

Interview with Egon Bahr: the relationship between Willy Brandt and Georges Pompidou (Metz, 10 June 2006)

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[François Klein] In your opinion, what was the relationship between Willy Brandt and Georges Pompidou like?

[Egon Bahr] I can sum that up quite easily. I would say that, despite initial reservations and differences in character — Pompidou was very erudite, well-versed in all things classical, and could come out with wonderful quotations just like that; Brandt couldn't do that, it wasn't in him — a really good working relationship developed. I wouldn't describe it as one of friendship, but there was definitely genuinely close and fruitful cooperation, which unfortunately didn't last long enough. Brandt would have liked to achieve more, but ... If you like, with de Gaulle he was not yet Chancellor and with Mitterrand he was no longer Chancellor, and the time with Pompidou was somewhat too short.