

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: The President's Meeting with Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of West Germany

(U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
James A. Baker, Secretary of State
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
Robert M. Gates, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
James Dobbins, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs
Robert D. Blackwill, Special Assistant to the President for European and Soviet Affairs (Notetaker)

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Foreign Minister
Dieter Kastrup, Political Director,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ambassador Juergen Ruhfus

DATE, TIME June 21, 1989, 11:50 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. EDT
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President began by asking about Chairman Gorbachev's June 12-15 visit to the Federal Republic. (ϕ)

Foreign Minister Genscher said it was an important visit, Gorbachev's first official visit to the FRG. The Foreign Minister said the joint FRG-Soviet declaration was very important as the basis for the fundamental values of human rights and national self-determination. The declaration also emphasized the importance of global challenges. The German side stressed that any discussion of the future of Europe must include the U.S. and Canada as a part of this Europe, this "common European house." Gorbachev had made clear that he is interested in close relations with the Germans and with the U.S. The Foreign Minister said he had no doubt that Gorbachev feels U.S. involvement in Europe is in Soviet interests. While in Bonn, Gorbachev had asked that his hosts extend his best wishes to the President and to say that he values the President's conventional arms proposal. (ϕ)

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The President asked whether the question of German reunification arose. (Ø)

Foreign Minister Genscher replied that Gorbachev had raised this with him in 1986. On this visit, Gorbachev had noted that the East German leadership faced serious problems. The Foreign Minister had agreed, noting that the GDR has no national identity and has a standard of living lower than in the FRG. There will be reform in the GDR, the Foreign Minister said, but Moscow is worried that it will come too slowly. Genscher said Gorbachev had asked the West Germans not to talk too loudly about reunification but rather to let events take their course -- toward a more cooperative and integrated Europe, not a reestablishment of the German Empire. As this happens, Genscher concluded, the separation of the two German states will become less important. Germany's fate thus becomes the fate of a reformed Europe, not a separate issue. The FRG will also draw Eastern Europe toward it, if Western Europe continues the process of economic and political integration. (Ø)

The President asked whether the interest of Poland and Hungary in the European Community was political as well as economic. (Ø)

Foreign Minister Genscher replied that in the first stage the interest is economic, because they want help. They also want to show that they are western Europeans, sharing those values; but the FRG cannot proceed with them outside the security context, since they cannot talk of leaving the Warsaw Pact. The Foreign Minister observed that this is a period of great change after decades of a very bad situation. It was therefore very important that the Alliance demonstrated unity at the Brussels Summit. In that context, the Foreign Minister said that President's speech in Mainz was also a great success. (Ø)

The President said that it was very helpful that Gorbachev's visit affirmed the idea that the "European home" must include the U.S. and Canada. The President expressed his appreciation for that and promised to stay in very close touch with the Bonn coalition. (Ø)

Secretary Baker noted that he and Foreign Minister Genscher had discussed the importance of pushing through the President's CFE proposal in all its elements by September 7. (U)

The President pledged that the U.S. would push hard and not drag its feet. He acknowledged that some find the timetable too ambitious, but said that he would go forward and felt Gorbachev would do so as well. (U)

Foreign Minister Genscher said he did not consider the timetable too ambitious, adding that it was also important to push hard for a ban on chemical weapons. (U)

The President, concluding the meeting, said that verification was a major problem but that he would love to find ways to achieve a global CW ban. (U)