

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of
Germany on September 21, 1993

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Chancellor Kohl
Interpreter: Erika Konuk
Notetaker: Jane Holl

DATE, TIME September 21, 1993, 4:40pm-4:52pm
AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President: Hello, Helmut. I am calling to tell you about my telephone conversation with Boris Yeltsin. I just got off the telephone with him. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: What did he say? (U)

The President: The Supreme Soviet is out of control. The Communists will not permit the wishes of the people to be carried out. He said he had signed a decree ordering new elections on the 11th and 12th of December and that until then he would govern by decree. The military and internal security forces are supporting him. He promised reform would move faster now. He said there would be no bloodshed. He would proceed peacefully. He said elections would be free, and all that wished to participate would be able to. He said the opposition would pretend this had not happened and would go on acting as before. (C)

I have been told today he refused access to the television station to Khasbulatov and Rutskoy. When I asked him about this, he said no one had been forbidden to talk to the press. So, he may have pulled the plug on the White House's access to the television station. On the other hand, he promised me repeatedly that he would not resort to undemocratic means, but would continue to support democracy. (C)

So I believe I should issue a statement in support of him, while basically stating that I asked him to honor democracy, and he pledged that he would. So that's how I left it with him, and as soon as that call was over, I called you to see if you thought we should issue a statement in support. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, well, of course, nobody on our side can really tell what is happening -- every detail -- but out of all

the people that play a role there, I trust him the most, and I am convinced that if he is no longer in power, if he's removed, it will be much worse. And so far I agree that if you are prepared to issue a statement over the next few hours, our people can agree on the wording. I'll be prepared to follow a literal course...I'm immediately ready to do that--it's the right course. (C)

The President: Suppose I have my statement faxed to you; I'll do so immediately. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: To the Chancellor's office? (U)

The President: Yes, to the Chancellor's office. I will send it immediately. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Did you already make that statement? (C)

The President: I had a draft, but I wanted to alter it following my conversation with Yeltsin. I wanted it to reflect that I urged him to support the process of reform, that I understood how complex the reform process is in Russia, and that there will be a free election this fall. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Bill, I would suggest that my people contact your staff immediately when the fax is received. Then we can coordinate what we are going to say. (C)

The President: Great. All right, I'll do it right now. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: We're going to proceed that way then? (U)

The President: I will send you my statement right now, and my people will call, and we can coordinate the statement. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Mr. President, who will be in charge, what member of your staff? (C)

The President: Sandy, Mr. Berger. That's an easy name for you to remember. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: In our case it will be Mr. Bitterlich who will contact Mr. Berger right away. (C)

The President: It's almost 5 p.m. here. We have to have a statement out by 6 p.m. for the evening news. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Thank you very much. Bye bye. (U)