

POEMS Automated Telegram Handler - B26 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 03/15/96 08:03 am Page: 1

Item Subject: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

RELEASE IN FULL

DECLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 ANKARA 2769 151241Z MAR 96

FOR DEPSEC TALBOTT ONLY THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM WAS SENT ACTION ANKARA. IT IS BEING REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION. QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L BAKU 000739 FOR DEPSEC TALBOTT AND DEP NSA BERGER FROM AMBASSADO

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1. CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR RICHARD D. KAUZLARICH.
EMBASSY BAKU. REASONS 1.5 (B, D).

2. ~~(C)~~ BELOW IS THE TEXT OF OUR DRAFT REPORTING CABLE ON THE TALBOTT BERGER MEETINGS WITH ALIYEV FOR YOUR INPUT, PER 3/14 DISCUSSIONS IN BAKU. OUR DRAFT ONLY REFLECTS THE SUBSTANCE OF THE LARGE GROUP SESSION ON 3/13 AND NOT THE TETE-A-TETES TALBOTT AND BERGER HAD WITH ALIYEV ON 3/13 AND 3/14 (SEPTTEL).

3. ~~(C)~~ CABLE TO BE SENT NODIS WITH REPEAT REQUESTED TO ANKARA, MOSCOW AND YEREVAN. PLEASE ADVISE ON ANY ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS.

3. BEGIN TEXT:

SUBJECT: ALIYEV TELLS TALBOTT-BERGER THAT ARMENIANS ARE STALLING IN BILATERAL CHANNEL

2. ~~(C)~~ SUMMARY: DURING SIX-PLUS HOURS OF MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT ALIYEV MARCH 13/14, DEPUTY SECRETARY TALBOTT AND DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR BERGER EXPLORED PROSPECTS FOR AN N-K PEACE SETTLEMENT. ALIYEV AND HIS FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR, VAFA QULUZADE, TOOK A TOUGH LINE ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BILATERAL CHANNEL. THEY CLAIMED THE ARMENIANS WERE ONLY INTERESTED IN N-K "INDEPENDENCE," AND HAD REFUSED TO ADDRESS THE POINTS -- LACHIN AND SHUSHA -- AZERBAIJAN HAD TO HAVE. AS ALIYEV LAID OUT HIS THINKING ON A SETTLEMENT, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT WHILE VIEWS ARE CLOSE ON CENTRAL ITEMS OF A SETTLEMENT -- WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND RETURN OF REFUGEES, A CORRIDOR FROM N-K TO ARMENIA AND SECURITY GUARANTEES//AUTONOMY FOR N-K -- THE CLOSER FINAL TOUGH DECISIONS COME, THE HARDER IT GETS. ALIYEV DID NOT RULE OUT AN AGREEMENT BY APRIL 18, BUT SAID IT WOULD BE VERY HARD. IT WAS AGREED THAT QULUZADE AND LIBARIDIAN WOULD MEET ON MARCH 18 TO CONTINUE WORK ON A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

3. ~~(C)~~ ALIYEV HIGHLIGHTED, BOTH IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE THE IMPORTANCE TO HIM OF PRESIDENT CLINTON'S INVOLVEMENT. FOR ALIYEV, EVERY COMMUNICATION FROM THE PRESIDENT IS SIGNIFICANT. HE IS BOLSTERED DOMESTICALLY; GAINS PRESTIGE BOTH IN THE REGION AND WITH MOSCOW AND TEHRAN; AND

Declassification Authority: Geoffrey W. Chapman, Senior Reviewer, A/GIS/IPS
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PERSONALLY THE DIRECT CONTACTS WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON ARE REWARDING TO ALIYEV.

4. ~~(C)~~ THERE IS SOMETHING TO WORK WITH HERE. ALIYEV SEES THE BENEFITS OF PEACE AND WANTS TO BE RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON. BUT IN NEGOTIATING WITH THE ARMENIANS, THERE ARE LIMITS BEYOND WHICH ALIYEV CANNOT GO WITHOUT SERIOUSLY RISKING HIS HOLD ON POWER. THAT SAID, THERE IS STILL ROOM TO NEGOTIATE. GETTING BOTH SIDES TO THEIR REAL BOTTOM LINES, AND SEEING IF THEY MEET, WILL REQUIRE CONTINUED PRESSURE FROM US TO KEEP THE BILATERAL CHANNEL MOVING, AND AT SOME POINT, DIRECT WORK WITH THE PARTIES ON SUBSTANCE.
END SUMMARY

