

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

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



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

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