

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Chancellor Kohl of Germany (U)

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

DATE, TIME: January 28, 1991, 11:50 - 11:57 a.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President initiated the call. (U)

The President: Helmut, I am back again. The 6 billion dollars was our original proposal. It includes a new 5 billion for operations and 1 billion on the track before for Desert Shield, before hostilities broke out. The 6 billion would put German participation to just over 10%. 5 billion would put it at just under 10%. I think from the perception of the public -- which we will join you in fighting, whatever you decide -- it would be better if you committed 6 billion. There might be a compromise; 5 1/2 billion would be exactly 10 percent. But whatever you do will be fine with me. We will welcome your contribution and express our gratitude. I will tell you that Congress, in its infinite wisdom, would react better to 6 than 5, but I don't want to get into a rug auction like in Baghdad. I hope it will be 6 but if it can't be, we will understand and put the best possible face on it. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: If 5 1/2 billion would be exactly 10 percent, then we will make it 5 1/2 and the rest will go to London. (S)

The President: Let's do that. I am grateful to you. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: London would be almost another billion dollars. (S)

The President: We will point that out, too. It is very generous. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I would like to ask you not to tell the public the exact amount for London. You could say 5 1/2 billion and also a contribution for London. (S)

The President: We could say 5 1/2 and be silent on London or whatever you prefer. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: It would be better for tomorrow to say that we have agreed on 5 1/2 billion, and if asked you could say that we will also support London. (S)

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The President: Let me be clear. It is okay to say today or tomorrow that Germany has agreed to 5 1/2 billion dollars. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: Tomorrow, please, because it is already evening here. (Ø)

The President: We will be silent today and wait until your announcement and then follow up with gratitude. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: That makes the thing definite from my side. (Ø)

The President: Okay. Thanks very much. (U)

-- End of Conversation --