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LBJ's Shopping Spree

Brandt Recalls Berlin Visitor, Nixon's 'Authority'

HAMBURG, May 17 (UPI) —Lyndon B. Johnson was more interested in shopping than in world affairs when then-resident John F. Kennedy sent him to Berlin in 1961 after the Berlin wall was built, according to former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt.

In an excerpt from his memoirs published in *Der Spiegel* magazine, Brandt said that Johnson insisted on getting a pair of shoes on Saturday night out of a shop that was closed.

"The same on Sunday when he wanted a collection of electric razors as souvenirs for friends. The same thing all over again with

porcelain ... Sunday night he ordered a vast number of ashtrays with the disarming statement: 'They look like a dollar but only cost me 25 cents.'"

But Johnson found Brandt's explanation of the Berlin problem "not easy to grasp," wrote Brandt, who served as mayor of West Berlin at the time of Johnson's visit.

In the memoirs, to be published this fall under the title "Encounters and Insights," Brandt wrote that he was impressed by former President Richard Nixon's "flexible, realistic foreign policy" and his authority over Henry A. Kissinger,

then national security adviser.

"Nixon's authority could be seen and felt," Brandt wrote. "If the Harvard professor [Kissinger] with his instinct for the necessary and opportune occasionally might have considered the President as his instrument, Nixon succeeded never the less in making himself the master of the idea his confidant proposed."

But the former chancellor said he felt something "staged, theatrical" about Nixon. "There was a shadow of restlessness and insecurity about him as if he could not come to terms with his humble beginnings," said Brandt.