Federal Chancellor Adenauer Starts his Election Campaign in Heppenheim (Summer 1953)

Abstract

The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) had been founded in 1945 in Berlin and had spread throughout the Rhineland via the city of Cologne. Until 1950, the CDU was only organized into state-level groups coordinated by an “Interzonal Liaison Committee” or an “Interzonal Work Group.” The CDU was first founded as a federal-level party at the Goslar Party Congress (October 20-22, 1950), where Konrad Adenauer was also elected its first chairman. In Bavaria, the Christian Social Union (CSU) had been organized not as a state branch of the CDU, but rather as an independent party, in order to show that Bavaria regarded itself as a free state [*Freistaat*]. The CDU and the CSU formed a single faction in the Bundestag, however.

On the basis of Christian values and representing an attempt to bridge the old Catholic-Protestant divide, the Union represented itself as an interdenominational bourgeois-conservative collective movement, as the first true people’s party. The crowd gathered at this CDU campaign event – a predominantly middle-aged, well-dressed group that includes a strong contingent of priests and nuns – makes clear that the party’s message resonated with its target audience. Under Chancellor Adenauer, the dominant political figure of the early Federal Republic, the CDU/CSU virtually became the parties of the social market economy and Western integration and repeatedly won the support of voters.

Source

Source: Chancellor Adenauer’s campaign trip in the summer of 1953 - Adenauer's speech in Heppenheim. Unknown photographer.
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