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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with President Vigdis Finnbogadottir  
of Iceland

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Secretary of State James A. Baker, III  
Assistant to the President for National  
Security Affairs, Brent Scowcroft  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for  
European Affairs, M. James Wilkinson  
U.S. Ambassador to Iceland, Nicholas Ruwe  
Notetaker: Robert L. Hutchings, Director for  
European Political Affairs, NSC

President Vigdis Finnbogadottir  
Chief of Staff to the President,  
Kornelius Sigmundsson  
Ambassador Ingvi Ingvarsson

DATE, TIME May 23, 1989, 11:05 - 11:20 am, EST  
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

President Finnbogadottir thanked the President for taking time to meet with her and expressed her satisfaction that Ambassador Ruwe could also be present. She expressed her gratitude for all the Ambassador had done to represent the U.S. so effectively in Iceland. (U)

The President said he was delighted to have the meeting, not only for personal reasons but also to strengthen ties between the two countries. The President then turned to preparations for the NATO Summit, noting that the U.S. and West German governments were working out their differences. He said that the U.S. does not want to be grudging in its relations with Moscow but does not want to engage in a public relations war, either. With the world moving toward democracy, free markets, and peace, the President said, there is no need for panic. Chairman Gorbachev knows from

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the President and from Secretary Baker that the U.S. wants him to succeed. The President also assured President Finnbogadottir that the U.S. would do its part to advance peace, perhaps through significant reductions, but would not move hastily for the sake of public relations. (Ø)

President Finnbogadottir said she appreciated the President's comments, adding that her country approaches world problems from a different angle. Iceland is deeply involved in environmental issues. Before going to Luther College to receive an honorary degree, President Finnbogadottir had been at the University of Bologna, where she met scientists from around the world working on a new, interdisciplinary concept of "cognitive mapping." She said that Iceland wanted to do its share and invited this group to come to her country. (Ø)

The President replied that EPA Administrator Reilly had just returned from Europe, where he had explored various environmental proposals. The President reaffirmed his commitment to the environment and mentioned recent conferences held in Kenya and The Hague, adding that he hoped there could be more gatherings at the experts' level to harness global efforts. The President said he was thinking of having a conference at that level, though he was not quite ready to announce it formally. (Ø)

President Finnbogadottir affirmed the desirability of cooperation between a small country like Iceland and a giant one like the U.S. She specifically suggested a gathering in Iceland for an event called "Mission Year 2000," adding that the image of the U.S. she had gleaned from her recent visits to Iowa and Pennsylvania was not that usually seen in Europe. She further suggested that the U.S. cooperate in a project on "Tourism: A Vital Source for Peace." (Ø)

The President asked President Finnebogadottir to convey further details on the projects to Ambassador Ruwe. The President concluded by noting that he had recently gone to North Dakota to join in that state's efforts to plant 100 million trees, as part of its efforts to address problems affecting the international environment. (Ø)

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