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THE WHITE HOUSE

6024

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

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

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

DATE, TIME July 26, 1990, 7:24 - 7:30 a.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

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

President Ozal: Fine, thank you, Mr. President. (U)

The President: It is good to hear your voice. How is your health? (U)

President Ozal: It is good. I am fine. I saw you running on television a few days ago. (U)

The President: I am calling because I had a good talk with Dick Cheney and wanted to tell you about the U.S.-Greece Bases Agreement. As you know, we signed the agreement on July 8 and the Greek Parliament voted to ratify it on July 24. I am convinced it is a good agreement for both the U.S. and for Greece. But I understand, and Dick told me, that there are some in your government who somehow think it contains an anti-Turkish clause, or is in some way aimed against Turkey. I just want to tell you as a friend, and as the President, to set the record straight and make it unmistakably clear that the Bases Agreement does not contain any security assurance against Turkey, direct or indirect. (U)

I know you personally have been restrained, but I hope you will be able to use what I have just told you to convince some of your government officials and your public that the United States would never contemplate some kind of anti-Turkish agreement. As Dick Cheney told you, and everyone else he saw during his recent visit, Turkey is too good a friend and too important an ally for us to ever contemplate doing anything to harm our relations.

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Look, we don't want to put ourselves into the position of choosing sides between allies. We will do whatever we can to promote a peaceful settlement of the problems between Turkey and Greece. (Ø)

I hope we can get this issue behind us and concentrate on our own bilateral relationship. And lastly, I know that we've had a few hurdles during the past year. I think we ought to put our efforts into strengthening our friendship and our alliance. As you said on July 17, NATO has not disappeared and should not in the future. The Soviet Union is still strong, right there next door, and I remain convinced that Turkey still has a key role to play in NATO and in assuring stability. So, I am calling just to assure you, knowing you have problems out there. (Ø)

President Ozal: Mr. President, I have no doubt there was no intention in that regard. What happened was that there were Greek claims, and reports in Greek newspapers, that put pressure on our side. I accept what you told me. I wonder if you could put those assurances in writing in a letter to me. (Ø)

The President: Okay, I'll get that off in a couple of days, repeating what I told you just now. (Ø)

President Ozal: Do you have any news on the Persian Gulf? (Ø)

The President: I understand OPEC has reached an agreement, but Iraq is pulling back some. What's your judgment? (Ø)

President Ozal: When we met in Washington, I told you about Saddam Hussein. Do you remember that? (Ø)

The President: I remember it very, very well. (U)

President Ozal: We need to be firm with him. (Ø)

The President: If you have other thoughts, please let me know. We are worried about the situation generally. But that was an important point you raised. It was very nice talking to you. I'll get the letter off. I don't like seeing you under pressure, but if a letter can help, I will do that. (Ø)

-- End of Conversation --