



Essay

FOR EUROPE, DEMOCRACY AND PEACE. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC BLUEPRINTS FOR POSTWAR EUROPE IN WILLY BRANDT AND GUNNAR MYRDAL'S CORRESPONDENCE, 1947¹

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In the summer of 1947, the Press Attaché of the Norwegian Military Mission in Berlin cautiously asked an old friend, now Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), about employment opportunities. While Willy Brandt never entered UN service – despite Gunnar Myrdal's offer –, the letter exchange between them illuminates the strategy that a circle of leftwing exile alumni pursued for a more stable postwar order. After the long-awaited demise of the Nazi Empire, both Social Democrats found themselves in neutral Stockholm, rather than at the victors' bargaining table in Potsdam. While the Grand Alliance rapidly disintegrated over the question of Europe's postwar architecture, Myrdal and Brandt's 1947 conversation still echoes hope for a left-liberal European "Third Way" between the American and Soviet socio-economic models and outside the superpowers' respective camps. Thus these letters illustrate the conundrum the democratic European Left faced when the schism between the victorious Allies demanded a declaration of political loyalties with increasing urgency.

Moreover, these letters captured thirty-three-year-old Brandt at a watershed moment of his biography. While the letter exchange ostensibly addresses Myrdal's job offer at the ECE that Brandt eventually declined, it offers a rare and hitherto neglected insight into Brandt's motivation for his return to Germany. Writing to his personal friend, Brandt candidly characterized his entrance into German postwar politics for the SPD as a conscious choice borne out of political calculations "for the sake of Europe, democracy and peace. And in spite of everything [...]."²

Such candor would have seemingly confirmed his adversaries' accusations of lacking patriotism for fleeing Germany that dogged Brandt for decades during his high-profile political career. Brandt countered Adenauer and Strauß' disingenuous insinuations by publishing these letters among a wide selection of his writings in exile in 1966, as he set his sights on the Chancellor's office. Keenly aware of these letters' delicate political content, *Draußen* (Outside) skillfully edited them to omit passages that could provide ammunition to Brandt's critics.³ Nonetheless, this redacted published version of the letter exchange has served as a standard source for Brandt biographers.

¹ Essay on the source: Correspondence between Gunnar Myrdal and Willy Brandt (1947).

² Willy Brandt to Gunnar Myrdal, November 8, 1947, Gunnar och Alva Myrdals arkiv, Gunnar Myrdal brevsamling 1947–1957, volym 3.2.2:2, Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek, Stockholm, URL: <www.arbark.se>.

³ Brandt, Willy, *Draußen: Schriften während der Emigration*, ed. Günter Struve, München 1966, p. 358.

Rather than reviving skewed West German memory politics of the 1960s, this essay seeks to reintroduce the original letters to the historical study of postwar European history. In doing so, this essay builds upon both at least two decades of scholarship on German-speaking exile during the Nazi era and a fundamental reappraisal of returned émigrés, or remigrés,⁴ in the Federal Republic. While scholarship has long acknowledged the “particular success” of remigrés like Brandt in the SPD,⁵ the experience of exile’s imprint on their political outlook has attracted less attention. Still, this literature on German-speaking exiles has paved the way for increased scholarly and popular recognition of these remigrés’ contribution to German postwar democratization. The most recent synthesis of German history lauded Brandt’s 1969 inauguration as Chancellor as an “emphatic new beginning” who “as émigré and Hitler opponent personified the ‘other’ Germany.”⁶ Mindful of Brandt’s legacy as icon of Social Democracy this essay turns to reassess his years in exile without political vitriol and instead scrutinizes potential ramifications of experience in exile for postwar European politics.

These letters provide a bridge linking seemingly obscure leftist discussion circles in wartime Stockholm with the democratic Left’s blueprints for postwar European cooperation by two of its most influential proponents. For a nuanced interpretation of this rare source, this essay surveys the friendship that developed between Myrdal and Brandt as a result of their deliberations within the Internationale Gruppe demokratischer Sozialisten (International Group of Democratic Socialists) in Stockholm during World War II. It also provides an introduction to Gunnar Myrdal’s formative tenure as ECE Executive Secretary to illustrate the institutional persistence of wartime designs for European cooperation. Correspondingly, the essay places the letters in the context of Brandt’s deliberations over his personal future in 1947. Finally, the essay reconstructs the remarkable publication history of these letters that illustrates the letters’ controversial content for contemporaries.

