

Protest Demonstration in Bonn against Brandt's *Ostpolitik* (May 30, 1970)

Abstract

The Federation of Expellees—United Regional-Cultural Associations and State Organizations represented the interests of the Federal Republic's nearly 8 million refugees and expellees. It was founded in 1957 after the Federation of Expelled Germans [*Bund Vertriebener Deutscher*] merged with the Union of Regional-Cultural Associations [*Verband der Landsmannschaften*]. On May 30, 1970, the Federation of Expellees organized a demonstration to protest the *Ostpolitik* of the social-liberal coalition; the event drew 50,000 participants to Bonn's market square. By that time, the governments of the Federal Republic and Poland had been engaged in negotiations in Warsaw for almost four months. These talks, which had started on February 5, aimed to produce a treaty that would ensure the mutual renunciation of violence and the regulation of the Polish-German border, the overarching goal being the normalization of relations between the two countries. Speaking at the demonstration, Herbert Czaja, a CDU Bundestag representative and the chairman of the Federation of Expellees, claimed that the Brandt government had no legal right to recognize the Oder-Neiße Line. The photograph shows the event's main speaker, CSU chairman Franz Josef Strauß, at the podium. The banner in the background reads, "Whoever recognizes violence, loses peace"; the one in front of the podium quotes Herbert Wehner (1950): "The recognition of the Oder-Neisse Line is a crime against Germany." Three small posters underneath it read: "Divided 3 times? Never!"

Source



Source: Demonstration in Bonn organized by expellee associations to protest the West German government's *Ostpolitik*, or policy toward the East. Franz Josef Strauß at the lectern. May 30, 1970.

Photo: Kurt Rohwedder.

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