

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

**DECLASSIFIED
PER E.O. 13526**

2015-0776-M (1.19)
7/31/2018 KBH

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany

PARTICIPANTS: U.S.
The President
Warren Christopher, Secretary of State
Madeleine Albright, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs
Alexander Vershbow, Senior Director for European Affairs, NSC (Notetaker)

Germany
Helmut Kohl, Chancellor
Klaus Kinkel, Foreign Minister
Joachim Bitterlich, National Secretary Adviser to Chancellor
Interpreter

DATE, TIME December 5, 1994 12:55 - 1:20PM
AND PLACE: Budapest Hungary

The President: Congratulations on the elections. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Politics is like a marathon. The first 20 kilometers are tough, but the key is to come out strong in the end. You have to want to complete the final lap. I will be talking later to Yeltsin about his statement about NATO. I will call you before Christmas to talk about other subjects in detail.
(X)

This is a highly depressing event. The people here just give speeches, and the people of the world are going to wonder if we have our wits about us. We aren't doing anything about Bosnia.
(X)

The President: It is very frustrating that the UN forces say they do not want us to use air power because the Serbs will take hostages, but then people are taken hostage and they say we can't use air power. Now humanitarian aid is being held up. The UN

has kept a lot of people alive, but we cannot allow the UN mission to be used against itself as is happening today. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: I understand you are leaving Budapest this afternoon. Is the Secretary of State staying? (U)

The President: Yes, you should talk to Secretary Christopher after you have your meeting with Yeltsin. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, I will speak to him after the Yeltsin meeting. (U)

Foreign Minister Kinkel: If we can at least make some headway at this meeting on humanitarian aid to Bihac and on the NATO question, then we will have achieved more than could have been expected. In Brussels, Kozyrev in effect said "no" to the NATO partnership agreements. Now everyone is waiting to hear whether he will say "yes" as a result of the pressure from Clinton and Kohl. (C)

Secretary Christopher: It is unrealistic to get him to say "yes" this soon. Kozyrev said he needed a longer time for a cooling-off period. He invited me to a meeting in the near future. But I urge you to try to get his agreement since we have worked so hard on the two documents. Yet I would not want to build expectations, and I have been careful in briefing the press. I have to leave early for Syria tomorrow morning and perhaps Chancellor Kohl could call President Clinton directly about his talks with Yeltsin. (C)

The President: Yes, call me on the phone. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Very well, I will call you irrespective of the call I will be making to you later in the month. Given time, we will be able to bring Yeltsin around on the NATO question. But this will take a long psychological campaign. We need to present the issue in a way that he comes to see it as his own idea. (C)

The President: In part, Yeltsin has a real concern. The Russians don't understand how everything will look 10-15 years from now. There is also an immediate concern about the psychological impact on the Russian people. This will have an impact on Yeltsin's political position in Russia. He has at least to respond to that element which wants Russia to reassert itself. On specific issues, Yeltsin is pretty good, but he sometimes scares people. So we need to work on the long-term strategic issues and try to reach an understanding so that Yeltsin can respond to his domestic constituencies without sending shivers up the spines of people in Central and Eastern Europe. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Let me clarify my position. We have a moral obligation -- all of us, but especially Germany -- with respect to Central and Eastern Europe. These are our neighbors, Poland and the others. We have to do everything we can to understand their anxieties and fears, and to allay those fears. The European Union can, in fact, do somewhat more to address their concerns from a psychological point of view. For example, I have invited the CEE heads of government to attend the European Summit in Essen. It is naturally more important to them from the psychological point of view than the substantive. For the Hungarians, for example, it is important that they stand out as a country for which there is light at the end of the tunnel. How long it will take to traverse that tunnel is not as important. Next year they will attend the EU summit again. If the EU's internal position on economic relations with the East becomes more amenable, that will be all the better. My European colleagues only agree with us up to a point. When they pay visits to CEE countries, they are more forceful in their rhetoric than they are in reality. (X)

On the NATO issue, I do see a chance of getting a more quiet reaction from the Russians. But at the same time, we all have to try to address the fears of Yeltsin and the Russians. We want to break down the walls. This is a long-term process, but our only option is to use all the powers that we can muster to draw them into the fold. You are the President of the United States. As we have discussed before, the Russians are suffering in that they are no longer a major world power. If we try to pursue our policy and elaborate on it, they will become less skeptical. I cannot see any alternative. We can't allow ourselves to topple Yeltsin. There will be nothing to gain from that. This is not an area of policy where we will all be covered with glory. We are not going to look good for the press. People are going to say that we have made no progress and ask what we are up to. We have seen so many superbrains at work, yet at the end we risk only having rubber and debris. This will be a long and contentious process. (X)

Ukraine is another aspect of the problem. In the EU we have an enormous problem over the financial protocol. I think we will be able to achieve the goal of 85 million ECUs (in balance of payments assistance), but it is moving forward millimeter by millimeter. Here too the alternative is very simple. If we do nothing, they will collapse. (X)

Some things are not going to look very good on TV. Our policies are not very imposing or ones that make us look good. But in Germany we say about things that are difficult that "even small animals on fire produce warmth."

My most urgent request to your Administration is to help make some headway in the former Yugoslavia. The damage, politically and psychologically, could be enormous if we do not. (Ø)

The President: What can we do? We were making progress when we established the exclusion zones around Sarajevo and Gorazde. Then it became clear that the UN forces, especially the British and French, did not want NATO to do anything else. What can we do now? This is a real dilemma for the United States. At home they are writing the obituary of NATO. In response, I say this has nothing to do with NATO, that NATO is as capable as it ever was, but that the UN forces don't see NATO as helpful. Everyone is full of ambivalence. Even President Izetbegovic does not want UNPROFOR to collapse and go away. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, to withdraw UNPROFOR is not what Izetbegovic wants. We have to see plainly what lies in the background. The Bosnians will try to organize support from the Islamic world. This may not ease the immediate situation and could have serious consequences. We need to keep a close eye on that possibility. It is obviously something that would weld together the fractured Islamic world -- people like Rafsanjani, the Indonesians, the Turks, the Pakistanis and others. (Ø)

The President: I recall the image of Prime Minister Ciller and Prime Minister Bhutto walking down the street together. That was quite a picture. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: In the year 2000 in the Islamic world there will be 70 million people with an average age of 25. That will be a very young nation. It is something to watch. So let us try to do something while we can. Kinkel and I have been discussing this issue. Let us stay in touch and try to avoid greater dangers. It is important for us to try to raise the humanitarian flag. If Bihac actually collapses, I don't know how our people will react. We have 400,000 refugees from former Yugoslavia in Germany. This is on top of the 700,000 guest workers. The images on our TV news are a catastrophe. (Ø)

Anthony Lake: I have the status report on the statement being prepared for issuance by the five Contact Group leaders. The British have agreed, as has Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev, although he has not yet obtained Yeltsin's approval. The French are having trouble communicating with Paris for technical reasons, so the statement may not be ready for issuance until tomorrow. It would be better if it could be issued this evening, however. (Ø)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

5

Chancellor Kohl: We will try to reach agreement on the statement today. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~