

*„...our normal relations  
are of a very special character ...“*

**Willy Brandt,  
the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel**





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A Friedrich Ebert Foundation  
Exhibition

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# Foreword

Willy Brandt's life and work reflect the highs and lows of twentieth century German history. He was just 19 when he escaped the National Socialists, going into political exile in Scandinavia. He was stripped of his citizenship and fought the Nazis from outside until the end of the war. He was still in exile when, together with like-minded people from all over Europe, he drew up plans for a new order on the Continent following the fall of the Nazi dictatorship, containing among other things an explicit call for the right of self-determination for the Jews.

After the end of the war he returned to Germany, regained German citizenship, and went on to serve in a number of political capacities. As Governing Mayor of Berlin, Chairman of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, Foreign Minister and Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as finally as President of the Socialist International, he worked indefatigably to bring people together, to overcome rifts between societies and states in East and West, North and South, and facilitate understanding in seemingly hopeless situations.

He was particularly concerned about what happened to Israel, feeling very profoundly a historic sense of responsibility. Right up to his death he strove to bring about understanding between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel, as well as between Israel and its Arab neighbors. All of this is documented in the present catalog.

Willy Brandt was a member of our Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Foundation), which is committed to the idea of social democracy and espouses the goals of peace, sustainable development, and international solidarity. He made a major contribution to our work in Germany and worldwide, and for its part our foundation gave as much support as it could to his activities both in Germany and elsewhere.

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung began its project activities in Israel as early as 1962. In cooperation with the Labor Party, further education opportunities were offered to scholarship recipients from developing countries. Very early on contacts were established with the General Federation of Labor, the Histadrut, and regular exchanges began between the foundation, the Histadrut, and the German Federation of Trade Unions.

Since the opening of our federation's Israel office, year on year numerous information-gathering trips have been made by German decision-makers and disseminators. Very soon the foundation began working with socially weak and underprivileged sectors of Israeli society. In 1982 the first mixed Israeli-Arab delegation visited Germany. Since then, the cooperation of Jews and Arabs in Israel and the region has been a major goal of our project work.

Promoting the peace dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians has been and remains of major importance to us. Even before the outbreak of the first intifada, we cooperated closely with Israeli peace circles and supported projects designed to bring home to the Israeli public the significance of a peaceful solution of the conflict.

Against the background of Germany's historical and moral responsibility vis-à-vis Israel, Willy Brandt's axiom that "our normal relations are of a very special character" has always held true. This is why it is used as the main title of our traveling exhibition on Willy Brandt, the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel. The goal of our project work in Israel is to place this not always straightforward relationship between two countries on a solid footing, and to foster fruitful dialogue and cooperation. Against this background we support exchanges between Israelis and Germans on diverse levels, in politics, in the trade

union sphere, in journalism, and in youth work. We use the many-faceted network of political, economic, social, and cultural ties between the two countries to learn from the other's experiences and bring Israel closer to Europe.

The Israeli-Palestinian peace process on the government and civil-society level remains the focus of our project work. In order to sustain a results-oriented peace dialogue, we also for example supported the Geneva initiative, produced by the first Israeli-Palestinian working group to put forward a draft peace treaty that was drawn up jointly. We also support the Jerusalem-Berlin Forum, whose participants propose concrete scenarios for a new set of arrangements for Jerusalem following a peace solution, based on their own experiences in East/West Jerusalem or East/West Berlin.

It is my hope that this exhibition on Willy Brandt, the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel by our Archives of Social Democracy will be able to reach many people on its travels through Israel. Through it they should gain an idea of the efforts to achieve understanding and peace that were made by Willy Brandt and hence by German social democracy. Willy Brandt was firmly convinced that not only do political tensions spread, but that reductions in tension can also be contagious.

Berlin and Bonn, May 2005

*Anke Fuchs*

Chairperson, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

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*„...our normal relations  
are of a very special character ...“*

**Willy Brandt,  
the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel**



Willy Brandt is born Herbert Ernst Karl Frahm in Lübeck on December 18, 1913. His mother, Martha Frahm (1), works at the Co-op as a sales assistant. Her son is raised by his grandfather (2), who plays the role of father. Like her own father, Willy's mother is a staunch member of the Social Democratic labor movement (3). Only after 1945 does Willy Brandt learn his father's name.

As a gifted pupil, Willy Brandt gains a free place at Lübeck's famed Johanneum, an academically and technically oriented high school for students intending to go on to university. After taking his final exams in 1932 (4), he wants to study history and become a journalist.

At an early age Willy Brandt is already writing articles for Social Democratic papers, including the Lübecker Volksbote ("Lübeck People's Courier") and the Arbeiterjugend ("Labor Youth"). Under his grandfather's influence, as a child he joins the "Falcons" and then the Socialist Workers' Youth, later going on to join the Socialist Workers' Party (5).

In March 1930, a supplement to the Lübecker Volksbote publishes an article by 16-year-old Willy Brandt. Entitled "The Swastika Lads", the article identifies anti-Semitism as a central tenet of National Socialism (6).

# 2 Childhood and youth 1913-1933

## Family and political beginnings

Willy Brandt is born Herbert Ernst Karl Frahm on December 18, 1913. Willy Brandt becomes involved in the Socialist Workers' Youth while still at school (he graduated from high school in 1932), going on to become involved in the Socialist Workers' Party (SAP). Even at the age of 16, he is revolted by the Nazis' anti-Semitic propaganda.



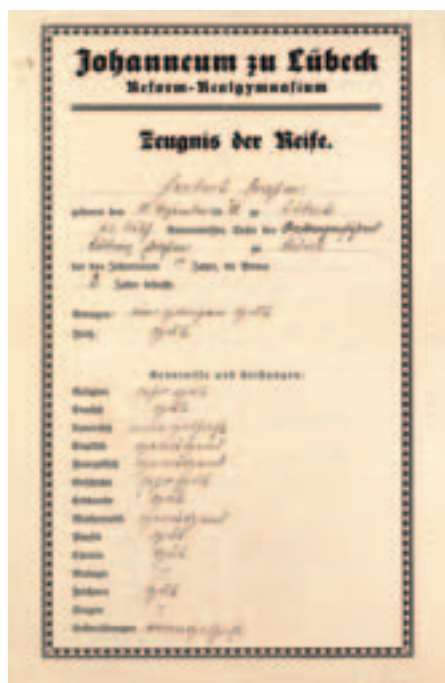
(1) Willy Brandt with his mother Martha Frahm, around 1915.



(2) Grandfather Ludwig Frahm (no date, 1920s), with whom Willy Brandt grows up.



(3) Willy Brandt with his mother at the Lübeck Nature Lovers' House, 1926 (Willy Brandt, 1st row, first from left; mother, 2nd row, third from left).



(4) Willy Brandt's high school diploma from the "Johanneum zu Lübeck" school, February 26, 1932.



(5) Willy Brandt reading the Kampfsignal, the Socialist Workers' Party paper, around 1932.



(6) Excerpt: article by 16-year-old Willy Brandt in Die Stimme der Jugend – Beilage zum Lübecker Volksboten ("The Voice of Youth – Supplement to the Lübeck People's Courier"), March 11, 1930 edition.

After Hitler “seizes” power in January 1933, the young Herbert Ernst Karl Frahm flees to Norway at the beginning of April 1933, for security reasons using the alias of Willy Brandt. In Norway he is to establish a center of the Socialist Workers’ Party (SAP, a small left-wing grouping which in 1931 broke away from the SPD, the Social Democratic Party of Germany), and with the support of the Norwegian Workers’ Party to undertake the struggle against Fascism. (1)

In Willy Brandt’s political exile, Norway becomes his second home. He becomes well and truly integrated in the Norwegian workers’ movement and its youth association (2), gives courses at the Malmoya Workers’ College (3), and has close contacts with the Norwegian Workers’ Party leadership. The Norwegian party’s development from a revolutionary-Marxist class-based party to a democratic-Socialist party not only greatly influences Brandt’s political activities in Norway, but will also have a major and lasting impact on his later political thinking and actions.

On September 5, 1938 the German Reich Gazette and Prussian State Gazette (Deutscher Reichsanzeiger und Preußischer Staatsanzeiger) publishes a public announcement, in which item No. 11 is the stripping of Willy Brandt, as Herbert Ernst Karl Frahm, of his citizenship (4). He therefore becomes stateless. As a result, he applies for Norwegian citizenship. In 1940, the Norwegian government-in-exile in London grants him Norwegian citizenship when he is living in Stockholm, where he fled after Norway was occupied by the Germans (5).

# 3 The struggle against National Socialism: Exile in Norway 1933-1940

## Flight and loss of citizenship



(2) Willy Brandt at the holiday camp of the Norwegian Workers' Party Youth Association, no date.

After Hitler "seizes" power in January 1933, Herbert Frahm, assuming the alias of Willy Brandt, escapes to Norway. In close cooperation with the Norwegian workers' movement, he opposes the National Socialist dictatorship. After the Nazis strip him of his citizenship, he receives Norwegian nationality.



(1) Brochure: Willy Brandt, Hvorfor har Hitler seiret i Tyskland? ("Why did Hitler triumph in Germany?"), Oslo 1933.



(4) Deutscher Reichsanzeiger und Preussischer Staatsanzeiger ("German Reich Gazette and Prussian State Gazette"), September 5, evening, 1938. Notification: H.E.K. Frahm is stripped of his citizenship (No. 11).



(5) Willy Brandt's Norwegian passport, issued on August 1, 1940 in the name of Herbert Ernst Karl Frahm.



(3) Willy Brandt (back row, 2nd from right) with students of the Malmoya Workers' College in front of the college building, mid-August 1939.

In the 1930s Willy Brandt establishes international youth contacts, including with Jewish youth organizations such as the Bundist Youth in Poland and the Young Guard (HaShomer HaZair) in Palestine and Europe. (1)

Between 1934 and 1939, in the course of Willy Brandt's political work to forge a united anti-Fascist front, from his base in Norway he crisscrosses Europe (2), including a 1937 visit to Spain, wracked by civil war. The heated arguments in the workers' movement, culminating in the annihilation of the left-Socialist POUM party by the Spanish Communists and the Comintern, are a decisive experience for Brandt (3).

As early as January 1939, Willy Brandt publishes powerful reports in the *Telegraf og Telefon* about the persecutions of the Jews in Germany, making the following point: "Today's political reaction has brought about a new Jewish problem, which can only be solved in a new European order, in which the Jewish majority which wishes to assimilate is given the opportunity to do so, while the minority, which wishes to forge a new Jewish nation, must be given a full opportunity to do so. The right way to achieve this is Palestine." (4)

From 1936 onward, the looming threat of a war between National Socialist Germany and its neighbors is the subject of intense discussions in the left-Socialist camp. In September 1939, after the outbreak of war (5), Brandt writes the following: "The Nazi bombers ... have launched the new world war above Polish cities! ... The war whose outcome will also determine Europe's future, finds us Socialists of all inclinations in a single front! ... This war must be the last war in Europe ...! While Europe rises up against Nazi barbarity, while the German workers continue their bitter struggle, Stalin sends his generals to Berlin. That is help for Hitler, betrayal of us all, and not least, of the Soviet Union itself!" This attitude means turning away from the previous SAP policy of cooperation with the Soviet Union.

