

“World Class for Germany”: CDU Campaign Poster (1998)

Abstract

In the last phase of the federal election campaign in 1998, CDU Secretary General Peter Hintze introduced the slogan “World Class for Germany” and used it to run a campaign that was entirely focused on incumbent chancellor Helmut Kohl. The slogan was supposed to emphasize Kohl’s standing as an internationally respected statesman. In focusing on Kohl, the CDU was emulating the strategy of the SPD, which had already personalized the election campaign, so to speak, by focusing heavily on its own chancellor candidate, Gerhard Schröder. One significant problem for the governing coalition of the CDU/CSU and the FDP was the pronounced wish for change expressed by the younger generation in Germany. According to a July 1998 survey, 69% of Germans were in favor of a change of government. The SPD emerged as the strongest party in the federal election of September 27, 1998; it garnered 40.9% of the second votes, whereas the CDU/CSU received 35.1%. Thus, after 16 years in power, incumbent chancellor Helmut Kohl was voted out. During his years in office, Kohl built up an international reputation as a committed European and as the “Unification Chancellor.”

Source



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