

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Working Lunch with Boutros Boutros-Ghali, UN Secretary General

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
 James A. Baker III, Secretary of State  
 Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
 John R. Bolton, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations  
 Edward J. Perkins, US Ambassador to the United Nations  
 Nancy Bearg Dyke, Director for International Programs and Public Diplomacy (notetaker)

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, UN Secretary General  
 Marrack Goulding, Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations  
 James Jonah, Under Secretary General for Political Affairs  
 Joseph Verner Reed, Special Representative for Public Affairs  
 Maurice F. Strong, Secretary General of UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)  
 Dick Thornburgh, Under Secretary General for Administration and Management  
 Alvaro de Soto, Senior Political Adviser

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DATE, TIME AND PLACE: May 12, 1992, 12:00 - 1:00pm EST  
 Old Family Dining Room

The President and UN Secretary Boutros-Ghali met for thirty minutes in the Oval Office and proceeded to the Old Family Dining Room. (U)

The President: It is a pleasure to welcome all of you. As I said in the Oval Office, Boutros is off to a really good start. We want to play a constructive part. I am going to Rio (for the UN Conference on Environment and Development), and I was glad to announce that. I think it is important. We will do all we can to make a positive contribution. We are respectful about what peacekeepers do. We talked in the Oval Office about Libya and Iraq. Our view remains that Iraq is not willing to comply with pertinent resolutions and that Saddam is trying to circumvent UN actions. Ekeus is doing a good job with the UN Special Commission regarding weapons of mass destruction, and that sends a strong signal around the world. We did not talk about

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peacekeeping generally of the Middle East in the Oval Office meeting, but we certainly can talk about it here. (U)

The Secretary General raised the complaints of some elements in the Moslem world about lack of UN attention. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: We talked about the Middle East peace process at breakfast and can certainly continue here. (U)

The President: We are sending you our best people. We had a very good ambassador up there in Tom Pickering. Now with Ambassador Perkins you are getting a really seasoned person too. And you have stolen Thornburgh and Reed. (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: The main question in Yugoslavia is trying to decide what the next step should be. I am worried that the political isolation of Serbia will simply exacerbate Serbian nationalism. The Serbs feel isolated and wrongly accused. They do deserve 70% of the blame. The Europeans have pushed hard for the UN to be active in Bosnia-Hercegovina. We will present our report to the UN Security Council tomorrow. There is no possibility to do anything in Bosnia-Hercegovina. In fact, we are having problems with UNPROFOR's mission in Croatia. (Ø)

The President: Do you feel there is something the U.S. could be doing? We held back recognition to help the UN and I got pounded by the ethnic groups. I think we were right. In any of these disputes, is there something you could suggest we could do to facilitate? (Ø)

Mr. Goulding: You kept influence for a long time in Belgrade by not recognizing Slovenia and Croatia. Then you recognized them about the time the Bosnia-Hercegovina problem began. The Serbs feel they are criticized by all the major powers. It is having an effect on the current UN operation. The Serbs are acting like spoiled children in saying that they would withdraw the federal army from Bosnia-Hercegovina, but would leave Bosnian Serbs in a Bosnian-Hercegovinian army. As a practical matter, this would leave some 80% of the JNA behind in Bosnia-Hercegovina. I told them to not do it until the EC fixes an agreement. This is an example of how criticism of them causes them to not behave. They deserve most of the blame but not all. (Ø)

The President: Do the Serbs feel totally ganged up on? (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali and Mr. Goulding: Yes. (U)

The President: Is anyone in the republics still communist? (Ø)

Mr. Goulding: All of the leaders say communism gone, but they all have communist backgrounds. (Ø)

The President: Are there Serbian communists in Belgrade? (Ø)

Mr. Goulding: No, Milosevic now thinks he invented the free market. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: For months, we tried to not recognize Slovenia and Croatia and work with Yugoslavia. The Serbs did not do well with this. They took our support and turned around and began killing people in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The President did what is right on this and it is still costing him. We had to let the Serbs know that we were angry. So, now both the Croats and Serbs are mad at us, all from just doing the right thing. (ϕ)

Mr. Goulding: We are still stuck dealing with the dissolution of Yugoslavia so that the crisis does not spread beyond Yugoslavia to the other Balkan countries. (ϕ)

General Scowcroft: We are facing a difficult issue. The EC is recognizing Bosnia-Herzegovina yet it is now being divided up. How should we deal with that? (ϕ)

Mr. Goulding: There are two possible ways of responding. First would be a huge military force to impose change. This would not work. Second is the political/diplomatic route. There is still a mechanism, the Conference on Yugoslavia chaired by Lord Carrington. It has met spasmodically and has a style of giving speeches. Maybe it could be made more continuous, keeping technical experts there all the time to try to find a solution, while the plenipotentiaries come periodically. Too much criticism may not produce a solution. (ϕ)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: A more active role by the EC in diplomacy is needed but has not been done as of yet. (ϕ)

Mr. Goulding: EC monitors are being withdrawn, and I would hardly recommend inserting UN monitors in their place. (ϕ)

The President: Are you involved in Macedonia? (ϕ)

Secretary Baker: That one is next. (ϕ)

The President: We have been in touch with the Greek government. We joined others in saying this needs time. There is no easy answer. (ϕ)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: They could change their name. (ϕ)

The President: That will solve it. (U)

Mr. Goulding: Macedonia has been a separate republic only since World War II, isn't that right, General Scowcroft. (U)

General Scowcroft: Yes. (U)

