

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of
the Federal Republic of Germany (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Helmut Kohl, Chancellor
Robert Hutchings, NSC Staff (Notetaker)
Harry Obst (Interpreter)

DATE, TIME February 13, 1990, 3:01 - 3:10 p.m. EST
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President initiated the call. (U)

The President: Helmut, I'm back again. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: George, I have a feeling there is a
misunderstanding. I'm in agreement with what the foreign
ministers are talking about in Ottawa. (Ø)

The President: I am glad to hear that. Frankly, I had
misgivings about that. What we wanted was that the German
Question would be discussed between the two Germanys; and then,
after that, after the elections, there would be 2 plus 4
discussions. Indeed, in the original language, which Jim Baker
read to me, shortly after the elections in the GDR the two German
states would get together. But if you agree with the new
language, I will tell Jim Baker to go ahead. We do not want to
be the only ones to stand in the way. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: I'm in agreement. I really don't see any big
problem. It will go like this. The GDR elections will take
place on 18 March. Then we will need about four weeks before the
GDR will have established a government. Then we in the FRG will
start our dialogue with the GDR. In practical terms, the senior
advisors will have to work on the terms. By then it will be the
end of April or the middle of May. That gives the two of us
enough time. (Ø)

I want to be frank. I have a different kind of reservation.
That is why I wanted the ministers to speak today. I worry if
this question remains open. Then we may find ourselves in a
situation again where others in the East and the West want to
join up with the Four. Then we will have a big problem. (Ø)

The President: The 35 wouldn't work. My problem was with the
language -- that preliminary exchanges at the official level will
begin shortly. I fear that would open the way for any of the
Four to cause mischief. But if it's okay with you, I'll call Jim
Baker. (Ø)

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Chancellor Kohl: That is okay. That is exactly what I think.
(S)

The President: Okay. We will talk about this at Camp David. I just spoke with Jim Baker and said you hadn't mentioned this language. That is why I called you back. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes, George. I am delighted you called back. It is better to have one call too many than one call too few.
(U)

The President: I don't want to get crosswise with you, and I am talking about Helmut Kohl as well as the FRG. You will note in my statements that we are talking about support for Chancellor Kohl and the FRG. I don't want to get caught up in internal political matters. (S)

Chancellor Kohl: I understand that well. Thank you. (U)

The President: Okay. I will see you in a few days. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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