

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTONMEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call to President Kenan Evren
of Turkey (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Kenan Evren, President of Turkey
Notetaker: Robert Hutchings

DATE, TIME August 1, 1989, 4:26 - 4:46 pm EDT
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President initiated the call, noting that he had received President Evren's letter concerning the terrible situation of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. The President said he had told Prime Minister Ozal when the President called in July and again today that the United States is very concerned about the situation and will continue to use every opportunity to condemn the Bulgarian Government's actions. (U)

The President said that Prime Minister Ozal suggested the U.S. speak with the Soviet Union on the matter. The President said he did not know whether the U.S. could help but would see what could be done. (U)

The President, continuing, said that he had issued a strongly worded statement on the situation of the Turks in Bulgaria on June 26 and supported an equally strong NATO statement on the subject. He expressed the hope that international pressure of this kind would bring some relief to Turks in Bulgaria as well as to those who have sought refuge in Turkey. (U)

President Evren said he wanted to take the opportunity to thank the President as well as the Congress for the sensitivity they have shown and the support they have provided. (U)

The President expressed his thanks, adding that Bulgaria is not a country the U.S. is close to, putting it mildly, but that the U.S. would like to help if it can. (U)

President Evren said he had no doubts about that. (U)

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The President said he would also like to mention the situation on Cyprus, adding that he knew President Evren had seen Ambassador Abramowitz earlier in the day. The President said that he was gratified that President Evren was lending his support and prestige to the Cyprus negotiations. (U)

The President, continuing, observed that Turkey and the U.S. want the same thing: a Cyprus settlement that will unite the island and protect the security of all Cypriots, including Turkish Cypriots. The President said that the main point he wanted to make was that the U.S. wants to see the UN Secretary General backed as much as possible. The negotiations have been delayed by the demonstrations, but the U.S. wants to have the two sides meet the September target date for an outline agreement. The President said that he would appreciate anything President Evren could do to back the Secretary General's plan. The President also noted that the U.S. has a very able special Cyprus coordinator, Nelson Ledsky, who will be in Ankara working to help if possible. (U)

President Evren said he understood Mr. Ledsky would be in Ankara the following day. (U)

The President said that Mr. Ledsky would then be going to Athens and Cyprus. The President repeated that the U.S. wants to get things going. The U.S. does not have much influence, but the President wanted to assure President Evren of U.S. interest. There had been much discussion of Cyprus in Paris, and some leaders have already weighed in with President Evren. The President repeated that the U.S. is ready to help if it can. (Ø)

President Evren said he also hoped that the issue will be resolved through the negotiations that the two groups will attend. He expressed the view that the best way to resolve the situation is for the two Cypriot leaders to meet face-to-face, because indirect meetings yield no results. He understood that the first meeting was to have taken place July 24 but was then delayed to July 26. Now there has been a further delay because Greek Cypriot women marched to the other side. (Ø)

The President said he understood that the demonstrations had stopped the negotiations. (Ø)

President Evren replied that they were not really demonstrations. About 150 women along with two ministers crossed the border to the Turkish side without permission. He understood that the court system was quite flexible, handing down very mild sentences. Those individuals who could pay their fines were released immediately. The only two who remained were the ministers, and they were able to pay their fines the next day and were released as well. President Evren commented that the biggest barrier to negotiations is the other side, which is using tactics to delay the process. (Ø)

The President replied that if the two sides can resume negotiations, there may be an historic chance for settlement and achieving peace in that troubled part of the world. (U)

President Evren assured the President that Turkey is not pursuing a cancellation of negotiations. The only debate is over the date of resumption. Originally August 15 was mentioned, but because of a celebration that is scheduled, August 17 has now been mentioned. (U)

The President, concluding, said that he had expressed to Prime Minister Ozal his concern about the hostages in Lebanon. He said that he would appreciate hearing from President Evren if he had any ideas on how to help. (U)

President Evren thanked the President for his call and expressed his concern for the murder of Colonel Higgins. Turkey has issued a statement condemning those actions and said to let him know if there was anything else Turkey could do. (U)