

“No Experiments!” CDU Election Campaign Ad (1957)

Abstract

Today the slogan “Keine Experimente!” [No experiments!] is mostly associated with Konrad Adenauer and the 1957 CDU election campaign, although it was first used by the Zentrum party in 1932. In the CDU election campaign of 1957, it was used as a warning to voters that a change in government would risk everything West Germany had achieved in the postwar years. One major point of contention in the election was West Germany’s membership in NATO, which the SPD saw as an impediment to German reunification. Adenauer handily won reelection for a third term.

Source

At the pulse of the levers and the switches

a clever man rules the state.

Revered as a capable administrator,

valued for his wise counsel.

After the downfall

he set the levers right again.

And we who depend on the grid,

we can be very reassured.

But unfortunately, as is usually the case in life

some people are blind to the good.

And there are people who claim

that they know better.

And one night, let's dream it:

It's the night of the federal election.

And they get the keys to those control rooms

handed in a case.

And now? Now the big renovation

Begins in the control room.

They don't listen to the warning signals

and everyone does as they please.

If you promise a lot, you have to deliver a lot,

Once you are in control.

The shifting of gears and meddling
quickly wears out the beautiful work.

Finally, in the worst-case scenario
you turn off the NATO lever,
and instead of security for all
the German house is short-circuited.

Moral: with the only goal to change that
which is already blossoming,
everything, everything is at stake.
So make sure that things stay the same.

Source: „Keine Experimente“. Election Campaign Ad, 1957. Courtesy of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. ACDP, 10-100-0055
<https://www.konrad-adenauer.de/quellen/videos/>

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