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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

**MEMCON**

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Luncheon Meeting with United Nations  
Secretary General Perez de Cuellar (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
James A. Baker, Secretary of State  
John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff  
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs  
Robert M. Gates, Assistant to the President  
and Deputy for National Security Affairs  
John Bolton, Assistant Secretary of State for  
International Organizations  
Thomas R. Pickering, U.S. Ambassador to the  
United Nations  
Nancy Bearg Dyke, Director, International  
Programs and Public Diplomacy, NSC  
(Notetaker)

Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary General  
Ronald I. Spiers, Under Secretary General for  
Political and General Assembly Affairs and  
Secretariat Services  
Virendra Dayal, Chef de Cabinet, Office of  
the Secretary General  
Marrack Goulding, Under Secretary General,  
Office for Special Political Affairs  
Alvaro de Soto, Executive Assistant to the  
Secretary General  
John L. Washburn, Director in the Executive  
Office of the Secretary General (Notetaker)

DATE, TIME June 4, 1990, 12:20-1:20 p.m.  
AND PLACE: Old Family Dining Room

The President: Glad you could come today. This is a working lunch and we want you to feel free to raise any issues you like. I want the advisers here to know that I raised UN financing in the Oval Office meeting with some embarrassment, after our previous criticism of the Soviets for not paying their dues. I believe great nations should keep their word, and as a great nation, we should keep our word. Secretary Baker told you that we have some new funding coming. I want your associates to know

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how strongly I feel. I'm delighted you are talking to Congress. I want to know how you come out on your talks and we will try to follow up. (U)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: Thank you. I would like to know your views re Afghanistan. (U)

The President: Gorbachev is as frustrated as we are. The tribal leaders are engaged in narcotics. The refugee problem is enormous - I know you have tried to help. Najibullah is hanging in. I thought he would be out sooner after the Soviet troops left. (S)

Secretary Baker: We find ourselves closer and closer together with the Soviets on this. The only thing that stands between us is whether Najibullah agrees to step down during the time of the Afghan-style election. Our view has always been that we can't be against his running. We clearly need a transitional authority. The Soviets cannot agree to our and we cannot agree to theirs. The main difference is what happens to Najibullah during the transition. We must be able, we think, to point to some change in his status. (S)

The President: They want the Nicaraguan model. They point to Ortega staying in power. We say that's because Chamorro and all agreed. The Mujahadin will not agree. They are not willing to do it. (S)

The President: What is your suggestion? (U)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: The Resistance is the problem. They are not used to our elections. (S)

Secretary Baker: We said "Afghan-style" elections. (S)

The President: Gorbachev knows we are not playing games and we are not trying to set up a hostile power on his border to be detrimental to Soviet interests. He knows about the attitude of the mujahadin elders. We had a reasonable discussion with him. (S)

The President: What about Hekmatyar? Do you see him as a bad guy? We see difficulty there, and he is not acceptable to Gorbachev. Also we have concluded that the chieftains are involved in the drug trade. This undermines confidence in the leaders. (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: That is a source of money for them. It is the same for the Syrian soldiers in Lebanon. (S)

The President: Do we have specific information on that? (S)

Mr. Gates: We can take a look at it. (S)

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Mr. Goulding: Our information is anecdotal, but we are told that it is across the board. The Syrian soldiers in Lebanon are selling hashish. (Ø)

Mr. Pickering: Poppies in the Bekaa Valley. (U)

The President: What is your general view on Lebanon? We have been able to do no more than give verbal support to efforts to bring a resolution to the problems. It just keeps churning away. (Ø)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: I wish them well. I feel sorry for the Lebanese people, who are suffering. We have to do something. I may appoint a special representative. (Ø)

The President: Do you know Aoun? (U)

Mr. Goulding: I've met him on several occasions. He has a strong sense of mission. He vowed to get the Syrians out of Lebanon or die trying. He resists advice. (Ø)

The President: How is he dealing with the elected government of Lebanon -- any moderation? (Ø)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: He shoots his guns -- no. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: Jaja was willing to recognize the government but Aoun was the holdout. (Ø)

The President: Can the Catholic church, the Pope, do more? (Ø)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: The Foreign Minister of Iraq is Chaldean Catholic. His intention is to embarrass the Lebanese government. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: The Iraqis are still sending equipment to Aoun. (Ø)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: Isn't the level falling off somewhat? (Ø)

General Scowcroft: Syrian levels are falling too. (Ø)

Mr. Goulding: Because Jaja is doing too well. (Ø)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: The dialogue in El Salvador is moving well. (President) Cristiani is helping us very much. More pressure is needed on the army in order to gain more flexibility. (Ø)

Mr. de Soto: We hope to have a cease-fire by mid September and elections by March 1991. There is agreement by all. We need to

