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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

MR 01-125 #12: at 22 5/29/02

By del NARA Date 6/19/02

DATE: May 7, 1975  
Time: 3:00 P.M.  
Place: White House

SUBJECT: Call on the President by Australian Prime Minister Whitlam

PARTICIPANTS:

UNITED STATES      President Gerald R. Ford  
Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger  
Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft  
Assistant Secretary of State Philip C. Habib

AUSTRALIA          E. Gough Whitlam, Prime Minister  
Lionel Bowen, Special Minister of State  
Alan P. Renouf, Secretary of Foreign Affairs  
Sir Patrick Shaw, Ambassador to the US

COPIES TO:

PRESIDENT: (Welcoming Remarks)

WHITLAM: You are having a spate of Foreign Ministers from the Jamaica Conference. Rowling, Wilson, Lee, myself.

PRESIDENT: How do you feel the Conference went?

WHITLAM: It has the great advantage that no formal resolutions are taken, there is no polarization, and matters are decided by consensus. That way agreed statements on thorny issues can be made. People realize how far you can go and they keep talking until you come to the consensus. With differences of country sizes and substances they can all discuss things tolerantly and come up with some sort of consensus.

PRESIDENT: You must get a broad perspective of world problems with members from all continents.

EA:PCHabib:rlw 5/9/75  
(Drafting Office and Officer)



WHITLAM: There are 34 members now. A few years ago there were only 20. We have 6 in the Caribbean and now we are getting more in the South Pacific. Fiji and Papua New Guinea will be next. Papua New Guinea is the biggest of the South Pacific islands, and the most sophisticated.

KISSINGER: Sophisticated?

WHITLAM: They have a very active Parliament.

KISSINGER: I never associated sophistication with New Guinea.

WHITLAM: The Chief Minister is Michael Somare. You would be fascinated with the range of his discussion. They are lucky to have a fellow emerge like that.

KISSINGER: What is the population?

WHITLAM: 2 1/2 to 3 million. At the Conference, about 15 of the 34 countries present are around the Indian Ocean. The debates get protracted but everyone was tolerant.

BOWEN: No one attacked us.

WHITLAM: The only other Conference I attended was in Ottawa in 1973. Things were more pungent then. Heath and Lee got stuck into me a bit. But Wilson is a change and Lee took a different attitude this time. All the developed countries have Social Democratic or Labor governments, the U.K., Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. Pierre Trudeau added Canada.

PRESIDENT: Fortunately your visits came after the traumatic experience of a week or 10 days ago. This has been a setback. It is over and this gives us an opportunity to indicate privately what we say publicly. The U.S. will keep its promises, stay strong and, to the extent that the President can, I will keep Congress' feet to the fire, so as to keep our commitments to our allies and the world as a whole.

WHITLAM: That is good to hear. We want to assist in that process. Everyone at the Commonwealth Conference would have been critical of participation in Indochina but there was no pleasure expressed in the reverse. Most are developing countries but there was no political or economic anti-Americanism expressed. Some old hands, like Nyerere, would not agree with anything the U.S. does, but there was a good deal of generosity and no gloating or exultation.



There was little reference to Viet-Nam. There was some talk about getting international efforts to reconstruct the country. You must get a bit depressed by what is sometimes said, but there was no anti-Americanism. The Caribbean countries got upset about Cuba, but there was little time spent on that. The rival systems got no sentiment in favor of them.

PRESIDENT: The U.S. is going to live up to its commitments and is going to have the capability to do so. We do not want potential enemies to get the idea that they can fish in troubled waters. We appreciate the strong position you have taken on our installations in your country. We are going to move ahead in our talks with Moscow. These installations are important to testing and verification.

WHITLAM: It is a contribution we thought we could make to balance the feeling of detente you and the Soviets have developed. This could have been an issue in Australia but it has been completely defused. Before we came to power, a seer would have said it would have been a source of trouble. I don't see it now. They will take and trust my judgment. Our parliamentary system is different than yours. I went in to Parliament in 1952. Let me take the Indochina business as an example. In the U.S., Republicans and Democrats have, at one time or another, both supported intervention.

KISSINGER: In fact the ones who now are against it, if they had been against it previously, I wonder how it would have gotten done.

