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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Summary of the President's Telephone Conversation with Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, President of France, December 28, 1979, 1:54 to 2:02 p.m. (C)

After a brief exchange of greetings, the President told Giscard that he wanted to talk to him about Afghanistan. We regarded the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as an extremely grave development. The Soviets had changed a buffer state into a puppet state and this had profound strategic consequences for the entire region. Giscard agreed. (C)

The President continued that we believed it was essential that we make this action politically costly to the Soviet Union. We would be approaching a number of governments, particularly the Nonaligned and the Moslem countries, to speak out. Although the plight of our hostages made it impossible for us to take Afghanistan to the UN now, eventually this would have to be done by the US or someone else. The President said that we considered this Soviet intervention to be a violation of agreements the Soviets have had with us since Nixon concerning general principles of detente. (C)

The President noted that the Moslem countries, and especially those directly adjacent to Afghanistan, would be deeply concerned. He had just talked with President Zia, who said the Soviet intervention was tragic and destabilizing. Zia believed that the direct overthrow of the Afghanistan government was orchestrated by the Soviet Union. The President said that there was no doubt about that. Indicating that we had all that we could handle in the Security Council right now with our hostages and Iran, the President stated that Cy Vance would be presenting our case in New York the next day. (C)

The President said that he felt deeply that we needed to have a consultation about events in Afghanistan, perhaps as soon as this weekend before too much time went by. He was therefore planning to send Warren Christopher, our Deputy Secretary of State, to Europe to talk to some of our North Atlantic Council partners. (C)

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Extended by Z. Brzezinski
Reason for Extension: NSC 1.13(a)

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BY J NARS, DATE 12/9/96

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Giscard replied that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was an important development and we must take it seriously. This was because of its impact on the countries in the region, not only Pakistan and Iran, but also the Gulf States. The latter would certainly feel threatened if there were no Western reaction. Giscard said that he knew we must present our case to the Security Council and that France would support us. The two delegations were discussing details in New York and, as we knew, the French had spoken to an African country on the Security Council. Giscard thought things were moving in the proper direction. (C)

Giscard had seen the comments on the Soviet intervention made by the FRG and UK and the French statement was about to be issued. It was important, Giscard continued, to have consultations on Afghanistan. However, he did not favor doing this through the NATO structure. Afghanistan was not in the NATO area. It was therefore not proper to use this instrument. On the other hand, Giscard said, if the US sent an envoy to consult in capitals, the French would be willing to have this consultation. (C)

In response to the President's observation that it would be difficult to call in at all the capitals in a short time, Giscard said that was not his problem. In any event, only a few NATO countries had an important interest in the issue. The President asked if Giscard would be willing to have a consultation this weekend in London, Bonn, Paris or Rome. We would send Warren Christopher to the meeting. (C)

Giscard replied "whatever you like." France could match Christopher with a French representative. Bonn was not the best place for such a matter because of its proximity to the Soviets. Giscard said London was the place and it was better to have an umbrella created by the participation of the countries concerned. Any European country could join, but not under NATO auspices. (C)

The President said he had never quite understood France's relationship to NATO. He had talked to Schmidt, Thatcher and Cossiga earlier. They all believed that we should get together, although Schmidt had some of the same concerns as Giscard. The President asked again if Giscard agreed that there should be a meeting this weekend at the Warren Christopher level and Giscard said all right. (C)

Noting that Vance would follow up with François-Poncet, the President said that he would have to check with the other leaders, but he was sure that a meeting in London would be OK with them. Giscard then noted that France would continue to

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support the US concerning Iran and the hostages. In response to the President's expressed hope that France would not suggest substantial amendments to our Security Council Resolution, Giscard said that he would not get into details. However, he did not think it was a good idea to prevent airlines from flying to and from Iran. That could be dangerous to our citizens inside the country who might need to get out in a hurry. The President responded that he did not know that this was part of our resolution, and he understood Giscard's concern. The President then asked if anything else in our resolution worried Giscard, and Giscard said the detail he had mentioned was the only thing. (C)

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