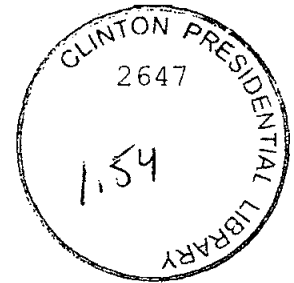


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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Prime Minister Blair (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Prime Minister Blair

Notetakers: Joel Schrader, Miles Murphy,
Matthew Sibley, James Smith, Roger Merletti
and Lawrence Butler

DATE, TIME April 5, 1999, 1:50 - 2:11 p.m. EST
AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President: How are you? (U)

Prime Minister Blair: I'm okay.

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

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. 52
DECLASSIFICATION DATE: October 14, 2015

The President: I agree with that.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

All

this is important, it helps with the efficacy issue. (S)

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Reason: 1.5(a,b,d)

Declassify On: 4/9/00

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Presentationally, I think you are right.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

Prime Minister Blair: I agree absolutely.

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

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

The President: I agree with that, but I don't think we are quite ready to say it. (S)

Prime Minister Blair:

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

The President: I agree. You can be sure all these offers he makes will not meet that standard. More and more of the Europeans are of the mind that we may have some definitional problems down the road. I'd like to talk about two things that are related. One is the refugee issue. It seems to me we are doing a little bit better, with NATO taking the lead organizing with Macedonia and Albania. But we have got to do more and quickly in finding places to resettle them and the conditions of their return. Different countries have different conditions, camps. (S)

I don't know, but I know we have to create a release valve to take the pressure off Albania and Macedonia.

We're increasing economic assistance to countries bearing the greatest burden.

I hope we can get as many concrete offers from others as we can, but the most important thing is to get those offers out now. We don't want Albania and Macedonia to close their borders and cause a worse situation. (S)

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

The other thing I wanted to mention is I am quite concerned about Russia's growing involvement,

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

We have to make it clear we understand this is a political problem for them, and we don't mind them jumping on us, but they shouldn't have military support that will put our pilots and our forces at risk. We can't act as if there are no consequences to that. ~~(S)~~

Another issue that we're trying to work on is that surrounding countries need to thoroughly inspect all the Russian shipments going into Kosovo to make sure they are not violating the arms embargo. I am concerned about that. I think the military situation is in pretty good shape,

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

Prime Minister Blair:

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

The President: This is an open line; we have to be careful what we say. You and I have discussed this before. ~~(S)~~

Prime Minister Blair:

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

The President: I agree with that. The problem we are having here is whether we're taking people in Guantamano or the continental United States, then they like it and say they don't

want to go home. Will they want to go home, once they've seen London? (C)

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

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED] (C)

The President: I understand the problem. On the other hand, we have to take enough pressure off Macedonia and Albania so they don't close the borders to keep their countries from coming apart. Talk to your folks. On one level, I'd like to take 100 thousand and put them in America tomorrow and run the risk of saying people don't want to go home. On another level, I don't want any. They might like it here and not want to leave. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: I agree with that. I wonder if our public affairs people should talk specifically to each other. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Let's see if we can get this organized. It would make a huge difference. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Let's have our own media people talking. We can offer to have all 19 join the conference call. If not, we ought to have the major countries agreed. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: I couldn't agree more. Okay, that's good. (C)

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Prime Minister Blair:

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

(S)

The President: I do, too, but we have a ways to go. People can say to us you don't have a clear strategy, but we have had clear goals, but you have got to have the proper mix of long-term goals and enough flexibility to deal with day-to-day realities. Getting our presentation a little better has helped some, with the clearing of the weather, the targeting process being worked out. I thought your memo was terrific, by the way. (S)

Prime Minister Blair:

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

The President: Absolutely. We've got that here. They would be calling people traitors, now they all join in. Everybody is a Monday morning quarterback. The right is saying you should have ground forces in there. Some people think I'm on the receiving end of a Trojan horse, that it's a deliberate set-up. But we have to take it as it comes and be determined we will not be defeated, that we will run this strategy out. But under no circumstances are we going to be defeated. If you tell me that, and I tell you that, and we hold hands. (S)

Now, let me say one other thing. We had good news on Lockerbie, with the suspects arriving in the Netherlands. Thanks for everything you did on that. This is great. We got the sanctions lifted, suspended for 90 days, but Libya will have to do more to get them lifted permanently. But this is a pretty good day for us since last August; it's a good argument for staying the course against terrorism in the long run. You going to follow up on the NATO PR thing and get back to us -- to Sandy or someone else -- to see how we coordinate our daily message?

(S)

Prime Minister Blair: Okay, Bill. (U)

The President: Okay. Goodbye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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