5. ~~(C)~~ DEPUTY SECRETARY TALBOTT AND DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR BERGER HELD OVER SIX HOURS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT ALIYEV MARCH 13/14. THE ENCOUNTERS BEGAN WITH A LARGE GROUP MEETING WITH PRESS PRESENT FOR OPENING STATEMENTS. ALSO ATTENDING THE LARGE GROUP MEETING WERE, FOR AZERBAIJAN, SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT RASUL QULIYEV, FOREIGN MINISTER HASAN HASANOV, AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON HAFEZ PASHAYEV, PRESIDENTIAL FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR VAFA QULUZADE, PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT ELДАР NAMAZOV, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTERS ARAZ AZIMOV AND TOFIG ZULFUGAROV, AND MFA EUROPE/U.S. DIRECTOR AGSHIN MEHKTIYEV (MEHKTIYEV LEFT WHEN DISCUSSION OF N-K BEGAN); FOR THE U.S., THE AMBASSADOR, S/NIS AMBASSADOR COLLINS, NSC SENIOR DIRECTOR BLACKER, S/NIS/RA AMBASSADOR PRESEL, NSC DIRECTOR HESLIN, D SPECIAL ASSISTANT NULAND, S/NIS SPECIAL ASSISTANT KROLL AND DCM.

SPOTLIGHT ON PRESIDENT CLINTON'S INVOLVEMENT

6. ~~(C)~~ ALIYEV BEGAN THE MEETING WITH TALBOTT AND BERGER BY HIGHLIGHTING THE INVOLVEMENT WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON. WITH THE LOCAL PRESS PRESENT (AND FOR IMMEDIATE BROADCAST ON AZERI TV) ALIYEV STRESSED THE MULTIFACETED NATURE OF U.S.-AZERBAIJANI COOPERATION, WITH OIL AND OTHER ECONOMIC TIES BOLSTERING ENGAGEMENT ON REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES.

7. ~~(C)~~ THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON WAS A CONSTANT THEME OF ALIYEV'S THROUGHOUT THE MEETINGS AND DINNER, WHERE ALIYEV DELIVERED AN EXPANSIVE TOAST IN HONOR OF THE PRESIDENT. HE REPEATEDLY RECALLED HIS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT IN NEW YORK AS WELL AS LETTERS AND THE PHONE CALL FROM THE PRESIDENT. (COMMENT: PLACING THE PUBLIC SPOTLIGHT ON HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON ALLOWS ALIYEV TO HIGHLIGHT FOR HIS

PEOPLE THAT COUNTS ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE. HE ALSO

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WANTS TO SHOW THE RUSSIANS AND IRANIANS THAT HE HAS A RELATIONSHIP TO COUNTERBALANCE THEIR ATTEMPTS TO DOMINATE THE REGION. AT THE SAME TIME, ALIYEV, PERSONALLY, FINDS THE DIRECT CONTACTS REAFFIRMING TO HIS SENSE OF LEADERSHIP. END COMMENT)

8. ~~(C)~~ WITH THE PRESS PRESENT, ALIYEV STRESSED HE HAD READ THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER, AGREED WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON'S "INITIATIVES" AND WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY TO FOLLOW UP HIS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT IN NEW YORK WITH DISCUSSIONS WITH TALBOTT AND BERGER.

BERGER-TALBOTT; THE MESSAGE IS PEACE

9. ~~(C)~~ WITH THE PRESS PRESENT, DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR BERGER EMPHASIZED PRESIDENT CLINTON'S INTEREST IN THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE NATIONS OF THE CAUCASUS AND IN FINDING AN ENDURING PEACE IN THE REGION. HE POINTED OUT THE IMPORTANCE WE PLACED ON DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC TIES AND WELCOMED THE MARCH 8 SIGNING OF AZERBAIJANI-GEORGIAN AGREEMENTS FOR THE WESTERN PIPELINE. BERGER MENTIONED HIS EARLIER VISIT WITH REFUGEES FROM THE WAR AND CALLED FOR EVERYONE TO REDEDICATE THEMSELVES TO THE CAUSE OF PEACE.

10. ~~(C)~~ DEPUTY SECRETARY TALBOTT REINFORCED THE MESSAGE ON PEACE AND STRESSED PRESIDENT CLINTON'S ENDURING COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE REGION. PRESIDENT CLINTON'S SENSE OF THE IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT WAS WHY HE HAD SENT BERGER AND TALBOTT TO THE REGION.

THE ARMENIANS WANT INDEPENDENCE FOR N-K

11. ~~(C)~~ AFTER THE PRESS LEFT, ALIYEV SHIFTED GEARS SOMEWHAT. AFTER SAYING THAT PRESIDENT CLINTON'S LETTER AND THE VISIT OF TALBOTT AND BERGER GAVE HIM "GREAT HOPES" FOR PEACE, HE RAISED THE KEY ISSUE FOR AZERBAIJAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. AZERBAIJAN'S STATUS AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE (COMMENT; AND ALIYEV'S ABILITY TO KEEP POWER. END COMMENT) REQUIRED THAT ARMENIA RECOGNIZE THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AZERBAIJAN. ALIYEV LAID THE FAILURE OF EFFORTS TO DATE TO ACHIEVE A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES TO ARMENIAN UNWILLINGNESS TO TAKE THIS STEP.

12. ~~(C)~~ IN RESPONSE TO BERGER AND TALBOTT'S REQUEST FOR A READOUT OF WHERE ALIYEV FELT THE BILATERAL CHANNEL WAS, ALIYEV GAVE A GENERALLY NEGATIVE RESPONSE. ALIYEV SAID HE BEGAN THE BILATERAL CHANNEL WITH GREAT HOPES. HOWEVER, DURING THE THREE QULUZADE-LIBARIDIAN MEETINGS, LIBARIDIAN ONLY DISCUSSED MATTERS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF N-K. IN

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THE NEGOTIATIONS QULUZADE HAD SAID THE AZERBAIJANIS COULD AGREE TO SOME OF THE ARMENIAN POINTS, BUT THE ARMENIANS WOULD NOT AGREE TO ANY OF THE AZERBAIJANI SUGGESTIONS. ALIYEV DID NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CONCLUDE A "JUST" STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES BASED ON THE WHAT HAD OCCURRED TO DATE IN THE BILATERAL CHANNEL.

ALIYEV ON A SETTLEMENT

13. ~~(C)~~ ALIYEV AGREED WITH THE IDEA OF A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES. HE WOULD LIKE IT IF SUCH A STATEMENT COULD BE SIGNED IN MOSCOW. BUT, ALIYEV WAS DOUBTFUL. HE REVIEWED THE EFFORTS TO REACH A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES IN THE FALL, BEGINNING WITH THE VISIT OF ZBIGNIEW BREZINSKI. THE FIRST DRAFT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO AZERBAIJAN, THE DRAFT BROUGHT BY AMBASSADOR COLLINS IN NOVEMBER WAS NOT WHAT AZERBAIJAN WANTED, BUT THEY HAD AGREED BECAUSE IT CONTAINED THE CONCEPT OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. HOWEVER, ARMENIA WAS NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT THE

TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AZERBAIJAN. THIS REMAINED THE PROBLEM.

14. ~~(C)~~ ALIYEV LAID OUT HIS VISION OF AN ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT:

-- RECOGNITION OF THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN;

-- WITHDRAWAL OF ARMED FORMATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA FROM THE TERRITORY OF AZERBAIJAN, INCLUDING FROM LACHIN AND SHUSHA;

-- A TRANSIT ZONE CREATED ON THE TERRITORY OF LACHIN IN ORDER TO ENSURE FULL LINKAGES AND CONTACT BETWEEN ARMENIA AND N-K;

-- REFUGEES RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES;

-- SECURITY GUARANTEES TO ARMENIANS LIVING IN N-K;

-- N-K RECEIVES THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF AUTONOMY IN THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN; AND

-- THE DEPLOYMENT OF OSCE PEACEKEEPING FORCES IN THE REGION TO MONITOR THE AGREEMENT. THE OSCE FORCES WOULD CONTROL THE TRANSIT ZONE.