The Internationale Gruppe demokratischer Sozialisten in Stockholm

Brandt and Myrdal met in Stockholm in 1942, where Brandt had found refuge after the German occupation of Norway. Both men actively participated in the Internationale Gruppe demokratischer Sozialisten, a loose association of socialist émigrés located in Sweden. The Internationale Gruppe was a short-lived forum for socialists from occupied, neutral and even Axis countries to discuss a common agenda for the postwar world. Regular meetings were held from September 1942 until the end of the war. The group met in an atmosphere of semi-secrecy, since Swedish authorities had forbidden any political activity that might provoke Nazi Germany.⁷ The members distanced

4 This article employs the term remigrés, I.E., those who “re-migrate,” to illustrate how they drew from their foreign experiences after return, an idea highlighted in Bauerkämper, Arnd, *Americanisation as Globalisation? Remigrés to West Germany after 1945 and Conceptions of Democracy: The Cases of Hans Rothfels, Ernst Fraenkel, and Hans Rosenberg*, in: *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 49 (2004), pp. 153–154.

5 Krauss, Marita, *Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land: Geschichte der Remigration nach 1945*, München 2001, p. 18, pp. 94–95.

6 Herbert, Ulrich, *Geschichte Deutschlands im 20. Jahrhundert* München 2014, p. 865.

7 Appelqvist, Örjan, *Rediscovering Uncertainty: Early Attempts at a Pan-European Post-War Recovery*, in: *Journal of Cold War History* 8 (2008), no. 3, pp. 327–352.

themselves from both organizations competing for the leadership of the international worker's movement, the Communist International and what was left of the Labour and Socialist International in London. The group was nicknamed the "Small International", reflecting not only its relative size, but also the fact that its members predominantly came from small European nations. Among the 14 nationalities represented in the group were many Scandinavians and Germans, but also Czechs, Poles and Hungarians. The Norwegian exiles around former Labour leader Martin Tranmæl constituted the group's nucleus, with Brandt acting as secretary.

Building on a Norwegian draft, the group set up a manifesto called the *Peace Goals of the International Group of Democratic Socialists* that was published on May 1, 1943. Tranmæl, Brandt, Myrdal and later Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky were among its principle authors.⁸ The *Peace Goals* were a continental, leftist response to the British-American war goals proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter.⁹ The manifesto criticized the Charter as too non-committal and claimed that it was not enough to safeguard small nations against aggressive dictatorships. Instead, a system of organized international cooperation in the economic and social area should replace rivalries between nation states and the anarchy of capitalist economies. At the center of the group's ideas was a federal European system, embedded in the global organization of a new League of Nations. Regional cooperation, i.e. between the Nordic countries, should constitute an intermediate step toward the distant goal of a "United States of Europe". It was important for the manifesto's authors to emphasize that regional cooperation should never be directed against certain other countries, especially the Soviet Union. Instead, they wanted to positively engage the USSR in economic cooperation. European social democrats should act as mediators between the liberal democracies in the West and the USSR. The *Peace Goals* expressly warned about the danger of a new war should the anti-Hitler coalition fall apart. A bloc of European countries governed by democratic socialists to counterbalance and mediate between the great powers was the implicit goal of the Small International. In an interview conducted much later, Myrdal stated that they wanted to achieve a coalition of neutrals at the center of Europe, reaching from the Nordic countries to Italy.¹⁰

Compared to other leftist declarations from the same time period, the *Peace Goals* were more far-reaching in their internationalist outlook, but less radical in their socialist demands. While the British Labour Party's manifesto of 1942 demanded the nationalization of key industries, the *Peace Goals* spoke only of centralized planning and regulation. The Swedish environment had certainly left an impact here; class warfare rhetoric and the nationalization of industries had been abandoned by the

8 On Kreisky's involvement in the group see Misgeld, Klaus, Politik für Österrrike. Bruno Kreisky och Sverige, in: *Arbetshistoria* 125 (2008), no. 1, pp. 8–18. Other members of the drafting committee were Czech, French, German, Hungarian, Polish and Sudeten German exiles. For a complete list of names, see pp. 54, 90 in Misgeld, Klaus, *Die "Internationale Gruppe Demokratischer Sozialisten" in Stockholm, 1942–1945: Zur Sozialistischen Friedensdiskussion Während des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, Uppsala 1976.