Mr. Thornburgh: What is the climate on the Hill re UN funding? (U)

The President: It is better in that they think the UN is doing a good job, but not so good on getting them to appropriate funds, but we will keep trying. (U)

Mr. Thornburgh: Can we expect anything before November? (U)

Secretary Baker: There is no vehicle. We were fortunate to get the additional \$270 million for peacekeeping - that was the only new money approved for FY 1992. (U)

Mr. Bolton: We recently paid just under \$200 million for peacekeeping bills on May 1. (U)

The President: The problems in Los Angeles have not helped. I heard again today about Americans turning inward. (U)

On Cyprus, is there any reason to be upbeat? (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: There have been new developments in the last two weeks. I believe that Denktash and Vassiliou could meet in New York within the next two weeks. (Ø)

The President: Our role is we support what the UN Secretary General does. There is no easy answer. (U)

General Scowcroft: We were fairly optimistic last fall because Ozal was behind it and put pressure on Denktash. But, Demirel is more cautious. The heart of it is the Turkish political situation. (Ø)

The President: Demirel is looking East. I spoke to him the other day, largely about President Nazarbayev. And, also he is concerned about Azerbaijan. We will keep pushing however we can. (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: I am afraid we will become involved in Nagorno-Karabakh. (Ø)

The President: What are they asking you to do? (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: Send peacekeepers like Yugoslavia. Their Permanent Representative is asking, saying "we are a full-fledged UN member now, so why not appoint a special representative? Why not send a fact-finding mission?" (Ø)

Another problem is we are overloaded. Even sending 200 observers costs. During the last six months, Rwanda and Uganda have asked for my help but I cannot intervene now. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: All of this is the result of the breakdown of the East-West confrontation. You made the good point that it is extraordinarily important to protect credibility of the UN. Long-time peacekeeping missions like Cyprus affect credibility. (Ø)

Mr. Goulding: There are very few conflicts ready for the UN. This fact has been obscured. (U)

Mr. Jonah: I am concerned about the perception that southern problems do not matter. (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: I agree. (U)

Mr. Bolton: The UN did Namibia. (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: That was three years ago. (U)

Mr. Bolton: I can also point to Angola, Western Sahara, Cambodia, Somalia.

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: The contrast between rushing 14,000 troops to Croatia and hesitating over a very few to Somalia is part of the basis of the perception. (Ø)

The President: What are you concerned about besides Somalia? The Secretary General mentioned in our earlier meeting concerns about the south and emphasis on East-West. (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: The perception is there that the UN is acting in Yugoslavia/Europe at the expense of the south. There are reports and complaints that we are not doing enough. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: We are paying. (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: It can be fixed with political attention and public relations. We are doing our best to counter the perception. We are sending missions. (Ø)

The President: Can we look to Rio and say what will happen? Will it be highly contentious with many groups raising loud voices? (U)

Mr. Strong: Fears have been exaggerated. The NGOs (non-governmental organizations) will be there by the thousand and they will make noise. But they will be located far from the conference itself. Your decision was not easy but I thank you. The voices of the south will be happier than now expected with your message and the G-77 are going to be reasonably cooperative. I expect positive results from the official conference. There is substantial agreement on what is being put in the documents. On the declaration, there is a strong move to open it up. It is not good to do that, though some of your people may want to do so. The G-77 do not want to reopen it. As to the rest of the agenda, there is a majority on virtually all the big issues. There are many square brackets still but they do not involve major sticking point. I believe the financial issue is the big one. (U)

The fact that you are willing to go along with the GEF is good. The G-77 see it as not the only source of funds. They see other channels that can be used for money too, such as IDA. But, it is not a pledging conference. What the developing countries expect is a decent start. (U)

I believe your business community has not recognized the opportunities for them. You might want to form a task force to assess the opportunities for US business. There is a significant

array of opportunities that Japan will run away with if the U.S. does not try. If your advisors take a look, you will see formidable opportunities. (U)

The President: I am looking forward to the conference. How do the NGOs participate? (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: There is a meeting outside of the formal conference. (U)

Mr. Strong: A few will speak formally at the conference. (U)

The President: The timing of the conference is not good for us, but we will try to be constructive. What is the role of Olivia Newton John? She sent me a tape urging that I go to Rio. In the tape, she said she is a UN ambassador. (U)

Mr. Strong: She is a goodwill ambassador for UNEP (United Nations Environment Program). I am committed to making sure this decision to attend is a good one for you. We want it to be a positive investment for you. (U)

Ambassador Reed: How many heads of state are coming? (U)

Mr. Strong: There are 120 now but more will come since the President has announced his decision. (U)

The President: Maybe we can ask about timing to come? (U)

Mr. Strong: Whenever you decide to come, we will make sure you have what you need. (U)

The President: Is it better earlier or later? I cannot stay long. Would it be more helpful at the beginning or the end? (U)

Mr. Strong: The latter part is best from the point of view of maximum extent of your own influence and feedback here in the U.S., though I should not assume to comment on your domestic considerations. Friday and Saturday the 12th and 13th are the last working days and the 14th is a symbolic day. We are encouraging heads to come the last three days. Whenever you choose to come is fine. (U)

Many businessmen will be there. I am glad you met with the US Business Council. Japan uses half the level of energy as the U.S. to produce a unit. Japan believes a new generation of technology will be environmentally driven. You can turn your decision into something positive for business. (U)

The President: Mike Deland has such a council as you mentioned. (U)

Thank you all so much for coming. (U)

End of Conversation