

THE WHITE HOUSE

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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Prime Minister Gonzalez of Spain  
(U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez  
Interpreter: Guillermo Baserva  
Notetakers: Alexander Vershbow, Tom Crispell,  
Katherine O'Loughlin, Celina Realuyo,  
Elaine Florio

DATE, TIME: December 29, 1995, 10:03-10:12 a.m. EST  
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Hello, Felipe? (U)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: Good afternoon, Mr. President. (U)

The President: Thank you for taking my call. (U)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: It is my pleasure. (U)

The President: I wanted to talk to you about the operations in Bosnia and Eastern Slavonia. I know that some of my people have been in touch with your government, but I wanted to talk to you personally about this. I think that things are going well in Bosnia right now, but I want to make sure the agreement between Serbia and Croatia on Eastern Slavonia holds up. For complete compliance, we will have to have a UN operation to supervise implementation. I understand Russia and Slovakia will likely contribute troops to the operation in Eastern Slavonia and that Belgium is willing to lead the mission, but the Belgians are hesitant without any other NATO partners participating. That is why I am calling: to see if you can contribute. (U)

I know that you have made a significant contribution to IFOR and that Spanish forces have compiled an excellent track record. However, I think that if you could make even a modest contribution to the peacekeeping force in Eastern Slavonia, it could encourage others to contribute, and it would help get Solana off to a good start as NATO Secretary General. I am

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worried that Croatia will resort to the military option if we don't get a peacekeeping operation in there soon. If we do succeed, then I think things will work out fine. (C)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: It would be a catastrophe if Croatia did that. I agree with you Mr. President. You know we are trying to send more troops to Mostar, but I will try to speak with our partners in the European Union to talk about the Eastern Slavonia problem and see what solution can be found. Do you have an approximate idea of how many troops we would need? (C)

The President: About 2000 more. If you could provide 800 or so, that would be good, depending on how many we could get from the others. But 800 to 1000 would be fine and would help convince others to contribute. (C)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: You know the operation in Eastern Slavonia is a UN operation, not a NATO operation. I am trying to send one more battalion to Mostar to complete our brigade there. (C)

The President: I understand it is a UN operation. But the Belgians said they would like some NATO partners to participate in the Eastern Slavonia operation. We would be prepared to make the same commitment to have NATO help with a withdrawal of the force if it got into trouble. Of course, all of NATO will have to agree, but I think they will. (C)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: This afternoon I will talk to my partners in the European Union who are also members of NATO to see what we can do about the problem. Right now, I am preparing to send more troops to Mostar to have a full brigade there. But I will talk to my EU partners immediately about Eastern Slavonia to see what we can do. Thank you for calling and I wish you all the best for the New Year. (C)

The President: Good-bye and good luck to you too. (U)

-- End of Conversation --