9 Berghahn, Volker, August 1941. The Atlantic Charter and the Future of Europe, in: Themenportal Europäische Geschichte (2008), URL: <<http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2008/Article=288>> (08.12.2015).

10 Gunnar Myrdal to Václav Kostecký, cited in Appelqvist, Örjan, Gunnar Myrdal i Svensk politik 1943–1947: En Svensk Roosevelt och hans vantolkade nederlag, in: *NORDEUROPAforum* 9 (1999), no. 1, n.p.

Swedish Workers Movement's Party (SAP) already in the 1920s. Interwar Social Democracy in Sweden was much closer to reform-oriented, left-liberal values of cooperation and equality, but also freedom and self-determination than its counterparts in Britain and Germany. The Internationale Gruppe was not backed by SAP, but received funding and support from the party's youth organization and from LO, the powerful Swedish trade union confederation. While the *Peace Goals* were not adopted by any party or government after the war, the work on the manifesto certainly influenced the later political practice of its authors. Myrdal himself provides the best example.

Gunnar Myrdal and the UN Economic Commission for Europe

Together with his wife Alva, Gunnar Myrdal joined the group upon their return from New York in autumn 1942. He had just concluded a large-scale research project on race and democracy in the United States. The resulting book, *An American Dilemma*, established his international fame as an academic. Before the war, both Myrdals were intellectual driving forces in the conception of the Swedish welfare state. During the Great Depression, Gunnar developed the theoretical basis for the SAP's policy of combatting mass unemployment through deficit spending, a form of Keynesianism *avant la lettre*. The Myrdals' co-authored book *Crisis in the Population Question* (1934) heavily influenced social policy in Sweden in the long run. Alva and Gunnar Myrdal's biographies read as impressive success stories: Stemming from humble origins, both of them became professors, government ministers, high-ranking UN officials, and Nobel laureates.¹¹ For Gunnar, the Internationale Gruppe marked a point in his intellectual biography where he felt they had outgrown the constraints of Swedish politics: "Their [Swedish politicians'] minds are fixed on local matters while we are thinking of America and the big world", he wrote to an American friend.¹² Myrdal remained active as a professor and politician in Sweden for another four years. During that time, his political writings increasingly went beyond the nation state. In line with the Internationale Gruppe, Myrdal was critical of the proposed UN system and the looming dominance of the great powers over small countries.¹³ He predicted that the United States would not be able to secure peace or be the world economy's motor. Instead, Myrdal warned in a book published in 1944 that America would enter a prolonged economic crisis comparable to or worse than the Great Depression soon after the armistice.¹⁴

In 1945, Myrdal was appointed minister of commerce in the new SAP government. He would later call this episode a "capital defeat".¹⁵ Myrdal was unable to convince the other cabinet members of his economic policy and became increasingly isolated. Still expecting a severe recession in America, he forged a series of bilateral trade agreements, including one with the USSR, as a backup for Sweden's export-dependent

11 Etzemüller, Thomas, *Die Romantik der Rationalität. Alva & Gunnar Myrdal. Social Engineering in Schweden*, Bielefeld 2010.

12 Cited in *ibid.*, p. 300.

13 Myrdal, Gunnar, "Speciella organ på det ekonomiska och sociala området," in *Fred och säkerhet efter andra världskriget. Ett Svenskt diskussionsinlägg*, ed. Utrikespolitiska Institutet, Uppsala 1945.

14 *Varning för fredsoptimismen*, Stockholm 1944.

15 *Hur styrs landet?*, Borås 1982, p. 225

economy. His decision to include a generous loan to Stalin in the agreement was highly unpopular in Swedish public opinion. Russia was still perceived as Sweden's hereditary enemy, and the invasion of Finland had stirred up anti-Soviet feelings very recently. In the winter of 1946/47, Myrdal authorized drastic import restrictions and rationing of imported goods. Commentators in Swedish media linked the sudden shortage of foreign currency to spend on imports directly to the Russian loan, blaming Myrdal for gambling away the prosperity neutrality had retained. Newspapers claimed that Alva Myrdal was seen squirreling coffee away before the import restrictions hit, making use of advance knowledge she had gained from her husband. The editor-in-chief of Sweden's biggest newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, a former friend and colleague, publicly accused Myrdal of having accepted unlawful personal benefits for signing the agreement.¹⁶ Exasperated, Myrdal resigned in spring 1947 and accepted the offer to become Executive Secretary of the newly created UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in Geneva.

