

→ Joan McCahey

Dear Fritz:

Thank you for your letter of June 30 and for passing along the news of Guenter Grass. I really can't agree with the way he describes our German policy and, therefore, see no particular need at this time to make the sort of gesture he proposes.

I was, of course, sorry to hear what Grass had to say in regard to visiting the US. I think it would actually advance the prospects of the negotiations if people like him could bring themselves to acknowledge the major conciliatory moves that we have recently taken. As long as Hanoi knows that all the pressure will be concentrated on us, it will have little incentive to become more flexible, but that is precisely what is needed now to get the negotiations off dead center.

Again many thanks for writing. Please don't hesitate to do so again because I value hearing from you.

With warm regards,

Henry A. Kissinger

Professor Fritz Stern
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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Hamilton Hall

June 30, 1969

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Special Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Henry:

Forgive me for intruding, but your last letter encouraged me to get in touch with you. I have, today, come back from four weeks in western Europe; in Germany, in particular, I tried to get an impression of the ramifications of the student movement.

As you know, the university situation in Germany is grim and most of our colleagues are dispirited. I had a talk with Günter Grass whom I have known for many years. Even his ebullience has been shaken. He is dismayed by what he interprets as exclusive American support of Kiesinger, and he was wondering whether it could not be balanced by some specific gesture toward Brandt. He thought that some commendation of Brandt's policy, especially toward the East, would constitute a considerable boost to the S.P.D.'s electoral chances. He is spending almost all his time campaigning and his commitment strikes me as one of the few hopeful signs in the German scene today. He wanted me to communicate his thoughts to you and to transmit his best regards. I must say that I see considerable merit in his position.

We have talked before about the impact of the Vietnam War on Europe. Let me add that when I asked Grass whether he would visit us again soon, he said, with real regret: "not until the war is over. You know how much I enjoy being in your country, but I just can't."

If you should want to talk to me about this or any other aspects of my trip, perhaps you could call me at my country place in Rochester, Vermont. The telephone number is (802) 767-5352. I expect to be there from July 2 on.

Once again, my apologies for bothering you. All the best,

Yours sincerely,



Fritz Stern
Seth Low Professor of History

FS:mgt