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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Plenary Meeting with King Hassan III of Morocco (S)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
The Vice President
Nicholas F. Brady, Secretary of the Treasury
Richard B. Cheney, Secretary of Defense
John Sununu, Chief of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Lawrence Eagleburger, Acting Secretary
of State
Frederick Vreeland, Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Near Eastern and South
Asian Affairs
Michael Ussery, U.S. Ambassador to Morocco
Richard Haass, Senior Director for Near East
and South Asia
Edmund Hull, Director for Near East and South
Asia Affairs (Notetaker)
Alec Toumayan, Interpreter

King Hassan II
Abdellattif Filali, Minister for Foreign
Affairs
Ahmed Osman, President of the National
Assembly
Ahmed Reda Guedira, Counselor to His Majesty
the King
Mohammed Berrada, Minister of Finance
Hassan Abouyoub, Minister for Foreign Trade
Mohammed Belkhat, Moroccan Ambassador to
the United States

DATE, TIME September 26, 1991; 11:40 - 12:30 a.m. EST
AND PLACE: The Cabinet Room

After the arrival ceremony, the President and King Hassan, joined by General Scowcroft, Ambassador Belkhat, and Interpreter Alec Toumayan, met for 40 minutes in the Oval Office before joining the two delegations for the Plenary Meeting in the Cabinet Room.
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The President: I want to welcome His Majesty and his distinguished colleagues and apologize for the delay in joining you. I had many questions to ask His Majesty, and we also renewed a longstanding friendship. This all took some time. We covered many subjects, but now I would like to turn the floor over to you to hear your views. If there are any questions, we have people here to answer. We will also want to respond and comment. (U)

King Hassan: First let me tell you how happy I am to be here today. It is deeply moving to see an old friend who is always faithful to that friendship. Because of your personal leadership, we see an American policy in the international area predicated more and more on respect for international legality. Sometimes there may be wide gaps between that objective and its realization, but it is most important that the intention be clearly expressed. (C)

In Morocco, which is located on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, we have observed with great interest the problems of the socialist bloc. This camp has been active in Africa of which we are a part. Our region has suffered from the "pollution" of the Cold War. We thank God that the Western Mediterranean has been less polluted in this sense than has the Eastern Mediterranean which suffers directly from the Arab-Israeli dispute. Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and other Arab countries are directly involved; we are removed. (C)

Looking north from our perspective across the Bosphorus, we clearly perceived Soviet naval power -- both above and below water. In this regard, there is now a major change for which we thank God. Now the situation is quieter. (C)

In another sense, these changes in Europe have placed Morocco and other Mediterranean countries in a precarious economic situation. We now find the EEC more inclined toward Eastern Europe and less attentive toward our needs. They planned for a common market of 300 million and instead have a market of 700 million. We are concerned with being "shut out" of everything. Yet, I doubt whether the Eastern Europeans will succeed. "Rich" is not in their vocabulary. They are not used to enterprise. The Maghreb countries have an opportunity -- not as recipients of aid, but initially as partners and ultimately as associates. (C)

South of the Sahara, the situation is not good. The failure of socialism in Eastern Europe and its return to market principles bodes ill for African states which have followed socialist ideals. Two countries are key: Zaire -- here we can say this country is a little tired and sick -- and Sudan -- a country which is even sicker. They share a short, common border, and they are in the heart of the African continent. A line of destabilization runs through them, right up the Red Sea and into the Middle East. Egypt borders Sudan. Saudi Arabia is but 30 miles away. (C)

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Elsewhere in Africa, the picture is mixed. Thank God there is reconciliation in Angola, but meanwhile Zaire falls into disorder. The French and Belgians have personal accounts to settle with Zaire. This is not so for U.S. and Morocco which has twice deployed its forces there. Regardless of Mobuto's mistakes, we should support actions which are not too radical, not too blunt. (C)

In Africa then, there are two countries which remain stable and moderate: South Africa at the southern tip and Morocco at the northern tip. We recognized change in South Africa, and I received De Klerk as a chief of state to encourage this change. We have given the South Africans rights to land and overfly their aircraft. In the coming month, we will establish diplomatic relations. (C)