WHITLAM: In our country my side was always against intervention. The other side was wholeheartedly in favor. The position is different in the British Parliamentary system. For twenty years there was a clear-cut difference. In yours there was a blend. Now we are concerned with the situation and are willing to help with reconstruction and resettlement of refugees, to a certain extent, through international organizations. The sums and numbers would be a fraction of yours but we are contributing substantial amounts. Five times more to South Viet-Nam than to North Viet-Nam. Also, on the evacuation, we made aircraft available and they are now under U.N. colors.

PRESIDENT: You were helpful in Danang.

WHITLAM: Yes, but we had to call it off when it became unsafe to fly the C-130's. Concerning refugees, we will roughly do about 1/2 of what Canada does. They have some Vietnamese residents and many of the Vietnamese do speak French so it is easier in Canada. But that is the sort of thing we have in mind.



PRESIDENT: Our big problem is roughly 120,000 or more refugees, and, despite what some politicians allege, we have gotten a good response from labor and church groups who are in favor of taking them. We can handle them but anything you can do would help.

KISSINGER: The Canadians are talking about taking 3,000 but we want to get it up to 5,000.

PRESIDENT: Out of the 120,000 refugees there are about 35,000 heads of families. With a working population of 70 million, 35,000 is very small. And, most have skills. Very few come from uneducated classes. They will make good citizens and will be productive when assimilated.

WHITLAM: About 60 nations have signed the UN Convention on Refugees and certainly half of them would take some. We took some at the end of World War II. Indonesia and the Philippines should take some.

KISSINGER: Is Indonesia interested? They are not likely to. They do not like the Chinese and the Vietnamese might add to their minority problem.

WHITLAM: The more involved the better. There are quite a number in Singapore and Hong Kong and we will take some. We want to get the UNHCR involved in it.

PRESIDENT: We will take care of the refugee problem and have asked Congress for \$507 million. There is a different feeling about funding for reconstruction. As far as we are concerned, the Congress would not tolerate it even if I put on the pressure. So our major effort will be in refugees.

WHITLAM: You will undoubtedly do a disproportionate share. About reconstruction, there is provision in our budget. It will not be a large amount, but we will do it. I can understand resistance here but we will do something there and probably through international agencies if they are available. The North Vietnamese are always suspicious of them. But I understand about rehabilitation, which is too much for Congress to consider.

PRESIDENT: After the long history it would be too hard for people to accept.

WHITLAM: In other countries of the Pacific their political structure is not so divided as in Viet-Nam. Take the Thais, their dynasty has ruled for several hundred years. They have a coherent culture. Indonesia is the most difficult. There are so many people in different groups. There are tens of thousands of political detainees. Some liberals in my country are criticizing the Indonesian Government, nevertheless we give them aid. Our

largest aid program goes to Papua New Guinea, next to Indonesia and then to Bangladesh. The UK is also going to give some aid to Indonesia. There is always the danger of a coup d'etat there. In the countryside, particularly in Java, they support the Government.

PRESIDENT: We have been encouraged by the progress there which has been helped by their energy earnings. We will do what we can to be helpful in economic and military assistance. We think it vitally important to preserve the structure of views of that Government and are glad to hear you say that you and the UK will help.

WHITLAM: We are placing a lot of emphasis on political and economic relations with Japan and Indonesia. It fits in with what you are trying to do.

PRESIDENT: Stability out there will inevitably increase now that we are over the hump.

WHITLAM: We are trying to get closer relations with the Philippines. We never had it before. We are trying to do a bit, but there again the Marcos regime gets a lot of criticism from us. However, it is ridiculous to say the previous regime was democratic. It was an oligarchy.

KISSINGER: Comparable to the wife.

WHITLAM: The steel butterfly. She queens it. Some years ago at the Holt funeral she was all in black and looked quite grand. She also came out to our Opera House opening in Sydney and we put her up. We will try to do a bit for them.

The Secretary said it might not be out of order if I mentioned the Indian Ocean. We are worried and concerned at the prospect of the U.S. and Soviets building up where hitherto there has been less confrontation. We suggest you confer with each other. When the Suez opens there will be a range of political sentiment in Australia. Our opponents will say that with the Soviets moving in, we want the Yanks out. We do not want to be pushed into a controversy on what is a domestic situation.

