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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with John Major, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
John Major, Prime Minister  
Interpreter: none  
Notetaker: Tony Wayne, NSC Staff

DATE, TIME March 29, 1992, 3:08-3:18 p.m.  
AND PLACE: White House

The President: John, I hate to bother you, but I just had two messages: First, Happy Birthday. (U)

Prime Minister Major: Thank you, George. (U)

The President: Second, I'm dying to find out how things are going. I know you are campaigning like mad, and I hope it all works out for you. (U)

Prime Minister Major: Thanks so much, George. (U)

The President: It's been a miserable five months here campaigning. How's the campaign going there? (U)

Prime Minister Major: It's been miserable here too. It's been a very dirty campaign. Labour is using every low trick it can find, including an advertisement exploiting a sick young girl. There is almost no depth to the low levels to which they will go. I also had a couple of "walkabouts" that were really nasty and ugly. The crowds were horrendous. I think it's been helpful politically, though you know it's not fun to do this. (U)

The opinion polls have Labour a little ahead, but our fellows on the ground think that our voters are firm and that we will win. We won't have as big a majority as before but that's expected given the recession. (U)

And also the Conservative press here has been bloody. They haven't been reporting our policy, and they've been criticizing our campaign, the posters, etc. It has been a rough fortnight, but on the bright side the opinion polls have narrowed, and our candidates on the ground are optimistic that they are going to win. (Ø)

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The BBC has been appalling too. For what is suppose to be a public television service, it is not impartial at all. But still I think we are going to win. (Ø)

The President: I saw a Harris poll that had you ahead five points. (U)

Prime Minister Major: Yes, but the polls are showing different results, some have us ahead and some behind7y yn. They are even varying day after day. We've looked at their methods and found that some of the polls are underestimating our voters by only calling during the day time when many people are at work. Our private polls have us pretty much level. On that basis, we will win a slight majority. (U)

The President: Well, I just wanted to check in and see how it was going. I'm not going to bother you with all the other subjects on our common agenda. I did see however that Princess Di's father had died. (U)

Prime Minister Major: Yes, he's been sick for awhile. It's not really a surprise. She's in Switzerland and coming home. (Ø)

The President: I'd like to send a cable. Should I send it care of the palace? (U)

Prime Minister Major: Yes, or I think you can send it directly to Kensington Palace where she lives. (U)

The President: I just wanted to give you my best. I wish there was something we could do to help you. (U)

Prime Minister Major: Many thanks, I appreciate it. (U)

The President: At least your election will be over soon. I have five more months to go. The economy is looking a little bit better, but it's an ugly process with a lot of smear stuff. It started that way in New Hampshire where the economy was particularly down, but I think that's beginning to change a bit. (Ø)

Prime Minister Major: Good. (U)

The President: If there is anything we can do, let us know. I won't bother you with anything else now. I know your focus is on the election. Just do your best to win. Goodbye. (Ø)

Prime Minister Major: Goodbye, George. (U)

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