The German opposition's main theme is now: What is coming after the war? In a foreign policy analysis (6) of the future shaping of ties between Germany and its neighbors in the East, Brandt proposes a Central European federation, in order to promote economic development and facilitate solutions to the minorities questions.

# 4 The struggle against National Socialism: Exile in Norway 1933-1940

## For a European keeping of the peace (1)



(1) HaShomer HaZair taking part in the May 1 rally in Tel Aviv, 1937. HaShomer HaZair is a Socialist Zionist youth organization which was set up by members of Ze'irei Zion ("Youth of Zion") and HaShomer ("The Watchman"), a scouts movement.

Between 1934 and 1939, Willy Brandt travels throughout Europe, including civil war-torn Spain, with the goal of forging a united anti-Fascist front. His political work focuses on the struggle against the Nazis' racist dictatorship and trying either to prevent the war or to bring it to a speedy end, as well as planning for a just postwar order, in which the Jews are to determine their own future.



(2) Willy Brandt with Gertrud Meyer, his long-time partner and political companion in Norway, during a 1937 visit to Paris.



(4) The Parita with 850 immigrants north of Tel Aviv on August 21, 1939. British Mandatory police forces block the landing point.



(5) Beginning of World War II: German attack on Poland, September 1, 1939.



(6) Publication by Willy Brandt: Stormaktenes Krigsmål og det nye Europa ("The War Aims of the Great Powers and the New Europe"), Oslo 1940.



(3) Willy Brandt's paper at the meeting of the extended SAP leadership, Paris, early July 1937: Ein Jahr Krieg und Revolution in Spanien ("A Year of War and Revolution in Spain") (duplicated).

After Norway is occupied by German troops, Willy Brandt lives in exile in Sweden from July 1940 onward as part of the Norwegian expatriate circle. In May 1941, he is followed by his wife Carlota and their daughter Ninja, born in 1940. In exile in Sweden, the Norwegian struggle for freedom and the future of Germany and Europe constitute the main focus of Willy Brandt's journalistic activities. In this setting, a lifelong friendship develops between Willy Brandt and the Austrian Socialist, Bruno Kreisky (1).

In Sweden, Brandt co-founds an international working group of Socialists and Social Democrats, which aims to formulate common peace goals for the period following the downfall of National Socialism and to overcome the fragmentation of the Left (2). Brandt is elected secretary of the narrower "Working Group for Issues of Peace", while Maurycy Karniol, the envoy of the Polish government-in-exile in London, is elected treasurer (3).

Against the background of the Allies' plans for peacetime (4), Brandt concentrates on the question of the postwar international order. This is reflected in his long work *Efter segern* ("After Victory") (5), and in the foreign policy part of a statement that Brandt formulates for the SAP Group (6). Both underscore the Jews' right to be reintegrated in their home countries, as well as the right to establish a Jewish national state.



# 5 The struggle against National Socialism: Exile in Sweden 1940-1945

## For a European keeping of the peace (2)



(1) Willy Brandt, Carlota and Ninja Frahm together with Bruno and Vera Kreisky, Sweden 1944. In Stockholm, the foundations are laid for a lifelong friendship between Brandt and Kreisky.



(2) Program, International May Day celebrations, Stockholm, May 1, 1943.

After Norway is occupied by Germany's Wehrmacht, Willy Brandt escapes to Stockholm, followed by his wife Carlota and their little daughter Ninja. Social Democratic and Jewish emigres from all over Europe hold in-depth discussions of the postwar goals for peace. These discussions are reflected in several of Brandt's publications.



(4) Conference of the "Big Three" in Teheran, November 28 to December 1, 1943 (left to right: Josef Stalin, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill).



(3) Willy Brandt addressing the International Group of Democratic Socialists, Stockholm, May 1, 1943. Right: Maurycy Karniol, member of the Polish Socialists (PPS) and representative of the Polish government-in-exile (London) for Scandinavia.



(5) Publication Willy Brandt: Efter segern ("After Victory"), Stockholm 1944. (Cover)



(6) Brochure: Zur Nachkriegspolitik der deutschen Sozialisten ("On the German Socialists' Postwar Policy), Stockholm 1944. (Cover)

“Hechaluz i Sverige” (“The Pioneer in Sweden”), whose primary task is to organize aliya and hachshara – immigration to Palestine and preparation for this through agricultural training (1) – maintains regular contacts with the “Working Group on Issues of Peace” and sends representatives to its meetings (2).

As early as the turn of the year 1943/1944 the Working Group adopts a resolution by the British Labour Party to the effect that the victory over National Socialism must “guarantee the complete civil, political and economic equality (of the Jews) and their national rights.” In “building up Palestine as the Jewish national home”, “the Jewish Agency must be given the authority to make the fullest use of the country’s economic capacity, to absorb immigrants, and to develop the country, including farming land that is vacant and not in use.” The demand is made here for “equal status for the Jewish people among the free nations of the world” (3).

In conjunction with Fredl Kalter and Willy Smulowicz of Hechaluz (4), as the working group’s political editor Willy Brandt drafts a resolution which is passed on April 21, 1944. Using the connections of the Swedish Hechaluz organization, it is to be published in Britain, the USA and Palestine, as well as elsewhere (5). It calls for decisive measures in order to implement the Jewish right of self-determination.

Maurycy Karniol gives Willy Brandt important information about the Nazi crimes against the Jews. Brandt is one of the first journalists to report on these in the American media, and protests against these crimes in international forums for discussion (6).

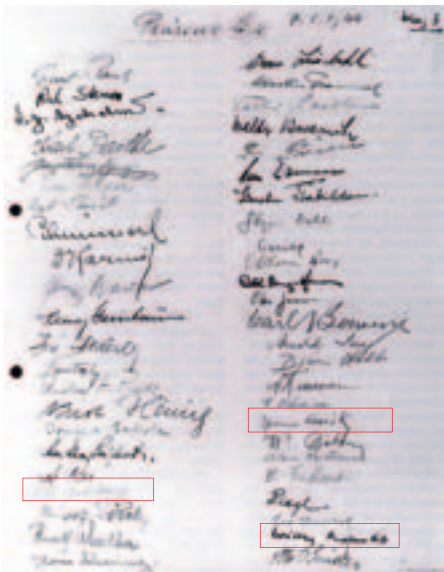
# 6 The struggle against National Socialism: Exile in Sweden 1940-1945

## With Hechaluz for Jewish self-determination

Together with representatives of the Swedish Hechaluz ("The Pioneer"), Willy Brandt drafts a resolution which on April 21, 1944 is passed by the "Working Group on Issues of Peace". It is to be distributed worldwide in German, English and Swedish, in order to mobilize international assistance for the future of the Jews.



(1) Hechaluz agricultural training (hachshara); here, grain harvest at the Winkel Estate hachshara center outside Berlin, 1932.



(2) Attendance list, meeting of the International Group of Democratic Socialists, Working Group on Issues of Peace, Stockholm, January 7, 1944.



(4) Proposed modifications, dated March 26, 1944, by Fredl Kalter and Willy Smulowicz in the name of "Hechaluz i Sverige" to a resolution by the Working Group for Issues of Peace of the International Group of Democratic Socialists.



(5) Letter from Fredl Kalter to Willy Brandt, April 3, 1944.



(3) International Group of Democratic Socialists, draft resolution, turn of the year 1943/44.



(6) Willy Brandt (first from left) and Edmond Demaitre (France) at an international discussion in Stockholm, February 1944.



# 7 "... the greatest crime against humanity"



(1) Arriving at the Auschwitz death camp.



(2) The Auschwitz death camp: entrance gate with the cynical slogan "Arbeit macht frei" ("Work liberates").



(3) Prayer service of mourning at Yad Vashem on June 7, 1973.



## 8 "... the greatest crime against humanity"

"... our language is too poor to convey the greatest mechanical-technical mass murder of the twentieth century. If we say it was 'barbaric', 'sadistic', 'bestial' ... or 'without parallel in history', what does this mean? In reality, most of us probably find it difficult to entirely understand what has happened. We try to familiarize ourselves with it. But the way most people are, they can understand the loss of a person whom they love. They can understand if ten people or a hundred have lost their lives. But millions?

Yes, millions. They did not die on the front, they were not killed in bomb attacks. No – they were 'concentrated', 'worked to death', 'gassed', or otherwise 'liquidated' in cold blood ... Things were bad in the occupied Western areas. In the East, it was far worse. Things were worst of all for the Jewish population groups. Sixty per cent of the 9.6 million Jews who lived in Nazi-ruled Europe, were exterminated. ...

The persecutions of the Jews were 'the greatest crime against humanity'."

Willy Brandt,

*Forbrytere og andre tyskere,*

("Criminals and Other Germans"), Oslo 1946

After the end of the war, Willy Brandt works as a journalist. He reports for the Scandinavian workers' press (1) on the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal of the main war criminals (2), which for him exposes one of the darkest chapters in German history (3). His many articles on the proceedings are adapted for his book *Forbrytere og andre tyskere* ("Criminals and Other Germans"), which is published in Oslo in 1946 (4). In this book he differentiates between political responsibility, which must be borne by all Germans – including the workers' movement – and guilt, which he considers must be determined on an individual basis. He opposes branding all Germans as criminals, and draws attention to the German resistance to Hitler from 1933 onwards and to those Germans who were incarcerated, tortured, and murdered in jails and concentration camps.

In order to vilify Brandt politically, conservative and extreme right-wing political opponents will later distort the title to "Germans and other Criminals."



