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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Wilfried Martens, the Prime Minister of Belgium (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Samuel Skinner, Chief of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Marlin Fitzwater, Assistant to the President and Press Secretary
David Gompert, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for European and Soviet Affairs (Notetaker)

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Wilfried Martens, Prime Minister of Belgium
Mark Esykens, Minister of Foreign Affairs

DATE, TIME January 31, 1992, 4:31 p.m. 4:40 p.m.
AND PLACE: Waldorf Towers, New York

The President: I'm delighted that we were able to stay together on the Libyan issue. The resolution on Pan Am 103 demonstrates the utility of the United Nations. It worked well against Iraq, though I'm still worried about Saddam Hussein. But the United Nations can be more effective than ever, thanks mainly to the change in the Soviet Union. We will be seeing Yeltsin shortly. We will be treating him with great respect. He's facing tough decisions well, and he has enormous problems yet to face.

(Ø)

Let me raise the Uruguay Round with you. Agriculture is the hardest problem. Is there a way to finish this? (U)

PM Martens: First, Mr. President, on the Security Council, we will continue to support your initiative with regard to Libya, even though this is a delicate issue for us. (Ø)

On the Uruguay Round, the EC is willing to seek a solution. Lubbers has worked very hard on this. He is very discouraged now. (Ø)

Mr. President: I thought we were very close. I'll talk to Kohl and Mitterrand. Mitterrand has the biggest problem of all. (Ø)

Mr. Esykens: A GATT failure would damage the whole world economy. But everyone has to understand that CAP reform will take some time. (U)

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The President: I hope it's clear that the United States will be making sacrifices too. Some people in the EC think that the United States has nothing to give up. We have an EEP program, which subsidizes exports in food. We will have to change that too. They went after me in Australia because of our export subsidies, which subsidizes exports in food. They would have to be reduced under a GATT agreement. (U)

What is your thinking about Zaire? Is your man (laughter) going to survive? (Ø)

PM Martens: The national conference has just met and has had no results. I think the key man now is the Roman Catholic Bishop. He is the President of the Conference as well as the President of the Bishops in Zaire. He is a very good man. Mobutu sees him as his real opponent now. (Ø)

The President: What do you foresee? Is there a chance there will be serious bloodshed? We've been very worried about this. (Ø)

PM Martens: Yes, I think there will be violence. It could turn into another Liberia. (Ø)

Mr. Esykens: We've recently had a Tripartite meeting on this: the U.S., France and Belgium. It was decided that we would make a three-Power demarche to Mobutu to insist that he reconvene this national conference. We also require internationally-controlled elections. Let's hope that such a process can get us through this dangerous period. (Ø)

PM Martens: Yes, we're working on a draft tripartite intervention now. Without a conference, there will definitely be violence. (Ø)

The President: Mobutu probably thinks that he can just put it down again using force. (Ø)

PM Martens: He has to realize know that he is a transitional figure. (Ø)

The President: It's very troubling. (U)

PM Martens: We had to get 10,000 Belgians out - mostly business people. There are about 1,000 missionaries remaining. (U)

Mr. Esykens: Zaire has great potential. It is a country of extraordinary resources. If we can get through this period safely then South Africa could be an engine for development throughout the entire Southern Africa region. (Ø)

The President: On South Africa, itself, I think that DeKlerk has been extremely courageous. We still have some sanctions in place. (U)

Mr. Esykens: Yes, we do too. Just an arms embargo. (U)

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The President: But we are prepared to lift our sanctions on South Africa as quickly as our law permits. Mandella is an interesting man, but sometimes I think he's living in a time-warp. I worry about his wife. And I worry about the fact that he still takes money from Qadhafi. (Ø)

- End of Conversation -

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