

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Foreign Minister
Hans-Dietrich Genscher of the Federal
Republic of Germany (U)

PARTICIPANTS: U.S.
The President
James A. Baker III, Secretary of State
John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Robert M. Gates, Assistant to the President
and Deputy for National Security Affairs
Robert D. Blackwill, Special Assistant to the
President for European and Soviet Affairs
Raymond G.H. Seitz, Assistant Secretary of
State for European and Canadian Affairs
Vernon Walters, U.S. Ambassador to the FRG
Gisela Marcuse, Interpreter

FRG
Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Foreign Minister
Dieter Kastrup, Ministerial Director,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Josef Holik, Commissioner for Arms Control
and Disarmament
Juergen Ruhfus, Ambassador
Dorothee Kaltenbach, Interpreter

DATE, TIME November 21, 1989, 10:10 - 10:45 a.m. EST
AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President opened the meeting at 10:10 a.m. in the Oval
Office. (U)

The President: I am interested in your reactions on SNF. I was
worried about the story in this morning's paper. It caused me
heartburn. The Alliance needs to stay together. ~~(S)~~

Foreign Minister Genscher: We have an agreement to defer the
issue until 1992. ~~(C)~~

The President: At Malta, there will be no surprises to our
Allies. There will be full consultation. My meeting with
Gorbachev is very timely. We need to discuss the changes taking

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place. We have been criticized here for not jumping on top of the Wall and cheering, but things are moving in freedom's way. (S)

Foreign Minister Genscher: One should never change a winning team. We should never change the winning concept agreed to at NATO in May. We are confident you will handle your meeting with Gorbachev well. We want better relations between the superpowers, because that will increase the freedom of maneuver in Europe. Germany's fate is embedded in this. There will be no isolated or singular German policy toward the East. We will stay firmly in the West. We want to keep the EC integration process going. The Strasbourg summit will be important in this respect. It will encourage reform in Eastern Europe. (S)

The USSR is part of Europe, so we cannot guarantee stability without the participation of the United States. We need to improve the political character and the arms control character of the Alliance and focus more on the arms control process. The more arms control in Europe, the less likely Soviet military, or even political, intervention in Eastern Europe. Second, the philosophy of the Russians has changed. They are less based on the military and the police. Instead, they have concluded that stability will only last if it is based on the consent of the publics in Eastern Europe, as long as these countries stay in the Warsaw Pact. The West needs to stress that we want these reforms to succeed, that we will not take any advantage of the problems or crises they will surely face in Moscow. Your meeting with Gorbachev will be helpful in this regard. (S)

The President: Gorbachev is concerned about German reunification. Is there a likelihood that the rapidity of change that has come to Eastern Europe will result in an instant demand in Germany for reunification? We know in the long run this is for the German people to decide, based on self-determination. But will reunification move faster than any of us think? (S)

Foreign Minister Genscher: No one can foresee. In the GDR, at the top of the agenda is freedom, democracy, and free elections. Last night, 200,000 in Leipzig shouted "one nation" again and again. So things are changing. When the GDR establishes a democracy, the better for the whole of Europe. It cannot be a concern for others to see Germans in freedom. This is a great advantage in Europe. Events in the GDR are not isolated events; they are embedded in a European framework. It is important for all to know that we will stick to our obligations in NATO and the EC. We do not want a special course for Germany, but we do not want self-determination everywhere except in Germany. That would not be acceptable. Whatever is done in Germany must be done in the context of the European Community. But all of this must be done in a way that does not alarm the Soviet Union. That is why we must stick to our current borders. That is a condition of the building of a stable structure in Europe, a structure first mentioned in 1967 in the Harmel report. We in the West have had the vision, not the Soviets. We need to repeat this to public opinion. (S)

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The President: I hope you will share your views with us concerning Malta. It is not an arms control meeting. If Gorbachev tries to make it an arms control meeting, I will say we have our allies and we will make no unilateral deals. He might propose the total withdrawal of all U.S. and Soviet troops from Europe. (S)

Foreign Minister Genscher: I do not think he will play the German card. He is very much satisfied with a U.S. presence on German soil. (S)

The President: We want to know what you think. I want to understand what Gorbachev thinks are his limits now. I want to know what he means regarding German reunification. Until he changes Soviet policy in our hemisphere, we will not move completely on the economic side. (S)

Foreign Minister Genscher: German reunification is discussed more outside Germany than inside Germany. Germans are now concentrating on free elections in the GDR. (C)

-- End of Conversation --

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