

“Der Wirtschafts-Wunder-Baum”: CDU Election Campaign Ad (1957)

Abstract

This 1957 federal election campaign ad for the CDU focuses on the government’s successes in economic policy. The cartoon features Minister of the Economy Ludwig Erhard, who became most strongly associated with the “economic miracle” in public perception, and Finance Minister Fritz Schäffer as the two gardeners tending the “economic miracle tree” in the German garden. Their work is briefly disturbed by SPD chairman Erich Ollenhauer, who is accompanied by a gang of (Socialist) moles presumably trying to undermine the government’s successful policies. Ollenhauer was running for chancellor for the second time in 1957 but was roundly defeated by Adenauer.

Source

/On a meadow of ruins

the economic miracle tree

grows deep in the ground.

It is not a tree growing in paradise,

but it bears fruit and is healthy.

We know the gardeners who tend it,

Erhard with his firm hand

and Schäffer, who rakes in the profits

and distributes them throughout the land.

Well, look who's here!

For almost eight years they have

watered and tended the tree,

and everyone has experienced it firsthand,

that it bears fruit for them.

That annoys the gardener of the cooperative,

and he lets it be known.

His commentary on everything

is loud and not very flattering:

[Ollenhauer]: "Better economic policy!"

He demands this, demands that,
and he promises and proclaims
that he will plant the tree of paradise
in Germany when he is in power.

[Ollenhauer]: "More money and less taxes!"

Even the balloon is inflating,
that's how much he promises us.

[Ollenhauer]: "Security for all!"

He criticizes circumstances
with an old pop song.
It is the mirage from the old legends
of the tree that grows into the sky.

It gets thicker and thicker,
until it floats away, the balloon.

And the moral of the story:
Don't expect anything from a dream,
because if it bursts, it's gone,
but the tree stands unshaken.

Source:

"Der Wirtschafts-Wunder-Baum." CDU Election Campaign Ad, 1957. Courtesy of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. ACDP, 10-100-0042
<https://www.konrad-adenauer.de/quellen/videos/>

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