

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET/NODIS/XGDS~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

Bulent Ecevit, Former Turkish Prime Minister,
Leader of Republican People's Party
Amb. Melih Esenbel, Turkish Ambassador
to the United States
Amb. Hasan Esat Isik, Republican People's
Party Foreign Affairs Advisor.

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, July 29, 1976
10:40 - 11:37 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

[The press came in for photos. There was small talk about Ecevit's being Secretary Kissinger's student, and the fact that the President had spoken before the Kissinger seminar, too. The press then left].

The President: When did you enter parliament?

Ecevit: 1957. I had to leave here to campaign.

The President: First let me apologize for the incident in New York [the assassination attempt by a Greek Cypriot]. I assure we will do our best to ensure it will not happen again.

Ecevit: Thank you, Mr. President. These things can happen anywhere. The security has been fine and they risked their lives for me -- otherwise I might have been killed.

CLASSIFIED BY Henry A. Kissinger
EXEMPT FROM DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE
EXEMPTION AUTHORITY 5 (b) (1, 3)
AUTHORITY FOR DECLASSIFICATION Imp. to det.

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DECLASSIFIED
AUTHORITY OAC Review 12/6/04. State visit 3/13/04
BY [signature] NLF, DATE 4/19/07

The President: We are delighted to have you here. I would be interested in your comments on our mutual interests, and I'd like to hear your suggestions for how we can improve things.

Ecevit: I would like to thank you for receiving me and for what you and Dr. Kissinger have done to maintain the ties with Turkey against domestic pressure. That has been the major influence in calming the Turkish people over the situation. The Republican People's Party is doing its best not to inflame the situation.

My general observation is that the Turkish people have always been independent, so they are very proud, and any government which appears too pliant is opposed.

For that reason, when I was in power in 1974, I am sure Dr. Kissinger would tell you we were not an easy ally. But in 1974, the Turkish people developed friendly attitudes toward the United States and NATO. There were no slogans and no anti-American demonstrations.

Kissinger: That is why the tragedy is that we couldn't move decisively in 1974 soon after the Cyprus crisis.

Ecevit: We had problems which developed within my coalition and I had to leave office in November and cancel Dr. Kissinger's trip because I couldn't deliver on my promise.

The President: Tragically, it has been more than two years now. We have irrational elements in this country on Cyprus. But I have done my best to maintain friendly relations without regard to domestic concerns. I just hope we can find a way out.

Ecevit: Yes. I asked to form a minority government because I thought if the problem wasn't solved right away it would be more difficult. The new Government inherited my coalition so they weren't able to make many moves. I had been critical of the Government and urged them to make some conciliatory moves. Then, of course, Makarios returned to Cyprus. I have the feeling the Greek Government is losing its interest in a solution to Cyprus, and they can't influence Makarios. So all of these things conspire to make movement difficult, and the longer it goes the more difficult it becomes. I had a plan in 1974, but it no longer applies. If we win in 1977, we will put forth a plan. Of course, the Greeks are intransigent because they think they can get American and Western support.

The West appears to be aware of only the Cyprus problem between Greece and Turkey, whereas the major problem is the Aegean. Greece is laying claim to the whole of the Aegean -- she has used NATO missions to reinforce that claim. They have been making seismic exploration in the Aegean without opposition. When I came in, we asked for discussions to solve the problem. The junta said there were no problems because the Aegean is theirs. So we sent a seismic ship out. Greece objected and we said, "So, let's talk." They refused. The Greeks have used their public relations skills on the issue to make it appear one-sided in favor of Greece.

The President: Haven't both sides agreed to submit it to the ICJ?

Ecevit: The Greeks proposed it. My Government thinks it is important to have talks first.

This is a big issue between us. What the West should do is to induce Greece and Turkey to negotiate all our problems simultaneously, but separately. In that way, things could get going. I mentioned it to Waldheim who thought it had merit.

The President: Under the UN, or bilaterally?

Ecevit: Bilaterally. The UN has no role now in the Aegean except to give friendly support for talks. The other point is the West shouldn't appear as if they support the Greeks against Turkey. Particularly the U. S. should keep equidistant between Greece and Turkey.

If I could, I would like to mention our difficult problems. I spoke yesterday with Congressional Armed Services Committees.

The President: How did it go?

Ecevit: I am not filled with optimism. I didn't have the impression they were sure the treaty would pass.

The President: We are forthrightly in favor of it.

Kissinger: Did you tell them what the consequences would be?

Ecevit: Yes. But we must be careful. We aren't volatile like the Greeks, but when we act responsibly we don't get the publicity.