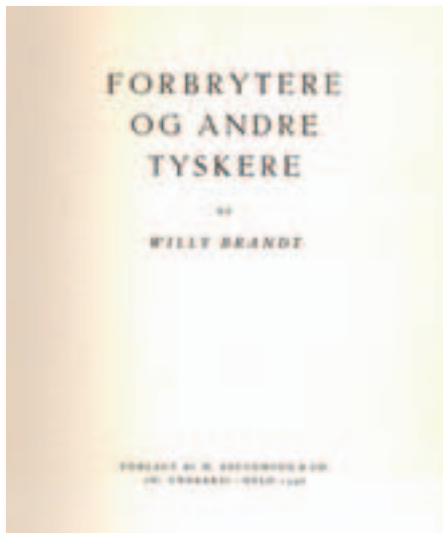
# 9 "...the greatest crime against humanity"

## At the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal 1945/46

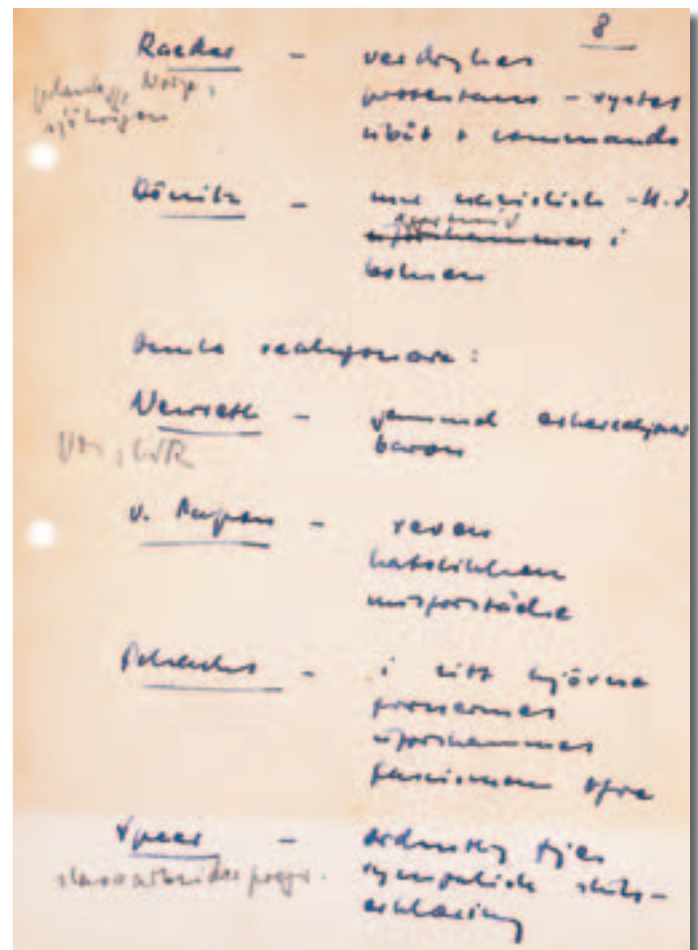
After the end of the war, Willy Brandt works as a Norwegian journalist, mainly for the Norwegian workers' press. Among other things, he reports on the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal of the main war criminals. Some of his articles are adapted for his book *Forbrytere og andre tyskere* ("Criminals and Other Germans").



(2) International Military Tribunal (dock).



(4) Willy Brandt's work: *Forbrytere og andre tyskere* ("Criminals and Other Germans"), Oslo 1946.



(3) Willy Brandt's handwritten notes on the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, October 5 and 12, 1946, Norwegian. In his notes Willy Brandt describes the behavior of the accused (Raeder, Dönitz, Speer, von Papen, von Neurath, Schacht) during the proceedings.



(1) Willy Brandt's press card for the International Military Tribunal which tried the main war criminals, November 1945 to October 1946, issued on March 11, 1946.

In January 1947, Willy Brandt returns to Germany as press attaché at the Norwegian Military Mission to the Allied Control Council in Berlin. Berlin is a devastated city (1). Divided between the four major powers, it develops into a dangerous flashpoint in the East-West conflict.

Willy Brandt needs a special entry permit from the Allies (2) and a military ID card (3) for his work as press attaché in Berlin.

In January 1948, he begins working for the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), as a delegate of the party executive in Berlin and to the Allied Control authorities. He regains his German citizenship. In Berlin Willy Brandt lays the groundwork within the SPD for his political career in postwar Germany.

In an address to the Berlin SPD about the Communists' coup d'état against the democratically elected government in Prague, Brandt gives up the idea of any form of peacetime cooperation between all the anti-Fascist forces, and refers to the contradiction on the level of principle between totalitarian Communism and democratic Socialism. He appeals to Berliners' desire for freedom and willingness to fight. Berlin must not become another Prague (4).

# 10 For Berlin as an outpost of freedom 1947-1966

## Professional and political activities

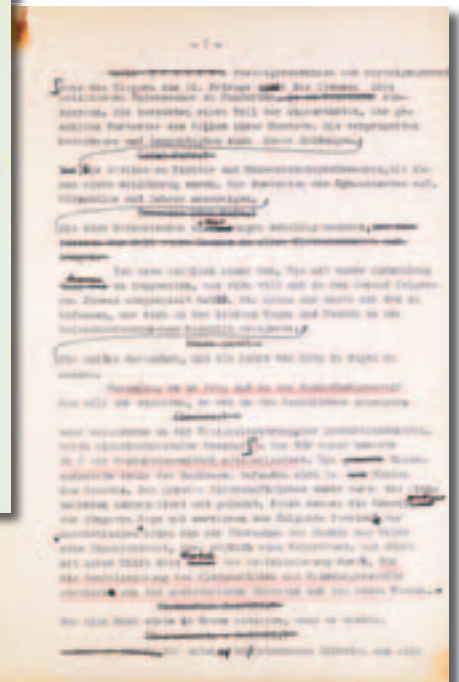


(1) Brandenburg Gate, Berlin 1945.



(2) Military entry permit for Willy Brandt to travel from Oslo to Berlin, issued in Oslo on December 19, 1946.

In January 1947, Willy Brandt returns to Germany as press attaché at the Norwegian Military Mission. In 1948 he begins working for the SPD, as a delegate of the party executive in Berlin and to the Allied Control authorities. He regains his German citizenship. For many years, Berlin will be the center of his political activities to defend freedom against totalitarian Communism.



(4) Manuscript with handwritten additions by Willy Brandt, Die Lehre von Prag ("The Lesson of Prague"), March 12, 1948. He highlights the contrast between totalitarian Communism and democratic Socialism, and appeals to Berliners' desire for freedom and willingness to fight.



(3) Norwegian Military ID, issued on December 18, 1946.

As a member of the German Bundestag in Bonn (1), first up to 1957 and then again in 1961 and 1969-1992, Brandt represents Berlin interests in particular.

Although elements of his subsequent *Neue Ostpolitik* ("new East policy" – German foreign policy towards former Eastern Europe) emerge as early as the 1950s, Brandt supports a declaration by all of the Bundestag parliamentary parties (excluding the Communist Party, the KPD). This declaration rejects the Goerlitz Agreement (2) between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Poland, on the grounds that such far-reaching decisions should be left for a peace treaty. Until the signing of the 1970 Warsaw Treaty, the truly contentious issue between the Federal Republic and Poland (other than the Hallstein Doctrine, the claim to sole representation on the part of the Federal Republic of Germany) is the question of Poland's western border. It is this which prevents the establishment of diplomatic ties and hence the normalization of relations between the two countries.

Under the effect of the events of June 17, 1953 in East Berlin and the GDR (3), Willy Brandt writes the brochure *Arbeiter und Nation* ("Workers and Nation"), vigorously condemning the suppression of the June 17, 1953 uprising (4).

For Brandt, the mass strike of the labor force, which to a large extent has the nature of a popular uprising, is of international importance: the workers, who constitute the advance guard and the majority of the insurgents, are fighting not just for an improvement in their situation in life, but also for social emancipation and national freedom. For Brandt, the Soviet system has been revealed to the entire world as the enemy of the workers.

# 11 For Berlin as an outpost of freedom 1947-1966

## In the German Bundestag 1949-1957

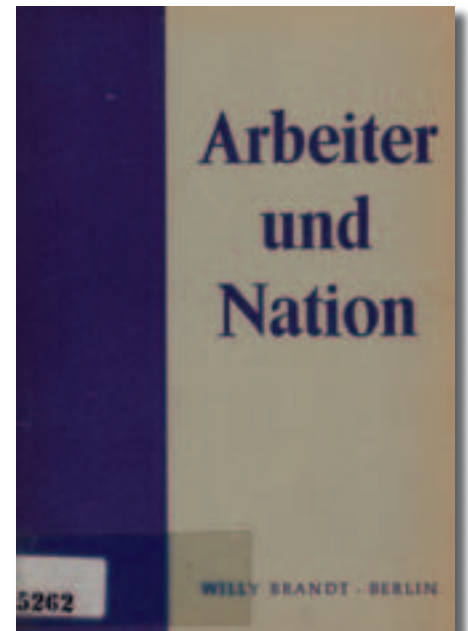


(2) Signing of the Goerlitz Agreement between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Poland on July 6, 1950, in which the Oder-Neisse line is recognized as the state border between Poland and Germany.



(1) Provisional card for members of the first German Bundestag (Lower House of Parliament).

As a member of the German Bundestag in Bonn in his first term up to 1957, Brandt represents Berlin interests in particular, as well as the demand for German reunification. As early as this period, he develops important elements of his subsequent Neue Ostpolitik ("new East policy" – German foreign policy towards former Eastern Europe).



(4) A publication by Willy Brandt: Arbeiter und Nation ("Workers and Nation"), Berlin 1953, vigorously condemning the suppression of the June 17, 1953 uprising.



(3) June 17, 1953 in East Berlin. Soviet tanks advancing against insurgents.

Willy Brandt, elected Berlin's Governing Mayor in 1957, leads the city through the crisis that threatens its very existence and begins in November 1958 with the ultimatum by Khrushchev, who as the head of the Soviet State and its Communist Party demands that occupation rights in West Berlin be revoked and West Berlin made a free city.

Willy Brandt rejects the ultimatum as unacceptable. The powerful May 1 rallies in West Berlin testify to West Berlin's determination to stand firm against the Soviet threat (1). The crisis culminates on August 13, 1961 with the building of the Wall between East and West Berlin (2). Brandt asks the American government to intervene. In a diplomatically worded letter to Willy Brandt dated August 18, 1961, US President John F. Kennedy declines to take military action, but promises to strengthen the Allied presence in West Berlin (3). In actual fact, a demonstrative reinforcement of American troops in West Berlin takes place, and Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson and General Lucius D. Clay are sent to Berlin (4).

# 12 For Berlin as an outpost of freedom 1947-1966

## Governing Mayor of Berlin 1957-1966

Willy Brandt, Berlin's Governing Mayor since 1957, leads the city through the crisis which culminates on August 13, 1961 with the building of the Berlin Wall. The Americans do not adopt any military measures in response, but at Willy Brandt's request they beef up their military presence in West Berlin.



(1) Willy Brandt's speech in front of the Reichstag, Berlin, May 1, 1960. The May rallies testify to West Berlin's determination to stand firm against the Soviet threat.



(3) Letter from John F. Kennedy to Willy Brandt, secret, August 18, 1961.



(2) Construction of the Berlin Wall, August 13, 1961.



(4) US Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson and General Lucius D. Clay welcoming Glover S. Johns, commander of the 18th Infantry unit that came to reinforce the Berlin Garrison, on August 20, 1961.

In agreement with American foreign policy, Willy Brandt develops a gradualist policy of “small steps” and rapprochement. He presents its basic ideas in Tutzing in July 1963 together with his press adviser, Egon Bahr (1): Germany must accept the results of history. Apart from its own military security, it must lay the groundwork for solving problems peacefully. In order to overcome and penetrate the Communist bloc’s borders, Brandt calls for “as many genuine points of contact and as much meaningful communication as possible.” What he wants, first and foremost, is for the Eastern side to undergo as much peaceful and dynamic change as is feasible. As he puts it, this is the only way that a divided Germany will be able to be reunited in a peaceful fashion. Both Willy Brandt and the Eastern side rule out all forms of coexistence over ideological issues.

On the occasion of John F. Kennedy’s visit to Berlin, Willy Brandt experiences the American President’s demonstrative support of his policy over Berlin, Germany, and the East, which coincides with Kennedy’s ideas on a détente-based policy (2).

