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By SR NARA Date 03

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

President Nixon
Vice President Agnew
William P. Rogers, Secretary of State
Melvin Laird, Secretary of Defense
George A. Lincoln, Director, Office of
Emergency Preparedness
David M. Kennedy, Secretary of the Treasury
Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chairman, JCS
George Shultz, Director, OMB
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs
John N. Irwin, Under Secretary of State
Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman, Deputy Director
of Central Intelligence
Martin J. Hillenbrand, Assistant Secretary of
State for European Affairs
Robert E. Ellsworth, U.S. Ambassador to NATO
Kenneth Rush, U.S. Ambassador to the Federal
Republic of Germany
Gen. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs
Col. Richard T. Kennedy (USA, Ret.) NSC Staff
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, NSC Staff

DATE AND TIME:

Wednesday - October 14, 1970
9:35 am - 11:15 am

PLACE:

The Cabinet Room
The White House

SUBJECT:

Meeting of the National Security Council:
Berlin and Germany (NSSM83)

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Dr. Kissinger: Amb. Hillenbrand will bring us up to date. I'll cover the general issues. He will cover the details of the negotiations.

The West German policy is not new. What has changed is that in the previous government the Eastern policy envisaged and sought a closer relationship with the East European satellite countries leaving the USSR aside. This failed. Brandt therefore concluded that the best approach was to concentrate on improving relations with the USSR. The focus of German policy is now on the USSR and to rely on the existing territorial arrangements; this amounts to their de facto recognition. The objective is a lessening of tensions weakening the ties between the East and the USSR.

The assumptions of the German policy are: (1) that the United States is not able to solve the German question; only a German Government can. (2) that the Western Alliance remains essential to West German security. (3) that it's best to negotiate while American assets are still present in Europe.

It is hard to find a quid pro quo on the Soviet side in a West German-Soviet treaty using the Berlin negotiations to lead along. The results of the Ostpolitik are, therefore, that East Germany will become recognized and a UN member; the Berlin negotiations will be thereby complicated; the Four-Power context of Germany will change; and the other conferences will take on a new light. Some other aspects of this are worth noting. As I noted, it is hard to perceive a quid pro quo aside from the Berlin issue. Secondly, some assumptions of the two parties in Ostpolitik seem to be in violent conflict. Brandt defends his policy on the ground that the ties between the Eastern Europeans and the USSR will be weakened, but the Soviets see it as just the opposite -- they see it as ratifying the status quo in Eastern Europe. If the Soviet interpretation holds, it will cause a domestic problem in West Germany. As the German commitment to Ostpolitik grows, the strains in their relations with the Alliance will grow. Many Europeans are wary that this will mean a growth of German nationalism and an increase of fear and a possible move of more states toward Moscow.

Our choices are limited. We could oppose the policy and bring Brandt down. This would put us into the position of thwarting a German national aspiration and interfering in German domestic policies. Alternatively, we could support the policy more actively. The price is that we would discourage those in Germany with whom we have been working in the past.

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The working group feels we must avoid either of the above alternatives. The issue is: Can we create greater unity in the West and create and strengthen the ties of West Germany to the West while Ostpolitik goes on? Can we strengthen European integration? We face this dilemma: We can't afford to oppose Brandt but we can't support his policy too strongly either.

Now let me turn to Berlin. The basic problem is that we are asked to deliver the quid pro quo for Ostpolitik but the negotiations themselves are upset by the Ostpolitik because it enhances the sovereignty of East Germany. There are two kinds of improvements we can seek in the situation around Berlin. First is the humanitarian -- improving access between East and West Berlin. Second, is the practical issue of access between West Germany and West Berlin. The fact is that traffic can be cut. If East-West relations are good, access can be good; they are not good, the access can be bad. The problem is that Bahr couldn't negotiate with the Soviets so now he wants us to do it via Berlin. We can be blamed for any failures.

Marty can give us the latest details of the Berlin negotiation.

Amb. Hillenbrand: The Berlin negotiations have had eight meetings so far. The results are indeterminate. After the German-Soviet agreement the FRG thought that the linkage with Berlin would soften the Soviet position on the Berlin negotiations. The opposite was the result. The talks are not at an impasse necessarily. Why the Soviets are now holding a tough line is not clear. Some people think it is a general toughening of the line across the board.

