

THE WHITE HOUSE
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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich of
Belarus (U)PARTICIPANT The President
James A. Baker III, Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Henson Moore, Deputy Chief of Staff
Robert Zoellick, Under Secretary of State for
Economic and Agricultural Affairs
Thomas Niles, Assistant Secretary of State for
European and Canadian Affairs
Robert Hutchings, Director for European and
Eurasian Affairs, National Security Council
(Notetaker)

Stanislav Shushkevich, Chairman of Supreme
Soviet, Belarus
Pavel Kozlovskiy, Minister of Defense
Petr Kravchanka, Minister of Foreign Affairs
A. Sychev, Director of External Economic
Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
N. Buzo, Counselor, Department of Information,
International Humanitarian Corp. & Human Rights
O. Ryabkov, InterpreterDATE AND TIME July 9, 1992, 3:30 - 4:00pm
PLACE: Helsinki Fair Center, FinlandThe President: So far, this is an interesting conference. (U)President Shushkevich: I am also pleased with it. I was glad to get your letter about the CSCE. I share your approach. It corresponds to ours. I am happy with the activities of your ambassador and your embassy. They enable us to solve issues very quickly. (U)The President: You have gotten off to a quick start. I view this as very important to our own interests. I thought we ought to get together and would like to hear anything that is on your mind. Be as frank as you wish. (U)

I want to mention our interests in the rapid ratification of CFE and your assurance to the NPT as fast as you can. We are off to a good start and we want to go forward. You gained respect for your position on START and NPT. The other point I want to mention is the importance of working with the IMF to get a comprehensive economic reform going. The floor is yours sir, Welcome. (Ø)

President Shushkevich: Mr President, first thank you for the opportunity to meet you. We have had many opportunities to meet with Secretary Baker. Our views have not changed. We shall fulfill every share of our obligations to the FSU. They want Belarus to be nuclear free and we support the establishment of a nuclear free belt in Europe. Unfortunately, there are some technical difficulties with our CFE ratification. I stress technical difficulties. Due to the excess of democracy in our country our deputies now have a chance for two months vacation and I have not used my constitutional right to reconvene our parliament. (Ø)

The President: That way you can bring them back in a good mood. (U)

President Shushkevich: You understand our difficulties with the economic situation. But, in contrast to the former Soviet Union, we would like to develop sophisticated modern technology. We supply ourselves with food stuffs. We do not have enough raw material unfortunately to have well trained, disciplined engineers and work force. We appreciated very much your humanitarian aid from volunteers and non governmental organizations after the Chernobyl disaster. We need assistance in education and training. In scientific assistance, we have received from Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago. This has allowed us to avoid an emotional approach regarding Chernobyl. We would appreciate your government's support.

The President: What is the status of nuclear power in Belarus? Are there nuclear plants there? Is that what you are referring to? (Ø)

President Shushkevich: Mr President, the terrible irony is - we never had a single power plant on the territory of Belarus. Chernobyl was 9km from our border but in a different territory - in the Ukraine. Yet, our territory received 70% of the fallout. (Ø)

The President: Did you receive power from Chernobyl? (Ø)

President Shushkevich: It is difficult to determine where precisely we were supplied with energy. We were buying it from others including Chernobyl - also from plants in Lithuania, Ukraine and Russia. We have never had a single power plant on Belarus soil. (Ø)

The President: What about power today? (U)

President Shushkevich: Mr President, we are now in a perverse situation. It is difficult to imagine even for the President of the United States that our per capita consumption of raw oil is about the same as the U.S.A. We buy it all from Russia.