The first practical outcome of the “policy of contacts and small steps and rapprochement in Germany” is the agreement on passes, which is signed on December 17, 1963 after tough negotiations (3). In its wake, for the first time since the building of the Berlin Wall on August 13, 1961 West Berliners can visit their relatives in East Berlin. The agreement on passes will come to act as a model for subsequent policy toward the East (Ostpolitik).



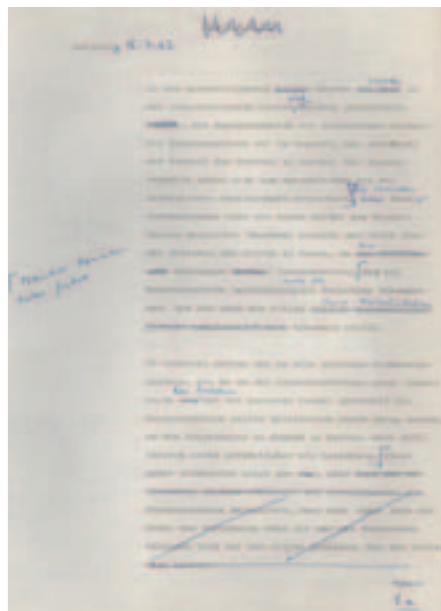
# 13 For Berlin as an outpost of freedom 1947-1966

## The “small steps” and rapprochement policy

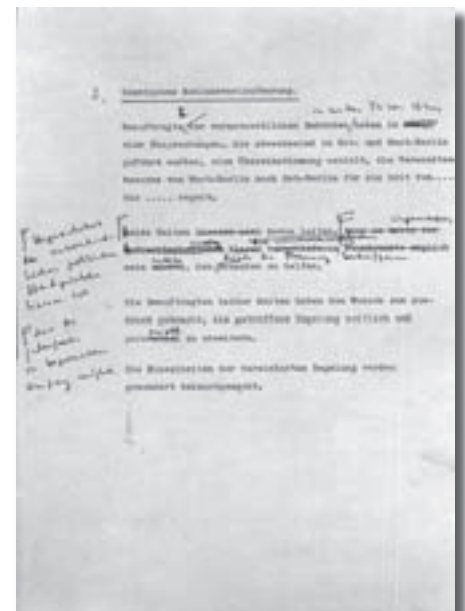


(2) Motorcade on the occasion of the visit by US President John F. Kennedy to Berlin, on June 26, 1963. In the car, from left to right, John F. Kennedy, Willy Brandt, Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.

Willy Brandt develops a policy of “small steps” and rapprochement with regard to the countries in the East. This takes place in agreement with American foreign policy, as reflected by President Kennedy’s visit to Berlin in June 1963. In 1963, Brandt presents the basic ideas of his new policy in Tutzing. One of the policy’s first achievements is the agreement on passes of December 17, 1963, which enables West Berliners to visit their relatives in East Berlin.



(1) Typescript with handwritten additions by Willy Brandt, Willy Brandt’s speech “Denk ich an Deutschland ...” (When I think of Germany ...) in Tutzing on July 15, 1963.



(3) Typescript with handwritten additions by Brandt, negotiations on passes, “Joint Communiqué”, no date (version authorized by Willy Brandt on December 12, 1963).

Immediately after the end of the war, the SPD resolutely advocates “reparations” (Wiedergutmachung, in a broader sense than financial operations only) for the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. In this way it accepts responsibility for the crimes committed by the Germans during Nazi rule, which was opposed by leading Social Democrats (Kurt Schumacher, Erich Ollenhauer, Alfred Nau und Fritz Heine) in exile and in the resistance (1).

As early as 1947, Kurt Schumacher (2), the first post-1945 SPD Chairman, himself a victim of persecution, advocates material reparations to the Jewish victims of Nazi terror. In the debate on reparations that takes place in the German Bundestag in 1952, Carlo Schmid (SPD) (3) attributes a central role to the State of Israel in connection with the provision of material compensation to Jewish victims.

It is only as a result of SPD Opposition support that the Christian-Democrat (CDU) Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, is able, in the teeth of resistance by a considerable portion of his own party, to carry through a “Reparations Agreement”, signed in Luxembourg on September 10, 1952. In the Agreement the Federal Republic of Germany commits itself to comprehensive financial compensation arrangements with the State of Israel and Holocaust survivors in the Diaspora (4).

During the “1971 Week of Fraternity” in Cologne, Willy Brandt calls the “Reparations Agreement” “one of the achievements by Konrad Adenauer and the Social Democratic Opposition of the time which we consider the foundation of our perception of ourselves as a state.”

# 14 Solidarity with Israel 1947-1966

## About "reparations" (Wiedergutmachung)



(1) Discussion at the West German SPD executive bureau in Hannover, March 31, 1946 (Kurt Schumacher, standing; Erich Ollenhauer, middle; Egon Franke, left; Alfred Nau, back; Fritz Heine, right).

After the end of the war, leading SPD politicians, many of whom were persecuted by the Nazi regime, advocate "reparations" for Jewish Holocaust survivors. It is only as a result of the Social Democrats' broad support that the Christian-Democrat Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, is able to achieve a large majority in the Bundestag on March 18, 1953 for the ratification of the "Reparations Agreement", signed in Luxembourg on September 10, 1952.



(2) ID photo Kurt Schumacher, Dachau concentration camp, January 1, 1936.



(3) Bundestag Vice-President Carlo Schmid (SPD) at the German Bundestag (standing, rostrum), here 1953.



(4) Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (right, seated, 3rd from right) and Israel's Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett (left, seated, 4th from left) signing the "Reparations Agreement", Luxembourg, September 10, 1952. Left: German-Israeli "Reparations Agreement" (document), also called the "Luxembourg Treaty" after the location where it was signed.



Very early on the SPD tries to establish contacts with Mapai, Israel's main Social Democrat-oriented ruling party. At first, the trauma caused by National Socialism and Mapai's resulting skeptical attitude to Germany prevent greater cooperation between the two parties, but from the early 1950s onwards, and particular in the wake of the 1952 "Reparations Agreement", a cautious change in relations can be observed.

In 1951 Mapai refuses to take part in the founding assembly of the Socialist International (SI) in Frankfurt am Main (1); in 1952 however, in contrast, it resolves to become active in the SI (2). Individuals of major importance to closer ties between Mapai and the SPD include Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett, Reuven Barkatt and others. David Ben Gurion, head of Israel's government and a leading Mapai member, advocates not equating the Federal Republic of Germany with Hitler's Nazi Germany. Likewise, Nahum Goldmann (3), President of the World Jewish Congress, declares: "We should not forget what has been done to the Jewish people, but no people can live permanently off its emotions. Its interests are more important than its emotions, and it must find the moral strength to overcome them, even if individuals may sometimes find this difficult. The German people cannot be Hitler's heir, just as the Soviet people cannot be the heir of Czarist Russia."

1957 marks the first high point in contacts between the SPD and Mapai. For the first time, a delegation of leading German Social Democrats visits Israel at the invitation of the young country's Mapai-led government (4 and 5), and lays the foundations for relations, which by now are becoming ever closer. This also includes contacts with the Israeli trade union movement (6), as well as with the General Federation of Labor, the Histadrut, founded in Haifa in 1920.

# 15 Solidarity with Israel 1947-1966

## Early contacts



(1) Poster announcing a rally in support of the Socialist International (SI) conference in Frankfurt am Main, July 1, 1951.



(2) Declaration of the Socialist International "Aims and Tasks of Democratic Socialism", July 2, 1951.

In the wake of the "Reparations Agreement" in 1952, contacts between Mapai and the SPD grow closer. The first high point is the 1957 visit to Israel by SPD Chairman Erich Ollenhauer together with leading representatives of German Social Democracy, at Mapai's invitation.



(4) Visit by Erich Ollenhauer (SPD Chairman 1952–1963) with David Ben-Gurion, Israeli Prime Minister, March 25, 1957.



(3) Nahum Goldmann with former Federal President Theodor Heuss (left) and Bundestag President Eugen Gerstenmeier (right) on the occasion of a visit to Bonn, 1960.



(5) Visit to Israel by leading Social Democrats: from the left: Georg (Giora) Josephthal, Mapai Party Secretary-General; Erich Ollenhauer, his wife Martha Ollenhauer, Heinz Putzrath, head of the Foreign Affairs Department in the SPD Executive, March 20, 1957.



(6) Talks between Erich Ollenhauer (center) and Heinz Putzrath (right) with the Histadrut Secretary-General, Pinhas Lavon (left), March 23, 1957.

Willy Brandt supports the Berlin Jewish Community (1) from the start, and early on becomes a member of the "Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation in Berlin" (2), founded in 1949.

On November 21, 1957 shortly after his official inauguration as Berlin's Governing Mayor (3), Willy Brandt lays the foundation stone for the new Jewish Community Center in Berlin (4) together with Heinz Galinski, President of the Jewish Community. This gesture by Brandt fosters the Jews' reintegration in Germany, as well as their desire for sovereignty, as foreshadowed by the columns that he published in exile.

# 16 Solidarity with Israel 1947-1966

## Christian-Jewish and German-Israeli encounters



(1) Document by the Berlin Jewish Community in gratitude for support in "rebuilding its destroyed places of worship", Berlin 1949.



(4) Laying the foundation stone for the new community center on the site of the original synagogue in Fasanenstrasse, Berlin, November 21, 1957 (Willy Brandt, Governing Mayor; behind him on the left: Heinz Galinski, long-time President of Berlin's Jewish Community, Chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany 1988-1992; right: Ernst Lemmer, co-founder of the CDU).



(3) Deed of appointment as Governing Mayor of Berlin, November 14, 1957.



(2) Willy Brandt's membership card for the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation in Berlin (Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit in Berlin), No. 679, dated July 8, 1952.

Very early on, Willy Brandt is supportive of Jewish affairs in his Berlin sphere of activity. As Berlin's Governing Mayor, in November 1957 he lays the foundation stone for a new Jewish Community Center on the site of the original Berlin synagogue together with Heinz Galinski, later Chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Following the center's dedication in 1959, it becomes a locale of Christian-Jewish and German-Israeli encounters.

Following his nomination as the SPD candidate for chancellor in the 1961 Bundestag elections, Willy Brandt's political activities now extend beyond the Berlin sphere: during his widely reported visit to Israel in 1960 (1), he endeavors to demonstrate a new perspective for German-Israeli relations: "I am in favor of normal relations between Israel and Germany, and I believe that what matters is the development of actual ties, and not just protocol." (2) Willy Brandt makes his position clear in a series of talks with leading Israeli politicians, in interviews and official speeches (3).

A year later, in March 1961, in the framework of his trip to the USA, he outlines his direction-setting ideas on the subject of "Germany, Israel and the Jews" (5) at the Theodor Herzl Institute in New York (4). In this address, Willy Brandt underscores Germany's special solidarity with Israel. He speaks about German responsibility for the past, seeing "not collective guilt, but collective shame", and promises an "honest endeavor" to "speak openly and honestly about the relationship between Germany and people of Jewish descent." Brandt clearly outlines the foreign policy goals that in essence still apply to this day on a cross-party basis for the Federal Republic of Germany: "The Federal Republic of Germany is in favor of normal relationships with all states which are desirous of having such and do not attach to them any conditions that are unacceptable to us. However, I emphasize that we – and this is undoubtedly in accord with American policy as well – wish to promote a friendly settlement between the peoples of the Middle East."