We have to examine the feasibility of two possible approaches to the Berlin negotiation. A more modest approach along the lines of the earlier approved paper would use agreement to some reduction in the Federal presence in Berlin as the quid pro quo for some modest changes in access arrangements and so forth. A more sweeping approach would ask the Soviets to acknowledge the continuing Four-Power responsibility for West Berlin, but treat East Berlin as the capital of the GDR, and get more firm arrangements on access to the West. The latest Soviet position demands, as a prerequisite to discuss access improvements that we would have to accept their definition of what is acceptable in West Berlin. This is a non-starter and no basis for negotiating.

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So where do we stand? We allies agree that the new agreements must be binding.

We agree that some Federal activity is to be reduced in West Berlin. There will be some concessions by the Soviets on access between West and East Berlin. And the agreement on access is to be part of the settlement. The Soviets demand that the agreement must be part of a broader agreement; that all political elements of the Federal Government must leave West Berlin; that there must be a blanket commitment from the West that nothing will be done adverse to Soviet interests in Berlin. On access between the FRG and West Berlin, all that the Soviets will do is join in a Four-Power recommendation but the details have to be agreed between FRG, Berlin and the GDR. This window is the most sensitive life line to the city.

We are in a good tactical position; we have given away nothing. Any improvement that we can nail down is a plus. We will have to produce a package that is satisfactory to the FRG.

If Gromyko shows any give in his talks with the Secretary of State this week and with the British later, we may have an inkling of where to go.

Dr. Kissinger: What the Soviets want is de facto the "free city" concept for West Berlin.

Amb. Hillenbrand: Yes, they have stressed this theme consistently for some time.

President Nixon: Thank you. Ken?

Amb. Rush: This new government represents the first major political change in Germany since the Republic was formed. The new government is composed of people of the East who look East. It will require a firm effort on our part to keep them in the Western camp. There are bitter divisions in Germany over Ostpolitik. The polls show 70% of others feel that Germany will lose its ties with the U. S. and increase the influence of the Soviets. I have tried to see Brandt regularly to let him know how we see it.

As to Berlin, the Soviet effort is to drastically change the status of West Berlin. They are determined to destroy the viability of West

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Berlin and to destroy its links with the FRG and the West. Brandt says he will not permit the weakening of the links between West Berlin and the FRG. We have no time factor pressing for an agreement. There are others in his government who would do almost anything. His government has only a small 6-man majority in the Bundestag. I believe this government will last. We must avoid having the onus of a breakdown of negotiations or of Ostpolitik rub off on us -- we must shift it to the Soviets.

Secretary Rogers: The French and British have stayed with us.

Amb. Rush: Yes.

Secretary Rogers: Brandt is in no hurry to reach agreement.

Amb. Rush: Yes, but he wants to move quickly but not at the cost of a bad agreement.

Secretary Rogers: The FRG has said publicly that it won't ratify the Soviet agreement unless there is an agreement on Berlin.

Amb. Rush: There are no reasons for us to give up anything for agreement.

Secretary Laird: We are caught in the middle. I think Brandt will take a softer line on Berlin in a couple of months and he will push us to take an easier line too. The Moscow Treaty is not necessarily in our interest. The FRG defense budget has been seriously cut and its posture is significantly decreased in effectiveness. We've given the FRG the wrong signals -- their Defense Minister thinks we've let them down. We should look at the Treaty in terms of its effect on the Alliance, on our defense and the US position. This Treaty gives the FRG nothing. Schmidt is a loyal member of the government but if he had his choice he would not have gone to Moscow.

Ambassador Rush: Bahr and Schmidt would do anything on Berlin to get ratification of the Moscow agreement.

Secretary Rogers: They are appealing to the young people and expect to get political benefit from this.

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Amb. Rush: The young people in the CDU support Ostpolitik.

Secretary Laird: They think the U.S. favors the Moscow treaty -- we've remained silent.

Dr. Kissinger: Many in Germany see the Ostpolitik as a new German nationalism.

Secretary Rogers: If we show our hand, we would build nationalism.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree.

Secretary Laird: Many of the German young people see this as a chance to become a power in Europe.

Amb. Rush: We must be very careful.

President Nixon: It's 28 years since World War II and the young don't see the danger from the East any more. They like to kick the Yankee around.

Amb. Ellsworth: Europeans see this as an effort to lessen tensions, as German recognition of the facts of life, and as a possible move to normalization. There is less fear of resurging German nationalism. They think Brandt is honest and will keep the ties to the West strong. But Europeans see Soviet goals as different -- that the Soviets want to exert hegemony over East Europe and become a full-fledged European power. They worry that Brandt can go on and keep his ties with the West and the Alliance. So far the Allies resolved these doubts in favor of Ostpolitik -- but in part because they think we have leverage to pace and manage German policy if we want or need to.

