MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Amb. John Sherman Cooper, Ambassador to GDR
Secretary Kissinger
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE & TIME: Friday - April 18, 1975
10:00 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

President: Does Lorraine like it?

Cooper: Yes, it is not a place you would want to be permanently, but they made a special effort for us in housing.

President: How do they treat you?

Cooper: You don't see private people. They look at you curiously. People don't talk at restaurants. We can go anywhere we want, but not near the military establishment.

President: What is the population?

Cooper: Seventeen million, with about 1-1/2 [million] communist.

Kissinger: They are the most industrial country in East Europe. Are they below West Germany?

Cooper: Yes, but they put out they are the most industrial state in the world. They have the two parallel lines -- party and government. The party is headed by Honecker.
President: Do you deal with the party or the Government?

Cooper: Initially just the Foreign Minister, but now I am getting invitations from the Party. I am the only one in the West who has ever met with Honecker. They say they are very glad with this relationship with the United States. I tell them about NATO and the Western partnership.

President: What does Honecker say?

Cooper: The same. They say it is/most important thing in the world for the U.S. and Soviet Union to maintain good relations. They talk of arms control and Vladivostok. Then they discuss our agreement -- consulate, Jewish problems -- and finally get to trade. Honecker says he knows it can't be normal, but we should do the best we can.

West Germany has a big embassy.

Honecker speaks highly of you and of Secretary Kissinger. They never mention Vietnam or economics, except trade. He said you were the biggest moral influence since Eisenhower. We should make the greatest efforts we can with them. A better trade relationship would help.
P Dear Hubert, let it be a plan you will want to be present, but try make special effort for me in sending.

C I now hear that you are having trouble with your neighbors. People don't talk about it, but it can go anywhere we want, for not some will, which

P What is a population

C It will be about 140,000.

C They are en route to industrial country in F.E.E.

C Are they back in Germany

C Yes, but they just got the most industrial state in the world. They have a parallel line - plants and ports, largely backed by Germany.

P Do you think they are back in Germany?

C Initially, it looks like Germany, but now I see they continue it in small way from Egypt. I really don't know what will go.

C Haushalter. They say they are now glad of their relationship with US. I told them about NEPI relationship.

C What else is happening now?

C The same. They try most important thing in world is to win for US. We have good relations. They talk of an early end to cold war. Then they have our agreement - consider friend, plus friendly policies. Haushalter says he knows it can't be normal, but we shouldn't look at what we can.

C West Germany has a big ministry

C (missed writing)

C General speaks highly of you + P. They want...
the US or economies, apart from
F's an after a little thing she said you were
biggest mind in town and asked 
We should make quaint effects on one
thing. A little trade could help.