

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with President Mitterrand of France

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Mitterrand
Interpreter: Carol Wolter
Notetaker: Heather Wilson

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: January 27, 1990, 7:04 - 7:18am EST
The Oval Office

The President telephoned President Mitterrand concerning the present situation in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and the Vienna conventional arms negotiations. (S)

President Mitterrand: Good Morning, George. (U)

The President: Good Morning! (U)

President Mitterrand: Are you awake too early? (U)

The President: No, I'm always up early. I'm here in the Oval Office with Brent Scowcroft. (U)

President Mitterrand: You wanted to speak to me today. (U)

The President: Yes, it's nice of you to take the call on a weekend. (U)

President Mitterrand: No, I am also working. (U)

The President: I wanted to talk to you today about the way the political situation is developing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and how these events relate to our position in the talks on conventional arms in Vienna. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, I understand. (U)

The President: As you know, our proposal on the table calls for the United States and the Soviet Union to have no more than 275,000 troops stationed in Europe when the CFE reductions are complete, in the mid-1990s. The Soviets have been putting out hints that the figure is completely unrealistic. I think they are right. (S)

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President Mitterrand: But this approach should not be confused with the neutralization of Germany, which is the Soviet objective. (S)

The President: Yes, of course. I share your concern on that. Tell me, do you worry more about the neutralization of Germany now than you did when we last talked? (S)

President Mitterrand: I think there is a drive to reunification which the West Germans want and the East Germans are not resisting very much. If, by the end of the year, we have elected Parliaments on both sides which have that (reunification) as their program, then there could be a great popular movement in favor of ridding Germany of all foreign troops and nuclear weapons. That is the only risk, and it is a major one. But I think it can be contained. I think your decision to go to 195,000 is a good one provided that it is accompanied by a speech in which this idea is set forth. We cannot allow the neutralization of Germany. (S)

The President: I think if you want to see Eagleburger and Gates, or your top officials. These concerns are extraordinarily interesting to me and I would like to hear your views from the heart. (S)

President Mitterrand: They will be received at a high level, and, in any case, I will see them. (S)

The President: Good. I will have my office get in touch with Jacques Attali. In the meantime, any questions that you have, you could let me or General Scowcroft know. I need your advice and counsel and I'm glad that, on a preliminary view, it sounds okay to you. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, it makes sense. I have mentioned my concerns. Kohl's enthusiasm is not fully reassuring. (S)

The President: It might be good for you, if you have the opportunity, to express these concerns directly to Kohl. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, it is a good plan provided we agree you cannot go from one topic to another: the necessary reduction of forces to the idea that there will be nothing left between the Soviet Union and the two other nuclear powers (Britain and France). (S)

The President: And what do you think Thatcher's view will be? You know her better than I do. (S)

President Mitterrand: She won't be happy. But as long as it is not the beginning of the departure. Thank you for calling and I will receive your emissaries. (S)

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The President: I would like to talk to you again, next month, to get your views on Eastern Europe more generally. (S)

President Mitterrand: Yes, of course. I am coming back from Hungary. I will speak to you about that. I think a lot about this. (S)

The President: Thank you, my office will be in touch with yours. (U)

The two parties wished each other well and said good bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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