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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Peter Agris, The Hellenic Chronicle
William I. Greener, Jr., Deputy Press Secretary
to the President
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs

DATE & TIME: Monday, September 29, 1975
11:30 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: I believe we are facing one of the real crucial decisions in the Congress Wednesday when this comes up. I have been trying, even early in the crisis when I was Vice President, to see how we could use our influence to settle this tragic problem. I want you to know I have always had the closest relations with the Greek Americans. My first job in high school was in a Greek restaurant at lunch. So I have always had the close relationship, both a personal relationship and a business relationship. They have always helped my campaigns and I have been closely involved in AHEPA.

So it pains me very much to have the Greek Americans opposed to what I think has to be done. The fact is the situation in Cyprus is deteriorating. Instead of the embargo resolving the problem, it has delayed it and created more temper and problems rather than less.

It hasn't helped the Greek Government. I have the greatest admiration for Karamanlis and I think Bitsios is a fine Foreign Minister. I know they have to walk the fine line. But it would be tragic if they came under political danger because of failure to solve the Cyprus problem. I think there is a threat from both sides, but probably worse from the left.

Agris: Probably they would be worse than the junta.

The President: It is severely hurting NATO, and Turkey has been forced to close down certain very important and sensitive intelligence operations of the United States.

DECLASSIFIED
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NSC MEMO, 11/18/88, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES
BY lsh MAR. DATE 6/3/84 State Rev. 253/11/04

TOP SECRET
CLASSIFIED

You know all these things, but it has failed to help Cyprus, it has hurt NATO and our intelligence operations and has not helped the Greeks.

I have told Demirel that if the embargo is lifted, we would expect some movement. I have told our NATO allies we would expect their help in getting movement.

I know Brademas and Sarbanes don't agree. We have met three to four times and we still have differences. But I don't see how any objective person can say Greece has been helped. If I am wrong, I would like to hear your views.

Agris: I would not say you are wrong on the facts. There may be a difference on interpretation of what might or might not happen.

Mr. Lloyd Waring is a great supporter of yours and wanted me to talk to you. I think the Greeks and even non-Greeks have confidence in our paper. We have not tried to demagogue this issue. You have never seen me in with AHEPA or the Archbishop.

I think a lot of the ill feeling is not at you but at how the State Department has handled the situation.

There were a lot of Greeks behind Durkin. The restaurant owners get to a lot of people every day.

The tragic thing is that most of the Greek American people believe in your philosophy. Hard work, law and order -- all of these things. I am not here for publicity. I want to help with a problem which is tearing me apart. I can understand your and Secretary Kissinger's attitude on the embargo. But they were as intransigent before as after. How do we know they will move?

The President: We have general assurances. Besides, there will be lots of legislation coming up. If they don't move, the cutoff can easily be re-imposed.

Agris: I am glad you told me that and that you were thinking along those lines.

One other point is our long friendship with Greece. I know Makarios is as intransigent as the Turks. Clerides I think could have gotten farther if he hadn't been tied down.



The President: Just by happenstance, Makarios and I sat next to each other at Helsinki. I told him that if we didn't get the embargo lifted, I would wash my hands of it. He didn't want that.

Agris: You have to understand Makarios. He is from a poor family and got where he is on his own. If there were an enosis, he would lose his religious independence as well as his political independence. He would be nuts to give this up, and I have been writing this way since '64. Now I know that the 40,000 Turkish troops won't budge by themselves. Makarios doesn't seem to see this. Clerides does, and he and Makarios don't see eye to eye. Karamanlis is very upset.

The President: I know. He told me.

Agris: I know the pride and ego of the Turks and what a problem we face that way. A Turk told me if you could give some aid secretly... I know it is unrealistic but they are hung up on their pride. The Greeks are much the same. That is a good part of the problem.

The President: Now we are faced with a Turkish election, with Ecevit the guy who sent the troops there and Demirel with a razor-thin margin.

We understand why Karamanlis can't come out publicly. And the Turks have this election. The consequence is that there is no movement.

Agris: But the Greeks think we could have stopped the coup and the Turkish invasion and did neither. They don't understand, in view of the strong friendship over the years and the way the Greeks have stood by us.

[There was a discussion of the legality of a Section 816 waiver, etc.]

The President: I do have a personal commitment from Demirel that he will move if the embargo is lifted, and from the NATO leaders to help produce movement.

The crucial areas at issue are that the Turks, with 18% of the population, have 40% of the land. The difference here has narrowed to 4-5%. Then there is refugee resettlement, and the nature of the government. There are really apparently no irreconcilable differences. They are soluble if we can ever get the parties to sit down for a period without outside pressures.

Agris: Karamanlis has authorized me to say that if you could give him economic aid -- I know he was asking for \$250 million.

The President: We are working on that. I don't know what the whole figures are. Brent, can you get me our figures?

Agris: The other thing is the refugees. If they would only let the refugees go home. [He shows photos] I something could be done on the humanitarian side. That would take much of the sting out of the issue.

The President: I don't honestly think you will get movement before a settlement. The aid is no problem, but this we have to get the Turks to do. There is no way to get this by Wednesday.

