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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with British Prime Minister Blair
(U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Prime Minister Blair

Notetakers: Doug Bayley, Don Cheramie,
Robin Rickard, Bob Ford, James Smith and
Richard Norland

DATE, TIME July 16, 1999, 10:09-10:33 a.m. EDT
AND PLACE: Camp David, Maryland

The President: Hello? (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Hi, Bill. (U)

The President: Well, today is not as bad as yesterday, is it?
(e)

Prime Minister Blair: I think that is the right analysis. (e)

The President: I just had Barak here, and he said how much you
had done to help. He admires you so much. We had a great talk.
(C)

Prime Minister Blair: [E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)] (e)

The President: [E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)]

Prime Minister Blair: [E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)] I am
seeing Massimo D'Alema on Monday. (e)

The President: [E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)]

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Classified by: Tracey A. Jacobson

Reason: 1.5(d)

Declassify On: 7/16/09

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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. 73
DECLASSIFICATION DATE: October 14, 2015

Prime Minister Blair: He's quite optimistic on the peace stuff, is he? ~~(C)~~

The President: It won't be easy, I can tell you. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E.O. 13526, section 1.4(d)

~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: That is a bit of hope, then. ~~(C)~~

The President: The other nice trivial thing is that the British Open is humiliating every golfer in the world. The average score yesterday was 79. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: It's the bloody weather, is it? (U)

The President: Yes. They have made it as hard as they could. They enjoy making people miserable. It's quite good, though. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: We must get you up there playing someday. (U)

The President: Where are we? I hope I gave a helpful statement yesterday. I said that I had failed to persuade them to work it out, too, and we should just go on from here. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)

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

The President: There's nothing to do now, is there? Is George Mitchell going to do something to help a bit? ~~(S)~~

Prime Minister Blair: That would be helpful, Bill.

The President: Yes. ~~(S)~~

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

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Prime Minister Blair:

The President: They can't have it both ways. So many of them, I believe, there are so very many of them who are having a hard time, whatever they say, in letting go of it. It's like their security blanket. Imagine what their lives are like, a certain amount of romance, danger, drama -- (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

The President: -- power. You're asking them to put a little white bread sandwich in a lunchbox and go off to work at the factory. It'll be hard for them. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: You mentioned this once before, I don't know if you recall. I have put some people to work on that. I

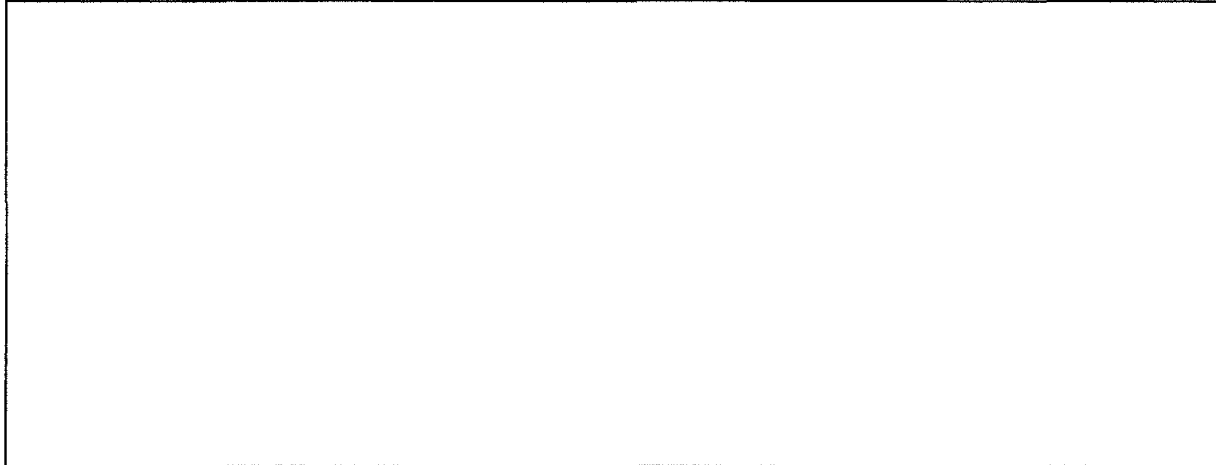
The President: Sinn Fein proper can imagine themselves running social services agencies or political services, but somebody ought to talk to Gerry about what are their people going to do with their lives when this is over. I think it's a big problem. It plays on their psychology. I just -- I've been thinking a lot of what I'm going to do when I leave here, but -- this may be a big postulate -- but what if I had been a romantic terrorist, especially lately, when it wasn't a lot of work and you didn't have to set off more than one bomb every two years, you know? I think you really have to think about what we can do not only to guarantee their security and safety, but to give some meaning to their lives, some way that they can participate in the new Ireland. I may be wrong, but I think it's a huge problem for Gerry Adams, even if most are not aware of what the real problem is. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: I agree. I have some people working on that.

