



THE WHITE HOUSE  
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SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Valery Giscard d'Estaing, President of the  
French Republic  
Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues

President Gerald Ford  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State  
and Assistant to the President for  
National Security Affairs  
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy  
Assistant to the President for  
National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, May 29, 1975  
[Following King Baudouin's Dinner]

PLACE: Royal Palace  
Brussels, Belgium

Giscard: I wanted to come to show you an expression of my regard for you and the United States. I know it is a difficult time for you. In Southeast Asia, we tried to influence them as long as we could. We know the difficulties you are having, and we understand why you wanted to come to Europe.

President: I have long thought we made a mistake in the way we conducted our operations, but I still believe our objectives in Indochina were right. There comes a time when you have to recognize the realities. It is over. But some of us don't concede that we were wrong to have tried.

Giscard: I think this will give you more freedom of action now. The French public opinion understood, and there was no criticism.

President: In the United States, most people did not take any satisfaction from the events, even those who were against the war.

Giscard: We have taken a certain number of refugees. Our Consul has visited some of the camps.

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

~~TOP SECRET - XGDS (S)~~  
CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER



President: We appreciate this. Several other countries have offered.

Giscard: I want to raise my second point: I believe that for French security and the stability of the Western world, it would be better to have two units -- Western Europe and the United States. In the past, it was thought that Europe couldn't be a reliable partner, but now I don't think it is possible to have a difference between us on major points. I think the people would have more security with two units. Of course, Europe is not yet organized, but I intend to try. I would like understanding from the United States that it is sympathetic to our attempt to do this. Tindemans is doing a study to see what could be done.

President: How about Portugal, and Spain?

Giscard: I am just thinking of the EC now, but we would expand to include Greece, Portugal and Spain.

I share your view on Portugal. I expressed it to Helmut [Schmidt]. We shouldn't ostracize them, but we shouldn't give them support.

President: They are no better than the old regime.

Kissinger: Concalves gave us a political lecture today: The Armed Forces Movement represents the people, the political parties represent only part of the people, he says.

Giscard: This is sad. The Portuguese people are nice people. To imagine the Armed Forces Movement is the expression of the people!

We were embarrassed. Casta Gomes is coming next week, on the way to Romania. We arranged it when we thought the election would change things.

I believe it is important to build Europe. Right now we have the Soviet Union and China fighting. If they join up, then there would only be the United States opposing.

It is better for us not to try to change the NATO structure. We will increase our own forces. We won't push our partners to diminish their NATO commitment. Defense relations will remain the same for now, but politics will be done more and more on a unified basis in Europe. Then it would not be good for the United States to work with one and another.





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