

## Interview with Egon Bahr: Willy Brandt and the United Kingdom's accession to the European Communities (Metz, 10 June 2006)

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[François Klein] From 1966 to 1969 you were Under-Secretary, as well as Ambassador Extraordinary and Head of the Policy Planning Staff, in the German Federal Foreign Office. In 1967 the United Kingdom made its second application to join the European Economic Community. How did Willy Brandt and the Federal Government view the question of British accession?

[Egon Bahr] Brandt felt that Europe was not complete without the United Kingdom. The mother of democracy in Europe belonged within it. It can also be said that Brandt's personal experience meant that he naturally also believed that the Scandinavian countries' specific brand of social politics would be good for Europe. Consequently, at the summit in The Hague, all the conditions were in place for him to be able to reach an agreement with Pompidou. A green light was given for British membership. I think it is very significant that the first act of the Social-Liberal Government led by Brandt was a European one. The Hague Summit was ... Well, we signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty straight off, but the first foreign policy act was a European one in The Hague: giving a green light to British membership.