

September 10, 1994

Cable, U.S. Embassy Office Berlin to the Secretary of State, 'Chancellor Kohl: NATO and EU Enlargement: The Future of Europe'

Citation:

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Summary:

Richard Holbrooke recounts a final meeting with with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl prior to leaving Germany. Kohl asked the Clinton Administration "to increase its involvement in the ongoing effort to chart the future of Europe," and called for the expansion of NATO and the EU.

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 FUTURE OF EUROPE

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 By VZ NARA, Date 6/24/2014
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TEXT:
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ BERLIN 002793
 S/S-0 PLEASE PASS TO DEPUTY SECRETARY IN MOSCOW FM AMB HOLBROOKE
 EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D COPY (SPELLING OF EXDIS)
 E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
 TAGS: PREL, GM, EU, US
 SUBJECT: CHANCELLOR KOHL: NATO AND EU ENLARGEMENT: THE
 FUTURE OF EUROPE
 1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ -ENTIRE TEXT.
 2. IN MY FAREWELL CALL ON CHANCELLOR KOHL SEPTEMBER 9, HE
 URGED WASHINGTON TO INCREASE ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE
 ONGOING EFFORT TO CHART THE FUTURE OF EUROPE. CLOSE
 CONSULTATION IS NECESSARY, BUT EU ENLARGEMENT, AN EU
 DEFENSE COMPONENT, AND NATO EXPANSION CAN ALL BE MADE
 COMPLEMENTARY. EVEN FRANCE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD NATO IS
 SIGNIFICANTLY MORE POSITIVE. HE ALSO STATED GERMANY COULD
 SUPPORT CLAES FOR NATO SECRETARY GENERAL.
 3. "PLEASE TELL YOUR COLLEAGUES AND THE PRESIDENT," KOHL
 SAID AT THE END OF THE MEETING, "THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN
 TIMES, IN BOTH DOMESTIC POLITICS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHEN
 WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY OPEN. MOST PEOPLE FAIL TO NOTICE
 AT ALL, AND THE RESULTS ONLY SHOW YEARS LATER." KOHL
 URGED US NOT TO LET THE CURRENT OPPORTUNITY PASS WITHOUT
 SETTING A COURSE WHICH WILL HELP ENSURE SMOOTH SAILING IN
 THE YEARS AHEAD.
 4. KOHL MENTIONED IN THIS REGARD THAT HE HOPES TO TRAVEL
 TO WASHINGTON SOMETIME THIS WINTER FOR A WEEKEND OF
 MEETINGS WITH THE PRESIDENT, PERHAPS AT CAMP DAVID.

 TIME TO SET COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

5. THE CHANCELLOR SAID THIS WAS A TIME OF GREAT
 OPPORTUNITY FOR THE UNITED STATES. FORTUNATELY FOR ALL OF
 US, HE SAID, PRESIDENT CLINTON IS FROM A GENERATION LESS
 BURDENED WITH PREJUDICES FROM WORLD WAR II AND THE COLD
 WAR. THE PREVIOUS U.S. ADMINISTRATION'S BELIEF THAT THE

EUROCORPS WOULD UNDERCUT NATO WAS ONE EXAMPLE OF THIS. KOHL SAID HE DEEPLY DISAGREED WITH THE "OLD THINKING" OF PEOPLE LIKE DICK CHENEY ON THESE MATTERS.

6. WE NEED A HOUSE, THE CHANCELLOR WENT ON, IN WHICH WE CAN ALL MAINTAIN SEPARATE APARTMENTS. ONLY THEN CAN THERE BE A COMMUNITY.

TAKING THE MESSAGE TO CENTRAL EUROPE

7. ONE IMPORTANT TASK WHICH WE SHOULD UNDERTAKE IS MAKING CLEAR TO THOSE IN CENTRAL EUROPE HOW ADJUSTMENT IN OUR SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AFFECTS THEM. KOHL EMPHASIZED THERE IS NO SIMPLE RECIPE FOR DEALING WITH CENTRAL EUROPE - WE MUST STOP REFERRING, HE ADDED, TO THAT REGION AS "EASTERN EUROPE."

