

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

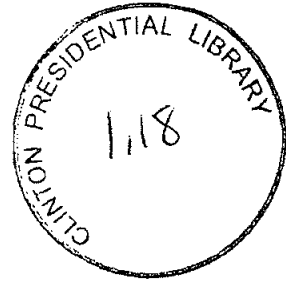
THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

DECLASSIFIED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE
INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

ISCAP APPEAL NO. 2013-090, document no. 18

DECLASSIFICATION DATE: October 14, 2015



MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with British Prime Minister Blair
(U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Prime Minister Blair

Notetakers: Peter Huggins, Tom Crowell,
Jeff Rathke, Lawrence Butler and Gwenth
Todd

DATE, TIME February 22, 1998, 4:38 - 4:49 p.m. EST
AND PLACE: The Residence

The President: Hi, Tony. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Hi, Bill. You're faint. (U)

The President: Can you hear me now? (U)

Prime Minister Blair: I've spoken with Kofi and I gather he's
spoken to Madeleine as well. ~~(U)~~

The President: Yeah. (U)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

But I'm not sure. Have you been able to glean any more
detail? ~~(U)~~

The President: Well, I haven't.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Reason: 1.5(b,d)

Declassify On: 2/23/88

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

2

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

The President: Yeah, I don't think he wanted to talk on the phone, and our guys are guessing on it, too. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

The President: Well, I hope he hasn't either, but I'm just not sure. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

The President:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

We just have to wait and see what happens. If there is another violation we need to seriously consider funding opposition groups and giving whatever help we can and just cut the umbilical cord. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

The President: Yeah, and it's weird, because Kofi is not coming back until Tuesday. It's going to leak. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: It's bound to. (C)

The President: It would put poor old Butler in a terrible situation. Madeleine talked to him today, but couldn't say much. We don't want him to spout off without knowing what kind of deal it is. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: I've never come across him. What kind of bloke is he? (C)

The President:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

Prime Minister Blair: Madeleine couldn't get the details out of him? (C)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

3

The President: No, she doesn't know much more than you do.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

He said he's going to have a press conference tomorrow morning. What's he going to say then? (C)

The President: We don't know. I think he's going to say tomorrow morning that he has a deal but he can't really talk about it until he comes back and briefs us. Then he will stop in Paris and give Chirac his plane back and come on over here. What else can I tell you? I just don't know. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: And there's no one he's going to see in Paris? (C)

The President: Yeah, no. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

The President: Yep, it's a very tenuous situation, and maybe when he gets to Paris, we can figure something out. It's a really raw deal to sit for a day and a half, not knowing what the deal is. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: If he just lands and takes off again... (C)

The President: I don't know, I just heard he will stop in Paris and then fly on to New York City. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: He may say he won't talk or speak to anybody, but on the other hand, we have got to know what is happening. (C)

The President: Yeah. (U)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

The President: That's what I worry about -- I talked to Madeleine and Sandy before I talked to you. Let me see what I can find out -- they think it can work if it is strictly administered by Kofi, but we need to know what Butler's going to say about it. ~~(C)~~

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Apparently he did that, but maybe Kofi gets to decide who goes back, and when. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Yep, uh-huh. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Yep, but if we can't get it, we have to say what we were going to say anyway. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: I think we'd better get working on that right away. I hate being in this position for the next thirty-six hours. ~~(C)~~

The President: That's really bad. Let me call my crowd back and see what they say, what we can work out. I don't like being in this position. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: I can try to contact Kofi and tell him that when he gets to Paris he needs to call us right away, that we really need to know what is going on. I think I will try that. ~~(C)~~

The President: Okay. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Yep. (U)

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

5

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

Prime Minister Blair: Bill, I'll get John Weston to start working on the Security Council thing right away. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] And in the meantime, I'll try to find out some more from Baghdad. ~~(C)~~

The President: Okay. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Yeah. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: It's a curious way of doing business. (C)

The President: Yes, it's a weird deal. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: That bothers me. Kofi's wait gives him a chance to spin it, and I don't like that. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Yes, Madeleine does. I'll see what we can do there, too. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Yeah. (U)

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

Prime Minister Blair: Okay. Right, Bill--I am here all night if you need to get a hold of me... ~~(C)~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

6

The President: I'll do it. (U)

Prime Minister Blair:

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

The President: Alright. Thank you. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Thanks, Bill. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY