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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call to President Turgut Ozal of Turkey (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Turgut Ozal, President
Robert Hutchings, NSC Staff (Notetaker)

DATE, TIME August 3, 1990, 1:58 - 2:11 p.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office (U)

The President: Mr. President, how are you? (U)

President Ozal: Fine, thank you. (U)

The President: I have been thinking about you and wanted to call. If you have one minute, I would like to compare notes on Iraq and Kuwait. (U)

President Ozal: Yes. I was going to call you. (U)

The President: Good. I have no talking points, but if it is agreeable to you I will tell you how we look at the situation. First, it is very, very serious. The interest of NATO countries and the West generally are tied up in a peaceful resolution in which Iraq goes back and Kuwait's rulers are restored. There are also keen strategic interests that go way beyond that, regarding the integrity of the Gulf states and the principle of the matter. (U)

I view you as a friend and an important member of NATO. In your geostrategic location you occupy a key position because of the pipeline going to Iran and Iraq. I wanted to know the conditions under which you might close it. I also talked with King Fahd regarding the Saudi pipeline. I wanted to hear your views -- not just about the pipeline but regarding the overall situation. (U)

President Ozal: When I spoke with you in January I talked about Saddam Hussein and said he is the most dangerous man in the area. When we spoke by telephone on the 26th of last month I said the same thing. I asked whether he would pull out and you said he is going to pull out. (U)

He should get his lesson. If anything happens we have to solve it. If he stays, then the problem will pop up again. (U)

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The President: Let me tell you, my friend, that you and I look at the situation in exactly the same light. Now the question is, where do we go from here? (Ø)

President Ozal: I talked to King Fahd one hour ago to discuss the situation. I told him that if the solution is that Iraq pulls back and Kuwait pays, that is not a solution but would be another Munich. (Ø)

The President: Right. What worries me is that Iraq may go further down the Gulf. Do you worry about that? (Ø)

President Ozal: Yes. From satellites, we have detected more forces being moved. (Ø)

The President: We are reviewing all options, including military options, though I know there will be some criticism here. Several years ago our countries stood side by side in Korea. In some ways this is more serious. This is the first call I have made to any NATO leader except Thatcher, whom I was with in Colorado. We are doing contingency planning regarding economic sanctions, including a total cutoff, and other measures, such as moving forces to protect against further aggression. I agree with you that a handwringing deal, in which Kuwait has to pay Iraq off, would lead down the road to further aggression. (Ø)

President Ozal: The solution is not only an embargo. (Ø)

The President: What do you recommend? (Ø)

President Ozal: The NATO Allies should come together. You've probably already consulted with the Soviet Union. (Ø)

The President: We had some encouraging talks. That is one new ingredient. We can now work with the Soviets to help resolve the issue. (Ø)

President Ozal: I will talk to Rafsanjani and the Iranians. (Ø)

The President: I was wondering about that. Maybe we could all work together, including Iran. Tell him that. When will you call? (Ø)

President Ozal: Tonight or maybe tomorrow. (Ø)

The President: If you have anything to report, call me at any time day or night. We're viewing this as a grave national emergency for us and our friends. (Ø)

President Ozal: We should not repeat the mistakes made at the beginning of World War II. (Ø)

The President: I spoke to Fahd.... (Ø)

President Ozal: I am not sure they will take the proper action.

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They are talking about Arab unity. I told him that if he makes a decision to inform us. (Ø)

The President: They talk about Arab unity, but it's not clear what they mean. (Ø)

President Ozal: They would like your full support. (Ø)

The President: They'll get it, but so far they don't seem to support our actions. I like your ideas about getting the Allies together and also about talking to Iran. What about Syria? (Ø)

President Ozal: I will call. They are neighbors. (Ø)

The President: I am sure Syria is concerned and will be helpful. I worry that King Hussein won't be helpful because of his relations with Saddam Hussein. (Ø)

I'll be in touch. Don't hesitate to call. I appreciate your spirit and your analysis. Turkey has a key role in all this. As I made clear to the King of Saudi Arabia, we're with you -- not only to protect Turkish interests but also to encourage you to isolate Saddam Hussein. (Ø)

President Ozal: Where does Mrs. Thatcher stand? (Ø)

The President: She is with us. (Ø)

President Ozal: Does she want to finalize this thing for good? (Ø)

The President: I think so. She strongly favors standing together. (Ø)

President Ozal: Thank you for your call. (U)

The President: Thank you. What do we do without friends at times like this? I respect you and salute you and appreciate the key role Turkey is playing. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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