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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of
Germany, on August 27, 1991

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Helmut Kohl, Chancellor
Interpreter: Gisela Marcuse
Notetaker: Robert Hutchings, NSC Staff

DATE, TIME August 27, 1991, 11:04 - 11:14 a.m.
AND PLACE: Kennebunkport, Maine

The President: Helmut? (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Hello, George. It's good to hear your voice.
I hope you caught a big fish yesterday. (U)

The President: Not bad. Not bad. Are you on vacation, Helmut?
(U)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes. I am back in my office. Unfortunately, I
have to go back to work. I don't feel like it. George, I called
you simply to say that we have a meeting of the EC foreign
ministers at this very moment in The Hague. I take it that they
will decide to recognize the independence of the Baltic states.
That is the formal decision that we intend to take tomorrow
morning in our cabinet. (Ø)

The President: That's very interesting. I'm not surprised and
most countries are doing this. Undoubtedly, the U.S. will do
that fairly soon. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: My intention was to tell you beforehand of the
decision. (Ø)

The President: That's very considerate. I wish we knew a little
more about what affect this will have on the other republics. I
wish we knew more about control of territory and who we're
dealing with on these security matters, but we don't so we will
have to make decisions with less information than I like. (Ø)

Chancellor Kohl: Well, George, my tendency is very obvious. I
will tell all the other republics that they should try to find a
reasonable solution within the union, that they should stay
together with Gorbachev. The news we heard was that the advisor
to Yeltsin declared first of all that Yeltsin did not have the
intention to stand as a candidate against Gorbachev. He made a
statement on behalf of Yeltsin. Their intention was to cooperate

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closely with Gorbachev. That is something that I told Yeltsin on the phone, too. I believe that the Balkanization of the Soviet Union would be catastrophic. The Baltics are a special case because of the Hitler-Stalin pact, but the idea that the Ukraine would try to separate is altogether different. (C)

The President: They have declared their independence or cited their desire for independence. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: I think the question of what they really mean -- whether they are claiming that as part of a federation. (C)

The President: Well, I think the jury is still out on that one. But I think basically your point of not suggesting that everybody leave at once, or suggesting that there needs to be some cooperation with the center, is a good point. Apparently Gorbachev told the meeting this morning keep the union or I'll resign. He may resign. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: I at least hope that he remains in office. (C)

The President: I think we do, too. It's hard to know. It seems like his power is curtailed. Ambassador Strauss is sitting here with me. He just got back from Moscow. We're just beginning to talk about the situation there. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: In any case, we should remain in contact, George. (U)

The President: Absolutely, and on this Sherpa meeting, we've instructed our Sherpa that for the U.S. at least there will be no commitments at this point. I hope Germany feels the same way. I think you told me yesterday that you did. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: What we have to do right now is learn more before we can take a decision. (C)

The President: We need to talk after the meeting. I'm very interested in what they all think and what they conclude. As far as the U.S. goes, I still feel they need to get on with these reforms. Otherwise, we'll be right back where we were at the G-7 in London. The money going in there won't help except possibly for food aid. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: Yes. I agree and I said that in a public statement today. We can only provide help for self-help. (C)

The President: I totally agree. You're very thoughtful, and I appreciate your call. It is important that Germany and the U.S., you and I, stay in close touch on all of this. (C)

Chancellor Kohl: I'll be keeping in touch with you, George, perhaps next week. (C)

The President: OK. Have a good day and thanks for calling. (U)

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Chancellor Kohl: George, give my greetings to Bob Strauss. I'm a long-standing admirer of his. I think it was a great idea of yours to send him to Moscow. (U)

The President: I'll tell him. He appreciates it very much. Our love to Hannelore. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: And to Barbara. (U)

The President: Helmut, Dick Cheney is sitting here and he sends his best also. (U)

Chancellor Kohl: Thank you. Good-bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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