

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Prime Minister Gro Harlem
Brundtland of Norway

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Andrew Card, Special Assistant to the
President and Deputy Chief of Staff
Ralph Johnson, Acting Assistant Secretary of
State
Nancy Bearg Dyke, Director for International
Programs and Public Diplomacy, NSC
(Notetaker)

Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister
Per Arne Bjerke, State Secretary
Marten Weiland, Adviser
Kjeld Vibe, Ambassador to the United States
Martin Huslid, Permanent Representative to
the United Nations

DATE, TIME September 24, 1991, 2:00 - 2:30pm EST
AND PLACE: Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York City

The President: Welcome. I am delighted to see you. (U)

Prime Minister Brundtland: I have read the speech of the Soviet Foreign Minister. It looks very positive. Your statement was excellent. My own view in many ways is along the same lines: a world economy, importance of the Uruguay Round, emphasis on democracy and economic growth. The Soviets need trade; that is the real way for the Soviet Union to be part of the world economy. In Norway, we feel not to take any risk is the greatest risk. You have taken a risk on Gorbachev, deciding to build a new companionship and relationship. I want to support the courage you have shown, and President Reagan too, to push to promote change in democratic ways -- and this is what it has lead to. Without that, we wouldn't have the position developed. So, it is important not to lose the momentum. The US is the leader. (C)

The President: You are very generous. We all have lots at stake that the Soviets not decline into economic anarchy. It is an enormous challenge... humanitarian. We will do our part. On economic aid, it is absolutely essential before real substantial progress that they need to work out an agreement. I talked to Foreign Minister Pankin this morning. (C)

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I know you are interested in avoiding a nuclear confrontation. It is our view that we can do more now on that. But Soviet missiles still are aimed at us and it is difficult to do as much in aid and financial support. Monolithic communism is history, but there are still arms problems to work out. We got a START agreement but it is almost passe'. There are still things to be done. There are still trouble spots around the world. NATO is important. US military strength is important. Today, we got a call on Zaire. We have got to stay strong. An active NATO is important. We must help the Soviet Union keep on a path. (C)

Prime Minister Brundtland: We think the Soviets can be helped with technical know how and help in building democracy. We did a forum on energy issues. There is a Soviet buildup in the Kola Peninsula. We are concentrating on the environmental side now. The Soviets are dumping waste there. (C)

The President: Are they cooperating? (C)

Prime Minister Brundtland: They are trying. I signed a document with Gorbachev, and we identified the problem as common interest. With the problem there, we have to deal with Russia. We are planning a Norway-Russia economic commission like we have had with the Soviet Union. (C)

The President: Not just the environment? (C)

Prime Minister Brundtland: Yes, more. The dividing line is the Barents Sea. There is a dispute on the border line in the sea and Continental Shelf. Gorbachev said it is three-fourths solved. We have gradually narrowed to a solution. Now Russia wants to participate before it is finalized. The Russian Republic is coming up as a stronger and stronger force. (C)

Short-range Nuclear Forces are still pointed at Norway. It has to do with the flank, and Norway is in a special situation and we would like to have more focus on short-range missiles targeted on Norway. All that has happened in five years benefits Norway, but we do have this special problem. (C)

The President: In any talks we have on this down the road we will not neglect Norway's interests. We don't want to make any deals that are detrimental to a friend. (C)

Prime Minister Brundtland: We get easily forgotten in the NATO context. The focus is on central Europe. We have to keep the US-Norway link. The EC concentrates on the center. Atlantic communications lines are important to us. That is also why we do not want the NATO pillar replaced by the EC. First, we are not EC members. Second, our geographical situation leads to a necessity for NATO. Even if we are members in two years (which could happen), we still want the NATO pillar. (C)

The President: A strong NATO is in everyone's interest. We hear talk of other security arrangements, but it is in the interest of Europe and the US for the US to be involved in Europe and to have NATO. The French view may be slightly different. Brent, do you want to add to that? (C)

General Scowcroft: The French have a slightly different view. They are inclined to think we will leave one day. (C)

Prime Minister Brundtland: We are closer to the German view to not weaken the transatlantic link. Why weaken the NATO alliance too much when it has had such an important impact on Europe and the Soviet Union? The point of the total picture is we did not allow NATO to weaken. In the NATO Summit, we expect a review of military preparations and discussions of whether NATO should be more political or military. France says political, Germany says political, and Norway says political but for different reasons. We think it is political. What we did in 1989 was an important push and background for what then happened with Germany and German unification supported by the Soviet Union. It made it easier to get results. Also, your relationship with Gorbachev was important. (C)

The President: There was an internal evolution with Gorbachev in the Soviet Union. It was a trauma when he was held. He is creeping back up now in strength. I credit Yeltsin with great courage, and if he had blinked an eye. . . They are finding that there is room for the center there. Gorbachev once showed a map with blue flags and said the US was encircling the Soviet Union. It was an age-old suspicion. We still have to convince them we are not the enemy. They have a big problem on defense conversion -- same thing in Eastern Europe. All are working together to manage change. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see in ten years totally harmonious republics? (C)

Prime Minister Brundtland: When I stayed in the US as a child, I wanted to bring a friend home to Norway but her father said no because the neighbor country was the Soviet Union. It stuck with me that Norway was very close to something dangerous. I am worried about the buildup in the Kola Peninsula but I am not afraid of the Soviet Union. (C)

The President: I met with Icelandic Prime Minister Oddsson. They have changed their position about naval arms. We have cut the Navy but will keep the Navy as a guarantee. The Philippines doesn't bother us. The facilities are somewhat obsolete and we can still perform our responsibilities. We will keep a relatively strong Navy presence. (C)

We were pleased with your cooperation on the Gulf. (U)

Prime Minister Brundtland: Yes, it cost \$80 per person in Norway. Do you believe we can succeed on the Uruguay Round? (U)

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The President: I am pessimistic. I had a long talk with Kohl. Germany can be a strong influence on France. The major stumbling block is agriculture. I should not have said I am pessimistic too quickly but it is not moving as briskly as we want. Kohl will help -- he is going into an election cycle. We are going into an election cycle too. (C)

General Scowcroft: Chancellor Kohl sounded determined to help. (C)

Prime Minister Brundtland: It is important to continue to try; it is important to move forward, otherwise the world freezes into trading blocs. Norway is ready to do what is necessary. For small countries, we need a conflict mechanism. For US courts to decide on trade conflicts is not appropriate. We have had three issues with the US out of 16. I hope it is coincidence. When your trade people look at cases, it is easier to choose a non-EC country. Salmon is one case. In order to have an international trade system, we must have a trade institution. (C)

The President: What are the other two? (U)

Prime Minister Brundtland: Dumping and a development contract in industry. The second was stupidly handled by Norwegians, naively handled. Salmon is really a strong US and Canadian interest. (C)

The President: Protection? (U)

Prime Minister Brundtland: Yes. I hope Kohl is serious in wanting to succeed. (C)

The President: You are right about blocs cropping up. We are trying to get free trade agreements with our neighbors, but **not** to interfere with GATT or free trade overall. (U)

Prime Minister Brundtland: I agree. Every free trade agreement is a building block to others. (U)

The President: Where are you going from here? (U)

Prime Minister Brundtland: Kentucky to receive an award. I'll be in Washington to see Senators Lugar and Nunn and Congressman Lee Hamilton. (U)

- End of Conversation -

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