Demirel makes sour statements which may sound a little dangerous -- like leaving NATO or warning of the consequences. I never say anything like that. I say that whatever happens, that is no reason to leave NATO because it is important for many reasons. I have kept my party in line on this issue. I don't think the Eastern Europeans would be happy if we left NATO. They can't say it, but we feel it.

The President: Romania or Yugoslavia?

Ecevit: Yes, and even further.

But if the treaty fails we would have to develop a new NATO relationship. We couldn't go on as in the past. Turkey would crack under it. Our defense expenditures are the highest in NATO. I have given this explanation to the Congress and told them they have been proven wrong on their predictions about Turkey. On the poppies, for example. The UN has investigated and said there is no opium leakage.

The President: I am dedicated to pushing the Turkish Treaty.

Kissinger: Frankly, I think the Greeks are trying to delay to prevent the Turkish Treaty from passing. I think we must separate them and push the Turkish Treaty.

The President: We will do whatever is needed.

[The Turkish press comes in for photos. Secretary Kissinger leaves. The Turkish press leaves.]

The President: Why don't you tell me a bit about the Turkish domestic situation?

Ecevit: There is a terrorist campaign from the extreme right, which is protected by some of the Government parties. By one party directly and by the Justice Party indirectly. There is a danger of militant counteraction from the left. We are trying to calm our party, but we have no influence on the extreme left. There have been 50 or so students killed and the terrorists are protected. Now they are penetrating the labor unions. I think all of this is being done because the conservative parties in power are different than those of the West. In the West, all of them are dedicated to the rules of the game. In developing countries, the conservatives fear democracy.

Nevertheless, I am confident of the future of the democracy in Turkey. We have a good constitution, an independent judiciary, a free press, a free labor movement, and a strong opposition party. Our Army has a tradition of intervening -- right or wrongly -- when it sees the country in trouble, but it has never wanted to rule. Now it is, thankfully, very reluctant to intervene in any way.

May I say frankly that in Turkey, many people suspect indirect CIA involvement in covert actions in Turkey.

The President: They must be approved by me and it is not and will not be done.

Ecevit: I believe whatever you say. As you know, such operations sometimes have a life of their own. I hesitate to mention it, but I thought you should know.

The President: I am glad you mentioned it to give me a chance to go on the record. There is absolutely no truth to the stories.

May I reemphasize the importance we ascribe to good bilateral relations with NATO. This Administration will maximize its efforts to maintain good relations and to contribute to a strong NATO. We must do our share -- especially with Congress, with the Treaty and to keep them from taking ill-advised action as they have done in the past. On the other hand, it is important that Turkey do its best to resolve the Cyprus problem. We understand Makarios' game. Cyprus is a cancer which is harmful to this Administration or to any U. S. administration. To the degree you can help in opposition, I hope you will work for progress. October, 1977 is a long way away. I hope to win in November.

Ecevit: I hope so.

The President: I plan to, but I have reason to believe Carter might be pro-Greece.

Ecevit: I know. I have seen his statements. I wish you well this fall. We know who our friends are.

The President: Can you have elections earlier than October 1977?

Ecevit: Only by an absolute majority of the Parliament.

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P/E civit

29 July 76

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Pres in

(Discussion of E civit with E student, P speaking before K seminar, etc)

Pres out

P attended your winter fashion show

E 1957. I had a hard time to organize

P First let me apologize for incident in NY. I assure you with will do our best to insure it ~~will~~ will not happen again

E Thank you Mr P. That thing can happen anywhere. The seminar has been free & they voted their bias for me - otherwise I might have been killed.

P We are delighted to have you here. I am interested in your comments on our mutual interests & your sug. for improvement.

E I would like to thank you for using me & for what you & I have done to ~~with~~ ^{with} the w/Turkey against domestic pressure that has been major influence in coloring T people over a pit. The Regent party is doing its best not to influence it.

My general observation is that T people have always been idiot, so they are very proud & ~~take~~ any quest which appears to plum is opposed.

For that reason when I was in prison in 74 I see K would tell you we

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AUTHORITY per hsc review 12/6/04; state visit 3/13/04

BY lh NLF, DATE 4/19/04



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T people changed friendly attitudes toward
US & Nato. There were no slogans, no anti-US
demonstrations

R That why a tragedy is we couldn't move
classically in '74 after soon after - Cyprus
crisis

E We had probably agreed w/ in my conditions +
I had a time in Nov + could K trip because
I couldn't believe in my promise.

P Tragically it has been more than 2 yrs.
now. We have mutual elements in
this country on Cyprus. But I have done
my best to enter friendly relations w/ a regard
to domestic concerns. I just hope we can
find a way out.

