

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with President Mitterrand of France
(U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
James A. Baker, Secretary of State
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 Eurasian Affairs (Notetaker)
Alec Toumayan, Interpreter

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Francois Mitterrand, President of France
Roland Dumas, Minister of State for Foreign
Affairs
Jacques Andreani, Ambassador to the United
States
Pierre Morel, Diplomatic Adviser to the
President
Interpreter

DATE, TIME January 31, 1992, 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. EST
AND PLACE: Waldorf Towers, New York

President Mitterrand: We really need an opportunity to meet and
talk at length. (Ø)

The President: I could not agree more. I know I owe you an
answer to a letter you sent me back in December. My answer is
yes. We are prepared to go forward with what you propose. We've
taken a while to answer the letter because Jim has been working
with the Germans. But proceed on this. Let's just be sure it
does not appear to an outsider to be the creation of some
exclusive club. (Ø)

President Mitterrand: My proposal makes it clear, it has a very
specific focus only on the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It
is not a disarmament forum; that's for the United States and
Russia. So there can be no confusion about this. If the Germans
and the Italians want to challenge us, perhaps they should get a
few nuclear weapons. Baker and Dumas can work out the details.
(Ø)

The President: We will treat Yeltsin with respect. (U)

President Mitterrand: We expect Russia to have influence over the other Republics. I think this is important for a stable situation. (Ø)

The President: At the same time, we have to respect the sovereignty of all the new states. But I agree Russia is key. Jim will soon be making a trip to the "outer six," as we call them where he will press them to accept CFE principles. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: It is very important that all of us in the West work together to counter Iranian influence in the Central Asian Republics. It is important that we welcome them into our community. The Iranians are very active already. (Ø)

President Mitterrand: This is quite right. We can also help Yeltsin deal with these other Republics. (Ø)

The President: I would like to raise the Uruguay Round. This is not the place to discuss the details, but it seems to me we just have to work it out. If we don't, it will be a real blow to world trade. And we'll see trading blocs form. As far as I can see, we haven't really made any progress since I was in The Hague. (U)

President Mitterrand: We should work together on some principles. If we can agree on principles it will be easier for the details to be worked out by experts. The issue of agriculture must be settled, but also there are three or four other areas that have to be settled. (U)

The President: That's right -- services, intellectual property, and market access. (U)

President Mitterrand: I believe this whole thing can be settled in a week. But we have the feeling that the EC is being asked for major sacrifices. Sacrifices should be equal on both sides. (U)

The President: I don't think I could disagree with that. (U)

President Mitterrand: Then, a neutral body could easily work out what that means. (U)

The President: We thought that Dunkel was neutral and objective. (U)

President Mitterrand: Dunkel is just the mouse. The U.S. is the big cat. (laughter) (U)

The President: I want to make clear that I do not want any strains in our bilateral relations. (Ø)

President Mitterrand: My intention is exactly the same.

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It seems that on very serious issues we get along just fine. But that on secondary issues we have problems. Let's try to meet before this summer, Mr. President. (Ø)

The President: We'll see what's possible. (U)

On Haiti, you should be aware that we are facing an almost impossible situation. We are becoming a magnet for the brigands that are bringing all these poor people to our shores. Now we've reached an impasse. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: We have 14,000 people in a camp at Guantanamo Bay. (U)

The President: If we say O.K., come to Miami, we will open the door to another wave of Cuban refugees. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: C.A.P. (Carlos Andres Perez) will be discussing these ideas with you. Our basic idea is that France, Venezuela, Canada, and the United States should work out a plan. Are there any French speaking territories in the Western hemisphere that could absorb some of these people? C.A.P. will want to talk to you about that. He will also want to inquire about the exiles in your embassy. (Ø)

President Mitterrand: I know in Guiana we have a lot of exiles already. So, I'm not sure what we can do. But we will not close the door on your request. (Ø)

The President: Aristide is O.K., but a weak reed. The embargo isn't working. (Ø)

President Mitterrand: The Haitian people must not become the victim of this. (Ø)

The President: Let me ask you about Algeria, what can be done about that? (U)

President Mitterrand: The fundamentalists there were going to win the election. Then democracy could die. They've organized to win the election, so a democratic event will end in the death of democracy. One has to be pragmatic, we are still in relations with the Algerian government. We'll help them but not be too loud about it. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: We are pleased we are in agreement on Pan Am 103. (U)

President Mitterrand: We'll walk in lock step. We sometimes have to be cautious about North Africa, but on this issue there can be no hesitation. (Ø)

- End of Conversation -

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