

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Francois Mitterrand President of France on July 11, 1991

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Francois Mitterrand, President of France
Interpreter: Eliza Burnham
Notetaker: Earl Anthony Wayne

DATE, TIME July 11, 1991, 6:59 - 7:08 a.m.
AND PLACE: The White House

(Opening pleasantries by both Presidents.)

The President: You and I are both concerned about the Kurds. Saddam must know that we are not abandoning them. We delayed our departure to mid-July (to make that clear). We will make a public statement this week repeating what we have told Iraq in private -- that we will retain the ability to intervene and to punish Iraq, if they start to punish the Kurds again. For this we need to keep a limited force in the area. Would you consider participating? (S)

President Mitterrand: As for France, I agree. (U)

The President: Good. I spoke to Ozal and I think he agrees. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, we need to retain the ability to monitor the situation. (S)

The President: I have another issue that I want to raise. Iraq's failure to comply with UNSCR 687 is very disturbing. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, we cannot abandon that cause. (S)

The President: We want to have the ability to punish Iraq, if it continues to deceive us and especially to build nuclear weapons. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, I have the same view as you. We must either reinforce or maintain the force in place. What's there should be sufficient. But in essence I agree with your basic thinking. (S)

The President: I have talked to the Saudis and they share our concern. Iraq recently submitted a letter to the UN suggesting

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that they might be ready to comply, but we won't know until we test them. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, we need a pre-agreed way of establishing what to do. We can't just declare war. We need an agreed signal. (S)

The President: I have a proposal. We will demand that Iraq go along with inspections at any time and at any place. If Iraq fails to comply fully, we would hit the site from the air, after brief notification to clear the site of civilians. (S)

President Mitterrand: Absolutely. (U)

The President: If Iraq still fails to comply, then we would hit selected military targets of great value to Saddam. I'm not enthusiastic to do this, but Iraq needs to comply with the UN resolution. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, he must indeed submit. But I agree. I hope this will be possible with relatively limited means so there is no need to have something major as we had before. He must be forced to comply. (S)

The President: I agree he must be forced to comply or be punished, and we do not want a major conflict. I am happy you share our point of view. (S)

President Mitterrand: I share your concerns. We can discuss the means and modalities at Rambouillet. (S)

The President: Yes, I look forward to talking with you. We have a lot to talk about. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, we can discuss Iraq and many other things. Thank you for coming to French soil. (S)

The President: Thank you for finding the time to see me. (S)

President Mitterrand: Oh, no, it's my pleasure. See you soon. (U)

The President: Goodbye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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