8. THERE ARE MANY THINGS TO BE CONSIDERED. HOW WILL THE COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION DEVELOP? WILL THERE BE A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, PERHAPS PURELY ECONOMIC, BINDING US TOGETHER WITH FSU? WILL THE FSU DEVELOP SOME ECONOMIC UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION, AS THE BENELUX COUNTRIES DID? KOHL PREDICTED THERE WOULD BE A NEW ECONOMIC WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE.

OLD FEARS IN CENTRAL EUROPE

9. KOHL EMPHASIZED THAT ANY NEW FORMS OF INTERNAL COOPERATION IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION WILL LEAD TO INCREASING ANXIETY IN CENTRAL EUROPE. IN THIS REGARD, POLAND AND HUNGARY ARE PSYCHOLOGICALLY THE MOST AFFECTED. HUNGARY WORRIES ABOUT ITS PROXIMITY TO THE BALKANS AND THE FATE OF HUNGARIAN MINORITIES THERE AND IN SLOVAKIA, AS WELL AS ROMANIA.

10. POLAND IS EVEN MORE CRITICAL. SOMETIMES WE FAIL TO APPRECIATE TO WHAT EXTENT POLAND LOOKS WARILY AT BOTH GERMANY AND THE EAST. KOHL RECOUNTED THAT THE NEW POLISH FOREIGN MINISTER HAD COME TO SEE HIM IN AUGUST. THE POLISH FM OPENED THE MEETING BY SHOWING KOHL A POLISH NEWSPAPER FEATURING A PICTURE OF KOHL EMBRACING YELTSIN. THE HEADLINE READ "WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR POLAND?" WHETHER IRRATIONAL OR NOT, THE POLES WILL ALWAYS OBSERVE VERY CLOSELY WHETHER RUSSIA AND GERMANY ARE MAKING ARRANGEMENTS TO THE DETRIMENT OF POLAND.

11. IT IS FOR THIS REASON, KOHL SAYS, THAT POLAND IS SO EAGER TO JOIN NATO, AND THE POLES DO NOT CARE AT ALL WHAT PRICE WE MAY HAVE TO PAY TO MOSCOW AS A RESULT.

INEQUITIES IN EUROPEAN DEFENSE

12. KOHL NOTED THAT THE MAASTRICHT INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE WOULD TAKE PLACE IN 1996. EUROPE HAD TO WORK TO CONSOLIDATE RECENT EXPANSION BEFORE PROCEEDING TOO QUICKLY WITH EXPANSION TO THE EAST. BY 1996 AT THE LATEST, EUROPEANS MUST ASK EXPLICITLY: WHAT CONTRIBUTION ARE THE EU NATIONS, INCLUDING ITS NEWER MEMBERS, WILLING TO MAKE TO EUROPEAN SECURITY?

13. THERE ARE CURRENTLY CERTAIN "PECULIARITIES," KOHL SAID, COMPLICATING EU AND NATO EXPANSION. IRELAND COMES

TO MIND, HE SAID. IT IS A COUNTRY WHERE YOUNG MEN DO NOT NECESSARILY SERVE IN THE MILITARY. EVEN WORSE, FROM THE GERMAN POINT OF VIEW, IS THE POSITION OF AUSTRIA. WHILE IT MAY MAKE LITTLE DIFFERENCE FROM A PURELY MILITARY POINT OF VIEW WHETHER AUSTRIAN FORCES JOIN A EUROPEAN DEFENSE COMPONENT, PSYCHOLOGICALLY IT IS VERY IMPORTANT, KOHL INSISTED. GERMANY AND AUSTRIA SHARE A LONG BORDER AND A COMMON LANGUAGE. MANY AUSTRIANS HAVE LEADING POSITIONS IN GERMANY. YOUNG GERMANS CANNOT HELP BUT ASK THEMSELVES WHY THEY SHOULD GET DRAFTED WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE RIGHT ACROSS THE AUSTRIAN BORDER DO NOT. KOHL ADDED THAT HE HAD ALREADY HEARD SUCH COMPLAINTS AND EXPECTED THEM TO INCREASE.

