

Letter from Dean Acheson to Robert Schuman (Washington, 30 October 1949)

Caption: On 30 October 1949, US Secretary of State Dean Acheson writes to Robert Schuman, French Foreign Minister, to assure him of his interest in seeking a concerted solution regarding the international status of Germany.

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October 30, 1949.

My dear Mr. Schuman:

To-day I have received the message which Mr. Bevin sent to you and me on German matters. It has occupied all of my thoughts not only because it contains so much of what I unburdened myself to you and him in our meeting in October, but because since then I have been full of the fateful sense that time was running out, that events were taking control, and that in the last analysis the problem was whether we could move shoulder to shoulder fast enough to lead and not be controlled by events which were taking on an all too familiar pattern.

You know my mind too well to make a long recitation necessary, but so much wrong and misleading talk has been printed that I wish to set down what has been in my mind. Before I do so, I want to say this: the problems Mr. Bevin writes about are at the very forefront. I am convinced along with him that early action by us is imperative in the dismantling issue. I shall be glad to set aside my own preoccupations and join you and him to talk this out, but if I do so, I should hope to make a contribution to constructive and positive action, and not merely to add to your problems which you know so much better than I do. I am sending you separately a personal message that I had in preparation before receipt of Bevin's telegram. After you have considered it, I should be grateful for your frank views as to whether I, or some representative, if you think that wiser, could advance the situation by responding to an invitation from you to join you and Bevin this coming week-end or shortly thereafter. In the event a meeting is held, we should have to consider carefully the public aspects of the arrangements for it.

Sincerely yours,

DEAN ACHESON.