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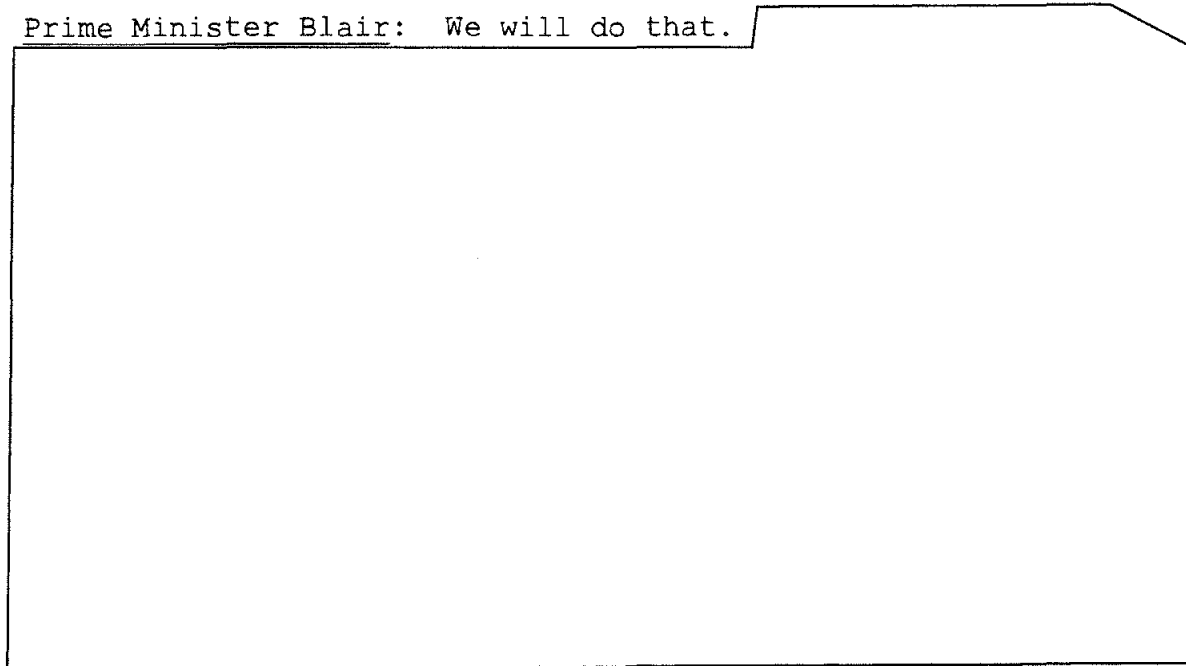
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E.O. 13526, section 1.4(b)(d)



The President: They should be asked whether they have ever actually talked to these people about what they would do with their lives when this is over. They may have some ideas, but I can't help but believe that is a big problem here. If Gerry thinks it's silly, at least you've opened it with him and he should consider doing something. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: We will do that.



The President: I'll call some of our Irish guys over the weekend, too. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:



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

[REDACTED]

The President: Do you think I should come over there? Is that what you were going to say? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: I was going to say it is not a bad idea. (C)

The President: Okay, I'll do it. I can do an overnight or a day trip. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: I'll call George and some of our congressmen over the weekend. I'll get on that. Maybe I can do that, if George can come up with something different. It wouldn't be very different, but it could look different. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Bill, one other thing. [REDACTED]

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

The President: Yes, we have to have something there. Did you see George Soros' article? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: No, I didn't. (C)

The President: It's what you're arguing, but on a faster timetable. He is arguing for a customs union within the Balkans and some provision where you put them on a clear path to EU membership as a region. Even if Serbia gets rid of Milosevic, you can't deal with them on a nation-by-nation basis, because of the inter-ethnic problems. He basically said they need to come up with a regional currency to force them together. It's quite

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a clever piece. Soros is not always right, but he's a genuine visionary. I will get someone to fax it over to you. And I'll see what we can say on the 30th. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Maybe our people should talk. I think we have to have an impact beyond just holding a conference. (C)

The President: I agree with that. We sure as hell can't go over there and just have a conference. Alright, man. Keep your chin up. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: All the best. (U)

The President: Okay. Goodbye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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