

Letter from Willy Brandt to Georges Pompidou (Bonn, 27 November 1969)

Caption: On 27 November 1969, in an effort to maintain close cooperation with France, Willy Brandt, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), informs the French President, Georges Pompidou, of his plans a few days before the opening of the Hague Summit, due to be held on 1 and 2 December.

Source: Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn. Depositum Egon Bahr. Box 441.

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Last updated: 06/07/2016

Letter from Chancellor Willy Brandt to President Georges Pompidou (27 November 1969)

Dear President,

In advance of the important conference which will bring us together in The Hague at the start of next week, I very much wish by the present letter to share with you some of my reflections.

The results of the conference will be of great importance for Europe's further development. This can be put another way: the close understanding between our two countries will be of great importance for the outcome of the conference.

In saying this, I fully understand, Mr President, your interests in the matter, that decisions of principle must be taken on the funding of the agricultural sector, although as you yourself are aware such decisions will give rise for me to domestic political difficulties. I realise that in this area some financial sacrifice is required of the Federal Republic. That sacrifice must not however exceed what can reasonably be demanded and must be manageable. It can be in no-one's interest for me to be faced with a nationalistic explosion in the middle of the legislative period. It is thus all the more important for me that we reach an understanding on a reform of the agricultural policy.

It should be in our common interest to come to an understanding on a decision concerning the opening of negotiations for an enlargement of the Common Market. I am sure we agree that these negotiations will be difficult and time-consuming. Their conduct must not in any way depend on which governments are in power at any particular time in any particular place. We are talking here not of ideology but of issues of substance which encapsulate the interests of the States concerned.

I have been devoting much thought to how we could go about establishing a European reserve fund once national economic policies have in some measure converged. Such a fund could be a vector for solidarity and stabilisation within the framework of the Community. In The Hague I will not be able to make more than hints in this direction, but subsequent confidential discussions might in my view be envisaged.

I would greatly welcome the opportunity, should it arise, to convey to you in person my thoughts on the Eastern component of German policy on Europe. I welcome the fact that our two countries are pursuing very similar policies in this respect and I am convinced that in this area too our close cooperation takes on special importance. You will find me ready at all times to provide you, by this or any other means, with any information you may require in furtherance of even closer understanding.

Please accept, Mr President, the expression of my highest esteem.

Brandt