Although the USSR is no longer a menace, we must take care because there are tens of thousands of Marxist/Leninists remaining throughout the world. They are "nostalgics" ready to aid any extremist faction -- racial or religious. We must be vigilant. Previously, we knew from where the threat came -- the KGB or Stassi. Now we do not know. There is no discipline now, but disarray caused by these Marxist/Leninist nostalgics. Therefore, we should not be euphoric, but rather vigilant. The world today falls into two camps -- those who say "In God we trust" and those who say "In gold we trust." The latter is dangerous. (S)

It is a historic moment -- a critical period for the Middle East. Not since 1956 when President Eisenhower and that iron man John Foster Dulles stood up to Britain, France and Israel over Suez, has there been a stand taken like the one today under your leadership. We know your position is based on principle -- there is no double standard. But, as I have said before, I do not think Shamir will make peace. He will arrange for himself to be overthrown before he will sign an agreement. He and his associates were the pioneers. The next generation will have to be the peacemakers. This at least is my psychological analysis for what it is worth. (S)

We must ask both the Arabs and the Israelis to look at the long term. They cannot "improvise" their existence in the region. The Arab countries must grasp the opportunity. The world is living in a period of legality; UN prestige is at an all time high. For our part, Morocco and the Maghreb have not refused to participate as observers of a Middle East peace plan. Allow me to clarify our view. The problem is that the countries directly concerned -- Egypt and Syria -- object to the presence of observers. Mubarak told me this as did Assad's vice president. Jordan, on the other hand, is for observers, and the Palestinians too may favor observers because they are disinterested parties.

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But, the Palestinian position is not united. A Palestinian National Council is underway to confirm or replace their leadership. Let me say that the Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) countries are ready to participate if the concerned parties accept that participation. U.S. diplomacy can play a role in this regard. We cannot say we will come now because they may say we do not need you. At the Rabat summit last week, the AMU countries agreed that we would participate as observers if all concerned parties agreed. Only Libya reserved its position, but in private. They promised not to make an uproar. As I told you, I am mandated to meet with the Syrians, Egyptians and Jordanians in New York next week to consult further, and I will keep you informed of their responses. (S)

On bilateral issues, we can congratulate ourselves on the state of our relations. During the Cold War, we signed agreements on staging and other issues. Since the end of the Cold War, we see no lack of U.S. interest in these issues. Internally, we have taken measures to encourage investment. We hope this administration can encourage Americans to come to Morocco. Mr. President, I know you are a busy man with other meetings. I will stop here. These are my views. (S)

The President: Thank you, Your Majesty. I know Larry Eagleburger does not want his lunch to burn so I will not speak long. I do want my colleagues to know that we also covered Iraq in our private meeting, and we see eye-to-eye on the need for Iraq to respect UNSC resolutions. On Israel, I might just say that I am not as pessimistic as you about Shamir. In any case, we must press forward. There are big problems with Israel, Syria and the PLO, but this is the last, best change for peace. I appreciate your clarification about participation as an observer. Larry, we need to inform Jim Baker and get back to those concerned. (S)

Acting Secretary Eagleburger: I spoke with Secretary Baker last night (after my meeting with the King.) (S)

The President: In Israel, we find the people are much more supportive of the peace process than is the government. A large percentage are willing to accept our approach -- land for peace -- as I noted in my arrival statement. Shamir could be like Nixon going to China. It could be harder for a moderate to take the steps which need to be taken. In any case, we will work in an equitable fashion on this very difficult issue. I hope to hear from you after your talks in New York. Perhaps a letter. (S)

We also discussed the Sahara in the Oval Office. I appreciate your views. There will be time in the one-on-one meeting we have upstairs prior to dinner to discuss other issues. Let me say I agree with you on South Africa, and we are lifting some of our

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sanctions. And, I agree that we must not let our guard down vis-a-vis communism. We are concerned, for example, with communist presence in the ANC and that organization's support for radical causes. I am delighted to hear of your treatment of De Klerk.
(S)

Now it is time to let you get to your lunch. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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