ECE was an intergovernmental organization much in line with the internationalist ideas expressed in the *Peace Goals*. Scholarly neglected, ECE was in fact the first international organization dedicated to economic cooperation in Europe after World War II and is still active today. It was created to retain inter-Allied wartime cooperation in the new UN framework and to provide European nations with a forum for the coordination of reconstruction plans. Founded immediately before the geopolitical division of Cold War Europe manifested, ECE as a UN organization included countries on both sides of the descending Iron Curtain. The United States and the Soviet Union were among its founding members. As Executive Secretary, Myrdal continuously tried to positively engage Eastern, Western and neutral countries in economic cooperation – a task that soon became Sisyphean against the backdrop of rising Cold War tensions.

When Brandt asked Myrdal about employment opportunities at ECE, the organization was still in an embryonic state. Just two weeks before Brandt sent his letter, U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall had held a speech at Harvard, offering American aid to promote European recovery and reconstruction, provided that the Europeans would organize the program themselves. For a short time, ECE as the only existing general economic organization in Europe seemed the most likely forum to organize the distribution of Marshall money. This prospect might have sparked the idea for Brandt to contact his old friend in Geneva.

Brandt's Choice for Berlin

When contacting Myrdal, Brandt explored his options for the future. Once vilified, the future chancellor's 1946 return to his native country as press attaché of the Norwegian Military Mission in Berlin has become part of German political lore. At the time, however, his stint as Norwegian diplomat allowed Brandt to keep his options open. On the one hand, the former capital's cosmopolitan appeal attracted Brandt: "Berlin – that tipped the scales. I accepted the offer without hesitation." Here he hoped to have found a location "where one can best serve the rebirth of Europe and by extension of German democracy." On the other hand, Brandt saw this post as a stepping-stone for a potential career in an international organization. According to Brandt, he entered the Norwegian

16 Sevón, Cay, *Visionen om Europa: Svensk neutralitet och Europeisk återuppbyggnad 1945–1948*, Saarijärvi 1995, p. 120

diplomatic service in hope of eventually transferring to the UN to “shape European cooperation more closely.”¹⁷

Brandt’s commitment to European cooperation colored his exchanges with Myrdal. Echoing wartime deliberations of a Third Way, Brandt still hoped in 1947 that a united Europe could avoid a full out confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union: “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.” Cautiously, Brandt added that he did not “nurture any specific illusions” in this task, hinting at the growing rift between the victorious allies over their competing blueprints for Europe.¹⁸

Brandt’s correspondence not only highlights his commitment to European cooperation, but also his reliance on his exile era contacts to advance his ambitious agenda in the postwar period. Upon arrival in Berlin, Brandt had immediately reached out to local Social Democrats. The Berlin SPD galvanized around a stridently anti-Communist line after rebuffing the brazen Soviet attempt to merge the SPD into a Communist-dominated Socialist Unity Party (SED) that would become the GDR’s ruling party.¹⁹ The 1946 liquidation of the SPD in the Soviet Zone anticipated the political division of Germany and impassioned a number of Social Democratic remigrés such as Brandt. During this time, Brandt linked himself with an informal network of remigrés around the thundering orator and Berlin Mayor-elect Ernst Reuter, who developed into a political mentor.²⁰ Relying on exile-derived contacts, this informal network would eventually propel Brandt’s Berlin career as vocal proponent of German integration into the Western alliance against Communist encroachment.²¹

The rapidly escalating political tensions in Berlin that eventually culminated in the Cold War Soviet blockade of the Western Sectors convinced Brandt to stand up for democratic principles in Berlin. At this point, Brandt decided to forgo the offered career in the all-European ECE for one in the stridently anti-communist Berlin SPD instead. Convinced that local Social Democrats defended West Berlin as an “Outpost of Freedom,” Brandt resigned from Norwegian service and became Berlin liaison of SPD Chairman Schumacher’s Hannover bureau in the fall of 1947.²² Privately, Brandt clarified that reclaiming his German citizenship was a deliberate political rather than personal choice. He assured Myrdal that “no formal distinctions will foster doubts about

17 Brandt, Willy, *Mein Weg nach Berlin*, München 1960, pp. 203–205.

18 Willy Brandt to Gunnar Myrdal, November 8, 1947.

19 Cf. Hurwitz, Harold, *Die Anfänge des Widerstands*, vol. 4, 4 vols., Demokratie und Antikommunismus in Berlin nach 1945, Köln 1990.

