

DECLASSIFIED

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- This meeting is completely OFF-THE-RECORD.
- We've never called a meeting like this before in this Administration-the fact that we have done so may tell you how seriously we view this matter.
- We've asked you to come in for a meeting because this is something which should not be discussed over open telephone lines.
- Jim, someone has inappropriately and incorrectly given you information about one of the most sensitive and important programs this country has.
- I say "inappropriately" because this information in the wrong hands could easily lead to the death of a U.S. citizen...and conceivably contribute to the deaths of millions of innocent victims of a foreign nuclear weapons program.
- I say "incorrectly," because someone has apparently told you that the program was mismanaged and already revealed to the Iranian government. To the best of knowledge of all of us here...that is totally false.
- Preventing working nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of rogue states is one of the most important missions that this, or any other, Administration can have.
- I won't ask you your source, because I know you will not tell me.
- There is no partial answer here. We see no way to write part of this story. If you write it...you endanger lives and national security.
- Asking journalists not to write a story is asking a lot. Now, I am going to ask you more. I am going to ask...in the strongest possible terms...that you not discuss this matter with colleagues and that you not conduct further inquiries around town about it. Each conversation, each call, increases the likelihood that the story will get out...even if you decide to do the right thing and not publish it.
- If you feel the need to discuss this with your seniors in New York. I request that you do so face-to-face. It is much too sensitive for telephone lines.

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Additionally, I ask that the details of the prospective story be immediately purged from your computer systems.

- Jim, I understand that you may have some government documents that impinge upon this story. If that is true, I won't ask that you turn them over to us...but I will ask that you shred every copy-now.
- Let me anticipate a question. You may be wondering, will there be a time when it would be safe for you to write the story. I cannot foresee such a time. Even if Iran turns into a democracy and renounces weapons of mass destruction, the techniques used to hinder their nuclear program could still be useful in preventing other rogue states from endangering us all.
- You have our promise that if we learn of any other news organization plans to publish this story...we will let you know immediately. If any other organization gets this information...we will work as hard to convince them not to publish as we are with you.
- What do you get if you agree not to publish? The comfort of knowing that you haven't contributed to making the world a more dangerous place.

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