PRESIDENT: I am sure the Secretary told you that we were going to proceed with Diego Garcia. It is not because we want any major presence. It is not a military installation in the full sense of a big naval installation. It will have limited capability but it is essential. That is the best military recommendation I can get.



We may have some problems in Congress. But this is not a first step that will lead us to others. It will just give us a capability which our military people see as a necessary backstop.

KISSINGER: I told him that after we have the principle established by Congress, we will consider arms limitations talks with the Soviet Union.

PRESIDENT: We need something to bargain with to get a fair equitable settlement.

WHITLAM: We all will not be happy. Everyone is cozy about this. The Shah and Lee would be happy, but will not say it publicly. Lee was in favor on Viet-Nam but did not send anyone or say anything.

PRESIDENT: Diego Garcia will not be a major facility. We will have a runway and refueling capability.

WHITLAM: We have something like that in western Australia at Perth, Freemantle and an airfield at the North West Cape. These could be used but they are not capable of repair on ships or aircraft.

PRESIDENT: I commissioned the 8,500 ton aircraft carrier NIMITZ the other day. It is the largest warship we have ever built.

WHITLAM: It can stay at sea for a long time.

PRESIDENT: It has a fuel capacity of 13 years without refueling. There are 6,500 people on board. I was on a carrier in World War II --the MONTERREY--we were in the carrier group that hit Rabaul in 1943-44.

WHITLAM: It is interesting that Kennedy, Nixon, Johnson and you were all in the Navy.

KISSINGER: That is why the Navy gets 50% of the money.

PRESIDENT: About 1/3 of our Navy is nuclear-powered. A formidable task force can be put together now.

WHITLAM: Our predicament about three years ago was that we did not want nuclear-powered vessels in our harbors. One objection has been overcome.

PRESIDENT: Congress passed a liability legislation in foreign ports and we hope that relieves the problem.



WHITLAM: That relieves one problem but the other one is environmental. The state governments run our ports and the most important naval facility is in Sydney. We will have to consult with state authorities. I do not think there will be any difficulty. Our politics are ragged. We have the Huey Longs and the Talmadges just as you did in the past.

PRESIDENT: Both their sons are in the Senate.

KISSINGER: Talmadge and Long are bright.

PRESIDENT: They are shrewd politicians, more sophisticated than their fathers but not more effective than them.

WHITLAM: Byrd is a second generation. Also, is he a Republican?

PRESIDENT: He is an Independent, but on committees within the Democratic allocation. About two weeks ago we had a Republican fund-raising dinner in Virginia and he showed up. There are not many Independent fund-raising affairs.

KISSINGER: He is a cordial gentleman, but very tough on issues in committees. For example, Rhodesia.

WHITLAM: That was an issue in the Commonwealth Conference. Tanzania and Zambia are training Rhodesians so if there is no movement there will be Rhodesian militants. That is clearly indicated.

PRESIDENT: The Byrd amendment restricts our policy.

KISSINGER: He gave us a bad time.

WHITLAM: I had a press conference in Jamaica and they asked me if I would raise Rhodesia when I saw you.

PRESIDENT: (Laughing). Well now you can say it did come up.

WHITLAM: I don't think that will be necessary.



NSC CORRESPONDENCE PROFILE

DOC		RECD		NBR		INITIAL ACTION O	
MO	DA	MO	DA	HR	7503280		<i>Smoyer</i>
5	13	5	13	19			

SOURCE/CLASS/DESCRIPTION

TO: PRES \_\_\_\_\_ FROM: KISSINGER, H \_\_\_\_\_

KISSINGER \_\_\_\_\_ COLBY, W \_\_\_\_\_

SCOWCROFT *X* \_\_\_\_\_ SCHLESINGER, J \_\_\_\_\_

DAVIS \_\_\_\_\_ ST EX SEC *X* \_\_\_\_\_

REFERENCE: S/S *7509717*

CIRCLE AS APPROPRIATE

UNCLAS LOG IN/OUT

LOU NO FORN NODIS

*C* EYES ONLY EXDIS

S CODEWORD

TS SENSITIVE

SUBJECT: *Memoirs of pres enty w/ PM Whitlam of Australia - request for approval*