# 17 Solidarity with Israel 1947-1966

## Greater involvement



(3) Willy Brandt's speech at the opening of the 15th International Conference of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), Tel Aviv, November 16, 1960.



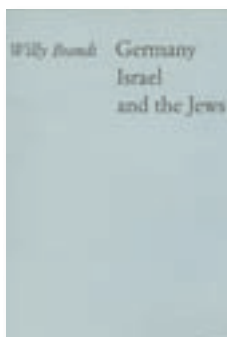
(1) Reports in the Israeli media about Willy Brandt's visit, November 14-17, 1960.



(2) Press cutting from Yediot Hadashot ("Latest News"), November 18, 1960.

As a result of his nomination to run for chancellor on the SPD ticket in the 1961 Bundestag elections and his trips to Israel and the United States, Willy Brandt achieves international importance. Taking responsibility for German history as his starting point, Willy Brandt speaks of the Federal Republic of Germany's desire for normal relations with Israel, combined with support for a peaceful settlement between the peoples of the Middle East.

(5) Brochure "Germany, Israel and the Jews", 1961.



(4) Willy Brandt's speech at the Theodor Herzl Institute, New York, March 19, 1961.

As early as the 1960 SPD Federal Party Conference in Hannover, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel is called “possible and necessary.” During his visit to Egypt in 1963, Willy Brandt makes the following points in an interview with Egypt’s “Middle East News Agency”, against a background of Egyptian displeasure: “Germany’s Social Democrats have never made a secret of their view that normal relations should exist between the Federal Republic of Germany and the State of Israel. We are aware of the fact that a series of problems is bound up with such a state of affairs. However, we believe that normal relations can make a contribution to bringing about an improved discussion of certain issues, in whose solution we must all be interested, even if not in the immediate future. We very much hope that this view will at least be understood properly.”

In the Federal Republic itself, voices of social groupings – including the Federation of German Trade Unions – are increasingly heard calling for full diplomatic recognition of Israel and publicly distributing petitions to this effect (1).

The “Hallstein-Doctrine” (2), which has been applied since 1957, confronts Federal German foreign policy with a dilemma: on the one hand the Federal Republic does not maintain diplomatic ties with any country, other than the USSR, which recognizes the German Democratic Republic (GDR). On the other hand, if the Federal Republic becomes closer to the Israeli state, this involves a risk of the GDR’s recognition in international law by the Arab countries.

When the GDR’s head of state, Walter Ulbricht, visits Egypt at the beginning of March 1965 (3), the Federal German government under Ludwig Erhard protests (4). Subsequently, on March 7 the Chancellor proposes to Israel that full diplomatic relations be established between the two countries.

The official institution of these ties takes place on May 12, 1965. A day later, ten of the 13 member states of the Arab League do indeed break off diplomatic ties with the Federal Republic (5).

# 18 Solidarity with Israel 1947-1966

## The establishment of diplomatic relations



(1) Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB – German Federation of Trade Unions), poster, calling for the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, 1964.



(2) Walter Hallstein, Undersecretary in the Federal Chancellor's Office, 1950, subsequently President of the European Commission; the "Hallstein-Doctrine" is named after him.



(3) Walter Ulbricht (left) talking to Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, 1960.



(5) German Embassy in Cairo: lowering the Federal German flag after the breaking off of Egypt's diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany, May 14, 1965.

Apart from the SPD, which comes out in favor of establishing diplomatic ties with Israel early on, other groups in West German society also call for the full diplomatic recognition of Israel. The "Hallstein-Doctrine" places Federal German foreign

policy in a dilemma: in response to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel on May 12, 1965, many Arab states break off relations with the Federal Republic.



(4) Israel's first ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Asher Ben-Nathan (left), and Chancellor Ludwig Erhard at the reception on the occasion of Israel's Independence Day, Bonn, May 2, 1968.

Following the formation of the 1966 government, that includes the SPD, the Federal Republic of Germany takes on a new look (1). As Foreign Minister, Willy Brandt manages to avert the threatening isolation of the Federal Republic in East and West. He is able to contribute to ensuring that the European Community is capable of action and has an open outlook. To the East, Brandt continues the policy cautiously initiated by his predecessor, of normalizing ties with the countries of the Eastern bloc by rapidly and systematically modifying the claim to sole representation: he sends an ambassador to Romania (2) and exchanges trade missions with Prague, Warsaw, and Budapest. The draft of a renunciation-of-force declaration is transmitted to the Soviet government.

Efforts to normalize relations with the Eastern bloc states suffer a considerable setback when the Warsaw Pact states invade Czechoslovakia in August 1968 (3). For Willy Brandt, Prague means a violent end to a historical experiment of reconciling Communism and humanity, eastern-style Socialism and democracy. However, he is neither able nor willing to accept the end of the "Prague Spring" as the end of his *Neue Ostpolitik*.

# 19 In the government: European détente and unification 1966-1974

## Foreign minister in the Grand Coalition 1966-1969



(1) Willy Brandt being sworn in as Foreign Minister on December 6, 1966.



(2) Willy Brandt with Romanian Foreign Minister Manescu, 1967.

As Foreign Minister in the Grand Coalition, Willy Brandt works to intensify the unification of (Western) Europe and strengthen the Western alliance. At the same time, he undertakes intensive contacts in order to

normalize relations with the Warsaw Pact countries. Even after the "Prague Spring" is put down with the use of force, he sees no alternative to this policy.



(3) Suppression of the Prague Spring, 1968.

After the 1969 Bundestag elections, despite his narrow majority Willy Brandt risks the first Social-Liberal coalition, becoming the first Social Democrat head of government in Germany since 1930 (1). Even more than the change of government itself, it is the personality of the new Chancellor with his personal and political past which for many constitutes a “historic turning point.”

Brandt pursues a resolute policy of domestic reforms so as to “heal the welfare state’s fractures.” He undertakes a resolute policy on Europe, with an outlook which embraces not only Western Europe, but Europe as a whole.

One of the key features of Willy Brandt’s chancellorship is non-aggression as well as détente and reconciliation vis-à-vis the East. The Moscow Treaty (2) paves the way to a contractual settlement of bilateral relations with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR, as well as the Four Power Agreement over Berlin. In the German-Soviet Treaty, the contracting partners pledge to recognize the inviolability of Europe’s post-war borders, including the inviolability of the “Oder-Neisse Line, which constitutes the western border of the People’s Republic of Poland” (3).

Brandt views the Warsaw Treaty of December 7, 1970 (4) as a sincere contribution by the Federal Republic of Germany to a European peace policy. The treaty is intended to put an end “to suffering and victims of a wicked past and herald a new beginning.” Brandt views close German-Polish cooperation in a whole range of areas as a long-term objective. In this spirit he suggests, among other things, setting up a German-Polish Youth Bureau and family reunification measures (5).

However, because of the provisions of Germany’s Grundgesetz (Basic Law) and the Paris Treaties (about Four Power responsibility for Germany as a whole), in principle the German question must be left open and a peace treaty must not be prejudiced. Hence in the Treaty the Oder-Neisse border is not designated as the national border between Germany and Poland. Warsaw also sees the Warsaw Treaty as the prerequisite for inaugurating the normalization process, part of which must also be compensation to the Polish victims from the period of National Socialist occupation and incarceration in concentration camps.

# 20 In the government: European détente and unification 1966-1974

## Federal Chancellor 1969-1974: The Treaties with Moscow and Warsaw

At the center of the policy pursued by Willy Brandt as chancellor in the Social-Liberal coalition government are domestic reforms as well as the unification of the whole of Europe and non-aggression, détente, and reconciliation vis-à-vis the East.

The Moscow Treaty paves the way to the treaties with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR. These



(5) Typescript with handwritten additions by Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr: Willy Brandt's speech to "fellow citizens", Warsaw, December 7, 1970.



(1) Presenting the Brandt/Scheel cabinet to Federal President Gustav Heinemann, Bonn, October 22, 1969 (1st row 3rd from left: Gustav Heinemann, 4th from left, Willy Brandt, 5th from left foreign minister Walter Scheel. 2nd row, 1st from left: defense minister Helmut Schmidt, Brandt's successor as Chancellor).



(2) Signing the Moscow Treaty, August 12, 1970.

treaties stipulate to the inviolability of Europe's postwar borders, but in no way prejudice any as yet outstanding peace treaty. However, the Oder-Neisse Line is designated as Poland's national western border by the Federal Republic. The aim of the treaties is to achieve the normalization and comprehensive development of mutual relations, as well as close cooperation.



(3) Caricature by Hanns Erich Köhler about the Warsaw Treaty.



(4) Signing the Warsaw Treaty, December 7, 1970.

At the memorial to the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (1), the Jews murdered by German SS units, Willy Brandt falls to his knees (2): “On the abyss of German history and carrying the burden of the millions who were murdered, I did what people do when words fail them.” (Willy Brandt: Memoirs)

Just a few weeks later, in his speech on the occasion of the Christian-Jewish “1971 Week of Fraternity”, Willy Brandt says, “For generations, the name Auschwitz will remain a trauma. There is no room for illusions: the wounds that have been inflicted in those dark twelve years on the soul of the people who were the victims and the soul of the people who were the perpetrators will not heal so quickly. For it was the image of man which was wounded, of man whom we understand as the image of God. This experience – this is the real catastrophe of mankind, more than all wars and their horrors – weighs heavily on Jewry, not only in Israel; and it weighs heavily on us Germans. ... Nobody is exempt from the accountability of history.”

Abba Eban, Israeli Foreign Minister (1966-1974): “When Willy Brandt fell to his knees in Warsaw, this was more moving than all the words which had ever been uttered in Germany.” The lasting achievement of the Brandt/Scheel government, in striving for reconciliation with its neighbors in the East, by acknowledging the weight of the past as well as of the status quo, receives the highest international recognition in the form of the Nobel Peace Prize which is awarded to Willy Brandt on December 10, 1971 (3 and 4). Among the reasons that the Nobel Committee gives for awarding the prize is that Willy Brandt “in the name of the German people has extended a hand for a policy of reconciliation between countries which are old enemies,” and has made “a substantial contribution to strengthening the possibilities for peaceful development, not only in Europe but in the world as a whole.” Willy Brandt also outlines the goals of his international policy of peace in 1971: “It is our view that we can best satisfy our people’s mission and its special responsibility if we play our part, with the appropriate diffidence, in encouraging the desire for peaceful reconciliation in the tense atmosphere of the Middle East. It would be arrogant to say much more about this. We are naturally convinced that our determined policy of peace in Europe can be a factor in easing tension worldwide. Not only tension – reductions in tension can also spread. Not only conflict – also the desire for peace can be contagious.”



# 21 In the government: European détente and unification 1969-1974

## Willy Brandt kneels in Warsaw and the Nobel Peace Prize



(1) Warsaw Ghetto, May 1943.

Before the signing of the Warsaw Treaty, Willy Brandt makes an internationally recognized gesture to the Nazis' Jewish victims. Throughout the world, his kneeling before the memorial to the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising is viewed as a symbol of German willingness to shoulder the burden of history and initiate a policy of active détente. It is for this that in 1971 Brandt is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.



