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PER E.O. 13526

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

2015-0716-M (1.26)
7/31/2018 KBH

SUBJECT: Telcon with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Chancellor Helmut Kohl

Notetaker: Mary Ann Peters, Sue Bremner,
Madelyn Marmol, Katherine O'Loughlin, Daniel
Flessas

DATE, TIME August 7, 1995, 5:30 - 5:49 p.m.
AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President: Hello? (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Hello? (U)

The President: Hello, Bill? (U)

Chancellor Kohl: How are you? (U)

The President: Very well, thank you. I'm calling to talk about
the situation in Yugoslavia. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, very good. (U)

The President: Before the Croats launched their assault on
the Krajina, we urged them to be careful of the dangers of a
wider war. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, I emphasized the same thing. (U)

The President: But I also know why they did it. I believe it's
a significant moment to initiate a new diplomatic effort... (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, I think so, too. (U)

The President: ...because of the changing situation on the
ground, the arrival of the Rapid Reaction Force and the tougher
NATO stance. On the other hand, there's more instability, so if
we don't press for a settlement in the next few weeks, the
situation is likely to unravel, making UNPROFOR withdrawal
unavoidable. I've had a couple of long meetings today about how
we can use the situation in Croatia to negotiate a peaceful
situation in Bosnia and a resolution in Croatia. (C)

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I'd like Tony Lake to make a private trip to Europe later this week to meet with his counterparts in London, Bonn and Paris and to work out a common strategy along the lines we've been discussing here. These talks can also address how we bring the Russians along and what each of us would have to do with the governments in Sarajevo, Zagreb and Belgrade, as well as with the Bosnian Serbs. So if you think it's a good idea, I'll send him. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Bill, I think it's a good idea you have, but I would be as discreet as possible so as not to raise expectations. (C)

The President: Yes, I know. We've kept it quiet here. My concern is whether Paris will leak the story. If it gets out, we'll have to downplay it in the short run. We have some good new ideas but must downplay expectations. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes. Well, I consider it very good and will do all I can to make sure our side prepares well. I think on a number of points we have a new situation which might become interesting. I consider the struggle for power among the Bosnian Serbs very important. I don't think Karadzic has the power to depose the General. If he is not able to remove Mladic, his power will be impaired. Mladic is a man of Milosevic. On Croatia, I have written a letter tonight to Tudjman that related to the French letter. I'm only telling you Bill. He'll have it handed to him tonight. I made three points. First, he has to make sure all principles of humanity are observed there. Also, with respect to refugees, he must be aware that any ethnic expulsion will have an effect on his reputation and on Croatia's reputation. I reminded him to respect the local autonomy of Serbs in Croatia. I also pointed out that he should issue a public statement regarding the Danish UN soldiers who had been abused. I then told him very, very clearly that he must be very much aware that any military actions in Eastern Slavonia would have a major impact on widening the war. (C)

It will be important to plumb now, test now whether Milosevic will be willing to come to any talks. Boris wants Tudjman and Milosevic to come together but I don't know if he will succeed. But Bill, I must say clearly that any arrangement between Milosevic and Tudjman at the expense of the Bosnians will not find my support. I think if what I see and hear is correct, the two of us are not very far apart on these positions. I have the impression that in London and Paris, the distance to Izetbegovic and Tudjman is much greater than the distance to Belgrade and the Serbs. This is not my position but perhaps I'm mistaken. I told Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Major that I hope we'll be able

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to find a common line. I share your opinion that perhaps we have a new opportunity now. And after all, Bill, if nothing else, at least we should have tried. (C)

The President: Boy, I agree with that. I am also concerned that there is an agreement between Milosevic and Tudjman. Tudjman had discussed in the past dividing up Bosnia and we can't allow that. We have to protect the integrity of the Bosnian Muslims. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Absolutely. (C)

The President: That would be disastrous for our relations with Turkey, Egypt and others. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: And that's 800 million people, Bill. (C)

The President: By the way, Chirac said the same thing today. That's good. So, I'll send Tony Lake in a couple of days. One more thing. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Listen Bill. We should continue to talk on the phone. No problem, this can be arranged if that's not a problem. (C)

The President: I think we have to resolve this week. We need a common position by Friday. We have to have a larger Contact Group meeting perhaps with Italy and Canada to see if we can't ram this thing through. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, we can talk about this. (C)

The President: Let me just discuss briefly an issue I raised in Halifax--

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Anyway,
the point I wanted to make is that
is the most knowledgeable senior

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official in my Administration on this subject, and I was hoping he would be able to talk with you personally and discuss this in detail. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Bill, when I get back from my vacation, I'll take care of it. I have postponed it until the end of my vacation. I will look for an opportunity for me and my staff to talk to him. (U)

The President: Thank you very much. And we'll talk about Bosnia in a couple of days. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, you can call. This time of the day is good for me. (U)

The President: OK Helmut, thank you very much. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Good night. Good-bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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