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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Luncheon Meeting with President Robert G. Mugabe of Zimbabwe

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Lawrence Eagleburger, Acting Secretary of State  
John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff  
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor  
Herman J. Cohen, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs  
Jeffrey Davidow, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs  
Robert C. Frasure, NSC Director for African Affairs (Notetaker)

Robert G. Mugabe, President  
Nathan Shamuyarira, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Denis Norman, Minister of Transport and National Supplies  
Elleck Mashingaidze, Commissioner of Public Services  
Nicholas Goche, MFA Deputy Secretary  
Stanislaus Chigwedere, Zimbabwean Ambassador to the U.S.  
Mary Muchada, President's Secretary (Notetaker)

DATE, TIME July 24, 1991, 12:05 - 1:15 p.m. EST  
AND PLACE: Old Family Dining Room

The President: Let's turn to South Africa. As you know, we think the process is irreversible. How do you see the internal scene? (U)

President Mugabe: I don't think Mandela is prepared to sit down now and talk because of the violence. We want to see negotiations for a new constitution. We want to see a unitary system. We want to see democracy. So we want negotiations sooner rather than later. ~~let~~

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: I think the ANC should enter negotiations now when the government is embarrassed. ~~let~~

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President Mugabe: I agree. The ANC shouldn't refuse to negotiate on a constitution. Political prisoners and other issues can be addressed by democracy. (C)

There will be a meeting in Abuja to monitor all of this. (C)

The President: How are your relations with Buthelezi? (C)

President Mugabe: They don't exist. (C)

We were in college together at Fort Hare. (U)

But because of the Bantustan system we haven't had relations. I had been thinking of calling him but the incidents of the last few weeks have prevented that. (C)

The President: It's a setback. (U)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: It's essential that they get together. (C)

President Mugabe: Yes. I agree. But I think that the National Party needs an ally and sees that in Buthelezi. (C)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: Angola is going quite well, isn't it? (C)

President Mugabe: Yes, we are sending in some people to help. (C)

The President: We were talking about dos Santos earlier. He is coming here, I believe. Are there any special events coming up in the implementation? (C)

Assistant Secretary of State Cohen: No. It is more of a continuing process. (U)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: Mozambique is not moving well at all, is it? (C)

President Mugabe: No. We have been talking to the team in Rome. The Church team is disillusioned by Renamo. (C)

The President: Is there lots of violence there? (U)

President Mugabe: Yes. (U)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: We have no influence on Renamo. (C)

Mr. Norman: Do they still have an office here? (U)

Assistant Secretary of State Cohen: No. They did. They still have friends here. (U)

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The President: You know that some conservatives here once thought Renamo was some kind of friend of democracy. Then the torture reports came out. And some people at Heritage and elsewhere woke up. (C)

What about the Secretary Generalship? How is support shaping up in Africa? For Chidzero? (U)

President Mugabe: It's very supportive. We want to see more. We will be discussing it at Abuja. (C)

The President: Are you confident that Africa will narrow its list? (U)

President Mugabe: Yes. (U)

The President: Who is the Ghanaian? (U)

President Mugabe: Ken Dadzie. (U)

The President: Is Boutros Ghali in now? Is he active? (U)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: Yes. (U)

The President: In September will the Africans at the UN get behind your man? (C)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: The Nigerians have put forward Obasanjo? (U)

President Mugabe: Reluctantly. They really didn't want their former President who is really a former General heading the UN. (C)

The President: That is understandable. But there is the feeling that Africa hasn't had its turn. Perez de Cuellar has done a good job but he doesn't want to stay on. (C)

President Mugabe: Can we talk about the Middle East? (C)

We had a principle of friendship with Iraq. But we couldn't countenance the violence, the aggression against Kuwait. We had some sympathy with Iraq in the war with Iran. But we were shocked by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. (C)

The situation has been redressed, and we are happy about that. (C)

We are glad that you have moved on to the Palestinian question. We are especially concerned by the suffering of the Lebanese people. (C)

We can appreciate the approach of the U.S. We can support it. But I could use a little more information. (U)

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The President: On the first point -- Iraq -- we are terribly concerned on this nuclear issue, but we don't wait to get reengaged. (C)

