

S-I-D-O-S-O-N



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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/03/27
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, TU, AM, AJ
SUBJECT: ~~(C)~~ DEPUTY SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION WITH TURKISH U/S OYMEN

1. (U) NODIS. CLASSIFIED BY: WILLIAM J. BURNS, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, S/S, DEPARTMENT OF STATE. REASON 1.5(D), 1.6(X5) AND (X6).

2. ~~(C)~~ THIS CABLE CONTAINS A MEMORANDUM OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH TURKISH MFA U/S OYMEN ON JULY 3. MR. OYMEN INITIATED THE CALL. THEY DISCUSSED NAGORNO-KARABAKH. I ASK THAT YOU NOT PERMIT COPIES TO BE MADE OF THIS MESSAGE, AND THAT YOU NOT DISTRIBUTE IT OUTSIDE OK THE MISSION'S EXECUTIVE OFFICE.

3. BEGIN TEXT:

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

DATE: JULY 3, 1997

TIME: 1316 EDT

~~(C)~~ PARTICIPANTS: THE DEPUTY SECRETARY AND TURKISH MFA U/S OYMEN

4. ~~(S)~~ THE DEPUTY SECRETARY TOLD OYMEN THAT HE HAD BEEN WATCHING DEVELOPMENTS IN ANKARA. OYMEN SAID THE COUNTRY WAS MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION-THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD GAIN CONFIDENCE AND CREATE A NEW CLIMATE. TENSION HAD ALREADY DIMINISHED, WHILE DEMOCRATIC RULES HAD BEEN RESPECTED. OYMEN SAID HE WAS VERY HAPPY.



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5. ~~(S)~~ OYMEN SAID TURKEY WOULD STUDY THE NON-AGRESSION INITIATIVE PROPOSED FOR THE MADRID SUMMIT. TURKEY WOULD DO ITS BEST TO MAKE THE INITIATIVE A SUCCESS AND WOULD ADDRESS THE ISSUE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL JULY 4. THE DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID HE WOULD CONVEY THIS TO THE SECRETARY. OYMEN NOTED THE TURKS WOULD ARRANGE THEIR MADRID ITINERARY TO ACCOMMODATE A MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY ON JULY 7.

6. ~~(S)~~ OYMEN SAID HE HAD SPOKEN WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT, WHO HAD FLOATED A PROPOSAL ON NAGORNO-KARABAKH. ECEVIT HAD SUGGESTED A REALIGNMENT OF BORDERS IN THE REGION, IN WHICH AZERBAIJAN WOULD CONCEDE NAGORNO-KARABAKH TO ARMENIA AND ARMENIA WOULD MAKE TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS TO AZERBAIJAN. ECEVIT HAD DISCUSSED THIS IDEA WITH THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR, WHO HAD SAID IT WAS WORTH PURSUING. OYMEN ASKED THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S REACTION.

7. ~~(S)~~ THE DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID HE WAS CAUTIOUS REGARDING THE PROPOSAL. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST FIFTY YEARS IN MANY REGIONS OF THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY AFRICA, WAS THAT BORDER QUESTIONS WERE A PANDORA'S BOX. IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO GET BOTH PARTIES TO APPROACH THE ISSUE IN A WAY WHICH EACH WOULD REGARD AS EQUITABLE. WHEN AFRICA WAS DECOLONIZED, MANY RECOGNIZED THAT INTERSTATE BORDERS MADE NO SENSE FROM AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STANDPOINT. BUT WHEN PARTIES LOOKED AT ALTERNATIVES, IT WAS A HOPELESS MESS AND AN INVITATION TO VIOLENCE AND DISORDER. IN THE CASE OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH THE BEST OUTCOME MIGHT BE STALEMATE AND THE WORST VIOLENCE.

8. ~~(S)~~ THE DEPUTY SECRETARY MENTIONED THE OSCE PRINCIPLE THAT BORDERS MUST CHANGE NOT BY FORCE BUT BY NEGOTIATION. IF THE AZERIS AND ARMENIANS WERE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE A SWAP, THE U.S., TURKEY, AND THE OSCE/MINSK GROUP WOULD SUPPORT IT-AS LONG AS IT WAS MUTUALLY AGREED. CONSIDERING HIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE ISSUE, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID HE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROPOSAL.

9. ~~(S)~~ LASTLY, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW IDEA NOW COULD DISTRACT ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN FROM THE PROPOSAL RECENTLY TABLED BY THE MINSK GROUP CO-CHAIRS AND GIVE THE PARTIES AN EXCUSE TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT. THESE WERE ONLY INITIAL REACTIONS, HE REMINDED OYMEN; HE WOULD TALK TO HIS COLLEAGUES AND REVISIT THE IDEA IN MADRID WITH OYMEN.

10. ~~(S)~~ OYMEN AGREED WITH THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSAL, AND POINTED OUT THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME THE U.S., FRANCE, AND RUSSIA WERE UNITED ON NAGORNO-KARABAKH. HE SUGGESTED KEEPING ECEVIT'S IDEA IN RESERVE. SHOULD THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS FAIL, IT MIGHT BE WORTHWHILE TO RESORT TO ECEVIT'S SUGGESTION. HE TOLD THE DEPUTY SECRETARY HE WOULD CONVEY THIS APPRAISAL TO ECEVIT.

11. ~~(S)~~ THE DEPUTY SECRETARY REVIEWED THE PROBLEMS WITH THE ECEVIT PROPOSAL BUT REMINDED OYMEN OF THE IMPORTANCE THE U.S. PLACED ON TURKISH SUPPORT ON NAGORNO-KARABAKH. HE AND OYMEN AGREED TO TALK FURTHER IN MADRID.

12. (U) THE CALL ENDED AT 1331 EDT.

13. (U) END TEXT.
ALBRIGHT

—SECRET—

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