

[3 CONFIDENTIAL]

UN ARCHIVES

SERIES S-1835

BOX 9

FILE 1

ACC. 2011/0195

TELEGRAM

CONFIDENTIAL/NODIS

IMMEDIATE

Action: SecState

From: U.S. Mission Geneva

To: Acting Secretary Eagleburger

From: Cyrus Vance

1. Confidential throughout.
2. Dear Larry,

Austrian Perm Rep Lang called on me November 27 to transmit orally the following request to the USG, which he said would also be sent in writing. The request is on behalf of the "Central European Initiative" -- a group based on the former Pentagonele -- and now comprising Austria, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia.

Their request is that the four Foreign Ministers of the "Initiative" be received in Washington at an early date -- next week if possible -- by senior officials of both the outgoing and incoming Administrations. Ambassador Lang specifically requested that the four Foreign Ministers be received by President Bush and the President-elect. They wish to discuss ex-Yugoslavia and particularly the situation in Bosnia and Hercegovina.

I told Lang I would be pleased to pass along the request, and offered no encouragement as to the response.

Warm regards,

Sincerely,

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"SECRET/LIMDIS" (US.MISSION ADVISED
(MR. RAVKLING) - 0900
- 27.11.92

Chen
Filed in Meetings

November 26, 1992

To: The Hon. Lawrence Eagleburger
Acting Secretary of State

From: Cyrus R. Vance

(VIA US.MISSION)
— PLAIN PAPER

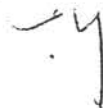
Dear Larry,

It was good talking with you yesterday and I will be back to you very soon on the matters we discussed.

In that connection, there follows a Memorandum of a Conversation I had yesterday, November 25, with Johnny Tsounis, the former Greek Ambassador to the United States. As you know, Tsounis is one of the wisest and most experienced observers of Yugoslavia and the Balkans. He does not hew to anybody's party line and is a very good friend of the United States. I believe you will find his analysis very worthwhile, and would be interested in any reaction you might have.

With warmest best wishes for the Thanksgiving holiday,

Sincerely,



Cyrus R. Vance

HS
11/26/92

BEGIN TEXT

Memorandum of Conversation
November 25, 1992 - 2.30-3.25 p.m.

Participants: Ambassador John Tsounis
Former Ambassador of Greece to the U.S.A.

Cyrus R. Vance
Co-Chairman of the Steering Committee of
the Geneva International Conference on
the Former Yugoslavia

Herbert S. Okun
Special Advisor and Deputy to Mr. Vance

Place: ICFY Conference Room, Palais des Nations, Geneva

The conversation between Ambassador Tsounis and Mr. Vance covered Kosovo; Macedonia; Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; Bosnia and Hercegovina; and other issues relating to the Balkans.

Kosovo: Tsounis stated it was essential to give Serbia assurance that neither secession nor independence for Kosovo was on the agenda. It was equally necessary to let Albania know -- publicly and privately -- that the secession of Kosovo was not on. The European Community should make these two points loud and clear. That would then enable them to press Belgrade hard to grant Kosovo genuine autonomy. Tsounis said that the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference should recommend this to the European Community. Mr. Vance noted that he and David Owen shared this view and have so stated publicly on numerous occasions. Both Mr. Vance and Tsounis agreed that the situation in Kosovo was extremely serious and needed urgent, careful handling.

Macedonia: Tsounis said that the problem for Greece was really not the name, but rather the nature of the state. He suggested that a way out of the current impasse could be a "Treaty of Guarantee," along the broad lines of the Cyprus Agreement. Such a treaty would be signed by all of the states bordering on Macedonia: Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece. It could guarantee Macedonia's

frontiers, its constitution, etc. It would also serve to engage Serbia usefully in the political process. Additionally, it would allow Greece to put the issue of Macedonia's name on the back burner; it would calm overheated spirits in Greece; and it would allow Greece to get something in return, since Greece could then use the road and rail facilities through Macedonia's Vardar valley to export its goods.

Mr. Vance said he would want to think about the suggestion but his initial reaction was that it was worth exploring. Ambassador Okun wondered whether President Gligorov and the Macedonians would go along with the idea; might it not smack of interference in their internal affairs? The London Agreement, after all, had given the Guarantor Powers the right to intervene in Cyprus. Tsounis noted that President Gligorov had indeed made such noises, but he thought these issues could be handled. Mr. Vance said he would think the idea over, and noted that under no circumstances would President Gligorov surrender on the issue of Macedonia's name. He outlined the Secretary-General's recent decision to send a United Nations inspection team from UNPROFOR to Macedonia, in order to prepare the way for a preventive deployment of U.N. peace-keeping troops in Macedonia.

Tsounis said he understood Gligorov's position on the issue of the name, and that it was a bad idea for Greece to have raised the issue in the first place. The key word with respect to Macedonia was not the name but "stability." If the country were to break up under pressure from its neighbours, and if Bulgaria were to expand westwards, this would pose a very large problem for both Greece and Serbia.

Serbia: Tsounis said that some Western Europeans were making a mistake by pushing the Serbs into a corner. Whatever happened we needed to negotiate with them, as no lasting solutions could be found without them. In response to a query from Mr. Vance, Tsounis said he did not follow FRY domestic events closely, but he had the impression that Prime Minister Milan Panic was not a major factor on the scene. He noted that after so much blood had been spilt, positions had hardened across the board. Mr. Vance described the current political scene in Belgrade: FRY President Cosic was seeking to influence the course of events from the outside, having decided not to run. Cosic's goal was that the Parliament pass a new constitution which would create a new situation inside the FRY and Serbia, so that a "two Presidents" (i.e. Cosic and Milosevic) state could be done away with. Mr. Vance noted that Cosic had recently given a lengthy interview in Politika which needed to be read carefully, as Cosic worked by nuance and indirection.

Bosnia and Hercegovina: Tsounis noted that the Bosnian Serbs were "getting the best of it." Mr. Vance confirmed that they were doing well militarily. He said that the Bosnian Serb military commander, General Ratko Mladic, was increasingly powerful and that there was some instability within the Bosnian Serb leadership. Tsounis drew attention to the fighting qualities of the Serbs, noting that the Germans occupied all of Yugoslavia in six days in 1941, but it then took 25 German divisions to hold the country down during the next four years. He said the Bosnian situation was not comparable to that of the recent Gulf War -- these are people who know how to fight. Tsounis asked Mr. Vance whether some form of cantonisation was not inevitable where Bosnian Serb areas adjoined Serbia proper. Mr. Vance said he opposed cantonisation on an ethnic basis, and outlined the provisions of the constitutional framework put forward recently by the Geneva Conference. He pointed out that the Geneva proposals called for seven to ten regions, not based on ethnic exclusivity, within a decentralized state. Tsounis drew attention to the transfers of population that had occurred following the First World War under the provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly, when ethnic Greeks had returned to Greece from Asia Minor and from Bulgaria.

Mr. Vance asked for Tsounis's views regarding Turkey's role in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Tsounis said that the Turks could not intervene militarily, as Bulgaria would not be so frivolous as to give them transit rights overland, and Greece would certainly never do so. In his view Turkey was playing to the gallery, as were the Islamic countries. What the latter really want is leverage on Palestine, Tsounis said. He also cautioned about the future role of Russia in the Balkans, averring that the Russians historically have sought to use the Christians and the Slavs, and later the communist parties, as their entry wedge into the Balkans. Having now been dismembered and humiliated, Russia will wish to regain some international influence via the Balkans. They will be back; wait and see.

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END TEXT