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THE WHITE HOUSE

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WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

DECLASSIFIED
PER E.O. 13526
2009-0740-MR
JL 10/16/12

SUBJECT: Somalia

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney
Interpreter: None
Notetaker: Barry F. Lowenkron, NSC

DATE, TIME: December 2, 1992, 4:45-4:54 p.m.
AND PLACE: Oval Office

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

Prime Minister Mulroney: Fine George. Thank you for your note. I'll get back to you on this. (U)

The President: Well, if the dates don't work, just give me a holler. We can do a combination of things. I'd love to have you up to Camp David. Have you ever been there? (U)

Prime Minister Mulroney: No, I haven't. The 16th seems good. (U)

The President: Well, you can fly into Andrews or Hagerstown. We can watch some movies. If you want some of the time to be a bit more formal we can bring up some other people. (Ø)

Prime Minister Mulroney: It sounds great. We're looking forward to it. (U)

The President: Well, Brian, I tell you why I'm calling now. It's about Somalia. I've got some points here and I'd like to go through them. I'm going to be calling other world leaders. I've already spoken to John Major. You're my second call and I wanted to run these by you and John to see if you had any major problems with what I'm suggesting. (Ø)

We want to see if we can put together an international coalition to establish the necessary security environment for the UN to get the food in -- especially in the hardest hit region in the south. We will make a major contribution, but it will not be possible without others participating. I hope that Canada can join us at the beginning of the peacemaking phase and then remain for the peacekeeping effort. You've done so much, but it's critically important if you could redirect your troops to the south where the anarchy is the worst and the people are dying. Our military will be in touch to coordinate on this. (Ø)

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I want you to know that my people tell me that General Baril is doing a great job in New York at the UN. We'll continue to need your support in building an effective command and control structure for the coalition. I'll be sending my ambassador in soon to follow-up with you. Boutros Galhi has been quite supportive. I'll be meeting with my NSC people -- and my key military advisor, Colin Powell on this. We want the forces to go in, help the UN and then get out. We want to make sure that the warlords don't come back to their warlord ways. As we see it, the risk in terms of lives lost is manageable -- these warlords haven't had to face any force, so this is entirely different than the situation in Yugoslavia and in Bosnia. At any rate, our thoughts are that we're not facing a high risk situation. I talked to Bill Clinton today. I told him I want to get in and out by the time he becomes President of the United States. We don't want to have this become a shooting situation. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Thanks. What size force are you contemplating? (S)

The President: I'll have a better fix on that after I meet with my advisors. A couple of brigades -- maybe up to 20-25,000. Colin gave me this number but we'll pin it down at tomorrow's meeting. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: What's your timing on this? (U)

The President: We want to go as soon as we're ready -- maybe within a few days. We want all our diplomacy in place first. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Yes, under a UN resolution. (S)

The President: Butrous-Gahli wanted a UN commander, but with the size of our contribution I said no. He understands all of this. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: We have about 1,000 or about 750-1,000 Canadians there now for peacekeeping purposes and another 750 on ships who'll be there in a matter of days. I'll meet with my people as well. My inclination is that we'll be very helpful and join in the UN effort to meet your objectives. (S)

The President: You've been wonderful. We'll get together with our people and we can talk over the weekend. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Great. I tell you, once those warlords see all the muscle they'll pull back. (S)

The President: The problem will be if they pull back to the oases only to come back later. I just don't know. But I do hope they'll learn their lesson. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: We'll be with you. (U)

The President: You're great. I'm looking forward to seeing you. Bye. (U)