Secretary Rogers: We do have a lever. We can slow them down, but we'd be blamed to some extent. We've done all we could up to now. The present position of the negotiations is about as good as we can get. The British and French are with us. The FRG is in no hurry. All are agreed that a Berlin settlement is essential to the Moscow treaty.

Amb. Rush: Each side is wrapping the American flag around its position. All the media are directed to the issue of Berlin. We must make every effort to show that the USSR is blocking the Berlin agreement and not us.

President Nixon: A related issue is the offset problem. Let me state a few basic propositions to start with. There is growing sentiment here to reduce our defense costs and to reduce our commitment in terms of men. In terms of the European

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situation there are different views. The majority view is that the Europeans deep down still believe that the key to successful defense in the NPG strategy is the U.S. presence -- which more than anything they can do for their own forces guarantees the deterrent. Also the bigger our presence, the more likely we are to be willing to use the deterrent. Some European countries would be willing to give money to us rather than devote it to improving their own forces. On our side, we need to work on the German offset to get the best possible deal we can, but for the long haul for us to get into the position that we can't finance our forces abroad and can stay only if Europeans will pay this would be bad. We have to look at a new NATO strategy. The need for maintaining adequate conventional forces may be infinitely greater than ten years ago.

Secretary Laird: The Germans are not very responsive now.

President Nixon: We must not be shortsighted. We must not show that our primary interest is in cost covering but rather in the mutual responsibility to ensure our defense.

Secretary Rogers: If we start reducing forces unilaterally it will play into the hands of those who support Ostpolitik. A troop withdrawal will cut our leverage.

President Nixon: We are at a sensitive point. With all our budget decisions and political actions we have to be careful that we do not imply that reductions will be made.

Amb. Rush: Chancellor Brandt considers that your statement, Mr. President that you will maintain American forces in Europe, was essential from his point of view.

Secretary Laird: We must face up to the question of our ability to implement it. Our dealings on defense issues are with committees other than Foreign Relations. The situation in Europe now is that the other countries are just not cooperating in improving their forces. They haven't done what they needed to do to have the Alliance move to a new strategy. Their forces are going down. I have to take a tough line on the burden sharing mix. Germany isn't going forward to improve their forces. We are paying for aircraft shelters, which should be covered by the infrastructure account. Here is an example of what they can do to be helpful. I have to take some of the additional \$1 billion '71 cut from NATO forces -- I can't take any from Southeast Asia. We must avoid tying ourselves down to numbers of

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planes, ships or personnel. The appropriations committees took a hard look this year at the costs in Europe and the contributions of the others. I must take a tough line.

President Nixon: If we look down road it is not a viable strategy for them to reduce their forces and pay for ours.

Secretary Kennedy: There are no real inconsistencies there. We can get more help from them in terms of support for our operations. The Congressional pressures are tough. Offset is no good; it costs us money.

Secretary Laird: I think we should wait for them to come up with a plan; it's not for us to make a plan.

Secretary Rogers: But the Germans are confused.

Secretary Laird: There is no new policy.

Amb. Rush: The Germans do think there is a change. I agree with the Secretary of Defense that we should get them to pick up a fair share of the costs. We make about \$500 million in payments to German personnel; we should press them to pay for this. Schmidt says that no government in Europe could get an increase in the defense budget through its parliament.

Secretary Kissinger: In the broad sense of burden sharing -- this is no change in policy -- the question is whether they should pay for our non-military costs or whether they should put more in their own defense expenditures. All the studies I see show there are serious maldeployments; they've been taking a free ride on our forces. They won't face up to the issue. If the European effort goes down and we just sit there, our strategy is unviable. We must face up to it now.

Secretary Kennedy: Do they come up if we stay?

Dr. Kissinger: They must and they must accept our view of burden sharing.

Secretary Laird: They must be made to understand it's not a new policy. They think they are off the hook.

Amb. Ellsworth: They may feel they are slightly off the hook. The Italians and Dutch may have in mind each step. We must clarify this.

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Admiral Moorer: They are living in a dream world about our nuclear support. They believe there will be an immediate shift to nuclear weapons in any war and thus conventional forces are unnecessary.

President Nixon: The easy way for them is to let them give us the money and we keep our forces there. I'm concerned that we should get all we can, but the most important thing is that our strategy has to be made viable, and that means they need more forces. We must change their thinking. We must avoid getting in the position of saying that if they contribute we won't reduce our forces -- that means we accept their strategy. We cannot accept that proposition. This lets them deal easily with their own domestic problems.

Secretary Laird: The problem is that their forces are going down.

[The meeting adjourned at 11:15.]

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