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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon With President Yeltsin of Russia

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Yeltsin
Interpreter: Dimitri Zarechnak
Notetaker: Kevin Wooton, William Spencer

DATE, TIME: April 10, 1994; Call began at 2315 EDT,
AND PLACE: terminated at 2338 EDT. The White House

The President: Hello Boris. (U)

President Yeltsin: Hi, Bill. It has been some time since we spoke. (U)

The President: Yes, it has. I understand you're about to leave, and I appreciate you taking my call. It's nice to hear your voice. (U)

Yeltsin: Yes, I am listening. (U)

The President: I wanted to discuss the events that occurred today - yesterday for you - in Bosnia. The Serbs launched a new attack in Bosnia while negotiations were being held on a cease-fire. The attacks on Gorazde resulted in heavy casualties and put the UN personnel there at risk. (U)

At this point, the connection to Moscow was lost.

The President: Boris, are you on now? Hello Boris? (U)

Yeltsin: Bill, we had a cut in the communication. (U)

The President: O.K.; I guess we'll try again. Anyway, the UN Commander in Bosnia, General Rose, received authorization from UN civilian authorities for NATO close air support. Under existing UN policy, after they were requested by UN civilian authorities and General Rose, NATO forces attacked. F-16 aircraft attacked a target identified by UN forces on the ground. We don't know how much damage was caused, but the purpose was limited, which was to stop the attacks, and that's what happened. I wanted to make sure there is no misunderstanding between us on what occurred. This action was not initiated by NATO. It was an urgent UN request for NATO to take action under a pre-existing UN Security Council resolution. (U)

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Yeltsin: Bill, I want to ask you if the United Nations Secretary-General has agreed to this action. (C)

The President: Yes, he did and it all happened very quickly. The planes were not trying to change the course of the battle; it was a brief close air support action in the hopes the attacks would stop, which they apparently did. Because it was cloudy, we're not sure of the results and we're unable to determine damages. It is my understanding that the Serbs intend to resume negotiations on Monday, and I want to make sure we focus on that. I have been very pleased at the way Churkin and Redman have worked together on Bosnia. (C)

Yeltsin: But Churkin was not informed. He did not know this move was in the pipeline. (C)

The President: First of all, I don't know if there was a pipeline. But it's my understanding that the UN had informed him. I'm sorry that they didn't, and if they didn't, we need to address that, and it is my understanding that the UN had informed your government in the appropriate way. (C)

One of the reasons I am calling, besides making sure there is no misunderstanding between us, is that I remain convinced the only way this will be settled is for our governments, that is Russia and the United States and Redman and Churkin, to keep working together. I told you the last time I would do everything I could to keep the Bosnian Muslims from using the Sarajevo negotiations, of which you were a part, to expand their territorial claims unnecessarily. Now I understand the Serbs intend to resume negotiations with the UN on Monday, but they must pull back their forces from the Gorazde safe area to make progress for peace to work. (C)

Yeltsin: I got you, I got you, Bill. (U)

The President: I want to say again -- (U)

Yeltsin: I believe we have to improve our process of preliminary consultations, which does not seem to be working very well, if Russia and the United States are to work together. (C)

The President: This whole thing that happened today happened very rapidly. It took about a half an hour or so. I thought the UN notified everybody. In the future the UN needs to address that. There is one important point I want to make. I have no interest in NATO air power changing the course of the war on the ground or changing the balance of the war...I'm not interested in that. You and I have to get these parties to work together to negotiate some cessation of hostilities. It would help if you would tell Milosevic this...that we want them to continue serious negotiations and pull Serb forces out of the safe area of Gorazde. Then I'll do what I can to work first for a cessation of hostilities and then a fair settlement. (C)

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Yeltsin: I got your point Bill, OK. I am trying to impress upon Milosevic these points and will send instructions to Churkin, and will try to do everything to get the Serbs back to negotiations and pull their heavy artillery from Gorazde. I may ask Kozyrev to go there as well. (Ø)

Well, thank you Bill for the call. I understand what you've said, it's clear. I am about to leave for Spain. (U)

The President: Thank you for taking the time to take this call. I will have Warren Christopher talk to Andrei Kozyrev this morning our time. Thank you very much, Boris, and have a good trip. (Ø)

Yeltsin: Thank you, Bill, and all the best to you. (U)

The President: Thank you and good-bye. (U)

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