

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Helmut Kohl, Chancellor
Notetaker: Robert Hutchings, NSC Staff
Interpreter: Gisela Marcuse

DATE, TIME: October 17, 1990, 9:19 - 9:30 a.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President placed the call at Chancellor Kohl's initiation.
(U)

The President: Helmut! How are you? (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Very good, thank you. Thank you for the message concerning the attempt on the life of Minister Schaeuble. Thank you for your sympathy. I am calling to ask how you are. I have nothing special in mind except to express my sympathy that you have to resolve quite a number of issues. I always thought it is good to have a friendly word of support. (U)

The President: Thank you. How do you see the Gulf situation from the point of view of public opinion in Germany? (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Hopes continue that this will not become a shooting war. We feel some pressure. There is the problem of dependents of Germans there. Messages have been sent to me saying that we should make some gesture, on the possibility that some Germans could be released. We will not do this. It would be outside the common policy of nations standing together. (U)

The President: How many hostages do you have? (U)

Chancellor Kohl: We don't know exactly. It is more than 300. Nevertheless, this is not a price we are going to pay. If we did, it would all be over. (U)

The President: Exactly. My problem is that this man continues to brutalize Kuwait and take it over. This is a new ingredient, and it has us very concerned. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes. It cannot be permitted. (U)

The President: You are doing well in the elections in eastern Germany. Congratulations. The CDU did better than expected in public opinion. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: The public is essentially the journalists from the press. For 20 years the majority of the journalists have been against me. (Ø)

The President: True. We've had the majority against us for a long time. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: It is something one has to put up with. We are working a gut issue, a very difficult issue on agriculture. We need to resolve this. I think maybe we should continue contacts through our staffs before we meet. On the occasion of your visit to Germany, we could talk about this. I am looking forward to welcoming you and Barbara. (Ø)

The President: Fine. Do you have a feeling about where we ought to go or not go? (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: That depends on what period of time you have in mind for the visit. (Ø)

The President: It would probably be very short, unfortunately. I will be jumping around, ending up visiting our troops. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: For that reason, we thought of Ramstein, which has one of the biggest concentrations of U.S. soldiers. From there it is only a few minutes to my house. (Ø)

The President: Let me ask that Horst and Brent stay in touch. The main thing is that I look forward to seeing you. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: We will find a good solution. (U)

The President: You blurred out a few minutes ago, so I want to return to the Uruguay Round. We have put forward new, more flexible agricultural proposals and also a more flexible textile proposal. I hope you can get the EC to give a little, also. We must have a successful Round, including meaningful agricultural reform, which is also important to the Third World. So may I urge you, if possible, to persuade the EC to be a little more flexible. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: We want to be helpful, so there will not be a rift about it. We will have to work it out now and not wait until December. (Ø)

The President: We will be in touch. Thank you for your thoughtful call. We will get our budget sorted out; don't worry about it. But it is good, as you said, to hear from a friend. (U)

-- End of Conversation --