

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: The President's Meeting with Richard von Weizsaecker, President of the Federal Republic of Germany (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
James A. Baker, Secretary of State  
Governor John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff  
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Marlin Fitzwater, Assistant to the President and Press Secretary  
General Vernon Walters, U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany  
Robert D. Blackwill, Special Assistant to the President for European and Soviet Affairs  
William Bodde, Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs

President Richard von Weizsaecker  
Klaus Blech, State Secretary, Federal Presidential Office  
Ambassador Juergen Ruhfus

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: June 6, 1989, 3:50 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.  
The Oval Office

The President said he hoped President von Weizsaecker's visit was going well and congratulated him on the very successful Kennedy Center performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony by the Berlin Opera's philharmonic orchestra. (U)

President von Weizsaecker said it had been a heavy schedule of meetings with Senators and Congressmen, including Congressman Hamilton's German study group, as well as a breakfast with Henry Kissinger. In all those talks, the Federal Republic was in the middle of discussions regarding the NATO Summit, Mainz, and the President's Washington Post interview. With Kissinger, the discussion was on questions surrounding Yalta. (U)

President von Weizsaecker said that the Federal Republic's aim is freedom and a unified Europe, but this cannot be achieved without reform by East European governments. The reform process in the East must go ahead under control and not become too turbulent. Poland and Hungary want to come closer, step-by-step, toward the EC and the Council of Europe in economic matters, but they are also sensitive to Soviet security preoccupations. They want to

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stay in the Warsaw Pact and become closer to the West. It will be a sensitive time. President von Weizsaecker suggested that after the NATO proposal, it would be useful if the U.S. had quiet talks with Moscow about the future of Eastern Europe. Europeans need to have similar talks, based, of course, on the values of the Atlantic Alliance. Germany is not at the end of the 19th century, he concluded, and does not want another option to the East. (Ø)

The President asked whether President von Weizsaecker was getting questions about reunification and Germany's role in Europe. (Ø)

President von Weizsaecker replied that he was getting such questions from every group -- Congress, the press, Jewish groups -- and that his answer was always the same. The Germans should not expect any Soviet offers in that direction. This will not happen. Chairman Gorbachev made that clear when von Weizsaecker visited him a year and a half ago. President von Weizsaecker commented that Chairman Gorbachev had simply said the future is unclear, adding that Chairman Gorbachev would be arriving in Bonn the next Monday. (Ø)

The President asked what Chairman Gorbachev would say, and whether he would reopen the SNF issue. (Ø)

President von Weizsaecker said that Chairman Gorbachev was not likely to press on SNF. What the Soviets are primarily after is to proceed with their plans at home concerning agriculture, consumer goods, and the like and to use Western resources and expertise to help. He expressed certainty that no long term Soviet proposal will emerge with respect to the two Germans, because Gorbachev cannot substantiate his concept of the European house. There is a sense among all the peoples of Europe, President von Weizsaecker said, along the lines of the President's Mainz speech: it is time for Europe to come together again. But Gorbachev will not be specific in Bonn. (Ø)

The President noted that he had said in Mainz that in a European home people have to be able to move from room to room. (Ø)

President von Weizsaecker observed that in their foreign relations, the Soviets are approaching a time that is totally unknown to them, and they are legitimately worried. The West needs to talk to Moscow to alleviate these fears. (Ø)

The President said that he had just come from the Soviet Embassy to pay his respects to those who lost their lives in the railway disaster. The Soviet Ambassador was reasonably positive about NATO's CFE proposal and said he had just been in Moscow with Gorbachev. On China, the President added, he had the feeling that the Soviets are saying, there but for the grace of God go I. They may be worrying that reform could affect them in the same way, as is clear from the press release the Soviet government

issued today. The President added that too little is known about the events in China to say what will happen next, but the U.S. must tend to its strategic relationship. (U)

President von Weizsaecker asked whether there was anything the President wanted him to say to Chairman Gorbachev next week in Bonn. (U)

The President replied only that he wishes him well. (U)

President von Weizsaecker noted in conclusion that he was convinced that the U.S.-German relationship is on solid, solid ground. (U)

The President agreed. (U)