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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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E.O. 12958 Sec. 3.8

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

MO-01-100, # 9; dt. 10/11/01

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

By *dae* NARA, Date 10/24/01

PARTICIPANTS:

President Ford
Georg Leber, Minister of Defense, FRG
Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense
Amb. Berndt von Staden, Ambassador to
the U.S.
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Karl Freudenstein [Interpreter]

DATE & TIME:

Friday, July 2, 1976
12:20-12:54 p.m.

PLACE:

The Oval Office

President: I think we had a very constructive meeting at Puerto Rico.

[The press was admitted for photographs.]

Leber: Our Chancellor and Foreign Minister thought it was a very fine conference.

President: They made a great contribution.

[Discussion of weather here and Puerto Rico.]

Rumsfeld: [Comments about the Army tank and the Hoffman presentations to the President, and Bob Hope and Leber at a party.]

[The press was ushered out.]

Leber: Thank you very much for granting me this brief encounter. The Chancellor sends you his greetings and I also bring to you our official gratification with your policies toward Europe and your defense

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budget which is an example of upholding the strength of the free world and as an example. In the face of Angola and other moves of Soviet policy, these measures are a good antidote for the sense of unease which runs through our countries [in Europe].

Our two defense departments have very good relations, which is not only good bilaterally but it flows through the Alliance when they see we two have such cooperation.

President: Let me say again how much I appreciated the Chancellor's contribution at Puerto Rico. It always is a privilege to see him. I am glad you are pleased with our defense budget. It is a difficult choice, but for years I have said that social programs have been growing at the expense of defense. We decided it was time it had to be turned around, and Don did most of the work but I am solidly behind it and we think we will get our budget requests through with only about 1 percent loss. I think the American people support me and the Secretary and that has had an impact on the Congress as well.

I would just add that I think NATO is in better shape than it was a year ago and than it was several years ago. But we have to keep up the momentum and I hope our effort will stimulate the others to do more.

Leber: I agree the Alliance is in better shape, although this in in contradiction to what we read in both our newspapers. It is true but for some weak spots in the Mediterranean -- like Italy, where noone knows what will happen. But besides the military confrontation, we will have a political confrontation. If I read Brezhnev's speech advocating disbanding of military alliances and cutting back defense. We must not just be passive and we must actively move to meet this political challenge.

President: I agree there are problems in the Mediterranean. Italy is a real problem and the Greek-Turkish dispute over Cyprus is a tragedy. I hope we can make progress in working that out.

But we shouldn't overlook the problems they have in the Soviet bloc. Judging from the recent speeches, there is internal dissension. We have to keep our guard up, but there are problems -- like Poland's recent attempt to raise prices.

We must do better. Just because they may have some problems is no excuse for us in any way letting down on our guard.

Leber: On the Eastern Mediterranean, we have followed with interest your attitude toward Greece and Turkey. The Chancellor and I traveled there to try to improve relations. I think it will be possible to reintegrate these two back together and in to NATO, but only if we deal with them on the basis of absolute equality. The Congress has not done this and unless it is done we cannot solve this problem.

President: I agree, on the Greek-Turkish issue Congress has been a disaster. One other point. In the Mediterranean I think Spain is taking careful steps toward opening its system and I think we must encourage them and move as rapidly as possible to associate them more closely in Europe and NATO.

Leber: Don and I have discussed this and there is no difference in our appraisal of the importance of Spain. My friendly advice is that NATO as an Alliance should not move too fast to make an association with Spain because of the problem it would create with some of the members. So I would keep NATO out of it now and encourage bilateral cooperation. Then, in the natural order of things, NATO association will follow. That will take patience, however.

You suggested in Bonn last year that I visit Portugal. That was a good idea and it was a productive trip. I urge that you do what you can to help.

President: I agree.

Leber: It doesn't have to be very much but it would be of great help.

President: Is Eanes a good military leader?

Leber: I think he is a reliable political leader.

President: I see he has moved rapidly in the economic field.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Presidential Libraries Withdrawal Sheet

WITHDRAWAL ID 018442

REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL National security restriction

TYPE OF MATERIAL Briefing Paper

TITLE Meeting with FRG Defense Minister Leber

CREATION DATE 07/02/1976

VOLUME 6 pages

COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID . 031400926

COLLECTION TITLE National Security Adviser. Memoranda of
Conversations

BOX NUMBER 20

FOLDER TITLE July 2, 1976 - Ford, Rumsfeld, FRG
Defense Minister Georg Leber

DATE WITHDRAWN 08/02/2004

WITHDRAWING ARCHIVIST GG

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Presidential Libraries Withdrawal Sheet

WITHDRAWAL ID 018443

REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL National security restriction
TYPE OF MATERIAL Biography

CREATION DATE 05/25/1976
VOLUME 1 page
COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID . 031400926
COLLECTION TITLE National Security Adviser. Memoranda of
Conversations
BOX NUMBER 20
FOLDER TITLE July 2, 1976 - Ford, Rumsfeld, FRG
Defense Minister Georg Leber

DATE WITHDRAWN 08/02/2004
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2 July 72

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L Our Chairman & F.M. that it was a very fine conf

P They made a great contribution.

R (Discussion of way here + P.R.)
Government about doing T.R. + H. from presentation to Pres, Westinghouse & others at party
(Pres out)

L Thank you very much for getting me this brief document. Chairman sends his greetings & looks being official representative of your policies toward Europe and your only budget as an example of upholding a strength of a free world & as an example for a force of America & other moves of Ser policy. These are a good example for a sense of increase which more than our countries (E.M.) Our 2 Depts have very good relations which is not only good bilaterally but it shows them a alliance when they see we 2 have such coop.

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AUTHORITY per ml 01-100 #9, et. 10/1/01

BY llj NLF, DATE 2/2/04



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PHOTOs - To my friend George when in Germany -

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