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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Nelson Mandela of South Africa
on May 3, 1991

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Nelson Mandela, African National Congress
Interpreter: None
Notetaker: Robert Frasure

DATE, TIME May 3, 1991, 9:00 - 9:10 am EDT
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Hello, Mr. Mandela? How are you? (U)

Mr. Mandela: How are you, Mr. President? (U)

The President: I'm fine. It's a beautiful day here. We are going off to our Midwest today to St. Louis. (U)

Mr. Mandela: Before we begin, let me tell you that I have a one-year-old grandson. He runs to the telephone every time it rings and yells: "Bush! Bush!" (U)

The President: That's wonderful. What is his name?

Mr. Mandela: Mbata. And he knows you! (U)

The President: Good. I will send him a note. (U)

Mr. Mandela: You must have seen our set of demands that we made to the government. (U)

The President: Yes, I have seen a summary. (U)

Mr. Mandela: We sent them to Mr. Swing (U)

We have done everything we can to convey our fear to the State President of the effect of violence on the negotiation process.
(P)

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We were keen to remove everything which destabilizes the process. I have spoken to de Klerk to warn him on the effect of violence. I have given him concrete examples of the complicity of the police. (Ø)

De Klerk never moved on this issue. We sent him our demands that on May 9 we would halt the talks if the government doesn't respond. There can be no question of talking to the government after that. (Ø)

The President: Oh dear. (U)

Mr. Mandela: We don't have the cooperation of the government on this. (Ø)

There is a wave of violence in Soweto. The government is doing nothing. In the Transvaal since last year ten thousand people have lost their lives. The government has failed to respond. That is why I wanted to contact you. I know you have a genuine interest in the situation. But it appears unless the government... (Ø)

The President: I appreciate your call. And I want to be helpful. I am concerned about the violence. It scares us to death as we contemplate the future of South Africa. There must be a way to contain it, to bring it to a halt. (Ø)

As you know, we have called on the government to fulfill its responsibilities to maintain law and order. We have emphasized the need for the impartiality of the police. But more needs to be done. (Ø)

I will be meeting with Buthelezi in June and urge him to do more. I will convey your concerns to the government so de Klerk knows how strongly I feel. I will contact him soon on the May 9 problem. (Ø)

You know there is supposed to be a conference on violence. Maybe there could be some kind of impartial national commission with people on it like Tutu whom everyone respects or Judge Goldstone, a name I don't know but he was suggested to me. (Ø)

I will contact de Klerk. But I do hope that a break-off of the talks can be averted. If that happens, it would be a terrible signal to the world. (Ø)

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Mr. Mandela: Thank you, Mr. President. I am happy to hear of your response. We started this process but we can only do our best. But it will be difficult if the other side doesn't cooperate. (C)

The President: I would appeal to you not to break it off. I will try to ameliorate the situation. I will call de Klerk and tell him that I stand with you on your concern about the violence. We need to get a process going on ending the violence. I would hate to see the peace process stopped. I will try to do what I can. (C)

Mr. Mandela: Thank you, Mr. President, for your help. (U)

The President: You know our last phone call they tried to make it as if there was some big division between us. (U)

Mr. Mandela: Yes, I know. Thank you. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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