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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
James A. Baker, Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Robert Blackwill, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Notetaker)

Helmut Kohl, Chancellor
Horst Teltschik, Security Adviser to the Chancellor
Walter Neuer, Head of Chancellor's Office
Uwe Kaestner, Deputy Security Adviser to the Chancellor for East-West Issues

DATE/TIME February 25, 1990, 9:22 - 10:30am EST
AND PLACE: Camp David - Second Meeting

Chancellor Kohl: We need to discuss the procedures of the Two Plus Four. (S)

The President: Margaret talked on the phone of getting started with official-level meetings. (S)

Secretary Baker: The statement in Ottawa made it clear that there will be no Two Plus Four ministerial meeting before March 18. But official-level contacts would begin shortly. Nobody defined what "shortly" means. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: A question is what will be the outcome of the Two Plus Four talks? What are our goals? We have agreed with the GDR to meet with them on March 7, to develop an agenda. There will be no other meetings until after the election. We cannot negotiate with the Modrow government. It has no status. (S)

Secretary Baker: One of the things we are running into is nervousness among our Allies about consultations. We were thinking, subject to your views, about having a One Plus Three discussion (the FRG, US, UK, and France) at the political directors' level, looking toward a political directors meeting at Two Plus Four. That would help dampen British and French

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anxieties as well as those of other NATO allies, especially if we let NATO know about these discussions. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: That procedure is satisfactory, but what would take place on March 1? Is that a One Plus Three meeting or the Two Plus Four? (S)

Secretary Baker: We are not married to any particular date. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: We should start with One Plus Three, then move to Two Plus Four. (S)

The President: Let's make damn sure we don't leave our Allies out as if we are carving up Europe. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: We need to exactly meet that point. There could be a One Plus Three meeting soon at the official level (including all Allies, France and the United Kingdom). Then we could have a Two Plus Four meeting after March 18. (S)

Secretary Baker: We need real consultation with the Permreps in NATO. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: My idea, that I have discussed with Manfred Woerner, is that, when I'm in Brussels in two weeks, I'll go see Woerner for an hour. I would ask Woerner to call a meeting of the Permreps and I would meet with them. All this would take place before March 18. Psychologically speaking, this would be unusual, but it would be helpful in these circumstances. (S)

The President: Excellent. (S)

Secretary Baker: Good. (S)

General Scowcroft: Great. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: Then we are agreed. (S)

Secretary Baker: There is one other thing we need to think through. We will have to deal with the USSR. If you do the One Plus Three without a subsequent Two Plus Four, you may lose the chance to get Soviet acquiescence in a united Germany becoming a full member of NATO. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: The One Plus Three must know what they want. They must establish a joint position. Then we would go to the Two Plus Four. (S)

Secretary Baker: We should do that very quickly. (S)

The President: We need to be low-key about our activities at One Plus Three. We don't want to give the Soviets the impression

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that they are being dealt out. (S)

Secretary Baker: The One Plus Three officials would meet on about March 1. Then the two Germanies would meet on March 7. Then the Two Plus Four would meet before March 18? Is that right? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: To be sure, let me say it. The One Plus Three can meet around March 1. At the end of that meeting we all must have identical goals. Then we in the FRG meet with the GDR on March 7. After that the Two Plus Four could meet, after the March 18 elections. (S)

Secretary Baker: I don't see how we can have a meeting on March 1 of the One Plus Three, then the Two Plus Four would meet only after March 18. I think the Soviets would have a problem. The British and French wouldn't like that either. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: After March 18, positions in the GDR will change. But, if you take that into account, then it is OK to have the Two Plus Four meet before March 18. (S)

The President: The Chancellor's visit to NATO will help. The One Plus Three looks like a deal in a smoke-filled room. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I will be going to NATO on March 8. (S)

Secretary Baker: Any One Plus Three discussion should be the night before the Two Plus Four. They should be almost simultaneous. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: That is not a problem with me. But the present GDR government will be a spokesman for the Soviets before March 18. What do the British and French want regarding our membership in NATO? (S)

Secretary Baker: They want full German membership in NATO. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I would think so. That's why I hesitate about having East German representatives at the table before March 18. That makes everything more difficult. I don't think this was discussed at Ottawa. The Foreign Ministry of the GDR is Communist from top to bottom. Why involve them before March 18? If the Two Plus Four takes place before March 18 then you will have the USSR, and the GDR, there as Soviet spokesmen. Why should we want that? (S)

General Scowcroft: That's a very good point. (S)

Secretary Baker: It is a good point. We don't feel strongly about it, but the British and French do. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: Then shouldn't we simply talk with the British and the French? (S)

The President: Helmut has made an excellent point. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: For the next few weeks, we need to conduct discreet consultations, so we don't offend people. We need full US-German agreement, then a clear position at One Plus Three. Then we can look toward the Two Plus Four, agreeing on how we will handle the Two Plus Four. You will have to deal bilaterally with the Soviets on this. (S)

The President: What do you see on the timing of when people will say Germany is unified? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I cannot give a precise prognosis. Developments are too dramatic. But here's how I see it today. (S)

First, there will be the elections on March 18. Then the GDR will be forming a government. Then there will be the May local elections. Then they will reestablish the old laender (which I support, but it will take time). That will take us to the end of the year. (S)

Parallel to that process we will deal with monetary union, which will require a great deal of work. Then we will address ownership of property and land reform. All of this will take lots of time. I don't want a hectic pace, partly because of the fears of others. So German unity might be next year. Some in the EC believe there will be unity only after 1992. That is silly. (S)

Mrs. Thatcher hit me in the press again today, saying there will need to be a delay, because people in the GDR will have to learn how to vote. She is in a bad humor because the polls are bad for her. But we need to bring her in. (S)

The President: Yes, and she worries about the pace. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: But George, it won't be in my hands. We could have a mass exodus after March 18. I won't be able to control it. (S)

Secretary Baker: What are your views on a Ministerial meeting of the Two Plus Four? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: If the Two Plus Four talks at the official level go well, I would do the Two Plus Four Ministerial discussions soon too. When is your Summit with Gorbachev? (S)

Secretary Baker: The last two weeks of June. (S)

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Chancellor Kohl: If you had made headway by June, then the Two Plus Four Ministers could meet, perhaps in May. (S)

Secretary Baker: What about a Two Plus Four Ministerial shortly after the Two Plus Four official talks? (S)

Chancellor Kohl: That would depend on what happens in the Two Plus Four official discussions. I don't want to put myself under time pressure. That is only useful to the Soviets. We want no time pressure. The Two Plus Four will have to finish its work by November, for a CSCE Summit, or else the CSCE will take over the Two Plus Four's work. (S)

Let's assume the Soviets want to fix their bottom line on Germany during the US-Soviet Summit, rather than before. I have a feeling that will be Gorbachev's approach. With that background, Two Plus Four Ministerial would then be OK before your Summit, but Gorbachev will wish to take a real decision with the President, in the context of major agreements and progress on arms control with the Americans. That would not be the Two Plus Four, just Gorbachev and the President. (S)

The President: Gorbachev has to be provided with face, with standing. That's a key point. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: That supports my thesis. He wants to make a deal with the other superpower. (S)

Secretary Baker: We need to be getting the Two Plus Four process concluded by the time of the US-Soviet Summit. That means we need to get going soon. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: The central question is the membership of Germany in NATO. In the end, Gorbachev will make that concession to the President. (S)

The President: What will he need to make that deal? (S)

Secretary Baker: He will need two things: First, Gorbachev needs to know Germany will remain steadfast behind full NATO membership. Second, he will want to see that legitimate Soviet security interests are being taken into account. (S)

The President: Yes, and that's why we must have the closest possible consultation between us. We are going to win the game, but we must be clever while we are doing it. (S)

Mr. Teltschik: We should not use the word "jurisdiction" when referring to NATO and former GDR territory. Rather we should use the word "forces." There is a critical difference. (S)

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Secretary Baker: Right. I agree completely. I used the term "jurisdiction" before I realized that it would impact on Articles 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: Good. It would be good if that is said publicly. (S)

Secretary Baker: Absolutely. (S)

- End of Second and Final Meeting -

(The two leaders and their colleagues then prepared between 1030 and 1050 for the joint press conference. A transcript is attached.)

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