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~~PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL~~

Conversation with Hans-Egon Bahr in Boston on April 10, 1965.

The meeting came about as follows: Professor Bracher from Bonn who attended a meeting at Harvard some weeks ago told me that Egon Bahr had asked him to tell me that he was most eager to see me when he came to New York and Washington early in April. Since I was not too eager to see him, I wrote Bahr that I would not be in either of these cities during his visit. Bahr thereupon offered to come to Boston.

Bahr opened the conversation by expressing his appreciation that I saw him on a week-end. Major Brandt has asked him to explore some ideas with me that they were mulling over. Of course, the election campaign was not suitable for major foreign policy initiatives. However, in the probable eventuality of an SPD plurality, Brandt was determined to move full speed ahead. I asked in what direction. Bahr said toward greatly increased contact with the East including East Germany. He added that one of the high priority goals would be the development of a draft peace treaty. The scheme he and Brandt were considering would have the following features: A unified Germany would leave NATO. It would renounce ownership of nuclear weapons. Foreign troops would be withdrawn from its territory. The German armed forces would retain their present size. There would be a four power guarantee of the territorial integrity of Germany. In addition there would be a treaty of mutual assistance by which the four

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powers would undertake to assist each other against German aggression.

I asked whether Bahr was worried that the guarantee might justify constant Communist intervention in German affairs. Bahr replied that I was still thinking in Cold War terms. I assumed an unlimited desire of the Soviets to expand their sphere. The perspective of the Berlin SPD was different; it assumed that the Soviet Union would become more and more national in character. The new leaders of the U.S.S.R. would come to value friendship with Germany rather than seek to bring pressure on it. If, however, they did bring pressure the existing German army could fight a delaying action until help from NATO arrived.

I pointed out that if Bahr's scheme counted on a strong NATO, he was likely to be in for a disillusionment. In the circumstances described by Bahr, not only would Germany leave NATO but NATO itself would probably disintegrate. It seemed inconceivable that it was possible to combine a treaty of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union with an alliance directed against an assumed Soviet danger. Bahr replied that he did not consider NATO as such very viable; its primarily significant element was the American guarantee which he thought could be maintained even without NATO.

Bahr then asked what I thought about the need for integration. I replied that I made a distinction between the integration of military staffs and the integration of interests. The latter was essential; the former seemed to me a technical question. Bahr said that he thought both

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the MLF and the ANF were nonsense and inconsistent with the conception he had developed. Unification was more important than NATO integration. I said that he seemed to differ from Erler with whom I had talked two days previously. Bahr replied that Erler was too cautious; too eager to please; too much influenced by the Bonn atmosphere. In any event, Wehner was on Brandt's side.

I said the whole conception struck me as quite Gaullist. Bahr replied that Brandt was fascinated by De Gaulle. He was planning to see him in late May or early June. Joxe was acting as an intermediary. This was another point where Brandt and Erler differed; but Brandt would prevail.

I then told Bahr that his scheme presupposed German unification. How did he propose to achieve it? Bahr said through the closest contacts with the East including East Germany. The chief obstacle to unification was the low economic level of the GDR. To unify now would be an intolerable humiliation. What was needed were perhaps five years of substantial West German economic assistance to the GDR to equalize standards of living. I objected that then the GDR would be able to be even more active in the underdeveloped countries. Bahr replied that this was a risk which he was prepared to run. The whole conception of the Berlin SPD was that the East Germans were German first and Communist second. He was even prepared to accept a confederation if it brought unification closer.

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We then spoke of the domestic situation. Bahr expected an SPD plurality in which case it would in all likelihood form a government. Brandt preferred a coalition with the FDP provided he did not need more than ten to fifteen of their votes for a majority. If he needed the whole bloc, he would try a coalition with the CDU minus the CSU.

Note: I cannot judge to what degree Bahr speaks for Brandt. He claimed that he was developing this plan to me at Brandt's suggestion.