14. ACCORDING TO KOHL, THE DEFENSE COMPONENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION MUST BEGIN TO TAKE REAL SHAPE BY 1996 AT THE LATEST, WITH ALL PARTICIPATING. HUNGARY, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD IMMEDIATELY CONTRIBUTE MILITARILY IF ADMITTED.

15. KOHL PREDICTED THAT SWITZERLAND WOULD BE AN EU MEMBER BY THE YEAR 2000. THE SWISS ARE NOW "CRYING LARGE TEARS," AS THEY WORRY ABOUT BEING EXCLUDED FROM A UNITED EUROPE. KOHL SAID HE WAS IN CONSTANT DEMAND ("PESTERED" EVEN) IN SWITZERLAND. IN FACT HE HAD RECENTLY BEEN ON PRIME TIME SWISS TELEVISION FOR AN HOUR AND TWENTY MINUTES, SPEAKING ON POSSIBLE SWISS MEMBERSHIP IN THE EU.

NATO MORE INDISPENSABLE THAN EVER

16. KOHL SAID THE EUROPEAN UNION COULD NOT DEAL WITH ITS DEFENSE COMPONENT WITHOUT THE U.S. IT HAD TO BRING NATO ALONG WITH IT. INTEGRATION WITH NATO WAS INDISPENSABLE FOR THE EU. KOHL PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED, AND REPEATED LATER AT SEVERAL POINTS DURING THE CONVERSATION, THAT AN AMERICAN MUST CONTINUE TO BE THE SUPREME COMMANDER OF NATO, EVEN THOUGH OTHERS IN EUROPE MAY NOT AGREE.

FRANCE'S CHANGING ATTITUDE TOWARD NATO

17. KOHL NOTED A SHIFT IN FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARD NATO, EVEN IN MITTERRAND, WHO, HE SAID HAS GRADUALLY ADOPTED A MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD POSITION ON FRANCE'S INVOLVEMENT IN NATO. IN THE OLD DAYS, KOHL JOKED, MITTERRAND HAD PUT ON HIS "BUDDHA FACE" WHENEVER NATO WAS MENTIONED

18. MITTERRAND IS NOW OLDER AND "MILDER." KOHL BELIEVES MITTERRAND WOULD MOVE FRANCE BACK INTO NATO WITHIN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS IF HE STAYED IN OFFICE. BUT IN ANY CASE, FRANCE NEEDS TO LEARN TO LIVE WITH CHANGING REALITIES. THE GERMANS ARE BACK, HE SAID. INTERESTINGLY, HE NEVER MENTIONED THE BRITISH.

19. KOHL WENT ON TO CAUTION THAT THE FRENCH WILL EXPECT A "SIGN" OF SOME SORT AS PRICE FOR MOVING CLOSER TO NATO. THIS IS ANOTHER REASON TO BE ABSOLUTELY FIRM ABOUT HAVING AN AMERICAN AS SUPREME COMMANDER OF NATO, SO THERE SHOULD BE NO DISCUSSION AT ALL OF CHANGING THIS.

20. KOHL CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE LOOKED FORWARD TO A "PERSONAL VISIT" WITH THE PRESIDENT IN EITHER WASHINGTON OR CAMP DAVID THIS FALL AFTER THE U.S. AND GERMAN ELECTIONS -- A TRIP HE SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED DIRECTLY WITH THE PRESIDENT. HE WAS IN A HIGHLY CONFIDENT MOOD AFTER THE BERLIN FAREWELL CEREMONIES, AND CLEARLY FELT THAT HE

NOT ONLY WAS NOW THE DOMINANT FIGURE IN EUROPE BUT THAT
HIS ELECTION PROSPECTS WERE LOOKING VERY GOOD. (NOTE:
HIS LEAD IN MOST POLLS IS STILL, HOWEVER, FAIRLY NARROW,
AND RESTS

AT ABOUT THE MARGIN OF ERROR.) COVEY

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