

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Prime Minister
Robert Hawke of Australia (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Robert Hawke, Prime Minister
Notetaker: Douglas Paal

DATE, TIME January 9, 1991 5:38 p.m. - 5:50 p.m. EST
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Hello, Bob? Listen, I'm calling you on the Baker-Aziz meeting. First, I saw a statement that you made to your own Parliament and it was a superb statement about what was at stake in the Gulf. Great. Somebody sent it to me. I received it only recently, but . . . Second, I'm calling key people like you, Brian, Helmut, so that you would hear from me directly. We went in thinking Tariq Aziz might have something. He showed no indication of flexibility of any kind. What Jim Baker said at the press conference is all there was to this. We are going to try to think of things to do. I am encouraging Perez de Cuellar to use his good offices. I just wanted to let key coalition partners like you know this meeting was unproductive. (C)

PM Hawke: I appreciate your ringing. First, I appreciate the efforts you are making to get a peaceful result, and you have our support. If Perez de Cuellar can do something, that will be good. I have a question: Are you totally satisfied with the Europeans, particularly the French? (C)

The President: I talked to Mitterrand twice today, and we differ on an international conference, but he does say they will avoid linkage of the Palestinian issue, and that he is firm on the use of force. Baker had a good talk with him, a solid talk, the day before. He has been sending mixed signals Mitterrand knows we are strong and that we firmly hold the course. I do not see him backing out. He has been very supportive. (C)

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PM Hawke: If you had to make a statement, what do you think the odds are, will the balloon go up? (C)

The President: I have to tell you, as a friend, yes, but I don't want to say it publicly. But as a co-collaborator, yes. (C)

PM Hawke: George, if I may, I have two things to raise with you. If it is not to be the peaceful scenario, will there be any opportunity for a further talk before a decision is taken on action? (C)

The President: Talk with you? Do you mean talk before we begin? And I do have... I would be glad to do it if it can be arranged. You have equities out there. I have to worry about the numbers of contacts, but you have been side by side with me on this. If we have to use our assets out there the element of surprise is very important because it's our kids out there. (C)

PM Hawke: I am more than happy to leave it in your hands, I understand the need for the element of surprise. Your final point is important. I will rest in your judgement. (C)

The President: I will mention it to Brent. We will try to get to you. It will not be widely known. I will get Brent or Baker, one of my trusted assets. I will have to tell you, in my view the longer we wait after the 15th, the more chance for erosion of the coalition. Sooner or later. (C)

PM Hawke: George, one point of procedure. My foreign minister, Gareth Evans will be in Washington Friday. He has arranged to see Cheney and Scowcroft. Is there any chance he can see Secretary Baker. (C)

The President: Who? (U)

PM Hawke: My foreign minister, Senator Gareth Evans. I would like for him to meet with his counterpart Jim Baker. (U)

The President: Your foreign minister? (U)

PM Hawke: Yes, Gareth Evans. (U)

The President: A very good man, he's done a lot of good work. I will pass that along and mention it. I don't know that Jim will be back. I am not sure he will be here. I will mention it to Scowcroft and he can work with his counterparts. (C)

PM Hawke: I would appreciate that very much, George. You have got an enormous responsibility in your hands. (Z)

The President: I know that, and we appreciate Australia's actions and support for the right position. It is good to have good friends. And Bob, keep your head down out there on the links. (U)

PM Hawke: Thank you, my good friend. Goodbye. (U)