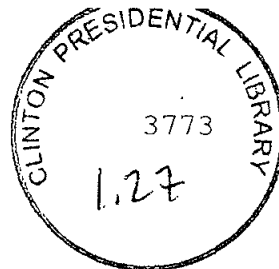


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THE WHITE HOUSE

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. 26

DECLASSIFICATION DATE: October 14, 2015

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with British Prime Minister Tony Blair (C)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Prime Minister Blair

Notetakers: Larry Wright, Bonnie Glick, Pat O'Shaughnessy, James Smith, Peter Huggins, Jenny McGee, Lawrence Butler

DATE, TIME May 21, 1998, 4:31 - 4:42 p.m. EDT
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Tony? (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Hi, Bill. (U)

The President: How are you doing? (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Fine, fine. I just spent the last 48 hours in Northern Ireland. (U)

The President: I hear it is turning around a little bit. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: I think so. I did a complete blitz of the place, really. Every single kind of radio show, TV show, audience participation program -- sort of a two-day election campaign. It's coming around a bit. (U)

The President: I did a radio spot yesterday that they are replaying today. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: That all worked well.

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The President: What were the best lines? (C)

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Reason: 1.5(b, d)

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Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: He has come along, hasn't he? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Yes. They had a U2 concert last night that was great. Instead of having speeches, Bono told them to have a minute of silence for the victims, which was very clever. (C)

The President: He's a smart man. I met him by accident in 1992 in Chicago, he helped me out and we've stayed in touch ever since. He's a very smart man. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Yes, we'll have to keep our fingers crossed. Thanks for what you did last weekend; it was tremendously helpful; [REDACTED]

The President: Good. I've just been thinking about you. I couldn't think of anything else. I did a big plug for it during a NATO expansion event. I talked about Indonesia and Northern Ireland at our NATO expansion ratification event. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: It has played very well here. [REDACTED]

The President: Yes, but you have to follow the locals. You've done all you can. I was glad to see in my morning intelligence that there is movement in the polls your way. I think the undecided may break your way. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: It is possible. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] But it sure was the right thing to advise. I literally have spent the last 48 hours

there blitzing the place, everywhere, doing everything. I stayed on longer today to visit a hospital, visit a regiment, saw the police, did a walk-about in the street. And as I got back into my car, the last person's hand I shook was (indistinct) McCartney. (C)

The President: Paul McCartney? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: No, Bob McCartney. (C)

The President: That's great. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: He started haranguing me. (C)

The President: Did he really? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Yes. And after I left, he accused some of the people around of being a rent-a-mob for us. This old lady turned on him and gave him a real earwiggling on television. She said that she was out to vote Yes and that she was not anyone's rent-a-mob. She thought he was a disgrace. (C)

The President: Sometimes, something like that can be more of a benefit than anything else. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Let's keep our fingers crossed. Put it this way: last weekend it was well that we did what we did.

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The President: Well, let me tell you also that Hillary and I had a wonderful time at Chequers. It was wonderful for us. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Oh Bill, I can't tell you how great it was to have you. And for the kids, Euan's friend went back to school the next day in a daze. I told my people that it was a real tribute to you that you were prepared to sit down and spend time with them in that way. We loved having you and had a great time, we really did. (U)

The President: Even in the darkest days back in '94 and early '95, when people thought we were finished, you can always spend time with kids and you'll never know how you'll have an impact on a young person that will change everything for them. A little extra time is the best investment you can make. Besides that, it's interesting for me. And in the work we do, you can lose contact with people younger than you. A year younger is a year younger than you. You don't even think about it, and then you turn around and find out it's been a year since you've talked to anyone who is 25. I liked it: they were delightful young men. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Yeah, I'm glad you did. For them, they are still on cloud nine. (U)

The President: You ought to be proud of yourself. You've done every damn thing you could. When the vote happens, we'll be on pins and needles over here. I guess we should know something by mid-day our time tomorrow. What kind of vote counting operation do they have over there? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Well, this is Northern Ireland. Everything is done differently. They won't start counting until Saturday morning. We will know Saturday afternoon some time. (C)

The President: They will do exit polls, won't they? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: In Northern Ireland, they've never done an exit poll. But you can never tell. If you are in the wrong part of town, you'll get completely skewed results. I think we

will know by this time tomorrow evening. We will let you know, and when the result comes through, let's just hope it is the right one. ~~(C)~~

The President: Well, keep your chin up. You did the right thing. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: All right. (U)

The President: Okay, you've done a heck of a job turning this thing around. Take care my friend. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: Alright, Bill. (U)

The President: We had a great time. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: We had a great time too. Goodbye. (U)

The President: Goodbye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --