

~~SECRET~~

44716

THE WHITE HOUSE

~~SECRET~~

WASHINGTON

SYSTEM II  
90457 ADD

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation Between the President and Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Federal Republic of Germany

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Chancellor Helmut Kohl

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: May 12, 1987, 9:00 a.m. - 9:25 a.m.  
Oval Office

After exchange of greetings, the President stated that he had a message he wished to convey to Chancellor Kohl. The Chancellor had displayed great courage in 1983 by the deploying Pershing II missiles in FRG. Our Alliance steadfastness in carrying out the 1979 NATO decision has nearly borne fruit. The Soviets have agreed to reduce their SS-20s by more than 90 percent --a major step toward LRINF elimination. (C)

The President emphasized that the US will keep at the LRINF negotiations until we get all the SS-20s eliminated. NATO can be proud of that, but now shorter range INF is getting the spotlight. He had a brief visit with Minister Genscher yesterday, but felt the Minister may have misunderstood part of what had been said. The President said he wished to underscore that we understand the FRG's special sensitivity on the SRINF issue. We have refrained from stating a preference on that issue to avoid putting pressure on you. We will continue to keep our options open. There is no pressure on you. Continuing, the President said that while he may have a personal preference for zero SRINF, the USG has not yet stated its position. Saying he was a strong believer in consultations, the President added we are awaiting your views as well as those of the rest of NATO before formulating our SRINF position. The President observed that he had talked long enough and I would be curious about the Chancellor's views. (S)

Chancellor Kohl thanked the President for his message and stated that he had two points he wanted to make at the outset. His first point was that he thought exactly along the lines the President had outlined. He believed two things brought Gorbachev back to the table: (1) NATO's 1983 deployment of Pershing IIs and GLCMs; and (2) the President's clear position on SDI. The Chancellor noted that the Soviets are people who do not want to engage in adventure where there is any risk; they want to win

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFY ON: OADR

DECLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

NLRR 507-080#44716

BY LOST NARA DATE 12/3/08

~~SECRET~~

- 2 -

~~SECRET~~

with no risk. Now, they have become aware of the risk and have returned to the table. This is our common success and we should be proud of it. (S)

His second point, said the Chancellor, was that he was absolutely in favor of agreement this year on LRINF. The agreement should be acceptable to NATO. He indicated that he wanted the President to finish a treaty -- he wanted the President to have that success. The President deserved such success because without the President's position and efforts in the US, it would have been impossible for Europe to take the position that has been taken. (S)

Turning to SRINF, the Chancellor stated that he did not want to delay this issue, but we (the FRG) could not negotiate on these issues -- either internally (within the FRG) or with the Soviets. The Chancellor expressed hope of concluding internal debate on SRINF in the course of the summer. He emphasized that Germany's special problem is that all the systems with less than 1000 kilometer range are targeted on German territory. The Soviet proposals on systems between 500-1000 kilometers which include the German Pershing I-A are not acceptable. (S)

Continuing, the Chancellor said the Europeans need to develop a common position that will be acceptable to the US. He said he wanted to continue German coordination in Europe, especially with London and Paris, and also with the other potential basing countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy). He had already had intensive conversations with Chirac and Mitterrand. Chirac is very clear -- he is full of skepticism on solutions in the 500-1000 kilometer range. With Mitterrand, the situation is different. He does not take such a direct interest in these matters, but has said he will not stand against the German position. Mrs. Thatcher has written both of us, but we should talk to her once more, said Kohl. (S)

The Chancellor pointed out that an emotional wave was being created in Europe that involved the same people who stirred up emotions in 1983 to try to prevent NATO LRINF deployments. We need, said the Chancellor, to give this aspect of the problem our common attention. The Soviets, the Chancellor said, will apply tactics to pressure NATO members. First, the Soviets have said that eliminating missiles over 1000 kilometer range is O.K. Now, they said that eliminating missiles between 500-1000 kilometer range is O.K. (S)

This will bring us, said the Chancellor, to a new discussion here in Germany: What is to happen in the range between 0-500

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

- 3 -

kilometer? At that point we (NATO and FRG) are confronted with the argument that these remaining missiles (0-500 kilometers) are exactly the weapons that will hit only Germans, East or West. This problem needs our careful consideration and discussion before it becomes a reality. Also, the Chancellor argued, the enormous Soviet superiority of conventional and chemical weapons must be taken into consideration. (S)

The Chancellor then stated that for him one point was of crucial importance. These matters must result in a success for the US, because only a US success makes it impossible for a war to be fought in Europe. Disarmament is not an end in itself, it only serves our purpose if security is enhanced, not diminished. That is our common Western objective. (S)

The Chancellor stated that in Europe there was need to balance nuclear and conventional weapons. A central point was the US military and nuclear guarantee to NATO -- the Chancellor stressed that there was no alternative to that. (S)

Chancellor Kohl concluded by saying that for all of these reasons the FRG was still in the midst of its discussions about SRINF. On a personal basis, he said that Option III -- described by Secretary Shultz (80 systems of SRINF on each side) -- is worth consideration and discussion. Further, the US and the FRG must determine for sure what will be the future of the German Pershing I-As. The Chancellor then stated that he had all the confidence in the world in the President, and that based on their very friendly personal ties -- which have spurred great cooperation -- the President would find an acceptable solution. In addition, the Chancellor promised to do all he possibly could to help find such a solution. (S)

The President thanked the Chancellor for his views and stated that we cannot begin discussing shorter range (less than 500 kilometer) systems before making sure that conventional and chemical imbalances were redressed. (S)

Chancellor Kohl responded that he shared the President's view. He pointed out that his comments were an attempt to describe what he foresaw as possible defeat in the FRG. The Chancellor then offered his personal view that Gorbachev would agree to eliminate all LRINF and that the US should continue to press for such elimination and reach agreement on it. (S)

Continuing, The Chancellor emphasized that with respect to all other systems -- both shorter range nuclear, chemical, and conventional -- the West should be cautious and prudent and should consider each step carefully. The Chancellor then repeated his wish to see the President achieve an LRINF agreement this year that could be ratified before the US elections. (S)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

- 4 -

~~SECRET~~

In reply, The President said he believed the US and the FRG agreed on many of these issues. He would welcome the Chancellor's further thinking after consultations were complete so the West could go forward with a unified position. This would make it impossible for the Soviets to separate the Allies. The President then indicated that he would like to move forward as soon as possible, but repeated that this was not an attempt to put pressure on the FRG. (S)

The Chancellor replied that that was exactly how he wished to assist the President. The President then reminded the Chancellor that if the Chancellor wished to try for an 80-80 SRINF solution, the US would need to know where Europeans wanted us to deploy the 80 systems that would be our part of that balance. (S)

The Chancellor stated that he understood the President's concern. (S)

Saying he appreciated the opportunity of this conversation, The President underscored that he looked forward to seeing the Chancellor in Venice. The two leaders then exchanged closings. (U)

*President reviewed  
& approved 5/13  
JFC Carter*

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~