(2) Willy Brandt falls to his knees at the memorial to the heroes of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising, who after a desperate struggle were murdered by German SS units, Warsaw, December 7, 1970.



(3) Nobel Peace Prize award.



(4) Conferring of the Nobel Peace Prize, December 10, 1971.

Only after heated disagreements, which lead to a motion of no confidence (1), can the treaties with Moscow and Warsaw be ratified. The only way round a parliamentary stalemate is to hold new elections. Willy Brandt's character is the focal point of the electoral campaign for the Bundestag (2 and 3). Brandt's showing is the SPD's best performance in its hundred-plus-year history: 45.8 per cent of the vote (4).

In 1973 the two German states, "irrespective of their special relations," are admitted to the United Nations on an equal footing. This places the seal of international acceptance on the process which accepts the results of World War II and enables the Federal Republic to engage in new areas of political activity on the UN level, especially in the field of North-South dialogue.

Willy Brandt places these new options for German foreign policy action in the center of his address to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, September 26, 1973, in addition to a worldwide renunciation of force calling for a new quality to North-South relations and a new, just world economic order (5).

When Günter Guillaume, Willy Brandt's personal assistant, is arrested as a GDR spy in May 1974, given the problems of the time Willy Brandt "takes the appropriate measures in the wake of negligence in connection with the affair of the agent Guillaume" and on May 6, 1974 resigns from his post as Federal Chancellor (6).

# 22 In the government: European détente and unification 1966-1974

## Federal Chancellor 1969-1974: Electoral victory 1972 to resignation 1974

Only after heated political disagreements, which lead to a motion of no confidence, can the treaties with Moscow and Warsaw be ratified. In early re-elections in 1972, Willy Brandt is highly successful, partly as a result of his Ostpolitik, and is congratulated by leading figures worldwide. In 1973, the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR become members of the United Nations. In May 1974, Brandt resigns as Chancellor when someone close to him is exposed as a GDR spy (Guillaume Affair).



(1) Jubilant members of the Social-Liberal coalition following the abortive no confidence vote by the CDU/CSU parliamentary party against Federal Chancellor Willy Brandt on April 27, 1972.



(2) Election poster.



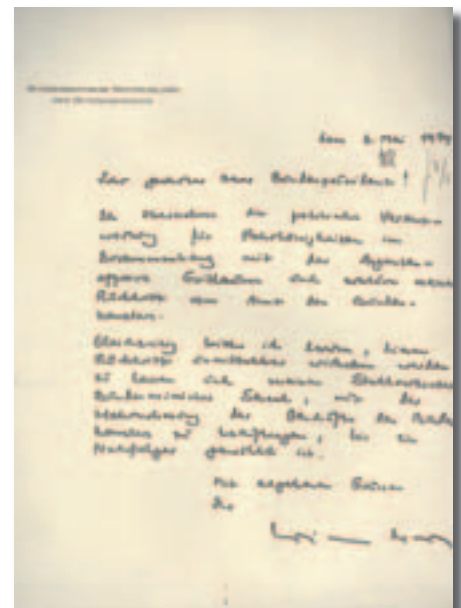
(3) Badge from the Bundestag electoral campaign 1972: "Vote for Willy".



(5) Willy Brandt's address to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, September 26, 1973.



(4) A victorious Willy Brandt following the 1972 Bundestag elections on election night, November 19, 1972.



(6) Willy Brandt's handwritten letter of resignation to Federal President Gustav Heinemann, May 6, 1974.

For a long time, the statute of limitations on crimes committed by the National Socialist regime of terror, which will apply automatically under prevailing law, weighs heavily on relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel. This statute of limitations is due to come into force on May 8, 1965, 20 years after Germany's unconditional capitulation on May 8, 1945 (1).

Since 1960, fiery debates (2) have raged in the Federal Republic over the statute of limitations issue. The SPD, and in particular Willy Brandt, who since 1964 is also the party's Chairman, resolutely demand that Nazi crimes be thoroughly exposed and fully prosecuted in criminal proceedings. On the trial of Adolf Eichmann (3), Willy Brandt states on the radio in April 1961: "Criminals must answer to justice, and Eichmann was a criminal." He goes on to say that it would be a "macabre state of affairs ... if people in both parts of our country ... were to reproach each other over their actual and supposed incrimination from the time of the Nazi dictatorship, but what would be intolerable is if the impression were to be given abroad that ... the so-called 'GDR' is a stronghold of anti-Fascism. ... Influential offices in the East Berlin polity are occupied by men who served the 'Thousand Year Reich' ... in responsible positions. The zone regime has persistently refused to make any form of reparations to former Jewish fellow citizens."

SPD members such as jurist Adolf Arndt and SPD parliamentary party head Fritz Erler speak their minds in objecting as a matter of principle to a statute of limitations on Nazi crimes, underscoring the moral responsibility of the individual (4). In the Bundestag, at first a compromise is reached in 1965: limitation will not apply to National Socialist acts of violence until 1969, 20 years after the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany.

In August 1969, basically under pressure from the SPD and its Justice Ministers – Gustav Heinemann in the Grand Coalition, from March 1969 onward Horst Ehmke (5) – the German Bundestag rescinds the statute of limitation for genocide, and in 1979 does the same for murder.

# 23 In government 1966-1974: Strengthening ties with Israel

## Debates about the statute of limitation on Nazi crimes



(1) Cover picture in „Der Spiegel“, March 1965.

Beginning in 1960, the statute of limitations on crimes committed by the National Socialist regime of terror leads to controversial debates in the German Bundestag. Under the decisive influence of the SPD, the period of limitation for genocide is finally rescinded in 1969, and that for murder in 1979.



(2) German parliamentary debate on the statute of limitations for Nazi criminals, Bonn, March 25, 1965: Fritz Erler (SPD) debating with Will Rasner (CDU), left Rainer Barzel (CDU), behind him Richard Stücklen (CSU).



(3) Death sentence being handed down in the Eichmann trial, Jerusalem, December 15, 1961. Adolf Eichmann in the dock.



(4) SPD Lawyers' Congress on "Citizens and the Law" in Heidelberg, March 1965 (from the left: Adolf Arndt; Friedrich Wilhelm Wagner, Vice-President of the Federal Constitutional Court; Fritz Erler; Gerhard Jahn; Lauritz Lauritzen).



(5) Resignation by Gustav Heinemann and appointment of Horst Ehmke as Federal Minister of Justice, March 1969. Gustav Heinemann is elected first Social Democratic Federal President (from the left: Gustav Heinemann, Heinrich Lübke, Horst Ehmke, Willy Brandt).

In its policy on Israel and the Middle East, the coalition of Christian Democrats and Social Democrats (1966-1969) largely limits itself to calling for a balanced, non-interventionist stance (1). As foreign minister Willy Brandt puts it in 1967, this does not, however, mean "moral indifference, nor any laziness of the heart."

When Willy Brandt assumes the position of Federal Chancellor, his government develops the first concrete thoughts about a peace policy for the region. These years are overshadowed by several anti-Israeli acts of violence in the wake of the 1967 Six Day War (2 and 3) and the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

When Arab terrorists hijack aircraft to Jordan in 1970 (4) and to Libya in 1972, taking Germans hostage in order to exchange them for Palestinians in jail in the Federal Republic, the Federal government resolves to undertake negotiations with the hijackers, which are eventually successful. This attitude is condemned by the Israelis, who warn against the danger of political extortion by terrorists.

The 1972 attack at the Munich Olympics also weighs heavily on German-Israeli relations. In the attempt to rescue the Israeli athletes who have been kidnapped by Palestinian terrorists, even though five of the eight hostage-takers are killed and three captured, the Germans fail to prevent the murder of the hostages (5).

The relationship of the friendly SPD and ILP parties are less affected, however, by these troubles. When Hans Koschnick, a member of the SPD presidency and acting President of the Bundesrat, visits Israel at the end of 1972 and the beginning of 1973, it is agreed that efforts will be made to achieve even closer cooperation with the Federal Republic. The personal contacts between Willy Brandt and Golda Meir decisively reduce tensions in the bilateral ties between Israel and the Federal Republic (6).

# 24 In government 1966-1974: Strengthening ties with Israel

## Challenges to German-Israeli ties



(1) Coalition talks between Social Democrats and Christian Democrats: Willy Brandt (left) und Kurt Georg Kiesinger (right), Bonn 1966.

Starting from a policy of non-involvement in the Middle East, in the period from 1966 to 1974, which is overshadowed by anti-Israeli acts of violence, Willy Brandt develops the first concrete thoughts about a peace policy for the region.

The relationship of the friendly SPD and ILP parties remains unaffected by troubles on the state level. The personal contacts between Willy Brandt and Golda Meir strengthen the bilateral ties between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel.



(6) Meeting of the Socialist International, Vienna 1972: from the left: Bruno Kreisky, James Callaghan, Golda Meir, Willy Brandt.

(3) Defense Minister Moshe Dayan (middle), Chief of Staff Yitzhak Rabin (right) and General Uzi Narkiss (left) entering the Old City of Jerusalem.



(2) Six Day War, June 5-10, 1967: An Israel tank drives past a truck with Palestinian refugees on Jerusalem's Amman Road.



(5) Terrorist attack at the 1972 Olympics: Funeral service, murdered Israeli hostages lying in state in the Munich synagogue.



(4) On September 12, 1970 Arab terrorists blow up three hijacked aircraft in the Jordanian desert. Passengers and crew are taken hostage in order to secure the release of Palestinians in custody. The German government decides to undertake (successful) negotiations with the kidnappers.



In June 1973, at the invitation of Prime Minister Golda Meir Willy Brandt visits Israel, the first German head of government ever to do so. At the Yad Vashem memorial site (1), Willy Brandt reads Verses 8-16 of the 103rd Psalm in remembrance of the victims of the criminal Nazi regime. Turning to Willy Brandt, Golda Meir says in the Knesset on June 7, 1973: "You are ... one of the first to have said that that which has been done cannot be undone, but that it cannot be forgotten, either. This saying has worked miracles, and it enables us and you to remember. ... I know that your brief presence here with us will help, even more than in the past, to bring our two peoples closer together, in friendship, in honesty ... Wherever there is an improvement in people's coexistence, the name of Willy Brandt must be mentioned. To Willy Brandt the man and the Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, our warmest wishes for health, happiness, and success." And Willy Brandt to Golda Meir in his "Memoirs" (1989): "I was overwhelmed by the feeling that we were very close, and emotionally I believe that that was indeed the case." (2)

On June 11, 1973, in the presence of Foreign Minister Abba Eban and Prime Minister Golda Meir, Willy Brandt is awarded an honorary doctorate by the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot (3), "in recognition of his unparalleled and unremitting efforts to bring about and maintain peace and freedom among the peoples of the world." During his visit to Israel, Willy Brandt consolidates the ties between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel in many conversations (4), characterizing the two countries' relationship as follows: "Our normal relations are of a very special character." Willy Brandt makes it unequivocally clear that in the Middle East process, the Federal German government "has neither the intention nor the credentials to engage in partisanship, whether asked for or not. We are neither competent nor in a position to play any role as mediator; but the German interest is clear: a peaceful solution must be found, which is negotiated and can be accepted by those directly involved."

