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14. Telcon	Re: Telcon with Felipe Gonzalez, Prime Minister of Spain (3 pp.)	4/20/91	(b)(1)	S

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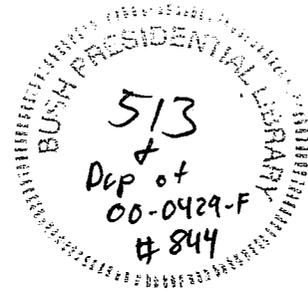
- P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Felipe Gonzalez, Prime Minister of Spain

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Felipe Gonzalez, Prime Minister
Adrian Basora, NSC Staff (Notetaker)
Stephanie van Riegersberg, Interpreter

DATE, TIME: April 20, 1991, 8:15 - 8:30 a.m.
AND PLACE: Camp David

The President: Felipe, can you hear me OK? (U)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: I hear you perfectly. (U)

The President: I'm sorry about the delays. We have had technical difficulties. I hope we haven't bothered you too much. (S)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: Not at all. I am here at a wonderful natural preserve, surrounded by beauty. (U)

The President: I am here at Camp David and its the worst day ever. But I'm calling you about El Salvador. (S)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: I hear things are coming to a critical stage there. (S)

The President: Yes. Let me run through a few points, and then I'd like to hear your views. (S)

I have just talked to President Cristiani and to Perez and Salinas on this. As you may know, UN Assistant Secretary General De Soto met with Cristiani on Thursday. This is a crucial week for gaining global agreement on key issues in the talks, including a cease-fire. The key issues that remain to be agreed involve constitutional change, and they must be agreed on before April 30 if the two sides want the current legislature to vote for them. (S)

It is our view that Cristiani is prepared to go a long way to meet legitimate FMLN demands, and he has been flexible. But, as we see the situation, he has to bring something back from negotiations to justify the steps he is willing to take,

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particularly on reducing and reforming the military. It is our view that the guerrillas cannot demand an unlimited number of revolutionary changes. They have never been elected by anyone.

(S)

What I would hope is that you will use your considerable influence with the FMLN to urge them to agree on key political issues and on a cease-fire. One key point is how the constitution is amended. Changing Article 248 is not a good idea because it will make the process open-ended, and I understand that all the democratic political parties -- not just Cristiani's party -- oppose this. I am told that the democratic parties believe that the two sides should be able to agree on a formula.

(S)

I have also told Cristiani that I would be ready to send someone to Mexico to the meeting next week if it would help. Cristiani said that he thought it would be helpful. That's all I have on this but I'd like to hear your views. (S)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: First, I agree on the whole with your diagnosis. We are following the situation step by step. (S)

Second, the procedural problem of how to reform the constitution is the blocking point, and it is difficult to overcome. On armed forces reform, I think Cristiani's position is more sensible than the FMLN's, especially given the limits on his maneuvering room.

(S)

They have invited us along with the Venezuelan and Mexican foreign ministers. They have invited us to the meeting in Mexico. At the moment, our foreign minister is in Central America. Our reply, in order to put more pressure on the Salvadorans, is to require some guarantee that the meeting in Mexico will be successful. Our minister is ready to go in three days time, provided both sides and De Soto give reasonable guarantees that the meeting will produce results. (S)

In sum, if we don't reach a resolution at this opportunity, the issue will be blocked for a very long time. The second problem is constitutional reform, because the present constitution makes it practically impossible to change the constitution. Therefore what we must do is force the Salvadoran Government to agree that, if all political parties can agree, they would pass changes as a means of agreeing to modifications before April 30. (S)

One last point. The demands of the guerrillas regarding the armed forces cannot be agreed to by the Salvadoran Government, nor by any other government. However, the government must make clear that there will be supremacy of civilian authority over the armed forces. (S)

The President: I agree. (U)

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Prime Minister Gonzalez: I want you to know that I received the Salvadoran Minister of Defense a few months ago and I said exactly the same thing to him. ~~(S)~~

The President: We are in agreement with that. (U)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: We are exerting every pressure, and if there is the slightest possibility of a successfully meeting in Mexico, we will be there. ~~(S)~~

The President: I would like to make one more point regarding our good friend Dona Violeta. I just had a very productive meeting with her during her state visit. She seemed in a good mood. She said that her number one priority is to clear Nicaragua's arrearages with the World Bank and the Interamerican Development Bank. ~~(S)~~

I pledged that we would do whatever we can, and I know she is seeking your help, too. But this is a very important point for her. ~~(S)~~

Prime Minister Gonzalez: The King and our foreign minister were in Managua yesterday and today and we have pledged to help. ~~(S)~~

The President: Well, she's got to succeed. Also, I want to say it has been nice to talk to you again. ~~(S)~~

Prime Minister Gonzalez: I have enjoyed it, too. ~~(S)~~

The President: Let's do it. It may come as a surprise to you, but I don't have much influence with him! ~~(S)~~

Prime Minister Gonzalez: No, no, that is for us to do, and we're doing it. We're seeing him this afternoon. ~~(S)~~

The President: Good luck. It was nice talking to you. (U)

Prime Minister Gonzalez: Goodbye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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