



## Quelle

Correspondence between Gunnar Myrdal and Willy Brandt (1947)<sup>1</sup>

Norwegian Military Mission  
Press attaché

Berlin, 19 June 1947

Secretary-General Prof. Gunnar Myrdal, Geneva

Dear Gunnar Myrdal,

First, much delayed, but heartfelt congratulations on your new and highly important position. Now, one may well hope that it will succeed to "channel" the suggestions from the USA in such a way that your organization is being equipped with an adequate mandate and means.

I just read the summaries of your first report to the Commission in the evening news and am glad that you included a suggestion to establish a steady liaison with the Allied Control Council in Berlin. Hoping that you yourself come here one time is probably too much to ask. But when you send someone, he should – among others – seek contact with Leo Skrzypszynski who is the head of the industrial administration (that is the German administration in that field) in the Russian zone. He works outstandingly well with the Russian authorities and has, as far as I understand, been commissioned to take part in drafting a new industrial plan. At the same time, he has good contacts with the others and is planning to visit America in early autumn. Several of the Norwegian ministers know him from the time when they were at Sachsenhausen together. – The Social Democrats' leading man in economic policy is, as you probably know, Dr. Victor Agartz. For now, he is head of the "Wirtschaftsampt" in Minden and will probably play a leading role at the bi-zonal economic council which is being established in Frankfurt. Other than that, many brag about Prof. Nölting [sic], the Social Democratic minister of economic affairs for Nordrhein-Westfalen (Düsseldorf).

As you know, I work as press attaché at the Norwegian Military Mission in Berlin for the time being. That is an interesting job, even if one does not see the larger results of one's work. I have not committed myself to stay here longer than until the end of this year, and it is not sure whether I will continue beyond that point. Most of my German friends believe that I should stay in Berlin and transfer to a German position, for example as head of the magistrate's press office. This task would be tempting for many reasons, and it goes without saying that there is a blatant shortage of people here. But in fact, I am not sure yet how I can make the best use of myself.

The reason why I mention this to you is that I have often thought that I could make a contribution in European-international cooperation. Though I have mainly worked as a journalist and author, I do have some administrative experience and, as I believe, disposition. My language skills are not as good as they should be, but I do get along in English and would not need many weeks to brush up on French.

You should not understand this as a job inquiry. That is not a danger with me for now. But I would like to let you know that I, in principle, might be useful in connection with the planned

<sup>1</sup> Gunnar och Alva Myrdals arkiv, Gunnar Myrdal brevsamling 1947–1957, volym 3.2.2:2, Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek, Stockholm, URL: <[www.arbark.se](http://www.arbark.se)>.

liaison office to the Control Council, or to another suitable job at the UNO's Economic Commission for Europe. I would be thankful for a note should you think that this is of any interest. My address is:

Major Willy Brandt,  
200 Norwegian Military Mission  
Berlin B.A.O.R.- Via England.

With the best wishes, also to Alva,  
Yours truly,  
Willy Brandt

ECE, June 3 [sic] 1947  
Mr. Willy Brandt  
Norwegian Military Mission  
Presseattachéen  
Berlin

Dear friend,  
Thanks for your kind letter of June 19. I will remember what you wrote at the end. Of course I am going to see you, if and when I come to Berlin. I will let you know beforehand.

Kind greetings from Alva and myself.  
Yours,  
Gunnar Myrdal

Berlin, 8 November 1947

Professor Gunnar Myrdal,  
Geneva.

Dear friend,  
When we talked on the phone in the beginning of September, I was looking forward to visiting you in Geneva and discussing the possibility of associating myself with your staff. In the meantime, a new situation has arisen, since I decided after much consideration to accept a position offered by my German, Social Democratic friends. I have been offered to represent the party leadership in Berlin and to the Allied authorities located here. This was not an easy decision, and I hope you understand the motives behind the choice I made.

It is not that simple that I choose Germany instead of Norway. But it is clear for me that I can and must do something more actively for the ideas that I avow, and that this country needs a strong engagement most urgently.

It is painful to give up the immediate bonds to a society one feels as a part of, and to a people that appreciates oneself - for better or for worse. Political work in Germany on the other hand means fellowship with many people one has little in common with. On top of this is the insecurity associated with developments in the future.

Regardless, I know that the solution to the German problem will depend on agreements made on the international, macro-political level. But much must be done in Germany, for the sake of

Europe, democracy and peace. And in spite of everything, there are positive powers within the German people who want to make their mark onto the future.

I do not nurture any specific illusions. But I want to try to help leading Germany back to Europe, and that it, if possible, becomes part of the third power that is needed to avoid the biggest catastrophe of all times.

Norway and the Nordic countries have given me much for which I am glad and thankful. No formal distinctions will foster doubts about [my] true allegiance.

Send Alva my regards and accept my heartfelt gratitude for your willingness to entrust me with a responsible position in your organization. I will take up my new occupation in January, but the Norwegian Military Mission will still know where to find me. So if you should come to Berlin again, I would be very glad to meet you.

With best wishes,  
Yours,  
Willy Brandt

ECE, 24 November 1947  
Mr. Willy Brandt  
Norwegian Military Mission  
Berlin B.A.O.R. 2.

My dear friend,

Alva and I read your letter of November 8 with the most cordial and respectful feelings of sympathy. We do not know all the circumstances, but we feel that you are doing the right thing by starting the work again for the one of your two countries which is the poorest and which is most in need of your assistance.

There is little reason to believe that this decision of yours is going to make it less probable that our roads will meet or that we are going to collaborate very closely, even if, for the time being at least, it will prevent your direct connection with the Commission.

With the kindest greetings from both of us,  
Yours,  
Gunnar Myrdal

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Correspondence between Gunnar Myrdal and Willy Brandt (1947). In: Themenportal Europäische Geschichte (2015), URL: <<http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2015/Article=746>>.

Auf diese Quelle bezieht sich ein einführender und erläuternder Essay von Stinsky, Daniel / Krause, Scott: For Europe, Democracy and Peace. Social Democratic Blueprints for Postwar Europe in Willy Brandt and Gunnar Myrdal's Correspondence, 1947. In: Themenportal Europäische Geschichte (2015), URL: <<http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2015/Article=745>>.