

June 4, 1965

**Memorandum of Conversation with West German
chancellor Ludwig Erhard, 'Nuclear Matters'**

Citation:

"Memorandum of Conversation with West German chancellor Ludwig Erhard, 'Nuclear Matters'", June 4, 1965, Wilson Center Digital Archive, NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, box 379, CF 2521 Visit of Chancellor Erhard 6/4/65 Admin & Substantive Misc and Memcons. Contributed to NPIHP by Bill Burr.
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Summary:

In this conversation, Erhard mentioned a briefing by McNamara that detailed U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in the Federal Republic. After Erhard wished that the numbers could be publicly disclosed, Ambassador George McGhee observed that it was "often overlooked that Germany was actually the third largest nuclear country in the world."

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Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Approved by the White House

6/25/65

Memorandum of Conversation

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DATE: June 4, 1965

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

PLACE: White House Luncheon

SUBJECT: Nuclear Matters

Part 3 of 4

GERMANS

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Ludwig Erhard, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany
 Dr. Gerhard Schroeder, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
 Ambassador Heinrich Knappstein, German Embassy
 Mr. Karl-Guenther von Hase, State Secretary; Federal Press Spokesman
 Mr. Hermann Kusterer, Interpreter

COPIES TO: AMERICANS

The President
 The Secretary
 Ambassador George C. McGhee
 Mr. John M. Leddy, Assistant Secretary, EUR
 Mr. George E. Reedy, Press Secretary to the President
 Mr. Harry Obst, Interpreter

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Mr. Leddy asked why the Chancellor wished to have at this time a summit meeting of the Six on political unity, since such a meeting now would not be successful.

Chancellor Erhard replied that such a meeting would demonstrate common agreement among the Five in favor of unity.

Chancellor Erhard said, although it had been clear to him that there was a great nuclear potential in Europe, he was very much impressed by Secretary McNamara's figures, especially the number of warheads on German soil. It was a pity that these figures could not be used publicly.

Ambassador McGhee mentioned that the fact was often overlooked that Germany was actually the third largest nuclear country in the world.

Secretary Rusk interjected that de Gaulle had boasted in one speech he would have 40 megatons of nuclear power by 1970. There were hundreds of megatons on German soil alone today. Even if de Gaulle should be able to reach that goal, such a contribution at that time would be trivial.

Chancellor Erhard agreed.

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