

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Berlin Governing Mayor
Walter Momper (U)

PARTICIPANTS: U.S.
The President
The Vice 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
James Dobbins, Deputy Assistant Secretary of
State for European and Canadian Affairs
Harry Gilmore, U.S. Minister, Berlin

Berlin

Walter Momper, Governing Mayor
Juergen Ruhfus, FRG Ambassador to the U.S.
Matthias Muelmenstaedt, Counselor

DATE, TIME February 27, 1990, 3:05 - 3:21 p.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office (U)

Mayor Momper: The shape of the problem is becoming clear. The atmosphere was euphoric, but now realism is setting in the GDR. People in the GDR are frightened about what a market economy means, and what social security means. They are frightened also about the currency and economic union. When an economic union comes, it will be better. In the FRG, all ask how much does it cost, and who will pay? (U)

But first I want to thank you for making these events possible. Berliners will never forget, beginning with the Berlin blockade, the role you have played for 45 years. (U)

The President: That is very generous. I very much appreciate your comment, and the fact that the German people say such generous things. But I must tell you we are very excited about what's going on, and want to conduct ourselves in a way that can help. People ask who is the enemy, and I say complacency. We hope the U.S. will have an ongoing military role in Europe and in Germany. We will keep saying that we want to play a stabilizing role. Perhaps because of geography and history, we are not seen as a threat to anybody. (U)

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Mayor Momper: That will be necessary. You play an important role and will in the future. Regarding West Berlin, as long as the Soviets are in the GDR, Allied troops should remain in Berlin. They are a necessary guarantee to our security. (C)

You must stay there whatever comes out of the Two Plus Four talks. We are in a transition period toward a new European peace order, coming from the CSCE process. The process of German unity is accelerating and will be even faster after March 18. We may see unification this year. (C)

The President: The Two Plus Four framework becomes important. We are convinced that there shouldn't be equality between the treatment of U.S. and Soviet troops. The Soviets are not wanted, but US forces are wanted. That's a big difference. As you look at the security of Europe, there will be a role for NATO, and for US troops as a stabilizing force. We are under pressure here for a "peace dividend," but I will resist. (C)

Mayor Momper: I agree. We need the Atlantic Alliance. We need the Atlantic partnership. We need either troops or other precautions. Over the long run, most Social Democrats think we should stay in NATO, which will become more political. (C)

The President: Is there any sentiment in Germany for total foreign troop withdrawal in a united Germany? (C)

Mayor Momper: A small percentage feels that way. Egon Bahr believes this, but not the majority in my party. People in the FRG want to belong to the West and the Atlantic Alliance. People in the GDR want to join the West. That is why Modrow's neutralization was so totally rejected. People do not want neutralism in either the FRG or the GDR. (C)

Secretary Baker: The desire to keep American troops in Europe is spreading to Eastern Europe. (C)

The President: We don't feel Gorbachev is embarrassed about the U.S. military presence. I hope that is right. We will keep trying to persuade him, to convince him we are not trying to exacerbate his problems. I told Chancellor Kohl that we are eager to finish START, CFE, and CW, to show Gorbachev that we will keep trying to improve our relationship. (C)

Mayor Momper: In Ottawa, the agreement on Two Plus Four and the new manpower initiative were great results for us. The Soviets in Berlin look for cooperation with the U.S. (C)

-- End of Conversation --