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be sure there is a sufficient political opening for the FMLM to feel part of it. The cease-fire in September will be the first stage. The price is high for the FMLN. Agreeing to a cease-fire by the FMLN makes them have to come out of the cities and into enclaves in rural areas. The UN can verify, but it is a high price for the FMLN. We need to stress respect for human rights and reform of the judiciary. The most difficult is getting the army to follow human rights. The need is to reduce the armed forces and put them under civilian control and assure that the police forces are separated and turned into civilians. This is a separate process. We are urging the FMLN on this. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: As with Nicaragua, we are trying to formulate a bipartisan approach to this. The chances are excellent if we can move to end the war this year. We are very grateful to you. The FMLN for the first time is engaged and serious. The big question is whether to slash aid up front or condition it on such actions as punishment of those who murdered the Jesuits. Some Congressmen want to immediately slash our aid by 50%. This would drive the army out of the process. (Ø)

Mr. de Soto: Everyone is counting on US leverage on the armed forces. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: But, we can't do it in a way that removes leverage on the FMLN. Balance is the challenge. (Ø)

The President: We like Cristiani. He conducted a fair election. I need to know what we're talking about before we go to another election. It worries me for the left to take the murders and let them undermine a fledgling democracy. (Ø)

Mr. de Soto: Everyone is in favor of election reform. (Ø)

The President: I do not want to send a signal that we are willing to undermine a fairly-elected President. I want to be sure we are on the same wavelength. (Ø)

Mr. de Soto: What I am talking about could strengthen Salvadoran democracy. Many more people will be able to vote. (Ø)

Mr. Pickering: Yes, there are pressures for more registration. (Ø)

The President: We should be supportive of that but when I saw Duarte the second to last time when he was dying of cancer in February, he confided in me, "I'm afraid I am going to be killed and I ask safe haven for my family. The new leaders will kill my family." He felt very strongly. That was before the election. This insidious reprisal has not taken place. We cannot undermine now a free process. (Ø)

Mr. de Soto: First, we need the cease-fire. (Ø)

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Secretary Baker: What is the FMLN insisting on about solutions on the Jesuit murders? (S)

Mr. de Soto: Exemplary punishment on that and other murders. (S)

Secretary Baker: Those are the kind of things that it is difficult for Cristiani to deliver. He doesn't have the political strength to deliver. (S)

The President: Do you think he is trying? (S)

Mr. de Soto: He has severe limitations. the Army is separate. (S)

The President: We believe in the army being controlled by the person elected by the people. (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: It's not an easy one. I would like to discuss Nicaragua. (S)

Mr. Goulding: There is a new agreement. There will be a better demobilization rate now. There are about 10,000 to go. By 10 June, nearly half of the core group will have been demobilized. If we can improve the rate, more than half will be demobilized by Sunday (June 10, the deadline). (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: I have to report to the UN Security Council today and by the 10th. (S)

Mr. Goulding: By Friday, we will know the rates. I have a confession. There was a glitch. ONUCA did not go as quickly as it should have in May on sorting out violations. The problem has been put right. Most complaints have been resolved. The ones that remain are about a difference of opinion on boundary, etc. (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: Cyprus. (U)

The President: This will be a timely discussion. The Greek leader (Prime Minister Mitsotakis) will be here this week. (U)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: He is a reasonable man. I hope you will encourage him to move. (S)

The President: We will. (U)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: Partition is unacceptable to me. Equality and liberty are a good recipe. Any piece of advice you can give them will be helpful. (S)

The President: I will do it. Secretary Baker has already told him about our interest in a strong UNSYG role. I'll do it when I see him Wednesday. (S)

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The President: What about Vassiliou (President of Cyprus). (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: He is a realistic man. He is extremely thankful to you. (S)

Secretary Baker: I wish we could snap our fingers and have a good solution. The President has personally weighed in with Ozal (President of Turkey) and with Prime Minister Thatcher too. (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: The Foreign Minister is a reasonable man. (S)

The President: We went through a difficult time when Congress wanted a resolution on the Armenians. We think we are past it now; we are talking to them again. It was a very divisive issue. If that comes up again, we will duck down for a while. We are talking to the Greeks too. If you see something we can do, please let us know. (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: Mrs. Thatcher helps me enormously. (U)

The President: Is there any change in Cuba or in Castro? (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: I just sent Mr. de Soto to Cuba. (U)

Mr. de Soto: The Cubans are not urging the FMLN on positions. I went to Cuba and saw one of the leaders (not Castro, he was out of town) watching CNN about the US/USSR Summit! They are making contingency plans in case they are sold down the river. They actually don't have lots of business deals with Eastern European nations. They do rely heavily on the Soviets. (S)

The President: Castro is showing no flexibility, but some day it is inevitable that it is going to happen. Castro must realize that he is out of step. (S)

Secretary General Perez de Cuellar: I've recently visited Albania. They want to join CSCE. They took a decision to create an attorney general post. There were six refugees in the Italian embassy; they were allowed to leave for Rome. The leader said, "I want to move ahead at a reasonable pace, not like Gorbachev." It was a reasonable discussion. He listened to my points. They are not pro-religion, as the religious groups did not help in the independence fights. It is not like Poland where the church helped. (S)

-- End of Conversation --

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