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PAGE 01 ANKARA 01957 021212Z

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ACTION: NEA-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-20 SNM-01 AID-12 CIAE-00 INR-06 IO-04 JUS-01  
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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3521  
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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PARIS: PASS CUSACK

FOR THE UNDER SECRETARY

SUBJECT: OPIUM PRODUCTION

REF: STATE 42685

1. I SAW PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL AT HIS OFFICE AT 9:15 THIS MORNING (APRIL 2) FOR DISCUSSION OF OPIUM QUESTION. AS IS USUALLY THE CASE, WE WERE ALONE WITH NO NOTE-TAKERS ON EITHER SIDE. AFTER A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF EARTHQUAKE DISASTER AT GEDIZ, HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE US AND UNDER SECRETARY RICHARDSON'S STOPOVER HERE, I BROUGHT UP MAIN SUBJECT WHICH WAS WHETHER OR NOT PRIME MINISTER HAD DECIDED TO PLOW UNDER THIS YEAR'S CROP.

2. PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO PRACTICAL MEANS WHEREBY THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY CAN PLOW UNDER THIS YEAR'S OPIUM POPPY CROP. NO GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY, HE SAID CAN DESTROY THIS CROP. IT WOULD CREATE A "CLASH BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT FORCES AND THE PEOPLE AND WOULD MAKE THE PROBLEM WORSE, SINCE IT WOULD CREATE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR PLANTINGS." IT IS "IMPOSSIBLE TO DO IT," HE SAID. HE REMINDED ME THAT WHEREVER THE GOT HAD STOPPED OPIUM PRODUCTION HIS PARTY HAD LOST THE ELECTIONS, BUT HE SAID THIS

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E.O. 12958, as amended  
June 22, 2004

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23

ANKARA 1957  
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TELEGRAM

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 01957 021212Z

WAS NOT IMPORTANT. HE SAID WE HAVE "GOT TO BE SUCCESSFUL" AND SHOULD NOT CREATE EITHER A PARLIAMENTARY OR PUBLIC PROBLEM. MOREOVER, IT WAS NOT CLEAR YET JUST WHAT KIND OR SIZE OF CROP WILL BE AVAILABLE THIS YEAR. WE "DONT'T KNOW HOW IT WILL COME UP AND WILL HAVE TO SEE AT THE END OF THIS MONTH, MAYBE SOME OF THE PLANTS HAVE BEEN KILLED BY THE COLD."

3. AT THAT POINT, I BROUGHT UP OUR FALLBACK POSITION TO WHICH HE LISTENED CAREFULLY. IN REPLY, HE SAID THAT GOT HAD ALREADY MADE A DECISION AT THE GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL TO MAKE A MAXIMUM EFFORT TO BUY UP ALL OPIUM PRODUCTION IN TURKEY THIS YEAR. THEY WILL USE BOTH NATIONAL AND LOCAL MECHANISMS AND WILL, IN ADDITION, TAKE THE STRICTEST MEASURES TO CUT DOWN SMUGGLING. BUT, HE SAID, AT THIS STAGE NO DECISION HAD BEEN MADE ABOUT NEXT YEAR'S PLANTINGS, BEYOND WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME AND AMBASSADOR HART BEFORE. "WE CANT TELL ANYTHING ABOUT NEXT YEAR YET. WE WILL STUDY THE CASE AND DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO BE HELPFUL," HE SAID. I PRESSED HIM ON THIS POINT, AND HE SAID THAT THE GOT WILL CONSIDER WHETHER OR NOT A COMPLETE BAN ON ALL OPIUM PRODUCTION CAN BE INSTITUTED FOR THIS FALL. BUT HE REPEATED, NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE ON THIS YET. NEEDLESS TO SAY, I DID ALL I COULD AT THIS POINT TO MAKE HIM AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS DECISION TO US-TURKISH RELATIONS, NOT TO SPEAK OF TURKISH RELATIONS WITH IRAN AND WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

4. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT GOT HAS ADEQUATE RESOURCES, FINANCIAL AND OTHERWISE, TO BUY UP THIS YEAR'S CROP. WHETHER IT SELLS THE CROP TO OUR PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS OR KEEPS IT IN STOCK DOES NOT MAKE MUCH DIFFERENCE. HE REPEATED THAT GOT IS NOT ORGANIZED TO DESTROY THIS YEAR'S CROP, IS CONSIDERING NOT PLANTING NEXT YEAR BUT CANNOT PROMISE THIS NOW, AND WILL, HE REPEATED, TAKE EVERY MEASURE TO BUY UP THIS YEAR'S ENTIRE PRODUCTION. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING, "IF YOU WANT US TO MAKE IT, GIVE CONSIDERATION TO OUR JUDGMENT; IF YOU WANT TO BREAK IT, FORCE THE SITUATION."

5. COMMENT: WHAT CAME OUT OF THIS MORNING'S SESSION IS OBVIOUSLY LESS THAN I HAD WISHED. AGAIN, I LEFT HIM IN NO DOUBT ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS MATTER TO US-TURKISH RELATIONS. HE UNDERSTANDS THIS. AT THE SAME TIME, HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT OUR INITIAL PLAN TO DESTROY THIS YEAR'S CROP

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23

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PA/HO, Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
June 22, 2004



Department of State

**TELEGRAM**

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

PAGE 03 ANKARA 01957 021212Z

IS PRACTICAL FROM ANY STANDPOINT. I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE HIMSELF HAS GIVEN A GREAT DEAL OF THOUGHT AS TO HOW BEST TO COPE WITH THE PROBLEM AND MEET OUR REQUIREMENTS. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ADDITIONAL US HELP, TECHNICAL OR OTHERWISE, WAS NEEDED FOR THE GOVT TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT HE SAID IT WOULD TRY TO DO THIS YEAR, NAMELY, THE MAXIMUM COLLECTION OF OPIUM PRODUCTION. COULD NOT GET HIM TO GIVE ME A FIRM COMMITMENT AGAINST ALL FUTURE PLANTING. BUT, WITHOUT BEING EXCESSIVELY HOPEFUL ABOUT IT, I GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS IS BEING SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED. THIS, THEREFORE, IS A POINT THAT THE UNDER SECRETARY MIGHT WELL BRING UP WHEN SE SEES THE PRIME MINISTER IN LATE APRIL.

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23