

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Jozsef Antall,
Prime Minister of Hungary

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Jozsef Antall, Prime Minister
Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada
Interpreter: Pat Austin
Notetaker: Robert Hutchings, NSC Staff

DATE, TIME August 26, 1991, 9:00 - 9:13 a.m.
AND PLACE: Kennebunkport, Maine

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

Prime Minister Antall: Good. The reason I wanted to speak to you was to give you some information. People I have commissioned have just gone from one to the other of the Baltic capitals. In 10 minutes, I am going to announce to the parliament that Hungary has taken the first step toward the recognition of their sovereignty. I notified the Soviet Union on Saturday that we are planning to take these steps and our parliament will elaborate on them. The other thing is that I find the situation in Yugoslavia extremely serious. (Ø)

The President: Mr. Prime Minister, you say first steps toward recognition. Exactly what does that mean? (Ø)

Prime Minister Antall: It means that in September, the foreign ministers of the three Baltic states are coming to Hungary. Next week, the parliament will pass a resolution in which parliament will authorize the government to begin negotiations for the establishment of diplomatic relations. So for all practical purposes, what we will announce is pretty close to what has been said by the U.S. since the three Baltic states have declared their independence and since Yeltsin has accepted that. We are not using the term recognition, but will simply take these steps. (Ø)

The President: That is very interesting. We may do the same very soon. I just haven't made a decision. You are very courteous to call. We should stay in touch. It is quite likely that the U.S. will recognize independence in a more formal way though of course, as you know, we have never recognized the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union. (Ø)

Prime Minister Antall: This we did in our statement on Saturday. (Ø)

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The President: One other point that concerns me is borders. Lithuania, for example, has quite different borders than it did at the time of incorporation. We, for one, do not want to get into border disputes in all of this. I am sure Hungary doesn't either. (U)

Prime Minister Antall: I think this transitional period will be sufficiently long that we can express how we want it to be worked out. (U)

The President: I appreciate your call very much, my friend. Incidentally, the Prime Minister of Canada is here with me. I think they will be moving in this direction soon, too. (U)

Prime Minister Antall: I would like to pass on best wishes to him, too. I would also like to say once again, I think the situation in Yugoslavia is very, very serious. Yugoslavia is on our border. It looks like river traffic on the Danube will be held up because of the fighting. I think it would be very, very important -- and I spoke to a number of Yugoslav figures about this -- to put pressure, the same kind of sanctions we talked about at the time of the Soviet coup, on the Serbian Communist leaders in order to prevent a catastrophe. (U)

The President: If you have one minute, Brian Mulroney would like to say hello. (U)

Prime Minister Antall: Yes. I would like to ask you, Mr. President, to have your military attache visit the border area. (U)

The President: Yes. Here's the Prime Minister. (U)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Hello, Prime Minister, how are you? I am visiting President Bush and wanted to take the opportunity to express the hope you will visit Canada at an early opportunity. (U)

Prime Minister Antall: Thank you very much. I heard we wouldn't be able to coordinate a visit in October when I am in New York, but following that, I would love to come. (U)

Prime Minister Mulroney: I look forward to that and hope to see you soon. (U)

Prime Minister Antall: Together with the governments of Europe and President Bush, I really hope you could be of assistance in the Baltic states and Yugoslavia. (U)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Yes, Prime Minister. What do you see in the next few days regarding Yugoslavia? (U)

Prime Minister Antall: Civil war, villages being depopulated and villages surrounded, 10,000 refugees. The situation in eastern Croatia is extremely serious. You can hear cannon fire and

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mortar fire from our border. We need to take a hard, firm stand against the Serbian national communists. Thank you. (S)

Prime Minister Mulroney: Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister. See you soon. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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