

1 September 1966

Dear General Gehlen:

I have always attached a special importance to the close relationship between our two services and I believe strongly that this relationship has contributed significantly to the development of the alliance between the Federal Republic and the United States. Today after two decades the common requirement for a strong bond between our two countries is greater than ever. Thus, in embarking upon my new responsibilities I feel obligated to do all I can to preserve and strengthen the concept of a special relationship between our two organizations. In terms of my personal interest and involvement dating back to the early years of our liaison, this is a task that I take up with pleasure.

Because I am mindful that your long experience in guiding the German intelligence effort throughout the period of the Cold War is unique in the Free World and because I would welcome an opportunity to talk personally with you regarding certain aspects of our work, I have considered making a short visit to Europe and particularly to Germany. Unfortunately, two circumstances beyond my control -- the pressures of the war in Vietnam and my present lack of an experienced Deputy -- dictate that I not absent myself from Washington in the immediate future. Still, however, I feel that it has been too long since we have discussed our many mutual interests. As a consequence, I would like to suggest the possibility that you visit us here in Washington in the near future, possibly in November which, from my point of view, would be a favorable time.

As you know, [] is planning to visit Germany in October and he is very much looking forward to meeting you. He will be accompanied by [], who is heading up our recently constituted European Division. I commend both officers to you.

In closing, I earnestly hope that you will find it possible to arrange for a November visit. Because of the long and close association of our organizations, I believe that they have an unusual ability and thus a special obligation to contribute to the mutual understanding and cooperation of our Governments and our countries.

With warmest regards,

Sincerely,
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