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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany

PARTICIPANTS: The President
(Small Meeting) James A. Baker, Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Gisela Marcuse, Interpreter

Helmut Kohl, Chancellor
Peter Hartmann, Deputy National Security
Adviser
Dorothea Kaltenbach, Interpreter

PARTICIPANTS: The President
(Dinner) The Vice President
James A. Baker, Secretary of State
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DATE, TIME June 8, 1990, 7:00 - 9:15 pm
AND PLACE: Oval Office/Old Family Dining Room

Chancellor Kohl: There are two things related to NATO that I wanted to raise. Germany going out of NATO would mean forty years have been wasted. NATO would collapse and the US would withdraw from Europe. Gorbachev knows this, but we have to find a way to help him without giving anything up. (S)

Second, NATO must send a clear message to Gorbachev that we are ready to adapt. It is strange. East Germany is chairman of the Warsaw Pact meetings right now. (S)

The President: And Hungary wants to get out of the Warsaw Pact. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I think our closest people should get together and put together a message for Gorbachev which conveys this

willingness to change. We don't want it to leak out. The Alliances could, perhaps, conclude a non-aggression pact. I just want to float the idea. (S)

The President: What it might do, though, is to cement the Warsaw Pact together. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: You could take them one by one. But we must keep this in a very close group. I could send Teltschik over if this is required. Your Summit came across very well. Brent told me that the human Gorbachev was very good as well. (S)

Second, I would think that -- not in the Two Plus Four forum -- we could agree to limits on the Bundeswehr. The big problem is the New People's Army in the GDR. They are 180,000 strong, including professionals and an officer corps drilled in the ideology. We can't use them. Only about twenty percent can be used. (S)

The Soviets will ask how many troops the future Germany will have. There are 450,000 in the Bundeswehr now, and 180,000 in the New People's Army. Maybe we should prepare now a certain figure for Germany. When unification concludes, it must be a sovereign Germany. I can accept Soviet troops in East Germany for three years, so long as it is based on a treaty between two sovereign states. Over the next few weeks -- before the NATO Summit -- we should arrive at a figure for the Bundeswehr. (S)

The President: How should we do this? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: We could send one or two people over to talk. There is something irrational about the Soviets that we have to consider. It is their psyche -- but Germany has invaded the Soviet Union twice. (S)

The President: I told the Soviets that Germany is reformed. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: They don't say Napoleon is French, but a European. But a German is a German. They did have over 20 million killed. They will be tough on this point. (S)

The third point. I expect a letter from Gorbachev on economic issues. They have two ideas -- one of which they raised with you. (S)

The President: He raised it only in passing, at the end of a meeting. He said he needed aid and hoped we could be a part of it. Nothing more specific. (S)

((Secretary Baker joined the meeting.))

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Chancellor Kohl: (The Chancellor repeated his introduction of the economic issue for Secretary Baker.) They have the expectation that we will help -- 20-25 billion. He used this figure with Teltschik. It would be to buy goods for consumption. (S)

But the second economic idea is for June, and the FRG only. It would be a loan of five billion DM to extend their credit line. Guaranteed. They said we could expect something in return. (S)

The President: I told him that the reality was that we would have big problems: Cuba, Lithuania. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: We're talking about two different things -- one now and one in the autumn. (S)

I think Gorbachev is seeking a way to settle the NATO issue. If Germany is not in NATO, the US will leave and Great Britain and France will have a nuclear entente. Then the small powers will be left alone. Then parallel to NATO is the question of the EC. If we change the security situation now, it would have a catastrophic effect on the EC. There would be two nuclear powers, a neutral Germany, and the small powers with nowhere to go. Then begins a debate in Germany: Why don't we have nuclear weapons? (S)

Gorbachev must understand this is non-negotiable, but we must try hard to make it easy. (S)

So there are three points. They will ask: How many troops will there be in the FRG? We won't allow this to be discussed in the Two Plus Four. I want to settle it now -- on the NATO level and not in the Two Plus Four. We have a big problem on the hard part, the New People's Army. It is a Party army, with many professionals. I would like us to agree on troop levels before we go into the NATO Summit. (S)

We also have to give a message to NATO, and the President of the United States must be a leader. What kind of proposals can we make? The Warsaw Pact has agreed to do some stocktaking and see how things progress. I was just thinking that De Maiziere was the chairman of that meeting. One idea I'm floating around was a non-aggression pact. (S)

Secretary Baker: We discussed this at Turnberry. It is dangerous to give the Warsaw Pact legitimacy, but we could do it for individual states. Some allies are too hard over on the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. The ball now is Germany in NATO, and some continued existence of the Warsaw Pact might be conducive to that. (S)

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There is a psychological point. The Soviet Union doesn't want to look like losers. Shevardnadze told me we would hear specifics on this point. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: We must send a signal to the Soviet Union on this point at the NATO Summit. (S)

- End of Small Meeting -

Dinner began at 7:30pm

The President: I am worried. How many Soviet troops would be in Germany, and for how long? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: It's feasible that they would stay for a short time, if we conclude a SOFA treaty. Then they couldn't claim the parallel issue. (S)

The President: How about German public opinion on this? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: One can't win support in Germany for the idea of Germany not in NATO. Only the Greens have opted out. Once we have all-German elections, I don't foresee problems. Germans in the GDR want the Soviets out. (S)

The President: But will the troops leave? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: We could agree to two or three years. (S)

The President: How valid is the argument they make, that they can't bring their troops out because they have no housing. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: This is no argument to leave troops there. (S)

The President: Gorbachev didn't say he wanted the U.S. out of Germany. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: All countries want the U.S. in Germany as part of NATO, and they want Germany in NATO. That, for the Europeans, puts two roofs over Germany. (S)

I am frequently asked about the timetable (for unification? for elections?). I have only limited influence on the timetable. (S)

The President: Has Poland been pacified with the way things are going? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: A decision is needed in about two weeks in the

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GDR and the FRG, to give a solemn declaration that, as their first act, the two Germanies will guarantee the border. (S)

The President: Will Walesa come in? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I don't think so. (S)

The President: I was impressed with Mazowiecki. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes. But it would be a mistake for him to become President. That would shunt him aside. Poland is falling behind in economic progress. Czechoslovakia is doing better. (S)

Secretary Baker: We agreed on SNF to kick the can down the road by studying the appropriate mix. Push it until after your elections. We should avoid taking up TASM. (S)

The President: When are the elections? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: They have to come between the last Sunday in November and the middle of January. My tactical approach is to keep it vague for now. (S)

Secretary Baker: Shevardnadze just told me the transition period didn't have to go past unification, provided the issue of troop levels was solved. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I think we should stabilize Gorbachev. Yeltsin is not a substitute. He is appealing to Slavophile feeling. (S)

The President: The question is, how does Gorbachev fit into Europe in a way which saves face. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: It's too bad there is a limitation on the press that is arriving with De Maiziere. You should let more of them in. (S)

The President: We'll take care of that. Any other advice for my meeting with him? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: (Described De Maiziere's family history)

The President: What was his instrument? (U)

Chancellor Kohl: The cello. He has no one he can rely on. (S)

The dinner ended at 9:15pm

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