When Willy Brandt resigns from the office of Federal Chancellor in 1974, Golda Meir writes to him (5): "History will surely record the profound contribution you, as Chancellor, made to the reconstruction of a better Europe and hence to world peace. Likewise, we in Israel shall always appreciate your concern and efforts to help bring about understanding between ourselves and our neighbours." Willy Brandt replies: "The ties between our countries and parties have always been a matter of special concern to me, to which I shall devote my strength in the future as well. I have endeavored together with my friends to make a contribution to overcome the gulf which has divided the German and Jewish peoples in such a terrible fashion." (6)



# 25 In government 1966-1974: Strengthening ties with Israel

## Consolidating German-Israeli contacts

Willy Brandt visits Israel in 1973, the first German head of government to do so. It is his wish to intensify the relationship between the Federal Republic and Israel in accordance with the maxim, "...our normal relations are of a very special character...", and to make a contribution to a peaceful solution in the Middle East. Willy Brandt does, however, stress that the Federal Republic is neither competent nor in a position to play any role as mediator in the Middle East conflict.



(2) Visit to Israel, June 1973: Golda Meir, and Willy Brandt.



(1) Willy Brandt at the memorial service at Yad Vashem, June 7, 1973.



(3) Honorary doctorate at the Weizmann Institute, Rehovot, June 11, 1973.



(5) Personal letter from Golda Meir to Willy Brandt, May 13, 1974.



(6) Willy Brandt's reply to Golda Meir (copy), May 16, 1974.



(4) Willy Brandt talking to Moshe Dayan, Israel's Minister of Defense, and to the "founding father" of the State of Israel, David Ben-Gurion, 1973.

As party chairman (1964-1987) and honorary chairman (from 1987 onward), Willy Brandt leads the SPD to new ways of thinking about policy on Germany and the East, peace, security, the environment, and the North-South issue.

When Willy Brandt assumes the party chairmanship, German-Israel ties acquire new dynamism, particularly as far as the friendly parties are concerned. In June 1966 the German-Israel Society (DIG) is founded, with decisive involvement by leading Social Democrats. Its mission is "to achieve closer ties between Germany and Israel in all aspects of public and cultural life." (1)

Regular contacts between leading SPD politicians and Mapai grow even more intense following the 1967 Six Day War (2). A high-ranking SPD delegation takes part in the "Unification Party Conference" of the three Israeli left-wing parties (Mapai, Rafi, and Ahdut ha-Avoda), which on January 21-22, 1968 merge to form the Israel Labour Party (ILP).

Mapai joined the Socialist International (SI) as early as 1952, and later the ILP also joins the SI, as does the left-Socialist Mapam party. Willy Brandt is first the vice-president (1966-1976) and later the president (1976-1992) of the Socialist International. Intensive contacts develop between Mapam's youth movement and the Young Socialists, the SPD Youth, whose markedly pro-Palestinian outlook Willy Brandt can only influence with great difficulty by conveying the need for solidarity with Israel in order to guarantee its existence.

The close and friendly ties between Israeli politicians and Willy Brandt is reflected in the special honor bestowed on him with the planting in 1985 of the Willy Brandt Forest at the Golani Junction (Galilee) (3).

Willy Brandt renounces a further honor in 1985. At his suggestion, the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, which in keeping with Brandt's ideas strives to achieve a compromise in the Middle East, is named after the first Social Democrat President of the Federal Republic, Gustav Heinemann. The inaugural address is given by Brandt himself (4).

Apart from Willy Brandt, for decades other leading SPD politicians are also supportive of Israeli interests: among many others, the main figures include Fritz Heine, Walter Hesselbach, Johannes Rau, and Annemarie Renger (5-7). In his position as SPD Chairman, Willy Brandt attributes this solidarity to shared roots in the workers' movement.

# 26 At the head of the SPD 1964-1992

## German-Israeli contacts on the party level



(1) Founding meeting of the German-Israel Society (DIG), June 1966. Founding members from left: Israel's ambassador, Asher Ben-Nathan; Adolf Arndt, Willy Brandt, Provost Heinrich Grüber, Gerhard Jahn (DIG President).

As party chairman Willy Brandt intensifies German-Israeli ties. Willy Brandt reminds voices in his own Young SPD party which are one-sidedly pro-Palestinian and critical of Israel of the joint historical roots in the workers' movement and the State of Israel's absolute right to exist. The close ties of friendship are reflected in Israeli honors bestowed on Willy Brandt and other senior SPD politicians.



(6) Planting a tree for Fritz Heine in the "Avenue of the Righteous among the Nations" by Heinz Putzrath, 1986.



(2) 1967 visit to Israel: Trade Union Chairman Ludwig Rosenberg with Alfred Nau, Günter Grunwald and Walter Hesselbach of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Hesselbach is awarded the Golda Meir Prize in 1980.



(3) Dedication of the Willy Brandt Forest, Willy Brandt and Shimon Peres, Golani Junction (Galilee), January 30, 1985.



(5) Visit by Johannes Rau, later to become Federal President, to the Yad Vashem memorial site, 1986.



(4) Dedication of the Gustav Heinemann Institute on January 30, 1985: the Institute's President, Ephraim Evron, pays tribute to Willy Brandt.

(7) Annemarie Renger, the former President of the Bundestag, is awarded an honorary doctorate by Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, 1991.

Willy Brandt makes his candidacy for the office of president of the Socialist International dependent on decisive substantive and organizational changes to the SI. His election on November 26, 1976 at the Thirteenth Congress of the SI in Geneva, in response to a proposal by François Mitterrand, who will go on to become the French President, testifies to the SI's willingness to follow new paths (1). In his inaugural speech (2), Willy Brandt identifies three priorities in the organization's future work:

- Offensive to achieve a secure peace, i.e. continuing the policy of détente
- Offensive for new relations between North and South
- Offensive for human rights.

Brandt defines the "new offensives" as

- principle of citizens' self-determination against the capitalist collectivism of alienation and against the Communist collectivism of dictatorship which is inimical to freedom
- defending peace against the determinism of force
- fighting for concrete human rights against claims to power which are based on injustice and weakness.

Under Brandt, the SI undergoes major organizational changes, becoming a working group of independent political parties, giving up its previous emphasis on Europe, and functioning as a political and moral force on a global scale. The North-South Commission, which was set up at the urging of Robert McNamara, President of the World Bank, submits two reports (1980 and 1983) under its chairman, Willy Brandt, containing far-reaching proposals to reform the global economic system and reshape international development policy (3). The "Brandt Reports" call for successful disarmament measures as a condition for releasing financial resources for the developing countries.

In carrying out his political responsibilities, Willy Brandt is convinced that a self-assured policy that aims to strike a balance between interests can contribute to expanding people's sphere of freedom. For Brandt, the struggle for human rights includes safeguarding individual and social human rights. Willy Brandt wants to work "softly" over human rights issues, but he insists that this must not be confused with "pussyfooting around." He makes the point, however, that the fate of people who are in distress must not be exploited for propaganda exercises (4).

# 27 For worldwide implementation of human rights

## President of the Socialist International (SI) 1976-1992

Under Willy Brandt's presidency, the SI becomes a political and moral force which extends beyond Europe, seeking to safeguard peace and human rights, as well as to improve North-South ties. Under Brandt, the North-South Commission draws up far-reaching proposals for reforming the global economic system and international development policy.



(4) Willy Brandt's book: Menschenrechte mißhandelt und mißbraucht ("Human Rights Abused and Misused"), Reinbek 1987.



(1) Socialist International brochure: A new start (around 1976).



(2) From the manuscript with Brandt's handwritten additions, Willy Brandt's speech at the 1976 SI Congress in Geneva.



(3) Presentation of the Second Report of the North-South Commission, Common Crisis. North-South, September 9, 1983. Left of Willy Brandt: Edward Heath (former British Prime Minister).

Under Willy Brandt's presidency, the Socialist International's (SI) involvement in the Middle East is stepped up. From 1974 to 1976 the SI sends three "fact-finding-missions" to the Middle East, in order to sound out possible bases for solutions to the Egyptian-Israeli peace process and establish contacts between the conflict parties (1).

In his speech to the Israel Labour Party conference on February 22, 1977, Willy Brandt makes the following statement: "It must be possible for relations between Jews and Arabs, between Israel and her neighbors to take a development similar to what has happened in Europe. This may sound utopian, but politics must follow a vision. The vision is the peaceful coexistence of the peoples of the Near East."

In a number of Middle East initiatives, Willy Brandt supports the stalled Camp David process, which ultimately leads in 1979 to a peace treaty (2). In the middle of 1978, when the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations to bring about a comprehensive Israeli-Arab peace settlement get bogged down in a crisis, Willy Brandt and Bruno Kreisky issue an invitation on behalf of the SI to Egypt's President Anwar Sadat and Israel's opposition leader Shimon Peres for a meeting in Vienna (3). After talks between the four, on July 10, 1978 Brandt and Kreisky issue a joint declaration (known as the "Vienna Document"), in which they insist that the Palestinian problem must be solved in order to achieve peace. In a resolution dated July 23, 1978, the Israel Labour Party's Central Committee expressly welcomes Brandt's and Kreisky's commitment (4).

One year later, in July 1979, at Bruno Kreisky's invitation, SI President Willy Brandt and PLO leader Yasser Arafat once again meet in Vienna (5). They call for a comprehensive peace settlement for the Middle East on the basis of UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. At the press conference held in Vienna on July 8, 1979 Willy Brandt makes things absolutely clear: "In the context of these talks also, no one is entitled to question my loyalty to my and our friends in Israel, nor could anyone seriously get the impression that there are any grounds to do so."

Subsequently at the SI Congress in Madrid 1980, the four party chairmen – Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Egypt; later UN Secretary-General), Shimon Peres, Bruno Kreisky and Willy Brandt – sign what is referred to as the "Declaration of Four", in which they call equally on Israel, its neighbors, and the Palestinians to undertake negotiations on a peace settlement.

# 28 Middle East initiatives by the Socialist International

## Supporting the Camp David process

Under Willy Brandt's presidency, the Socialist International's involvement in the Middle East is intensified. Willy Brandt supports the stalled Camp David process in a number of Middle East initiatives. The solution to the Palestinian problems is viewed as central to achieving peace in the Middle East.



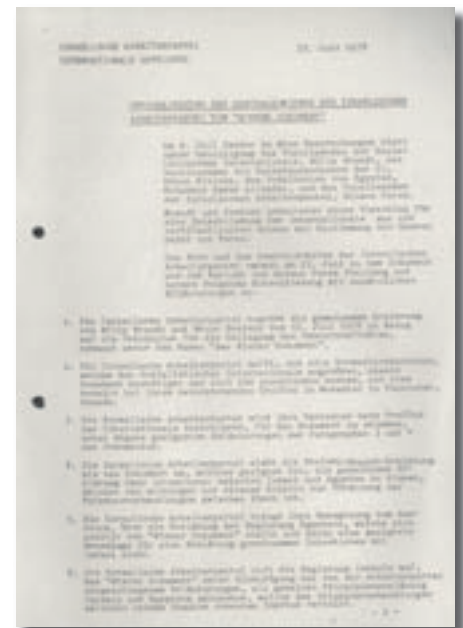
(2) Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (left), Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin (right), and US President Jimmy Carter at the conclusion of the Israel-Egypt peace treaty, Washington, March 26, 1979.



