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THE WHITE HOUSE

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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call to Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu of Japan

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu
Interpreter: Frances Seeds
Notetaker: Torkel Patterson

DATE, TIME August 19, 1991, 8:50 a.m. - 9:03 a.m.
AND PLACE: Kennebunkport

The President: Toshiki? Can you hear me alright? Well, I am delighted to speak to you, but I wish it were under different conditions. I just wanted to touch base with you, we have no specific ideas, we do not know where Gorbachev is and we do not know anything except what is in the public domain. My calls to world leaders got interrupted by a press conference which just ended a few minutes ago. If you are interested in it, I am sure your embassy can send you the transcript. I am interested in your views, but with your permission, I will just summarize mine right now. (Ø)

PM Kaifu: Please do. (U)

The President: We want to handle this in a calm but firm manner and keep insisting that we are committed to reform, glasnost and democracy. We have made the point that the coup is extra-constitutional. We feel that we do not want to send things back to where they were in the Cold War days, so that calls for firm but calm rhetoric. The only thing hopeful so far is that statement by Yanayev that this does not mean the end of reform. (U)

The Soviet new leaders will have some statement about 10:00 our time which is about an hour from now. (U)

I made the point that we could not go forward with financial aid as long as these extra-constitutional actions are taking place. I made the point that we expect them to honor the treaties that were made and indeed the new Soviet leaders have said they will honor existing treaties. The press, typically, asked me who

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controls the nuclear arms and am I using the hot line. I am trying to calm things down and not alarm the American people about any sort of military confrontation. That is about the theme we are taking. (Ø)

I may go back to Washington for one day to have some meetings there, but I do not want to alter my vacation drastically. I think that would send the wrong message. Frankly, Toshiki, there is not much we can do. (Ø)

PM Kaifu: George. First of all, I would like to thank you very much for informing me. Of course when I heard about this about noon time, initially we were told this was for health reasons, then martial law. Of course, the expression coup d'etat was not used. We were very concerned there was something very unlawful. I have made a statement to the Japanese public that we would pay extremely close attention to the situation. As you have said George, of course, we do not want to see the relationship go back to the Cold War days. (U)

President Bush: What I would like to do, if you are agreeable, is to announce that you and I have had a good talk and that we see eye to eye on this -- it would be very helpful if you and I could agree that I could do that. (U)

PM Kaifu: Please do. (U)

President Bush: Okay, we will keep you informed and I will let you know if there is anything new or different. There is much at stake. (U)

We are not going to change our views on the Northern Islands. It is important that the Soviets cooperate on the Middle East. We have a lot to solve but we are going to stick to our principles. (U)

PM Kaifu: I, of course, on my side have solidly expressed to the press my concern that Perestroyka and New Thinking continue and we will continue to pay close attention to this situation. (U)

President Bush: That is very good. It is nice to talk to you. I followed your trip to China closely. (U)

PM Kaifu: One thing if I may. I will not bore you with details at this point. When I went to China I expressed to the three leaders that I met that it is very important for the U.S. as well as the international community that China move forward with humanitarian affairs. I said that President Bush has worked very hard granting MFN to China. I told them how you worked to persuade Senators and Representatives. I expressed that it is very important that they move forward for an humanitarian system. (Ø)

President Bush: Do you think they will do anything? (U)

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PM Kaifu: Well with regard to some of the other issues, such as the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, they are willing to participate with no conditions. Another issue, the proposed UN treaty on conventional arms tracking -- they said they would study it. (C)

President Bush: I see, well, it was a very good trip. (U)

PM Kaifu: That is right. (U)

President Bush: We are sitting in Kennebunkport looking at a beautiful picture of you and your wife when you were out on our boat. Now we are expecting hurricane winds and we are taking the boats out of the water. I think it will blow by and we will get them back in tomorrow. I am sorry to call so late, get some sleep and we will stay in close touch. (U)

PM Kaifu: Thank you very much and please continue working hard on your side, too. (U)

President Bush: We will. (U)

PM Kaifu: Please let me know when you find out more. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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