E Yes, I asked to form a minority govt because
I thought if a prob wasn't solved right away
it would be more dry. The new Govt
inherited my position so they weren't able
to make many moves. I have been critical
of a Govt + urged conciliatory moves. Then,
of course, Turkish started to Cyprus.
I have a feeling a Greek Govt is losing its
interest in voluntarily to Cyprus + that
they can't influence Turkish. So all these
conspire to make movement diff + a longer
it goes a more dry it becomes.
But since I had a plan in '74, but it



we longer apply. If we must win in
7) we will put forth a plan.

Opponents of Greeks are an intransigent bunch
They think they can get US + Western
support.

The West appears to be averse of only a
Cyprus prob but G + T, whereas a major
prob is Algeria. Greece is laying claim
to a whole of Algeria - has used NATO
missions to support that claim. They
have been making serious exploration
in Algeria w/o opposition. When I
came in we asked for discussions to solve
Cyp. The junta said ~~to~~ there were
no probs cause - Algeria ~~states~~ theirs.
So we sent a senior diplomat. Greece
objected + we said, so, let's talk. They
refused. The Greeks have used their
P.R. skills on a issue to make it appear
and ruled in favor of Greece.

P I want both agreed to submit to ICT

E Greeks proposed. My Govt thinks important
to have talks 1st.

This is a big issue bet us. What
a Govt should do is to induce G + T
to negot all our probs. separately, but
separately. In that way things could get
going. I mentioned to Waldheim who
cht it had merit.



P Under UN a bilateral?

E Bilateral. UN has no role either in Cyprus except financial support part.

The other point is a West should not appear as if they support Greeks against Turkish. Partic. US should keep equidistant. but.

Go T.

If I could, I would like to mention one def. press. I spoke yesterday w/ Cong. A.S. Center.

P How did it go?

E I was not filled w/ optimism. I didn't have impression they were a treaty would pass.

P We are particularly in favor of it.

K Did you tell them a course program?

E Yes, but we must be careful. We aren't volatile like Greeks, but when we act resp. we don't get publicity.

Demirel makes some statements which may sound a little dangerous - like having Nato as warning of consequences. I would say anything like that. I say whatever I express that we are not less than Nato because it is important for many reasons. I have kept my party in line on this issue. I don't think E. Enos would be happy if we left Nato. They can't pay it, but we feel it.

P Rumor + Yugo?



E Yes, & even further.

But if a treaty fails we would have to change a new NATO ~~and~~ relationship. We couldn't go on as in a past - Turkey would crack under it. Our def. exp are the highest in NATO. I have given this explanation to a Cong. & told them they have been proven wrong on predictions about T. On a poppis, for example. The UN has invest. & said there is no option ~~being~~ discharge.

P (Discussed our election to pushing a T Treaty)

R Frankly I think the Greeks are trying to delay to prevent a T treaty from emerging. I think we must separate them & push a T treaty.

P We will do whatever we could (Turkish possession) (K leaves) (Turkish pass out)

P Why don't you tell me a T domestic sit.

E There is terrorist emergency from a extreme right - protected by some of our parties. By one directly & by Justice party indirectly. There is always of militant construction from a left. We are trying to calm our party, but we have no influence on extreme left.



There have been 50 or so students killed & trimesters are protected. Now they are penetrating a loose union. I think all this being done because a conservative path is in power and different than those of a West for West, all are dedicated to the rules of a game. In doing countries, exercises from ideas. Nevertheless I am confident of a future of ideas in T. We have a good court, an independent judiciary, a free press, a free labor labor movement, a strong opposition party. Our Army has tradition of intervening - rightly or wrongly - when it sees country in trouble, but it has never wanted to rule. Now it is, thankfully, very reluctant to intervene in any way. May I say frankly that in T, many people respect and distrust CIA involvement behind a curtain. All - stories about CIA in other countries leads to exposure.

P Let me say categorically there is no CIA involvement in contact in T. That must be approved by me & it is not & will not be done.

E I believe whatever you say. As you know such agencies functions have a life of their own. I hesitate to mention it but that you should know.

P I glad you mentioned it to give me



a chance to go on record. There is absolutely no touch to a strain.

May I re-emphasize the importance we attach to good bilateral relations w/ NATO. This Admin will carry its efforts to enter good relations & to contribute strongly NATO. We must do our share - esp w/ Com w/ a treaty to keep them from taking ill-advantaged actions as they have. On other hand, it imp. that Turkey do its best to resolve Cyprus prob. We understand Turkish gov. Cyprus is a matter which is handed to this Admin or to any US Admin. To a degree you can in opposition I hope you will work for prog. It is long way away. I hope to win in Nov...

E I hope so

P I plan to, but I have reason to believe Carter might be pro-Greece

E I know. I have seen his statements. I wish you well this fall, we become who our friends are.

P Can you have elections earlier than Oct 7?

E Only by absolute majority of Parliament.

