

THE WHITE HOUSE
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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call with President Turgut Ozal of Turkey

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Ozal
Interpreter: None
Notetaker: Jane E. Holl

DATE, TIME: December 5, 1992, 6:47-7:03am
AND PLACE: White House

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

President Ozal: I am fine, George, thank you. I am just going to Cairo to see Mubarak. I want to tell you that I was delighted when I heard about your decision on Somalia. We will also contribute to your efforts. We will go to Parliament. I talked to the Prime Minister. We are inclined to send troops under your command. (Ø)

The President: That's wonderful. What size force will you be sending? (Ø)

President Ozal: We have not made any firm decisions. First the Parliament will decide. (Ø)

The President: Well, if they're not ready now we can use the troops for peace-keeping, if not peace-making. (Ø)

President Ozal: Listen George, I have some recent news from Bosnia. The massacres and rapes have reached terrifying levels. The whole world is looking to your leadership again. I share your view about the U.S. catalytic role. The massacre in Bosnia will lead to demonstrations in the Moslem world, including in Turkey. We cannot wait until ending. (Ø)

The challenges in the Gulf couldn't be over estimated -- I am of the same mind regarding Serbia. There will not be much need for U.S. ground troops. Turkey is ready to help contribute, with others. Also the arms embargo must be lifted, George. They have opened roads against the Serbs, but couldn't take action because there was no ammunition. Your action now will help prevent the spillover of conflict and you will also help the new administration. (Ø)

You must act to stop the barbarism. It will only help the fundamentalists if this goes on. (Ø)

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The President: We're against that. (U)

President Ozal: The Serbs are not so strong. Only air power will be sufficient to knock out their air force and heavy weapons. (S)

The President: I agree with you that we have to do something. What disturbs me is, in terms of U.S. military on the ground, our military doesn't see a formula short of Desert Storm to get the job done. Second, we have a resolution on the no-fly zone and that's being violated. We're concerned about what to do there. There's discussion about lifting the arms embargo -- the matter is being reviewed, but I've made no decision yet. (S)

We're clear about the humanitarian case. I'm trying not to saddle the Clinton administration with major new commitments. Somalia was so appalling -- we think some of our young men may be killed. I hope we are wrong. Bosnia is different -- the terrain and so forth. (S)

I'm glad you called. I agree about the fundamentalist threat. I don't want the U.S. seen as uninterested when Muslims are being ethnically cleansed. (S)

President Ozal: This situation is like Afghanistan. But there is no Russia power. Only Serbian power, but it's not as big. You only would need to use limited air power -- like Afghanistan. (S)

The President: We're very tired of Milosevic and we're worried about the conflict spreading. Turgut, this has been a helpful telephone call. I'll share it with all of my advisers -- Scowcroft, Baker, Eagleburger -- I appreciate your words of support on Somalia. (S)

President Ozal: Only limited air power. No ground troops -- air power will solve the problem. (S)

The President: But how would you respond to the argument -- wouldn't the British and French troops be attacked? (S)

President Ozal: No. I think the Serbs know that if they go further, they would lose. Your air power would be sufficient to stop them and give support to the Bosnians. Then we can send people in to train them and we can give them ammunition. (S)

The President: I respect your judgement. (U)

President Ozal: I will be coming at the end of January to the United States. I hope to see you in Houston. (S)

The President: Yes, we certainly will see each other. But we'll get on these issues right away. Thank you again for your call. (U)

-- End of Conversation --