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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Francois Mitterrand/President of France (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Francois Mitterrand/President of France
Eliza Bernham: Interpreter
Adrian A. Basora, NSC Staff, Notetaker

DATE, TIME: October 23, 1989, 6:12 - 6:23 p.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: How are you? My apologies for calling so late. We are convinced that we have a good opportunity for a peace process thanks to you and to the work of the Saudis. We are happy that Lebanon has reached accords. I just talked with King Fahd to congratulate him on it. I realize we have little influence on Aoun, but you know him and he listens to you. This gives France a key role. I hope you will feel inclined to call him, and you may have already have done so. (S)

President Mitterrand: I hope very much he doesn't oppose the agreement. Although it is not perfect, it gains needed time. Contrary to what you believe, Aoun doesn't always listen to me. You know, I've proposed additional guarantees--the five permanent members of the Security Council to be guarantors, in addition to Saudi Arabia. This would introduce an additional element. Perhaps it would not convince him, but it would convince the people of Beirut. This would be psychologically important. It is not guaranteed to work, but it is a logical approach. France has let Aoun know it would not go along with his rejection of the agreement. (S)

The President: That is good. (S)

President Mitterrand: I'll approach him again. But if we had additional guarantees, it would increase the chances of his acceptance. I will repeat tomorrow what I've already told him. (S)

The President: Well, he may not do exactly what you ask but you do have influence on him, which is good. We will be able to see if additional guarantees are needed. (S)

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President Mitterrand: Dumas has already talked to Jim Baker regarding the possibility of intervention by the five permanent members of the Security Council (S).

The President: I understand your people are talking with ours about an informal meeting in December. We have much to talk about and I hope it can work. (S)

President Mitterrand: Indeed, I had proposed to go to the North American continent. (S)

The President: So I had heard, and this is of great interest. (S)

President Mitterrand: Regarding Lebanon, I'll keep you informed in the upcoming days. Right now I am in Spain for a working meeting with Felipe Gonzalez. (S)

The President: I had a wonderful meeting with him. We had a small dinner which gave us an opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues. Please convey my respects to him. (S)

President Mitterrand: I will speak to him, and I was pleased to hear from you. (S)

The President: It is always a pleasure. (U)

President Mitterrand: Thanks, dear George. (S)

END OF CONVERSATION

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