

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Manfred Woerner, Secretary General of NATO

PARTICIPANTS: The President
James A. Baker, III, Secretary of State
Alton Keel, Permanent U.S. Representative to the North Atlantic Council
John Sununu, Chief of Staff to the President
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Paul Wolfowitz, Under Secretary of Defense
Robert Zoellick, State Department Counselor
Robert Blackwill, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (notetaker)

Manfred Woerner, Secretary General
Marcello Guidi, Deputy Secretary General
James Cunningham, Director of the Secretary General's Private Office

DATE, TIME May 29, 1989, 9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
AND PLACE: NATO Headquarters, Brussels

The President said that the SNF issue was still unresolved. He asked the Secretary General, as the host for the Summit meetings, for his advice. (Ø)

Secretary General Woerner said that one clear priority was to keep the Summit from being dominated by the missile issue, although the press would focus on it. He wished to avoid spending the morning discussing SNF instead of the main purpose of the Summit, which was to look forward to the great opportunities lying ahead. The Allies should create a group chaired by Deputy Secretary General Guidi to see if there was anything that could be done. (Ø)

The President thought this was a good idea. (Ø)

Secretary General Woerner asked for the President's support. (Ø)

The President asked how much time the prepared interventions should take. (U)

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Secretary General Woerner expected they would average about ten minutes each for the sixteen heads of state and government. (U)

General Scowcroft commented that the President's intervention was slightly longer than ten minutes. (U)

Secretary General Woerner asked that the intervention not last more than twelve minutes. (Ø)

The President said he wished to be forward looking and mention his decision on COCOM no exceptions policy and Jackson-Vanik, but he did not wish to take advantage. He recalled sitting through speeches at the United Nations. (Ø)

Secretary Baker observed that those in the room would be interested in the President's major conventional arms control proposal. (Ø)

The President said the U.S. would not move any further on SNF. It would be unwise, he said, to be driven by the lowest common denominator. (Ø)

Secretary General Woerner said he did not wish to contradict the President. (Ø)

Secretary Baker said he had detected a little more flexibility on when the SNF negotiations might commence and the conditions thereto, but none on the question of the third zero. The UK, French, and Dutch may support the U.S., so Genscher might worry that he will be isolated. (Ø)

Secretary General Woerner said he was more pessimistic. The Alliance needed to emphasize its political objectives. (Ø)

The President said his CFE proposal alters the previous Western approach to the talks in an unprecedented way. The West would be moving forward in CFE. This would bring SNF negotiations closer. Things were different now and, naturally, time would be needed to study the situation. The President hoped Genscher would take this suggestion. (Ø)

Secretary General Woerner advised the President not to set a new deadline for arriving at a decision on SNF. This would put all the public expectations and pressure on the Alliance. German domestic pressure would continue. Those who blocked agreement should not be allowed to claim victory on the issue of SNF negotiations with only "details" to be worked out. Genscher was popular because he said the weapons are no good and negotiations will solve everything. The Allies needed to explain to its publics the rationale for nuclear weapons. (Ø)

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Continuing, Secretary General Woerner urged the President to point out that the U.S. had come a long way to gain an agreement. People asked why SNF would be needed if there was conventional stability. This view was dangerous because, even if there was a conventional balance, SNF weapons would still be necessary. This point was not easy to explain. The Secretary General also remarked that the President had given a good speech on Eastern Europe; he should repeat that message. (P)

Governor Sununu asked whether there was any Allied support for the Secretary General's language on the SNF issue. (P)

Secretary General Woerner said this text could be a basis for compromise except for Genscher. Genscher might accept tying SNF negotiations to a CFE agreement. But Genscher could not accept exclusion of the possibility of a third zero. There had been bitter arguments between Genscher and Kohl which threatened the coalition. Kohl could accept the Secretary General's formulation but Genscher could not. (P)

Secretary Baker said the Alliance could not let itself be driven by a representative of five percent of the German electorate. It was clear from the (Quad) breakfast that no compromise was possible on the issue of the third zero. (P)