

## Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder lays a Wreath on the Grave of an unknown German Soldier at the Ranville War Cemetery in France (June 6, 2004)

### Abstract

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At the invitation of French President Jacques Chirac, Gerhard Schröder joined 23 other heads of state and government leaders in commemorating the 60th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy (D-Day). Schröder's participation was a first – up to that point, no German Chancellor had ever taken part in the official D-Day anniversary celebrations. Although word of Schröder's participation had drawn advance criticism from certain quarters – especially for British veterans' associations – the manner in which he comported himself at the festivities drew praise from the international press. In his address at the French-German festivities in Caen, the chancellor emphasized the duty to “resist racism, anti-Semitism, and totalitarian ideologies” and praised the “European partnership” between France and Germany. At the Ranville War Cemetery, Schröder laid two wreathes to honor the soldiers buried there – 2,200 soldiers from the British Commonwealth and 322 German soldiers; he then lingered for a while at the grave of an unknown German soldier.

### Source

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Source: Bundesregierung, B 145 Bild 00014121 Photo: Bernd Kühler

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