

DATE AND TIME: Friday, September 12, 1975
11:00 - 11:20 a.m.

PLACE: Cabinet Room, The White House

SUBJECT: Turkish Arms Embargo

President: Please, won't you all sit down. We'll have the press photographers in here for a couple of minutes.

(To Mr. Berker): I understand you went to the University of Michigan, although probably much more recently than I did.

Berker: Yes, Mr. President, I was the Class of 1948.

President: I was '35.

Berker: Well, we are very proud to have a President from Michigan.

President: (To press photographers) Good morning everybody. Are you all spry this morning? We gave them quite a workout yesterday. It was beautiful in New Hampshire, almost Indian Summer there.

Kilic: Mr. President, Mr. Berker is not only from the University of Michigan, but in Turkey they think he even looks like you.

President: No, he's younger and more handsome.

(Press photographers leave)

President: At the outset, in the first place, I am very grateful that you are all here. Secondly, I think it is appropriate that you are representing Turkey and that your own strong views are being taken into consideration. It is important that you are telling another side of the story on the embargo.

I am sure that you all know how I have felt from the beginning that the Congress has been wrong on this issue. Secretary Kissinger and I have worked hard to convince the Congress how much it has been in error, and how counterproductive the aid cut-off has been. Americans cherish the relationship between Turkey and the United States. It has been excellent, and I hope that this tragic problem we currently face is only temporary, not permanent.



I assure you that this decision of the Congress is totally contrary to my views, to those of Secretary Kissinger and to those of the great majority of American people. I want to do what I can to get this road block eliminated. Secondly, with that done, I want to rebuild the relationship of trust and mutual effort between Turkey and the United States.

I am very unhappy about the development of the earthquake in Turkey. I am sure that you know that I was in touch with your President and we made an immediate offer of assistance, and that offer is far broader than what we have been able to do thus far. We are awaiting word from your government. It is my understanding that the latest estimate is some 3,000 victims.

Berker: Yes.

President: We'll do what we can.

We had hoped to move the legislation out of the Rules Committee this week. Unfortunately, the Chairman of that committee is adamantly opposed and it is too late for action this week. The House will be back after the recess next week and we hope to get a ruling by the Committee by Wednesday, Thursday or Friday at the latest. The Chairman of the Committee is difficult. However, I think we have the necessary votes in the committee and a narrow margin in the House. I will be interested to know how you have been received during your visit. Mr. Berker will you make a report?

Berker: With your permission, Mr. President. We have been welcomed by each member of the Congress we have visited. They have been sympathetic. We saw Brademas and Sarbanes and had a hearty talk. They both said that if Turkey was able to show a solution, they would vote to restore aid. They said that this is not an effort to disgrace Turkey but that there has been, in their view, a breach of the US-Turkish Arms Agreement. We explained our views. We said that the Turkish government and Turkish public opinion cannot comprehend this U.S. action. We said we had acted legally in Cyprus following the Greek coup -- as you know, your Under Secretary Sisco and Foreign Secretary Callaghan were involved at the time. Mr. President, Turkish public opinion deeply believes that a solution to Cyprus should come soon. Our actions have been legal. We have been safeguarding the Turkish minority in Cyprus. Now that we are talking, we believe that the Turkish government and people will accept a fair solution to the island.

As private citizens we cannot give assurances, but we believe in our hearts a solution is possible. The differences have already been reduced to a very narrow gap. We believe that the US-Turkish friendship we are trying to

save after three decades of friendship must be saved. Our objective is to bridge this friendship damaged by Congress. The Turkish army and the Turkish people are proud; we can't yield under pressure. The members of the Congress understand, but then they point out that the arms agreement has not been obeyed and that this has implication for similar agreements the United States has elsewhere in the world. We are not lawyers, but we believe the second action on the island can be defended. Brademas says that the first Turkish action was legal and that he has no problem with it but that the second action was not. The second action, that of August 20, is where Brademas places his legal position.

President: If I might interrupt, I have had many conversations with Brademas and Sarbanes. They never start with July 15, with the assassination of Makarios, the Greek effort to put in Sampson, the move to put in 700 Greek forces in the Greek-Cypriot National Guard, they never talk about that.

The problem is that if we stay in the past saying who did this and who did that, we will not be able to achieve a solution. Brademas and Sarbanes concentrate on August 20. Others say July 15. If we just go back and forth this way it will only be more difficult to find a solution. I have listened to Paul Sarbanes and John Brademas. We are old friends from my days in the House of Representatives -- I never agreed with them much, but we are old friends. They keep saying that Turkey has to do something about the refugees, that Turkey has to take that action and this action to do something to justify repeal. You are more familiar than I with the difficult political situation in Turkey. We are familiar with the difficult situation in Greece. We know that we can't expect movement in the negotiations until the embargo is ended.

