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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

#6296

MEMCON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telecon with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia

PARTICIPANTS: The President
King Fahd

Interpreter: Shukran Kamal
Notetaker: Sandra Charles

DATE, TIME August 2, 1990, 6:43 - 7:21pm EST
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Your Majesty, how are you? (U)

King Fahd: I am sorry to be so late taking your call. (U)

The President: That's OK. I wanted to tell you our thinking and more importantly hear your views regarding the terrible invasion. (S)

King Fahd: First thank you for your interest in this most serious matter in the Middle East from a country that doesn't understand what it means to be a neighbor. My opinion of this situation is that it is very difficult. It must be stopped soon in any way because it is a very serious principle when a country with arms attacks a small neighbor. (S)

The President: Exactly. (S)

King Fahd: This attack took place at 2:30 am Saudi time. As you know representatives from Iraq and Kuwait were here with me two days ago. I tried to reconcile matters, and both expressed willingness to do so. It was decided a delegation from Kuwait would go to Iraq and another session would be held in Kuwait so that an agreement could be reached. But unfortunately, although Saddam assured us he had no interest to attack Kuwait, the opposite happened. (S)

The President: Exactly. (S)

King Fahd: This is because he is conceited. He doesn't realize the implications of his actions are upsetting the world order. He seems to think only of himself. He is following Hitler in creating world problems with one difference -- one was conceited, and one is both conceited and crazy. I believe nothing will work with Saddam but use of force. (S)

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I spoke with Saddam at 4:00 Saudi time and told him he was making a mistake and with what law and logic can you attack a small country with force of arms? And I reminded him that during the Arab Summit in Baghdad he suggested a nonaggression pact among the Arab countries, agreeing not to intervene in each others affairs. He is a liar. My conversation with him today was strict and strong and I asked him to withdraw from Kuwait now, and that we would not consider any regime a representative of Kuwaiti public opinion or Arab public opinion. And Saddam told me he tried to reach agreement with Kuwait, but Kuwait not responsive. I told him that was an unacceptable excuse -- if he had found Kuwait unresponsive, he could have contacted us and we would have done what we could to reach an understanding. He had no excuse to use in his conversation. That is why I say he is arrogant. He believes what he has done will pass easily. And then he told me let me ask you to allow me to send my Vice President to meet you at 11:00 am Saudi time tomorrow. Then I told him if you realize your mistake, and withdraw from Kuwait, then it is possible to see and meet your Vice President. So he asked me again to receive his representative tomorrow and maybe we will find a solution. And I told him that I hold him responsible for the safety for all people in Kuwait -- Kuwaiti or not. (S)

Mr. President, we will see his representative tomorrow and will speak briefly to him. Either he must understand Iraqi troops are withdrawn and things smoothed or we will tell his representative to return quickly. Saddam will either withdraw from Kuwait into Iraq quickly or the only other solution is the use of force. Mr. President, this is a matter that is extremely serious and grave. It involves a principle that can't be approved or condoned by any reasonable principle or moral. Mubarak contacted me about requesting an Arab Summit be held. I told him it was a good move. Arab leaders must be convinced what has happened is a poor move and through Mubarak and me, we will convene an Arab Summit the day after tomorrow. Tomorrow Saddam's representative will let me know if he will rectify matters and withdraw from Kuwait or not. And any information from Saddam's representative will be relayed to you. Mr. President what Saddam has done, we can't possible remain silent about. (S)

I hope matters can be resolved peacefully. If not Saddam must be taught a lesson he will not forget the rest of his life if he remains alive. (S)

I want to thank you and the American people, and Europe and the world for your firm stand against Iraq action to make Saddam realize his grave mistake against Kuwait. Also allow me to propose preparedness because we don't know what Saddam will do. This information is for you; now do you have any questions? Please ask as a friend -- and I will answer as a friend.
(S)

The President: I have one question, are the Kuwaiti leaders in Saudi Arabia, the Crown Prince and the Amir, safe and well?
(S)

King Fahd: Many people from the royal family in Kuwait are safe here and welcome. (S)

The President: Very good. We will be making a joint statement with the Soviets condemning the Iraqi invasion when Baker is in Moscow for a few minutes to make a strong statement between us and the Soviets. (S)

King Fahd: This is very good news. (S)

The President: Our goal like yours is to get Iraq out and restore Kuwaiti sovereignty. (S)

King Fahd: I told Saddam that we don't buy this national government in Kuwait. We know no one in Kuwait who agrees to the removal of the legitimate ruler. If they brought Iraqis in place in the leadership, which is possible, then that is totally unacceptable. (S)

The President: Total fraud. (S)

King Fahd: At any rate from now until tomorrow we will find out what the situation is. (S)

The President: Thanks. In the meantime, we are doing what you expressed an interest in. We are making preparations in my government on diplomatic, military, economic options. We should consider additional diplomatic, economic and military options as well. We have implemented comprehensive economic sanctions, and are now considering other economic measures against Iraq in conjunction with Chapter 7 sanctions at the UN. Another would be to consider closing down his oil export capability, either by cutting off pipelines or an embargo of Iraq. Obviously we need to talk further to consider a wide array of options, but I hope Arab efforts succeed on a withdrawal and to restore the legitimate government to Kuwait. (S)

King Fahd: We too hope Arab efforts are successful but all the measures and options you mentioned are measures that would be helpful in deterring Saddam. (S)

The President: On Saudi Arabia, we believe we should consider deploying TACAIR which we need to discuss with you because your security is important to us and want to do everything possible to deter any Iraqi aggression against the Kingdom, and to work with you to take whatever steps are necessary to convince Saddam to withdraw from Kuwait. (S)

King Fahd: Thank you for what you said about Saudi Arabia. In view of what happens tomorrow, I would be delighted to discuss this further. (S)

The President: You should know we are moving our carrier nearer to the Gulf. We think collective Arab action would be good. We salute your efforts, and hope tomorrow is successful. I look forward to hearing the results. (S)

King Fahd: Thank you for your interest, and I thank you on behalf of the Saudi people. (S)

The President: I have one other favor. Please convey to the Amir, Sheik Jaber, my personal regards and tell him how deeply I despise this outrageous, brutal act against his country, and tell him that he has our support. I would appreciate your conveying this to the Amir. (S)

King Fahd: I will convey it to Amir. (S)

The President: Thank you. Blessings to you and the Saudi people. Good luck with your heroic efforts toward peace. (S)

King Fahd: Thank you. Thanks for friendship between the Kingdom and the United States for more than 60 years. (S)