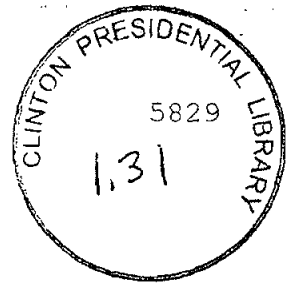


~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with British Prime Minister Blair
(U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Prime Minister Tony Blair

Notetakers: David Higgins, Tony Campanella,
George Chastain, Jenny McGee, Chris Jansen
and Ralph Sigler

DATE, TIME August 16, 1998, 7:51-8:04 p.m. EDT
AND PLACE: The Residence

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. 30
DECLASSIFICATION DATE: October 14, 2015

The President: Tony? (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Hi, Bill. (U)

The President: Tony. Well, I just called to tell you I was
thinking about you. You've had a miserable day. (U)

Prime Minister Blair: Yes, it's pretty grim. (U)

The President: What the hell happened? Who did it? ~~(U)~~

Prime Minister Blair:

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

The President: Do you believe the person who gave the warning
made a mistake or did it deliberately? ~~(U)~~

Prime Minister Blair: The truth is, we don't know. ~~(U)~~

The President: Do you still want me to come? ~~(U)~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Classified by: Glyn T. Davies

Reason: 1.5(b, d)

Declassify On: 8/18/08

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

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

Prime Minister Blair:

[REDACTED] (C)

The President: It is probably more important now than before. You need to decide as time goes by if we need to visit the site and make a stop. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Absolutely. I've visited some of the victims and families tonight. It was pretty harrowing. (C)

The President: Pretty tough, isn't it? (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Yes, it's an awful feeling -- completely helpless. (C)

The President: I just had to sit with all those people, with their families, who got murdered in Africa. There's nothing you can say, but it matters to them to know the leader of their country came to see them, so you did a good thing. Even if you felt like you have five thumbs. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

[REDACTED]

The President: Can Gerry Adams help you get these people? (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

[REDACTED]

The President: Do you think they will? They could do more good in less time by helping you get these guys. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

[REDACTED]

The President: Did they condemn it at all? (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

[REDACTED]

The President: Not just Gerry Adams, but did the IRA condemn it? What do you want them to say? (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

[REDACTED]

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

3

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

[REDACTED]

The President: If who proposes? (c)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: And they will agree? Both will agree? You would like the IRA to say, look, what happened is a part of the past, it's all over, and if the chief constables can agree on new security measures, they will support them? I'll see what I can do. (c)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: I think this is an opportunity for him, too. (c)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: I've got it. I will get on this right away. I guess I'll have to wait until morning to call them, but I'll be up late tonight. (c)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Okay. (c)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Ninety people, 15 hardcore. Do they have a name? (c)

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

4

The President: All right I'll get on this. ~~(C)~~

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

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Okay, got it. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: Bill, how are you? ~~(C)~~

The President: I've been up to my ass in this Africa bombing, because there's a lot more than meets the eye on what happened in Africa. If we were on a secure line, I could tell you more. But I'll see what I can do. I'll put Sandy on this tomorrow. I'll make some calls tomorrow. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

The President: Damn right. ~~(C)~~

Prime Minister Blair: [REDACTED]

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

The President: If Sinn Fein really forms an alliance with the Unionists, that leaves the other group out. You'll have a localized version of what's happened around the world, where terrorists are not associated with or funded by governments. In this case, what you've got is a cell. ~~(C)~~

I don't know who's giving them money, but we're going to increasingly have to deal with terrorists with no ties to any nation-state, including Iran, if the precedent there keeps on track. But in the case of a lot of Middle East and African countries, we could be dealing with these people, like in those old James Bond movies with SPECTRE and Dr. No. We're going to have a twenty-first century version of those. ~~(C)~~

We're already dealing with drug cartels. The Colombian Army has been defeated in battle four times in the last year with narco-dealers. They do not have the physical capacity to extract these people. They don't engage in terrorism; they just kill people who get in the way of people making money. If you can

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

get somebody worth about 200 or 300 million bucks to operate this and earn enough money per year through stock earnings and interest accounts, and if you're prepared to spend it building an international network. (C)

Some of these guys earn enough money in terrorism and think, compared to whatever they get paid, it's more than they were making before. My worry is for all these IRA offshoots, isolated cells who were kept apart and were kept isolated from centralized control, that psychologically they may not be able to handle it. If what their real prospect is that they could lay down their arms and not go to jail and take low-paying jobs instead of terrorism, a lot of them may not be able to psychologically handle going to work everyday and carrying a lunchbox. (C)

What kind of psychological message are you sending to them? What kind of economic message? Have you had someone working on getting them college payments or job help? My worry is these people will think, "I cannot imagine leading this deadly dull life." I may be wrong, but I think these people personally cannot imagine living in a different way. If you're only dealing with 15 killers and 75 others in a support system, what thought can you give to offering them an interesting life? But I'm all into dull these days. I'm all for a little more dull. This really is a problem, Tony. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

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

The President: Absolutely, and infused with meaning. You ought to have a really smart person think about the psychological and economic dynamics about how they would spend their days, and do a concerted effort on persuading them how else they could spend their days. It may be B.S., but I think it's part of the problem and is worth thinking about. You've got a lot of brilliant people over there that could figure out a psychological campaign to deal with them specifically. You don't have much to lose and you might have some benefit from it. I will do these things you asked. I'm really sorry, Tony. I'm so sorry this happened. You know, I was afraid this would happen before the vote. I was afraid they might try to kill Gerry or David. (C)

Prime Minister Blair:

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

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

6

The President: If you could bust these guys in a hurry, even pick up just one or a couple of these guys. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: We will try to do that. (C)

The President: Okay, I'll get on this. (C)

Prime Minister Blair: Best of luck to you, too. Goodbye. (U)

The President: Thanks, man. Goodbye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY