

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with President Jacques Chirac (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Jacques Chirac

Interpreter: Carol Wolter
Notetakers: Miles Murphy, Roger Merletti,
James Smith and Philip Gordon

DATE, TIME May 27, 1999, 10:00-10:09 a.m. EDT
AND PLACE: Yulee, Florida

The President: Hello, Jacques? (U)

President Chirac: How are you? I'm so glad to hear you. (U)

The President: It's great to hear your voice. I just wanted to check in and talk for a couple of minutes. (U)

President Chirac: With great pleasure. (U)

The President: I'll be very brief. I think the indictment of Milosevic and his colleagues in some ways makes our diplomacy more complicated, but it also gives us a chance to increase the pressure and isolation. I think it will widen the pressures we're already seeing around Milosevic in the military and the Serb public. And I think it will make some of them see that he is responsible for the destruction they are facing. On the other hand, I think there is some risk the indictment will make him even more intransigent. But I think if he wants to hang on to power, he will still have good reasons to agree to our conditions. So I think we need to stick with our strategy and keep up the pressure. I think the updated plan for KFOR that NATO has endorsed is a good thing, so I am pleased with that. I also agree with you that we have to make sure we do it in a way that the Russians and the others will be able to participate in an international force in the end. Of course, we now have, all

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of us, to provide additional forces and military police and gendarmes. If we stay unified and everyone stays as steadfast in their position as you have, I think we will get through this. (C)

President Chirac: Yes. I am preparing a presentation for French television this evening. I shall present the decision by the international war crimes tribunal as a victory. Naturally, diplomacy will be a bit more difficult, but this clearly puts morality and law on our side, and I consider this is a good thing. In this context, we must continue on with our strategy and step up the strikes, if possible. It is not the time to change strategy, it is time to intensify our strategy. As concerns the Russians, we have to make an effort to understand and also to involve them more in this affair. American diplomats always have difficulties understanding the Russians. They are in a difficult situation and they shouldn't be caused to lose face more than they already have. Therefore, it is necessary to make an effort to make them feel involved and integrated in the final action. This is my feeling, but I am not in the least pessimistic. In any case, we cannot lose, therefore we shall win. (C)

The President: I agree with that. I just wanted to check in to see if you think the same way I do. I think the Milosevic indictment is a plus and as long as we make it clear to the Russians, it will work out fine. (C)

President Chirac: I think so, as well. We are absolutely on the same line. (C)

The President: Good. Alright. I will be back in touch. (U)

President Chirac: I am very pleased we are able to meet and have dinner together in Paris before the G-8, and I am still looking for just the right restaurant to take you to. (U)

The President: If it's half as good as the last one, it will be wonderful indeed. (U)

President Chirac: No, I really want to find something even better. (U)

The President: Thank you. I am looking forward to it. (U)

President Chirac: My love to Hillary, and I will see you soon. (U)

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The President: Okay. Goodbye. (U)

President Chirac: Goodbye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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