(1) Socialist Affairs, 1975



(3) Willy Brandt, Anwar Sadat, Bruno Kreisky (host), Shimon Peres, Vienna, July 1978.



(4) Israel Labour Party's Central Committee resolution on the "Vienna Document", July 23, 1978.



(5) Yasser Arafat, Bruno Kreisky, Willy Brandt, Vienna July 1979.





# 29 Middle East Initiatives by the Socialist International

## The goals of the Socialist International's Middle East Policy

“For us, the following points remain valid:

- The self-evident nature of the State of Israel and the effort to convince the Arab peoples of this right to exist
- The need to reconcile Israel's right to exist in particular with the rights of self-determination and the viewpoint of the Palestinian people
- Rejecting acts of terror and championing a peace settlement for the region, in which the desire for cooperation replaces the potential for destruction – a peace settlement which should be guaranteed by both world powers, to which Europe should also commit itself, and which would offer a chance to reduce over time the importance of national borders which is so detrimental to cooperation. ...
- And never to be forgotten: the unremitting struggle against racism ...”

Willy Brandt

*Israel-Europe Socialist Dialogue, Paris 1986*

In the 1980s Willy Brandt tries to use the SI's range of measures in order to inject new life into the faltering Middle East peace process. Since 1982, the SI's specially constituted Socialist International Middle East Committee (SIMEC) has tried in negotiations with the parties involved to reconcile Israel's right to exist with the Palestinian people's right of self-determination. In the "Israel-Europe Socialist Dialogue" that takes place in Paris on September 6-7, 1986 under the guidance of Willy Brandt and Abba Eban (1), the SI calls for a compromise between Israel's interests and those of the Palestinians.

In 1988, against the background of escalating clashes in the areas of the West Bank occupied by Israel and in the Gaza Strip, another fact-finding mission is sent to Israel. With the support of the two SI member parties, the Israel Labour Party and Mapam, the mission declares itself in favor of an international peace conference.

After Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and the subsequent economic sanctions imposed by the UN, dictator Saddam Hussein reacts by taking foreigners in Iraq hostage. In his capacity as president of the SI, Willy Brandt manages to persuade Saddam Hussein to release the hostages (2).

The SI – SIMEC – is unable to prevent the Gulf War and hence the Scud attacks on Israel (3). The solidarity of Brandt and the SI with Israel is unwavering: "You should know that our feelings of solidarity are with you and the victims of the brutal Iraqi missile assaults on Israel. What Saddam Hussein has in mind with this new act of aggression and violation of international law is obvious and shameless. But I sincerely hope and pray he will not succeed in widening the war into a conflagration. ... You can be assured that Israel's security is an indisputable principle of our efforts for peace in the midst of these dreadful developments." (4)

# 30 Middle East initiatives by the Socialist International

## Peace efforts up to the Gulf War

(1) Willy Brandt and Abba Eban, Israel-Europe Socialist Dialogue, Paris, September 6-7, 1986.



(3) Gulf War: Scud rocket attack on Israel on January 18, 1991: Damaged house in Tel Aviv.

At the beginning of the 1980s, Willy Brandt tries to get the deadlocked Middle East negotiations moving again. The aim is to sound out the extent to which Israel's right to exist can be reconciled with the Palestinian people's right of self-determination.

The Socialist International opposes all acts of terror and military actions and calls for a peace settlement in which force will be replaced by the desire for cooperation.



(2) As President of the SI, Willy Brandt persuades Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein to release the foreign hostages that he has taken. Here: the arrival in Germany of all 193 hostages, 1990.



(4) Letters of solidarity with Israel by Willy Brandt, addressed to Elazar Granot, Chairman of the United Labour Party, Mapam, and to Shimon Peres, Chairman of the Israel Labour Party, January 23, 1991.

At the 1991 SI Council Meeting in Istanbul (1), the SI proposes a peace plan for the Middle East (2). In his address at the Reichstag in Berlin during the SI Congress in September 1992, Yitzhak Rabin promises that “the present government will do its best to make sure that no stone will remain unturned on the road to achieve peace”(3).

Serious illness prevents Willy Brandt from taking part in the Congress. In his words of welcome, he takes his leave of his political friends, including those in Israel.

After Willy Brandt’s death, in parallel to the peace dialogue which has been underway since 1993 (4) the SI Middle East Committee (SIMEC) steps up its talks in Tel Aviv (5), Amman, and Gaza (6). Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination in November 1995 puts an end to hopes and expectations of achieving a peaceful solution in the near future (7).

To this day, Israel’s hopes of a land of peace, shaped by the Biblical exodus from Egypt and the new beginning after the Holocaust, have not been realized.

# 31 Socialist International Middle East Initiatives

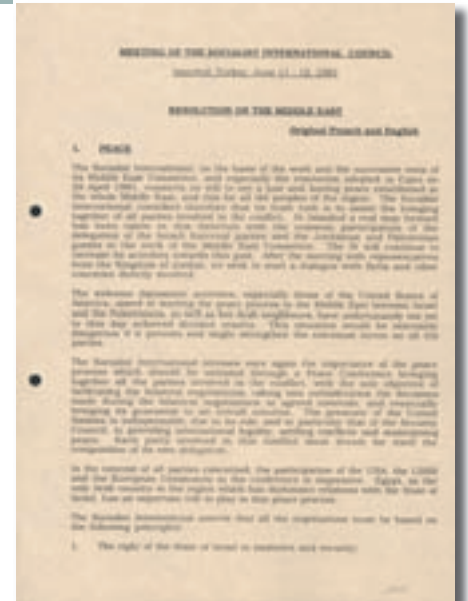
## Further efforts to achieve peace up to Rabin's death



(1) SI Council Meeting in Istanbul, June 1991.

At first, the 1995 assassination of Yitzhak Rabin makes it totally impossible to develop the 1991 Middle East peace plan and additional efforts to

achieve peace by the Socialist International which follows Willy Brandt's line even after his death.



(2) SI Middle East peace plan, 1991.



(3) Socialist International Congress in Berlin, September 15-17, 1992.



(4) Yitzhak Rabin, President Bill Clinton and Yasser Arafat in front of the White House, Washington, November 1993.



(5) SIMEC meeting in Tel Aviv, March 1995: Yitzhak Rabin, on his left: Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, SIMEC chairman.



(6) Gaza, March 1995: Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, Yasser Arafat and SI Secretary-General Luis Ayala.



(7) Yitzhak Rabin remembrance, November 1995.

It is not only Berlin and Germany that Willy Brandt is thinking of when he is inspired at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate to say, "Now what belongs together will grow together" after the border has been opened on November 9, 1989 (1 and 2). He is also thinking of the "growing together" of parts of Europe – as he says on the same day to a huge crowd in front of the Schöneberg Town Hall. In one of his last speeches, entitled "European Germany", Brandt points out that the European Community and its ongoing integration do not come to an end at the Oder and Neisse rivers.

For Brandt, the signing of the treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Poland on June 17, 1991 (3) is therefore viewed as confirming his policy. Willy Brandt is in no doubt that his policy on Germany and the East was planned to achieve movement and helped to loosen what first needed loosening up. The 1970 German-Polish Treaty, in light of the possibilities of that period, was a milestone that pointed the way to a new era of peace. In this sense, the Treaty truly serves as an example.

# 32 The closing of the circle

## End of the East-West conflict and fall of the Berlin wall



(1) Willy Brandt at the Brandenburg Gate, November 10, 1989.

Brandt's call, "Now what belongs together will grow together" after the internal German border is opened

on November 9, 1989, also refers to the integration of the whole of Europe. Brandt therefore welcomes

the German-Polish treaty on good-neighborly relations as confirming and completing his policy.



(2) Berlin, November 10, 1989: Willy Brandt (middle) with former West Berlin Mayor Dietrich Stobbe (behind right) passing a check-point.



(3) Signing the treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Poland on good-neighborly relations and friendly cooperation (Nachbarschaftsvertrag) by the heads of government and foreign ministers in Bonn on June 17, 1991.

For Willy Brandt, Israel's Socialists fell into the category of his very special political friends throughout the world, as he made clear in Paris in 1986: "Both the General Jewish Workers' Union (with its considerable North American membership) and the World Union of Socialist Zionists are associated with today's SI, whose Israeli membership now comprises Mapam in addition to Mapai. As President of our International, I would like to thank all those involved for their interest, their cooperation, and many valuable initiatives. What is more natural than to think here of my friend Shimon Peres, who has taken Golda Meir's place in the International and is one of our vice-presidents." On the same occasion Willy Brandt also referred to the solidarity and assistance shown by Jewish Socialists for their German comrades when they became "illegal" and were forced to emigrate both before and after the end of World War II. "The friendship of the Israeli workers' movement was moving."

By 1991 Willy Brandt is seriously ill. He dies on October 8, 1992 in his home in Unkel, near Bonn. Willy Brandt is the first democratic German statesman since Gustav Stresemann (foreign minister in the Weimar Republic, died in 1926) to be honored with an official State ceremony in Berlin's Reichstag. Heads of state, government representatives, and politicians from the entire world pay their last respects to him (1).

In "Battling for Peace. A Memoir" (1995), Shimon Peres (3) writes the following about Willy Brandt: "Brandt had a profound relationship with the Jewish people and the State of Israel, a relationship which I would call bordering on the religious. When he fell to his knees in the Warsaw Ghetto, this was the most significant symbolic gesture in his long life as a politician." In Yitzhak Rabin's note of condolence of October 9, 1992 (2) he writes: "We were deeply grieved to learn about the death of Willy Brandt. I knew Willy for many years and his death is a great personal loss, – a loss for the State of Israel, the Jewish people, the Israel Labour Party, the Socialist International and the entire world."



# 33 Willy Brandt's death and tributes



Willy Brandt dies on October 8, 1992. At the State ceremony in Berlin's Reichstag, heads of state, government representatives, and politicians from the entire world pay their last respects to Willy Brandt. He is mourned by politicians in the West and East, North and South, including leading Israeli Socialists. Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin highlight Willy Brandt's profound ties to Israel as "bordering on the religious." His death is "a loss for the State of Israel, the Jewish people, the Israel Labour Party, the Socialist International and the entire world."

(1) State ceremony for Willy Brandt, October 17, 1992. At the rostrum: Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker.



(2) Note of condolence from Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, October 9, 1992, conveyed by Israeli ambassador Benjamin Navon. Photo: Yitzhak Rabin, Israeli Premier and Defense Minister.



(3) Shimon Peres, Chairman of the Israel Labour Party (ILP). Book of condolences. State ceremony for Willy Brandt, Reichstag, Berlin, October 17, 1992. Shimon Peres wrote: "To a beloved leader and great human being, a friend of our people and of our state."

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