

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Brian Prime Minister Mulroney,
Prime Minister of Canada

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada
Interpreter: none
Notetaker: Tony Wayne, NSC Staff

DATE, TIME May 1, 1992, 3:55 pm
AND PLACE: White House

The President: Brian, how are you? (U)

Prime Minister Mulroney: George, how are you doing? (U)

The President: Just calling on the elusive Rio meeting. Brent brought me up to date on our position on a new draft offered by the Chairman of the committee meeting now in New York. I am told we are very close to finding compromise language, if the text is not changed, on the Climate Treaty. I know the completion of that treaty is important to make the Rio summit a success. I'm getting all kinds of pressure on whether to go to Rio. Given the size of the U.S. and all, I know it would disappoint lot of friends (including Kohl) if I didn't go. (Ø)

The Chairman is tabling a draft this afternoon. I am told that the language on the green house gases is acceptable, but it puts me on the line. I think it has been informally circulated. Very candidly, some will interpret this as what I have been resisting -- setting deadlines -- but we think we can live with the language, if it stays the same. If there is no change, I can do what Kohl and others want and go down to Rio. I know that you want a Rio treaty, too. I hope you can ask your negotiators in New York to support the Chairman's proposal or at least resist any criticism of it until you have had a chance to look at it. I haven't actually looked at it yet, but going by what I'm told -- that we can live with the language. I'm going to catch hell from the right wing, but I'm willing to take it. I hope you can support this compromise. (Ø)

Prime Minister Mulroney: George, I saw an earlier draft before I left Ottawa. I've been on the road, and I'm in British Columbia now. Maybe something has been updated that I haven't seen. But I very much want to see you there in Rio, and I understand the problems you have. We all have them. I told our Cabinet to look at the proposal and to give the Canadian delegation in New York additional flexibility so that Canada can accept the treaty with

a softer commitment. They will be ready to help your delegation to wrap up a final package. This is a major compromise for us which will cause me difficulties with the environmentalists. (C)

The President: I realize that. I hate to put people in bind. But if people can support this without amendments, we can accept it. I can't burden the economy with expenditures that would slow down economic growth. (C)

Prime Minister Mulroney: George, we are prepared to work to facilitate a solution. Canada will be involved in the search for compromise. I told them that in an election year the worst thing to happen would be that you don't go, or you go and sign a bad deal, or you go and get ambushed with a different document. Thus I'd rather show some flexibility with the Chairman's draft and acknowledge compromises, and then go down and sign a treaty with you. I will tell the third world countries that it is better to have three quarters of the loaf than none at all. (C)

The President: That is very statesmanlike of you. If the statement is as described and it survives the debate without changes, then I'll go. And if they try to change things once we are in Rio, we'll just have to hold our own. (C)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Tell Brent, we'll be flexible. Canada is trying to be helpful on the Chairman's language. Tell your delegation to have a cup of coffee with our delegates. (C)

The President: He's here now, I'll tell him right now. (C)

Prime Minister Mulroney: What is your assessment of the trade mood in D.C. now? (C)

The President: I think it is better. I had a good meeting with Cavaco Silva and Delors. And it is improved on Canada; some here have pulled back. On the Uruguay Round, it has been frustrating. I have been down on Delors, but he's been better and even quite cooperative. In fact, our recent meeting was the best we ever had. Incidentally, he (Delors) did say he can urge that the draft Chairman's statement not be altered. I've also been trying to counter those who say its all right to hold back everything on the Round until after our elections. (C)

Prime Minister Mulroney: He (Delors) was very pleased after visit with you. (C)

The President: Really? (U)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Yes, he was very hopeful that a Round agreement would be doable on a 90-95% basis, allowing each of us some exemptions for things causing us trouble, for example Canada on dairy, the EC on bananas. (C)

The President: Any thoughts on how I should play my policy speech to the nation tonight about the L.A. situation? There is a lot of angst here. (C)

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Prime Minister Mulroney: On the situation? (U)

The President: Yes, the race question and how we can't condone violence. We are sending in federal assets, troops. We certainly can't condone the violence. (Ø)

Prime Minister Mulroney: I just spoke to 1000 high school students in British Columbia. I told them not to forget the U.S. is greatest democracy in world. Never in history has there been a country with such color blindness. This is an extraordinary achievement. In your remarks, you should accentuate the positive. Yours is the single greatest experiment in the world of such pluralism. It only functions poorly when compared to perfection. Compared to anywhere else in world, it is a magnificent city on the hill, a pillar of democracy and opportunity. Look at what you have achieved. You have a serious problem with race and justice which you must deal with. But don't throw out the baby with the bath water. (Ø)

The President: Yes, that is a good upbeat message. It's a tough problem. I must uphold law and order. I can't condone violence. But the American people saw the film showing the guy beaten up, and they don't like what they saw. I was sickened myself. I can't undermine our system of justice, even if it hands down a screwy decision. (Ø)

Prime Minister Mulroney: That is the splendor of democracy. You talked about Delors. Well one of his predecessors Jean Monet said, "Man's greatest accomplishment is to unite with his fellow man." It's not a black and white situation. The judicial system is not perfect. Like in Canada, we had a man who spent 23 years in jail for a crime he did not commit in Winnipeg. He got out of jail because his mother accosted me on the street and I had someone look into it. I think you've got to acknowledge weaknesses, flaws, but also put them into perspective. As long as you have a democracy it will be wrong from time to time. (Ø)

The President: Thanks on the other. I'll tell Brent about getting in touch with the Canadian delegation. (Ø)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Okay my friend. (U)

The President: Thanks. (U)