DISTRIBUTION/INITIAL ACTION ASMT

INTERNAL ROUTING AND DISTRIBUTION			REC CY FOR	ACTION REQUIRED
	ACTION	INFO		
ADVANCE CYS TO HAK/SCOWCROFT				MEMO FOR <i>X</i> <i>Scowcroft</i> <i>X</i>
STAFF SECRETARY				MEMO FOR PRES _____
FAR EAST <i>Smoyer</i>	<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>	REPLY FOR _____
SUB-SAHARAN AFRIC				APPROPRIATE ACTION _____
MID EAST / NO. AFRICA / SO. ASIA				MEMO _____ TO _____
EUROPE / CANADA				RECOMMENDATIONS _____
LATIN AMERICA				JOINT MEMO _____
UNITED NATIONS				REFER TO _____ FOR: _____
ECONOMIC				ANY ACTION NECESSARY? _____
SCIENTIFIC				CONCURRENCE _____
PROGRAM ANALYSIS				DUE DATE: <i>5/27</i>
NSC PLANNING				COMMENTS: (INCLUDING SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS)
CONGRESSIONAL				
OCEANS POLICY				
INTELLIGENCE				

SUBSEQUENT ROUTING/ACTIONS

DATE	FROM	TO	S	SUBSEQUENT ACTION REQUIRED (OR TAKEN):	CY TO
<i>5/22/75</i>	<i>Smoyer</i>	<i>Scowcroft</i>		<i>- for approval</i>	
<i>5/22/75</i>	<i>Scowcroft</i>	<i>X</i>		<i>Decision (5-29)</i>	
<i>5/23/75</i>				<i>joined by 7503282</i>	
<i>5/26</i>	<i>NOCLIS</i>	<i>C</i>		<i>by memo approved recons</i>	
<i>5/27</i>				<i>reopened</i>	
<i>5/27</i>	<i>Davis</i>	<i>S</i>		<i>Memo to Smoyer (5-28)</i>	
<i>5/27</i>	<i>C Davis</i>	<i>J</i>		<i>Memo to Smoyer</i>	

NSC/S DISP INSTR

DISPATCH *5/27/75 CD*

CY RQMTS: SEE ABOVE PLUS:

NOTIFY \_\_\_\_\_ & DATE \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL DISPOSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

CROSS REF W/ *7503282*

SUSPENSE CY ATTACHED: *X* FOLDER: \_\_\_\_\_

MICROFILM & FILE RQMTS:

M/F'D \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_

CRT ID: *ML* SA SF

OPEN *ML* HP NS

CLOS *ML* WH EP

*ML* PA DY



NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

May 27, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Mr. George S. Springsteen  
Executive Secretary  
Department of State

SUBJECT: Memoranda of Conversation

The memoranda of conversation between the President and Australian Prime Minister Whitlam (S/S 7509717) and New Zealand Prime Minister Rowling (S/S 7509782) are approved for distribution.

*James E. Basner*  
Jeanne W. Davis  
Staff Secretary *for*

MEMORANDUM

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTION

May 22, 1975

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL SCOWCROFT

FROM: W. R. SMYSE 


SUBJECT: Clearance of the President's Memoranda of Conversation with Prime Ministers Whitlam and Rowling


Attached (Tabs A and B) are the memoranda of conversation between the President and Prime Ministers Whitlam and Rowling, respectively.

The State Department requests your clearance on these memoranda of conversation before it distributes them.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you approve the attached memoranda of conversation (Tabs A and B).

Approve (Whitlam)  Approved as Amended \_\_\_\_\_

Approve (Rowling)  Approved as Amended \_\_\_\_\_

5/25

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ GDS

Oct 1/2000



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

May 13, 1975

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR LIEUTENANT GENERAL BRENT SCOWCROFT  
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: President's Meeting with  
Australian Prime Minister Whitlam

Attached is a memorandum of conversation covering the President's recent meeting with Prime Minister Whitlam. It is submitted for your approval.

No distribution will be made within the Department of State pending your approval.

*George S. Springsteen*  
George S. Springsteen  
Executive Secretary

Attachment: As stated.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

GDS

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