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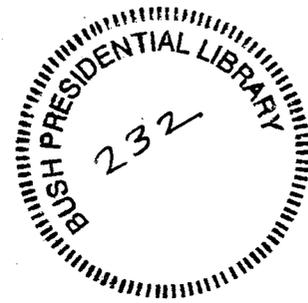
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Prime Minister Cavaco Silva of Portugal (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
James Baker, Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Marlin Fitzwater, Assistant to the President and Press Secretary
Everett Ellis Briggs, U.S. Ambassador to Portugal
Adrian Basora, Director for European Economic Affairs, NSC Staff (Notetaker)

Anibal Antonio Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister
Antonio Martins da Cruz, Diplomatic Adviser to the Prime Minister

DATE, TIME September 25, 1990, 10:00-11:05 am
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

During the photo opportunities there was a brief personal exchange during which the President said that he hoped to get the Prime Minister back to Kennebunkport. The President, making an exception to his normal rule, answered a press question as to whether he was satisfied with the Portuguese contribution in the Gulf crisis. He said that he was very satisfied. (U)

The President: Where shall we start? I will be happy to talk about any subject you would like. I am glad to see Ted Briggs back here. (U)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: I want to express my strong support for what you are doing in the Gulf. Without U.S. action, Saddam Hussein would have imposed a fait accompli. Therefore, Portugal strongly supports U.S. policy in the Gulf. If a large country can invade a small one, we can never be secure. (S)

We support U.S. and EC actions. At the start of the conflict, we were about to start work on an Iraqi tanker in Lisbon harbor. The situation was complicated because 10 Portuguese workers were already on board, but we managed to get them off and have not done any work on the ship. (S)

I also want to congratulate you on your Helsinki meeting with Gorbachev. (S)

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The President: The significance of Helsinki was that it showed that there was no division possible between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. It sent a good signal to all -- to the EC, to Portugal, to U.S. public opinion, and to Saddam Hussein. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: Now the problem is to achieve Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. (S)

The President: What do you think? How do you see this ending? Obviously we want a peaceful solution. Obviously, of course, if there is a provocation it's a different ball game. (S)

Saddam Hussein is hardening his position. He is dismantling Kuwait not only physically by moving out equipment, but he is also trying to obliterate the population. He is eliminating the records of all those who have left the country. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: Everyone is doubtful as to whether the sanctions will work, but all say that we must put all our strength into the sanctions. The UN approach is necessary in order to maintain cohesion. I noticed Mitterrand's speech yesterday. (S)

The President: What did you think of it? I didn't read it the same way some did. (S)

Secretary Baker: He did mention that, if Saddam Hussein agreed to leave Kuwait, then everything was possible, and he did mention other Middle East problems. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: I think it is important to Mitterrand to show an independent approach. He does not want to be seen as simply following the U.S. (S)

The President: I feel sorry for King Hussein, but I am also somewhat disappointed. (S)

Secretary Baker: Italy is sponsoring a conference for all of the Arab countries, but it is not inviting Iraq. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: There is discussion of intensifying our dialogue with the Arab countries; I believe it is a conference on security in the Mediterranean. (S)

The President: On Saddam Hussein, I am absolutely determined that there can be no compromise without his leaving Kuwait and without having Kuwait's rulers restored. I realize that this presents a problem because many say that the Kuwaitis were stingy and its rulers are unloved. Therefore, there is a tendency toward erosion. But the Sabah family must come back, or else we will have set a dangerous precedent. But I know some people, including in the U.S., who are probing as to compromises that would go against this principle. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: Yes, they are probing. But we cannot accept such an outcome. This crisis shows the weakness of Europe. If the U.S. had not acted, we could not have done so.

(S)

The President: How about public opinion in Portugal, especially among the young? Do they support or oppose the U.S. sanctions?

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: They strongly support it.

Secretary Baker: Do you see opinion eroding or holding firm if there is a prolonged stalemate?

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: Europeans have gotten used to peace, economic growth and having no problems. They are expecting a new era of peace. But I think opinion will remain supportive nevertheless.

Secretary Baker: Would opinion hold better if there were a prolonged stalemate, or if rapid military action were taken?

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: It is hard to say. At the beginning, we expected Saddam Hussein to invade Saudi Arabia. Europe will defend a peaceful solution, under UN auspices. This, people can support. But if we take things outside of UN cover or interpret the UN resolutions ambiguously, then we may have trouble with public support.

The President: But Mitterrand has said that we are in a "logic of war". Has he repeated this recently?

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: He has repeated it two or three times, but it was not in the logic of his UN speech.

The President: I worry about Saddam Hussein's propaganda effort, pretending that the US is looking for a pretext for inserting its forces permanently in the Gulf. This is false. We don't want to leave a permanent force there and we have said so. But we have to keep repeating this in order to make it clear that Iraq's propaganda is false.

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: We must also make it clear that this is not the US or the West against Iraq. It is the civilized world against Iraq.

The President: Our own press is trying to make it into a Bush versus Saddam Hussein conflict, but this is wrong and we will keep refuting it.

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: Do you think that the embargo is having a real effect?

The President: We think so but there may be a difference in effect in different areas. Ozal said weeks ago that it was having an impact but I think he was too optimistic then. I think that now it is having an impact, however, although we don't know for sure. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: Saddam Hussein is not getting any hard currency. Therefore, it is very difficult for him to make purchases and break the blockade. I am told that he got \$2 billion from Kuwait, but this is not enough to maintain significant imports. (S)

Secretary Baker: The Soviets think that the embargo will take two months to have an impact. That is, two months from when I saw Shevardnadze in Moscow. (S)

The President: Food is a problem. Saddam Hussein can conjure up the problem of starving children or in fact it can be a real problem. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: And Saddam Hussein is just the kind of man to let children starve. (S)

The President: Yes, he is cruel. Also, there's a question of what he will do if he feels cornered. It is hard to predict. Would you like to talk about Angola? (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: I do want to talk about Angola. The negotiations began their fourth round today, with U.S. and Soviet observers present for the first time. There are two baskets, and the Angolan government has accepted linkage between the two. UNITA wants explicit recognition. I was informed as of an hour ago that the negotiations are proceeding in a good atmosphere. (S)

The President: Who is attending for each side? (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: UNITA is represented by its top military man. (S)

Secretary Baker: This is the first time that the U.S. and the Soviet Union participate. (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: This is also the first time that they are discussing a cease-fire. I am told that they had good talks this morning. (S)

I ask that the U.S. government be committed to this process. Assistant Secretary Cohen is working with UNITA, and the government of Angola has shown some flexibility, as has UNITA. They have talked about specific concessions. (S)

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Can we have a word about Mozambique? (S)

The President: Yes. (S)

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There is a problem of bilateral relations that I would like to mention. I want to start the base negotiations in a very positive way. But, if the commitments made during the 1983 agreement are not kept, this will be a political problem. U.S. assistance was stable under the Socialists, but it has been declining since I have been in office. (S)

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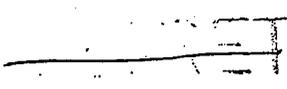
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Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: I have been asked to visit the European Subcommittee of the Congress. (S)

The President: Oh, that is Lee Hamilton. You should tell him frankly about the problem. (S)

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Secretary Baker: Yes, you should go up there and level with him.
(S)

The President: I understand you were just in Tokyo? (S)

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva: Yes, and I was pleased that Kaifu will be providing \$4 billion of assistance in the Gulf. (S)

The President: I like Kaifu. He has exceeded my exectations in providing help for the Gulf crisis. (S)