

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

## MEMORANDUM FOR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call with Prime Minister Mulroney of Canada

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Prime Minister Brian Mulroney  
Adrian Basora, Notetaker, NSC Staff

DATE, TIME: February 5, 1991, 9:20 - 9:30 a.m.  
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Brian, how are you doing? I wanted to touch base generally and to say something about the trade agreement. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: How is it going? (U)

The President: The war is going ahead on schedule. International support is good. I am in no rush to move to a land war. I will wait to receive suggestions from our generals in the field and from Colin Powell and Dick Cheney, and then I will make a decision. I am somewhat worried about Iraqi accusations about civilian casualties. We are doing all we can to minimize them. I am afraid you caught me on a day when I am taking great pride in what we are doing. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: You are right to do so. I am going to visit our war college training facility for pilots today. The mood in Canada is somewhat along the lines of yours. It is a mood of strong support for what Canada is doing. I suppose your decisions on the ground war will have an effect. As long as there is not too much sadness coming out of the Gulf, support is likely to stay high. (S)

The President: Yes, the speculation on body counts and the talk of body bags is beginning to mount again as the idea of a ground war comes closer. But I haven't given up hope that the air war will persuade him to relent. (S)

I am concerned about the calls for a cease fire. Nobody is more for peace than I am. But some people have the concept that things would be fine if we would just stop and talk. This would enable Saddam Hussein to snatch victory from defeat and it would make the new world order very difficult to achieve. Saddam would have the mantle of Arab heroism, despite the decimation of his military apparatus. This is not the time to stop. There do not need to be any concessions to him. Most people agree on this, including the Iranians. (S)

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Prime Minister Mulroney: If we did a list of the most harmful things that could be done, with rankings from one to ten, the most harmful thing that could happen now would be a cease fire if Saddam is not out of Kuwait. I keep hoping that the pounding he is taking from the air will cause him to pull back -- and then we can have a cease fire. But a cease fire in place is unacceptable. (S)

The President: I really called you on the FTA, although I suppose that Derek Burney has briefed you. I just talked to Carlos Salinas and he says that the understanding is fine with him. I want to read you the four key points of our understanding just to check them with you: (a) we will not use the negotiations to retreat from our bilateral FTA; (b) we will stick to our end-of-91 timetable; (c) we have left open the possibility that some issues may have to be solved bilaterally, and not trilaterally; and (d) Canada will gracefully withdraw if its continued participation would in any way delay or jeopardize the U.S.-Mexico FTA, thus allowing bilateral negotiations to continue. Salinas feels this is important. We don't think this would happen, but it is important to have an understanding. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Yes, I agree. Those points are realistic. (S)

The President: As I understand it, our negotiators had agreed on these points. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Fine, I agree with the points, but if you can avoid emphasizing the fourth point regarding Canada withdrawing that would be helpful. (S)

The President: That's no problem. I don't have to mention all of the points in public. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: My GATT negotiators tell me that this FTA is having an impact on the EC. They came to see me after Poos saw you. The idea of a North American FTA or a hemispheric FTA scares the hell out of them. (S)

The President: Good. They need incentives to keep them moving. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Yes, they see the U.S-Mexico-Canada agreement moving towards an FTA for the whole hemisphere. They see that this would have consequences for the GATT. (S)

The President: How are your political wars going? (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: I am starting to inch back up, although I am not within striking distance of your rankings in the polls. But I would settle for half of what you've got. However, our internal constitutional problems are coming to the surface again. (S)

The President: Oh, is that coming up again? I had heard something about it, but it isn't getting much coverage here. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: We've got a long way to go. The issues are complicated. We can discuss them in private the next time we meet. (S)

The President: Yes, that would be a good idea and we should get together soon. I'll have Brent look into it. Love and out.

-- End of Conversation --