

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: The President's Meeting with FRG
Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble

PARTICIPANTS: US
The President
Chief of Staff John Sununu
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Ambassador Robert D. Blackwill, NSC Staff
(Notetaker)

FRG
Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble
Ambassador Juergen Ruhfus
Dr. Christian Ueberschaer (Notetaker)
Heinz Weber (Interpreter)

DATE, TIME February 9, 1989, 2:50 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.,
AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President began by noting that Minister Schaeuble would have a good talk with General Scowcroft after the meeting in the Oval Office. He knew Schaeuble had seen Secretary Baker and wanted to stress to the Chancellor that he, the President, was outraged over some of the press stories here concerning West Germany, Libya and CW. The President thought that we could have handled our side a bit better, but we could not control our newspaper columnists. While some laws in the FRG will have to be changed, the Chancellor should know that we are sure that he is determined to stamp out chemical terror. The President wanted the Chancellor to be completely at ease about the US-German relationship which has not been affected in the least by this controversy.

Minister Schaeuble said it was a great honor to be received by the President. Bonn had made it clear that it would do everything possible to stop CW proliferation. Within a short time, there would be legislation in the FRG which would make it much more difficult for companies to export chemical technology.

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The President responded that he appreciated personally the spirit of this visit. Although verifying a CW ban was extraordinarily difficult, we had to go on working on the problem.

Turning to SNF, Minister Schaeuble said that the FRG was completely against a third zero. The Baker trip to Europe would help coordinate US-German views on this subject. Bonn was very grateful for the trip. The Minister commented that it was important not to isolate SNF modernization, but instead to fit it into a comprehensive concept of dealing with Gorbachev.

Replying to the President's question concerning German public opinion and the third zero, Minister Schaeuble said that Bonn could run into difficulties on the matter but was determined to prevail.

The President said that each time Gorbachev makes a forthcoming, interesting speech, it was all the more important for the Alliance to stay together. He asked Schaeuble to convey to the Chancellor that our policy reviews were not born of fear but instead rested on our judgment that there were new opportunities in East-West relations. At an appropriate time, the President went on, he would meet with Gorbachev. But this would only be done on the basis of complete consensus within the Alliance. In this context, it was important to think creatively on arms control, Eastern Europe, regional tensions, and so forth. So we are in a thoughtful mood here in Washington. The President said that he was sure Gorbachev understood this and was willing to wait until the United States was ready to proceed.

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