15. ~~(C)~~ TALBOTT WELCOMED ALIYEV'S DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF WHAT SHOULD BE IN A PEACE SETTLEMENT. WITH SOME DIFFERENCE IN POINTS OF EMPHASIS, WHAT ALIYEV HAD LAID OUT

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WAS WHAT WE SAW AS THE ELEMENTS OF A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES. TALBOTT INVITED COMMENTS FROM U.S. N-K NEGOTIATOR PRESEL AND S/NIS COLLINS, WHO SAID THAT THE DELEGATION WOULD BE DISCUSSING THE SAME ISSUES IN ARMENIA. WITHOUT GETTING INTO THE DETAILS OF THE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS, WE BELIEVED THERE WAS ROOM TO MAKE PROGRESS AND WE REMAINED INTERESTED IN GETTING A STATEMENT TO BE ANNOUNCED IN MOSCOW IN APRIL. WE UNDERSTOOD A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES HAD TO ADDRESS THE CONCERNS OF BOTH PARTIES, BERGER TOLD ALIYEV. WE WOULD MAKE THIS POINT TO TER-PETROSSIAN.

BILATERAL TALKS STALLING

16. ~~(C)~~ QULUZADE, AT ALIYEV'S DIRECTION, DESCRIBED THE ARMENIAN POSITION IN THE BILATERAL TALKS AS AN EFFORT TO USE DISCUSSION OF STATUS AS A WAY TO CREATE AN INDEPENDENT N-K. ON EVERY POINT, QULUZADE SAID THE ARMENIANS WERE TRYING TO CREATE AN ENTITY THAT WAS FULLY INDEPENDENT. LIBARIDIAN WOULD ONLY DISCUSS THE STATUS ISSUE, BASED ON AN EIGHT-PARAGRAPH PAPER HE HAD PRESENTED. WHEN THE AZERBAIJANIS PRESENTED COUNTER-PROPOSALS, THE ARMENIANS REJECTED THEM ALL. AS EXAMPLES, VAFA OFFERED THAT FOR N-K THE ARMENIANS WANTED:

-- THE RIGHT TO CONCLUDE ALL FORMS OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. AZERBAIJAN ASKED TO EXCLUDE MILITARY AND POLITICAL AGREEMENTS, BUT WOULD AGREE TO THE RIGHT TO CONCLUDE OTHER KINDS OF AGREEMENTS. ARMENIA REFUSED.

-- ARMENIAN AS THE ONLY LANGUAGE. AZERBAIJAN ASKED FOR AZERBAIJANI AND ARMENIAN AS STATE LANGUAGES. ARMENIA REFUSED.

VAFA BELIEVED THAT ON ALL POINTS ARMENIA WAS AIMING NOT FOR "DE FACTO" INDEPENDENCE BUT FOR "DE JURE" INDEPENDENCE.

17. ~~(C)~~ TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WAS THE KEY POINT FOR AZERBAIJAN, BERGER SAID, AND THE STATUS OF N-K WAS KEY FOR THE ARMENIANS. AZERBAIJAN WAS OFFERING A "HIGH DEGREE" OF AUTONOMY. IT WAS NECESSARY TO FIND A COMMON-GROUND ON AUTONOMY SHORT OF DE JURE INDEPENDENCE, COUPLED WITH A CLEAR STATEMENT BY ARMENIA RECOGNIZING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AZERBAIJAN.

18. ~~(S)~~ QULUZADE REITERATED HIS BELIEF THAT LIBARIDIAN WAS TRYING TO CRAFT AN AGREEMENT ON STATUS THAT WAS EQUIVALENT TO "DE JURE" INDEPENDENCE FOR N-K. THE PREVIOUS ARMENIAN REFUSALS TO ACCEPT THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AZERBAIJAN AND LIBARIDIAN'S REFUSAL TO ENGAGE

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ON LACHIN AND SHUSHA SHOWED THE TRUE ARMENIAN INTENTIONS.

19. ~~(S)~~ THE TALKS THEN SHIFTED FROM THE LARGE GROUP
FORMAT TO A SMALLER GROUP, FOLLOWED ON MARCH 14 BY
TALBOTT/BERGER/ALIYEV MEETINGS (SEPTEL).
KAUZLARICH
UNQUOTE
GROSSMAN

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ANKARA 002769

FOR DEPSEC TALBOTT ONLY

THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM WAS SENT ACTION ANKARA. IT IS
BEING REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION.

QUOTE:

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ BAKU 000739

FOR DEPSEC TALBOTT AND DEP NSA BERGER FROM AMBASSADO
PLEASE ALERT D-NULAND AND NSC-HESLIN UPON RECEIT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1.6 (XL)
TAGS: AMGT