On one thing, I have put my reputation on the line. I have said that if we get the embargo lifted it is mandatory that the government of Turkey make the most forthcoming effort possible to settle the Cyprus problem. If we can't get a settlement quickly, then the next time there is legislation -- and it is coming up only two months from now -- the Congress will do the same thing again. It is essential once the embargo is lifted that Denktash and Clerides move quickly. We should not try to write the formula, that is for the parties to do. But time is important.

Berker: We will take your words home, Mr. President, and convey your views to our government and people. We will explain that the U. S. Congress is not against Turkey, but that we are faced with a political problem. Our delegation is also hoping to make a trip to Greece as soon as the opportunity

is available. We think that dealing as businessmen we have greater flexibility. We will carry the flag of friendship to Greece. We are even looking forward to joint ventures. We are proud and grateful for your stand. We will keep this moment in our hearts for our lifetimes.

President: Thank you. I think it is good that you are planning to go to Greece. We are apprehensive that if the problem goes on a bad political situation may develop in Greece. This would not be in the interests of NATO or US-Turkish interests.

I want to come back to one essential point. I had two fine talks with Prime Minister Demirel. He wants to be helpful, but I understand his political problem. He can't do it unless public opinion supports him. He has to have the backing of leaders such as you. Time is of the essence. If it drags on, Brademas and Sarbanes will say, we told you so, we'll have a replay of the entire problem. If I can leave one message, it is to get a settlement once the American embargo has been lifted.

Berker: Time is important. We'll tell this, Mr. President, to our government, and we will make sure our public knows your words.

President: I hate to run. As you may know, I'm heading off for St. Louis and other places today. I want to thank you all again for coming.

Turkish Delegation: Thank you, Mr. President.

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~SECRET/NODIS~~ACTION

September 12, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL SCOWCROFT

FROM:

Mr. Clift 

SUBJECT:

Memorandum of Conversation: President's
September 12 Meeting with Turkish Businessmen

The memorandum of conversation at Tab I is forwarded for your review, approval and inclusion in the President's files.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the memorandum of conversation at Tab I.


APPROVE 

DISAPPROVE _____

~~SECRET/NODIS/XGDS~~

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5

NSC MEMO, 11/24/98, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES
BY  . NARA, DATE 6/3/04

NSC CORRESPONDENCE PROFILE

DOC		RECD			NBR		INITIAL ACTION O	
MO	DA	MO	DA	HR	7506171			
9	12	9	12	19				

SOURCE/CLASS/DESCRIPTION

TO: PRES _____ FROM: CLIFT KISSINGER, H _____ REFERENCE: _____ CIRCLE AS APPROPRIATE

KISSINGER _____ COLBY, W _____ S/S _____ UNCLAS LOG IN/OUT

SCOWCROFT X _____ SCHLESINGER, J _____ OTHER _____ LOU NO FORN NODIS

DAVIS _____ ST EX SEC _____ C EYES ONLY EXDIS

_____ S _____ CODWORD

_____ TS SENSITIVE

SUBJECT: Memcon of Pres mtg w/ Turkish Businessmen
Sept 12, 1975

DISTRIBUTION/INITIAL ACTION ASGMT

INTERNAL ROUTING AND DISTRIBUTION			REC CY FOR	ACTION REQUIRED
	ACTION	INFO		
ADVANCE CYS TO HAK/SCOWCROFT				MEMO FOR HAK (_____)
STAFF SECRETARY				MEMO FOR PRES (_____)
FAR EAST				REPLY FOR _____ (_____)
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA				APPROPRIATE ACTION (_____)
MID EAST / NO. AFRICA / SO. ASIA			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MEMO _____ TO _____ (_____)
EUROPE / CANADA			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	RECOMMENDATIONS (_____)
LATIN AMERICA				JOINT MEMO (_____)
UNITED NATIONS				REFER TO _____ FOR: _____ (_____)
ECONOMIC				ANY ACTION NECESSARY? (_____)
SCIENTIFIC				CONCURRENCE (_____)
PROGRAM ANALYSIS				DUE DATE: _____
NSC PLANNING				COMMENTS: (INCLUDING SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS)
CONGRESSIONAL				
OCEANS POLICY				
INTELLIGENCE				

SUBSEQUENT ROUTING/ACTIONS

DATE	FROM	TO	S	SUBSEQUENT ACTION REQUIRED (OR TAKEN):	CY TO
9/12		Scowcroft	X	Approve memcon (9/12)	
9/15		NAC/12	C	Scowcroft approved recom	

NSC/ S DISP INSTR

DISPATCH _____

CY RQMTS: SEE ABOVE PLUS: _____

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CROSS REF W/ _____

SUSPENSE CY ATTACHED: RF FOLDER: _____

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SEP 17 1975 BY ADC

CRT ID: _____ SA SF

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