources. Bill Swing has been discussing our specific concerns with Minister Exume and President Aristide. They center on the need for adequate budgetary support and ensuring that supervisors are impartially selected and properly trained. You should urge Michel to see that these initiatives receive his Government's priority attention.

Perceptions that Haiti is slipping in its commitment to impartial and effective justice and security systems have been compounded by the lack of a GOH response to recent murders of opponents of the Haitian leadership. The FBI has been investigating the most notorious of these killings. There is concern over the possibility of Government involvement in such crimes. While political killings have dramatically declined since Aristide returned, the few that have occurred are disturbing and call for a serious Government response. We have asked that the GOH find a means to empower a special investigative unit to pursue such cases. Once this is done, we and the UN can provide investigative help. You should urge that President Aristide appoint an investigator as quickly as possible.

This is a tough message, but one I think Michel is among the most ready of Haiti's leadership to receive and convey at home. Receiving it from you will ensure forceful delivery.

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TALKING POINTS

Opening

- We together have accomplished much toward achieving our mutual goal of democracy, justice and economic recovery for Haiti. However, much more needs to be done to ensure another smooth transition in Haiti ... this time to a new Government and a new post-UNMIH situation in February.
- We will be consulting with your government, the UN and our international partners shortly on this. In the meantime, there are key problems in the political, economic and public security areas which we need to resolve together.
- We need to overcome these problems in order to ensure a smooth transition next year. But we also need to overcome them in order to head off growing concern and opposition in our Congress to our Haiti policy.

Economic Reform

- Your Government has made great progress on the economic front, and you personally deserve much of the credit. I particularly commend your steadfastness in defending GOH privatization initiatives in the face of fierce domestic opposition this summer.
- It is vital you and President Aristide to carry through on reform in order to rebuild Haiti's credibility with the international financial community.
- I understand that you and Finance Minister Rey will be returning to Haiti to prepare for important talks with the IMF. It is important that the World Bank and IMF agreements be finalized quickly. We will offer any technical support that you require. How do you think the talks will go?

Elections

- A visible agreement between the Government and opposition parties which ensures the parties' participation in the Presidential elections is urgently necessary.

- We are concerned about the credibility of the election process and the refusal of the opposition parties to participate further. Among other things, Senator Helms already has put a hold on seven million USD in funds to support the critical elections in Haiti because of questions about conduct of the electoral process.
- I hope you will urge the President to make a renewed effort to bring the opposition on board.
- In addition, it is vital that the Parliamentary runoff elections scheduled for September 17 be conducted in an honest and effective manner. I hope they will be better run than the elections on June 25.

Police

- The ability of the Haitian National Police (HNP) to perform effectively has been hampered by inadequate supervision and resources.
- The Haitian government needs to dedicate adequate budgetary support for the HNP and ensure that supervisors are impartially selected and properly trained.
- These initiatives should receive the Haitian Government's priority attention.

Justice System

- Perceptions that Haiti is slipping in its commitment to impartial and effective justice and security systems have been compounded by the lack of a GOH response to recent murders of opponents of the Haitian leadership.
- Political killings have dramatically declined since Aristide returned, but the few that have occurred are disturbing and call for a serious Government response.
- We have asked that the GOH find a means to empower a special investigative unit to pursue such cases. We recommend that you urge President Aristide to appoint an special investigator as quickly as possible. The UN can then provide whatever investigatory and technical help that you need.