20 For the development of a mentor-protégé relationship between Reuter and Brandt cf. Barclay, David E., *Schaut auf diese Stadt: Der unbekannteste Ernst Reuter*, Berlin 2000, pp. 299–301; Merseburger, Peter, *Willy Brandt, 1913–1992. Visionär und Realist*, Stuttgart 2002, pp. 276–277; Brandt, *Mein Weg nach Berlin*, p. 216.

21 For Brandt’s political career as anti-communist remigré proponent of German Westbindung, cf. Krause, Scott H., *Neue Westpolitik: Remigrés’ and Americans’ Clandestine Campaign to Westernize the SPD in Cold War Berlin, 1948–1958*, in: *Central European History* 48 (2015), no. 1, pp. 79–99.

22 For the narrative construction of West Berlin as heroic Cold War city and the political clout of this narrative, cf. Eisenhuth, Stefanie; Krause, Scott H., *Inventing the ‘Outpost of Freedom’ Transatlantic Narratives and Actors Crafting West Berlin’s Postwar Political Culture*, in: *Zeithistorische Forschungen / Studies in Contemporary History* 10 (2014), no. 2, pp. 188–211. For Brandt’s resignation from Norwegian service, cf. Merseburger, Willy Brandt, pp. 265–269.

[my] true allegiance,” suggesting a singular identification with the ideals proclaimed by Scandinavian Social Democracy rather than any kind of German patriotism.²³

The Letters’ Publication History, a Case Study in Self-Censorship

Brandt’s understandable reluctance to reclaim his German citizenship in 1947 could have easily been misconstrued after his emergence in West German politics as West Berlin Mayor ten years later. Political opponents like Franz Neumann, Konrad Adenauer, and Franz-Josef Strauß questioned his past in exile to assail the integrity of “Brandt alias Frahm.”²⁴ As early as February 1948, Berlin SPD Chairman and personal nemesis Neumann made inquiries in Stockholm about Brandt’s conduct in exile.²⁵ Subsequently, nominal comrade Neumann pioneered what would become the tactic of choice against Brandt for decades to come: accusing Brandt of opportunism in exile.²⁶ This character assassination campaign reached its peak when Brandt first ran to replace Adenauer as Chancellor in 1961. On the campaign trail, Minister of Defense Strauß asked rhetorically what Brandt had done “outside” for a dozen years, only to add contently “yet we know what we did here on the inside.”²⁷ In 1960s West German politics, an anti-Fascist activist had to defend his past against a Wehrmacht veteran.

Brandt responded to these allegations in a two-prong strategy. He stressed his impeccable anti-Communist credentials as West Berlin Mayor during his federal campaigning. To rebut these personal accusations, Brandt commissioned the publication of his writings in exile.²⁸ Picking up on Strauß’ phrase, *Draußen* (Outside) coincided with Brandt’s 1966 move to Bonn as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The book compiled the abundant evidence for Brandt’s wartime preoccupation for German democratization. Among the extensive selection of pamphlets and letters, the book published the correspondence between Brandt and Myrdal as proof. However, comparison with the original letters in Myrdal’s personal papers has revealed that either Brandt or his editor Günter Struve tactically redacted passages that could illuminate Brandt’s complex motivation to return. Most notably, *Outside* skipped any mention of exile era experiences as Brandt’s “true allegiance.” Instead, Brandt’s November 8, 1947, letter now simply read: “It has not been the case that I simply 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 [German] country needs a strong engagement most urgently.” The book omitted the following paragraph in which Brandt regretted renouncing his Norwegian citizenship: “It is painful to give up the immediate bonds to a society one feels as a part of [...]. Political work in Germany on the other hand means fellowship with many people one has little in common with.”²⁹ Until now, this simple

23 Willy Brandt to Gunnar Myrdal, November 8, 1947.

24 Merseburger, Willy Brandt, pp. 408–414.

25 Cf. Landesarchiv Berlin (LAB), E Rep 300-90, 555 Nachlass Franz Neumann, Material von und zu Willy Brandt, Korrespondenz.

