

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with President Turgut Ozal of Turkey

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
President Turgut Ozal  
Nicholas Burns, NSC Staff (notetaker)

DATE, TIME January 21, 1991: 7:31-7:39 a.m.  
AND PLACE: Camp David

The President: Hello, Turgut. How are you? (U)

I am calling to check in to compare notes on how things are going. We feel pretty good about the situation. The weather has been bad the last few days which has delayed us. But from our end, we are pleased by the way things are going. Civilian casualties have been kept as low as possible. We're doing great damage to military installations. (S)

President Ozal: Generally from our side, things are okay too. My opposition makes noise and opposes the war. But it doesn't matter. The larger population supports me. (S)

I wonder if maybe the Iraqis have chemicals to use on the troops, from artillery and planes. One information I've received is that some Turkish contractors built underground airfields in Iraq. (S)

The President: We had heard something about that. (U)

President Ozal: Not only storage facilities, but airfields. The planes can come out of the bunkers. (S)

The President: How does it work? Do the planes go straight up? Can you tell us where these bunkers are? (S)

President Ozal: They don't know where they are, but maybe in the north. I'll check it out once more and will let you know. (S)

The President: We are upset they are parading our pilots on TV. The American public is outraged. (S)

President Ozal: I know. It is similar in Turkey. George, I tell you this -- this man and his military machine must be destroyed. (S)

The President: Yes, and it will be. I'm confident of it. Some reporters are concentrating on how long it will take. Some are trying to turn public opinion against the war. But it will go pretty fast. How long do you think it will go? (S)

President Ozal: My estimate is that it will take less than two months, but maybe one to two months more. (S)

The President: That is about right. It will depend on the ground forces. Or one of his officers may decide enough is enough and get rid of him. (S)

President Ozal: Are you bombing electric power plants? (S)

The President: Yes. (U)

President Ozal: Are you bombing water facilities? (S)

The President: We've been careful on the water. I am not sure. But electricity, and communications to the military are down. Every time he sends up his airplanes, we shoot them down. Their air force sent up eleven planes. Every one was shot down without one allied plane lost. Our planes have been lost to ground fire, not to planes. (S)

President Ozal: It looks like ground fire is decreasing. Some units are on the tops of buildings. (S)

The President: We think there are 40,000 anti-aircraft guns on tops of buildings. Most of the SAMs have been wiped out. Our pilots fly over easily. I hope they are not getting too careless. (S)

President Ozal: One other thing. Are you using B-52s, especially on the ground troops? (S)

The President: Yes. We are using them on ground troops. We think it has been effective so far, but it is hard to measure the effectiveness due to the weather. We are trying to keep Israel responsible. They have been attacked twice now. So far, Israel is okay. (S)

President Ozal: Yes, the coalition is holding strong. There may be some noise from some Arab countries. (S)

The President: Listen, it has been nice talking to you. Please call anytime and stay in touch. (U)

President Ozal: Okay. God bless you. (U)

-- End of Conversation --