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THE WHITE HOUSE
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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with John Major, Prime Minister
of the United Kingdom

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Prime Minister Major
Interpreter: None
Notetaker: Barry F. Lowenkron

DATE, TIME: October 2, 1992, 1514-1521, 1525-1537
AND PLACE: Air Force One, 10 Downing Street

The President: John, how are you? (U)

Prime Minister Major: Hi, George. I'm fine. How are you? (U)

The President: Well, I'm back on the campaign trail. I'm glad to hear from you. (U)

Prime Minister Major: I want you to know that the election is of great importance to us, and I'm sure you will do well. There is a great deal of good will here for you. I'm glad the debates are settled. What impact will Perot coming back into the race have?
(P)

The President: Thanks for your words. We need that. I'm trying to do what my friend John Major did. I feel encouraged, though we can't seem to close beyond nine points. We've got three debates hammered out today. It's going right down to the wire. On Perot, most of our people think it will help me. When he got out of the race, Clinton got a big boost. I think Perot coming back in will confuse things, and the anti-Bush vote -- which is fairly substantial now because of the economy -- I think it'll come down, but not by too much. (P)

Prime Minister Major: Well. I hope so. It'll be very good to see the anti-vote split. (P)

The President: How are things at home? (U)

Prime Minister Major: Well, I've never known them to be so rocky, so testy, so bitter and unpleasant -- it's been very rough. (P)

The President: Because of the monetary crisis and the vote? (P)

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Prime Minister Major: Yes, but, it's a series of other things, and the press has distorted them. On top of that we've even had a seedy sex scandal that's run and run in the press. I just had a fight in the last few minutes over a major newspaper story fed by someone in Europe which is a major distortion of what happened. (Ø)

The President: Well, I think we have the same mood internationally in the press. Was the fight over the economy? (Ø)

Prime Minister Major: Yes, it relates to the currency crisis. (U)

The President: It's terrible. Maybe the world will calm down. I feel confident. But, all the things you and I and others have done doesn't count for much now. I hope it will on election day. (Ø)

Prime Minister Major: I very much hope so. I think people do focus their minds when they cast their votes, and I hope this will happen. (Ø)

The President: I hope so. But, its gotten very, very ugly, going after our kids -- not much, but enough. (Ø)

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The President: John, it sounded like a tremendous catastrophe disconnected the line. (U)

Prime Minister Major: You're back, that's fine. Can I raise a couple of things that are on my mind? (U)

The President: Please, do. (U)

Prime Minister Major: On the Uruguay Round, I spoke to Lubbers, to Kohl and to Mitterrand. Kohl is ready to move on GATT as we are. This is not the case, I'm afraid, with Mitterrand. Mitterrand feels very warm to you personally, by he's sore at the United States, particularly on oil seeds and wheat subsidies. When I pressured him on GATT he said that Kohl already pushed him, and he was waiting for me to do the same. He had a very wry smile. I called MacSherry and Delors. Delors will try to get the Commission to move. I know that Madigan and Hills will be meeting with the Commission on the tenth. We'll need a good deal of pressure on Mitterrand to get it done. (Ø)

The President: Do you think the Maastricht vote made it harder or easier on Mitterrand? (Ø)

Prime Minister Major: If he had lost the Maastricht vote, there would be no GATT. If he had won with a big margin, then he could have moved on GATT. But he's stuck in the middle, so there's still the same difficulty. (Ø)

The President: Exactly. Well, Delors, as you know, agreed to see Hills and Madigan again. I don't know their schedule. Maybe they could stop in London. Mitterrand is in a difficult position. I wrote him after the vote on Maastricht, but haven't talked to him. The key is to get agreement in the Commission and then take it from there. (S)

Prime Minister Major: Absolutely, if we can persuade the Commission to recommend an agreement, then we could get the French to accept it. I know Delors will try to get Mitterrand to say yes, but it will be difficult. I'll keep you posted. (S)

The President: Well. I appreciate it, and if there is anything else we can do. (S)

Prime Minister Major: Thank you very much. (U)

Prime Minister Major: I'd like to raise another issue. We have a pretty difficult problem with a Chapter Seven resolution. I understand it's tricky from your end as well. A no fly zone in Bosnia raises a number of questions, and I'm not sure how far we've thought through them. Granted there are political pressures to do something, on top of the difficult situation on the ground. We have 1,800 troops there. The decision to send them met with a lot of hostility at home as well as a lot of support. I'm concerned that these troops may get shot at or put at risk. If there is a mandatory no fly zone, if there is any action, then the first retaliation could be against British troops. (S)

A second point, who would enforce the no fly zone? If it is you, would it be with planes from the Saratoga? I don't know how it would be carried out? Would you bomb aircraft on the ground? But, the principal problem is the danger to our troops if there is retaliation or if the UN withdraws its troops. In these circumstances we'll have to pull our troops out as well. (S)

The President: John, we had an interesting meeting here last night with our top people: Scowcroft, Baker, Cheney, Powell, Eagleburger, and we talked all about it. It's not an easy call. If we had to take action after the monitoring begins then what would we do? We could knock down anything that flew, which apparently is not hard to do. We're already seeing what they are doing with our AWACS. Or, we could take these aircraft out on the ground. The real question is this: will it cause the Serbs to pull back or will it provoke retaliation? One question that bothers me is that a lot of our close friends and allies in the Muslim world believe that we are selective in our concerns, especially after Iraq. Egypt and Turkey are concerned and want us at least to go forward with a security council resolution banning flights. (S)

Prime Minister Major: Yes. I see that. It's a very real political problem. If we have a Chapter Seven resolution, it could call into question the basis on which the House of Commons

approved the troop deployment, and I may be under heavy pressure to pull them out. With Labor in opposition, and with my narrow majority, I may not be able to win this. Those who were most keen to send in troops a few weeks ago are now trying to find a reason not to have them there. (S)

The President: Does it make any difference if there are two steps on this? (S)

Prime Minister Major: Well, I hadn't conceived of the concept of a two-step approach -- but I want to give it some thought. (S)

The President: It's difficult. If it's any consolation the resolution calls for enforcement. We could begin with two steps: first monitoring, and second enforcement. The question is then asked, what do you do if they don't comply? Would it be of more help if it took place in two steps? (S)

Prime Minister Major: My instinctive thought leads me to a first question: If we monitor, what do we do when it is challenged? If we do nothing, we'll look extremely wimpish. (S)

The President: I agree with that, and that's why we favor one resolution. Let me talk to our people about the resolution, but we don't want to hurt you, especially with you out in front of us with troops on the ground. (S)

Prime Minister Major: I have the Party Conference next week, which will not be a barrel of laughs. (S)

The President: I hope that goes well. Let us talk to Brent and Baker. We damn sure don't want to complicate the picture with your troops on the ground. (S)

Prime Minister Major: Bless you. But in the meantime, you get out there and win those votes. (S)

The President: We're tired, but we're blessed with good health. We're going all the time. (S)

Prime Minister Major: I'm sure it will all work out well. Norma sends her love. You and Barbara are constantly in our thoughts.

The President: Thank you. The same from Barbara. We'll get back to you. Bye. (U)

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