26 Krause, *Neue Westpolitik: Remigrés’ and Americans’ Clandestine Campaign to Westernize the SPD in Cold War Berlin, 1948–1958*.

27 Pfeil, Moritz [Rudolf Augstein], *Unbewältigte Gegenwart*, in: *Der Spiegel* (August 3 1961).

28 Brandt, Willy, *Draußen: Schriften während der Emigration*, ed. Günter Struve, München 1966.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 358.

omission tactic has shaped scholarship as Brandt biographers have relied on the redacted published version of the letter exchange.³⁰

Brandt's „Vergangenheitspolitik“ concerning his own past should not surprise in the context of the vicious ad hominem attacks he faced. Nearly fifty years after redacted publication, asking for the rationale for Brandt's disavowal of a constituent part of his political identity poses a more productive question. Apparently, a former anti-fascist activist felt compelled to cloak his principled opposition to Nazism in order to stay electable in federal German elections. While the self-deceptive to cynical relationship with the most recent past in the first two decades of the Federal Republic has been well documented, Brandt's self-censorship highlights the intensity of the hostility remigrés faced.

Conclusion

The posthumous appreciation of Willy Brandt as SPD icon and incarnation of the “other Germany” shows that the esteem of German exile in public discourse and historiography has changed dramatically since the 1960s. Antifascism and exile were, then, still highly controversial in West German political discourse. This is exemplified by Brandt's deliberate self-censorship when first publishing his 1947 letters to Gunnar Myrdal. The uncut version of their letter exchange, however, offers insights both on the biographical level, but also more generally on wartime exile and postwar politics.

At first sight, Brandt's letters to Myrdal seem to tell an anecdote about a job offer that was kindly declined. Seen in its broader context, however, this brief exchange of letters in 1947 highlights the complexity and the many contingencies of World War II's aftermath. While the Iron Curtain was descending, alternative ideas about a postwar European order persisted and left a long-term imprint on biographies as well as institutions and policies.

The left-liberal, idealistic designs of the Internationale Gruppe's manifesto were not taken up by any government after the war. Neither did they succeed in laying the foundations for a new socialist international. Yet, the group is remarkable for two reasons. First, to unite exiles from Germany, neutral and occupied countries in the midst of the war and to agree on a common agenda for postwar cooperation was an accomplishment in itself, as historian Örjan Appelqvist has remarked.³¹ Second, the Internationale Gruppe established a loose network of contacts among European democratic socialists sharing basic political assumptions, many of whom would rise to influential positions after returning from exile.

The correspondence between Willy Brandt and Gunnar Myrdal illuminates that these contacts continued after 1945. Through the position he held at ECE until 1957, Myrdal was directly concerned with a pan-European agenda similar to what the Internationale Gruppe had intended. Myrdal's continued efforts to foster economic cooperation, to resist the dominance of the great powers within the UN, and to positively engage the Soviet Union and eastern European governments echoed the wartime deliberations expressed in the group's manifesto. ECE's ambitious attempt at pan-European

30 E.g. Merseburger, Willy Brandt, pp. 264–265.

31 Appelqvist, Örjan, Rediscovering uncertainty: early attempts at a pan-European post-war recovery, p. 333.

cooperation was certainly no success story, but the amount of international agreements facilitated at ECE in spite of the Cold War divide remains remarkable.

As secretary of the Internationale Gruppe and one of the principal authors of its manifesto, Willy Brandt had a major influence on the ideas brought forth by the Stockholm exiles. His continued commitment to European cooperation is expressed in his initial wish to take on a job at the newly founded ECE. With the eventual decision to forego the international career offered by Myrdal, reclaim his German passport and enter the anti-communist Berlin SPD, Brandt gave priority to the democratization of Germany. Berlin would become the place where Brandt gained his Cold War credentials. Yet, essential ideas of European cooperation that would shape Brandt's foreign policy as chancellor were expressed already in his exile era thinking.

The mediating role between East and West that the Internationale Gruppe imagined for European social democrats and their willingness to positively engage the Soviet Union in economic cooperation characterized its members' political actions after 1945. Both Gunnar Myrdal's ambitious pan-European project ECE as well as Willy Brandt's more cautious *Ostpolitik* echo their discussions in wartime Stockholm.

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