Agris: I could have guaranteed you in August a lifting of the embargo for this humanitarian gesture. It is these refugees -- every week there are more pictures and stories.

We have the 25th Anniversary of the Chronicle coming up. If you would consider using our banquet as a forum for announcing any of these, you would be honoring us.

The President: If there is any way you can change a few votes...

[Discussion]

Agris: If the embargo is lifted, could we have a Presidential statement mentioning the Greeks?

The President: Of course.

[The meeting concluded.]



→ Report to State

→ report

P/Peter Agrios / owner

29 Sept 75

11:30 am

P I believe we facing one of the real serious decisions in a long while when this comes up. I have been trying, even early in a crisis when I was up, to see how we could use our influence to settle this tragic problem. What you & I have always had a close relationship w/ Greek - this. My first job in high school was in a Greek restaurant at lunch. So I have always had a close relationship, both personal & business. They have always helped my campaigns and I have been closely involved in Aheya.

See it pains me very much to have a Greek - Greek opposed to what I think has to be done. The fact is a lot in Cyprus is deteriorating. ~~The~~ Instead of embargos resolving a problem, it has delayed it & created more tensions & problems rather than less.

It hasn't helped the Greek Govt. I have requested administration for Keras & I think Britain is a friend. I know they have to work a fine line, but it would be tragic if they came under political change because of pressure to solve a Cyprus problem. I think there is threat from both sides, but just worse from a left.

A ~~Part~~ ^{another} course ~~than~~ than a month.

P It is severely hurting NATO and Turkey has been forced to withdraw certain very important & sensitive vital areas of US.



You know all that, but we have failed to help because, it has been NATO & our initial offers & not helped - Greeks.

I have told Demirel if we have left we would expect some movement. I have told our NATO allies we would expect their help in getting movement.

I know Brak & Sackman about a year. We have met 3-4 times & still have diff. But I don't see how any objective person can say Ankara has been helped. If I am wrong, I would like to hear your views.

R I would not say you are wrong on facts. There may be different interpretations of what might or might not happen.

^{tho} Mr. Waring(?) is a great supporter of yours & convinced me to talk to you. I think a Burke & even even - Greeks have confidence in our paper. We have not tried to demagogize this issue. You have never even been in w/ Assad or a Archbishop.

I think a lot of - all feeling is not at you but at how State has handled a set.

There are a lot of Greeks behind Demirel. The restaurant owners get a lot of people every day. The tragic thing is that most of - G-H people believe in your philosophy. Hard work, law & order - all these things. I am not here for publicity. I want to help with a prof which is training me apart.



I can understand you & say attitudes & contacts.
But they were as intransigent before after
Rounds we knew they would move.

P We have great assurances. Besides, there will
be lots of legs kicking up. If they don't move,
a veto can easily be compiled.

A I glad you told me that & that you were
thinking along those lines. On the other point is
our long friendship of Greece. I know Makarios
is ~~as~~ as intransigent as the Turks. Clelio I think
could have gotten further if he hadn't been tied
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P Just by happenstance, Makarios & I sat next to
each other at Helsinki. I told him if we didn't
get a compromise I'd work my hands of it.
He didn't want that.

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family & got when he is he on his own. If there
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Karamanlis is very expert.

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A I know the price & ego of a T & what a job we
fall that way. A Turk told me if you could



give some aid secretly... I know it is
unlike others but they are hung on their
pride. The Arabs are much the same. That
is a good part of the problem.

P How are you faced w/ a technician, w/ a secret
guy who sent a trap there & denied w/ a large
thin margin.

We understand why Kana. can't come out
publicly, & the Tanks have this election - emergence
is that the movement

A But the Arabs think we could have stopped
a large & a transmission & did neither.
They don't understand, in view of a strong
friendship over a year & a way the Arabs have
strayed by now.

(Discussion of Sec 806 waiver legality, etc).

P I do have a personal contact from Derwiel that he
will move if embargo is lifted, & from Nato looks
to help & produce movement.

The crucial ones at issue are that T, w/ 18% of
pop. have 40% of land. If they have increased
to 4-5%. Then there is a major settlement &
return of a part. These are really apparently no
irreconcilable obj. They are soluble if we can
ever get a partner to sit down for a period w/
a outside presence.

A Karoum's has authorized me to say ~~that~~ if
you could give him some aid. I know



of Parents - How much more aid for Greece?

He was asking for \$250 mil.

P We are working on that. I don't know what the whole figure are. But, can you get the two figures

A The other thing is a refugees. If they would only let a refugees go home. (Shows photos) If countries could do some humanitarian side. That would take much of the sting out of a rescue.

P I don't honestly think you will get movement before a settlement. The aid is no job, but this we have to get to do. No way to get this by word.

A I could have guaranteed you in any a lifting of a embargo for this humanitarian gesture. It is this refugees - every week there are more pictures & stories.

Q - have a 25th Anniversary of Eisenhower coming up. If you would consider using our language as a forum for announcing any of these, you would be helping us.

P If there is any way you can arrange a few notes...

Discussion

* A If embargo is lifted, could we have a pro-statement mentioning a Greek.

P of course.