Saddam has violated the peace accord. I still feel very strongly about this. Our problem is with Saddam Hussein. We will have no normal relations with Iraq until he is gone. Saddam has diverted his nuclear material and tried to hide it. He has diverted relief food and medicine to his home area. (C)

I don't trust him! (U)

I said during the war we would address the Palestinian question. (U)

Our approach is take into consideration very carefully the views of the region to use in conjunction with the relevant UN resolutions. (C)

The Arabs have said they will release the boycott if the Israelis end the settlements. We agree with that. The settlements go right to the heart of rightwing politics in Israel. (C)

The Arabs are ready to go to a conference. (U)

The U.S. and the USSR are going to stay together on this. (U)

The Europeans are feeling a little whipped at the moment. (C)

The question is which Palestinian representatives. Arafat behaved so badly in the war. It would be difficult to include him. (C)

We want Jordan to come forward with the Palestinians. Hussein said he would go. Then he said he wouldn't. (C)

We are a little bit optimistic. There is a lot of pressure on Shamir. People here will get concerned with Israel. (C)

Have I left out anything significant, Larry? (U)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: No, Mr. President. You never leave out anything significant. It's saying things like that, keep getting invited back to lunch. (U)

There is a solid front against Israel on this issue without it looking like that. (C)

President Mugabe: But the Palestinians are the real question. The PLO claims that Shamir will not accept people from areas that matter. We have stressed the need to be flexible. (C)

Arafat stressed the need for a flexible stance by the Palestinians. (C)

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General Scowcroft: But he has been getting hard on the issue lately. (S)

President Mugabe: Is that so? (U)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: He fears he is being marginalized. (C)

President Mugabe: He probably wants some time to pass after the Iraq war. Mubarak told me that people in the street don't want Arafat anymore because of the war. (C)

The President: Arafat has a lot of fence mending to do in the Gulf. Jordan is doing that. (S)

Can Arafat be cut out it? (S)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: No, not out of it. But Shamir is badly positioned too. The rightwing may leave the coalition. Shamir may have to rely on Labor votes to keep in power. Labor would be prepared to do that for peace. (S)

Over time the Israelis may be prepared to come forward. (C)

General Scowcroft: I'm not quite so optimistic. The Palestinian issue gives Israel room to play. (S)

There are four kinds of Palestinians; the PLO, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and others outside Israel. (S)

The issue is really East Jerusalem and others. (S)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: But you must admit, Brent, it has gotten a lot further than you and I would have thought. (S)

General Scowcroft: That's true. Assad saw the opportunity and put Israel on the defensive. (S)

The President: How is it seen in your part of the world? (S)

President Mugabe: We are struck by the intransigence of Shamir. We have supported the PLO in the past. But on Iraq, he was wrong. (C)

The PLO, however, is still a force. But how do you get the Palestinians to speak with one voice. (C)

The President: It's a problem. (S)

You know I think that Saddam convinced Arafat that we wouldn't fight. He miscalculated. He remembered things like Vietnam. (S)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: Even if we get a conference, it is only a beginning. (S)

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President Mugabe: What is Shamir's solution? (C)

The President: He doesn't have one. Shamir will have to yield on territory. (C)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: Shamir is a kind of Scarlet O'Hara when it comes to decisions. He is a decision maker who puts it off as long as possible. He is faced with it. He realizes he must make a decision. (C)

The President: The people in Israel want it. Labor wants it. He can stand up against the right if he wants to. (C)

Governor Sununu: Have you talked to the PLO? (C)

President Mugabe: Yes, in Tunis recently. They told me they are not moving away from the UN conference. A regional conference is not enough. Secondly, the emphasis should not be on peace between countries but it deals with the Palestinian question. They are prepared to be flexible even on Palestinian representatives in that case. (C)

Why did Hussein get it wrong on the Gulf? (C)

The President: There are two schools of thought -- the spoils of war promised by Saddam or the pressure of fundamentalism. Mubarak says spoils of war, oil. They promised them to him too. (C)

President Mugabe: I thought he might have been afraid of Saddam. (C)

Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger: He misjudged the U.S. (C)

The President: Hussein saw us flop around in other situations. (C)

Shall we go on outside? (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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