
Kohl Eulogy

Herrhausen: 'patriot and world citizen'

Alfred Herrhausen was a German patriot and world citizen at the same time, said Chancellor Helmut Kohl in his keynote at the state funeral ceremony held in Frankfurt, Federal Republic of Germany on Dec. 6. Alfred Herrhausen, the chairman of Deutsche Bank and a leading unofficial economic adviser to Kohl, was slain by terrorists on Nov. 30, two days after Kohl's historic speech laying out a 10-point program for reunifying West and East Germany. Kohl's words echoed the famous phrase of Germany's greatest classical poet, Friedrich Schiller, the author of *Wilhelm Tell* and the "Ode to Joy."

The chancellor's eulogy portrayed Herrhausen as a committed citizen of the postwar German state, a courageous and cultivated man, one who publicly admitted: "I am proud of what has developed in this country."

Herrhausen, Kohl recalled, loved philosophy as his innermost passion, he loved music and the arts, and became a "close friend and good comrade" with the Chancellor over the years. "I owe much to him personally," said the Chancellor. "He has earned merits in serving his fatherland."

Kohl also emphasized Herrhausen's self-conception as a world citizen, when he got engaged in the campaign for debt forgiveness for the Third World over the past few years, his role in the dialogue on Christian ethics in the world of industry with outstanding churchmen like Cardinal Josef Hengsbach (one of Pope John Paul II's closest advisers).

"Do we really comprehend the meaning of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law?" Kohl said. "Are we really able to measure how infinitely precious these goods are? These are goods for which many people—known and unknown—have risked their personal existence. In our more recent history these were the courageous men and women of the July 20, 1944 [who attempted to overthrow Adolf Hitler]. Today, they are the valiant people of Poland and Hungary, in the C.S.S.R., and in the G.D.R. The first German democracy [of the Weimar Republic] was ground up between the extremes of left and right. The second German democracy must not be permitted to snuffed out through complacency, spiritual indolence, and moral indifference."

According to the Brazilian press, Herrhausen had

maintained a close relationship with the late finance minister Dilson Funaro, the author of Brazil's debt moratorium in 1987. "Herrhausen was one of the few bankers in Europe who refused to let the opening to the East serve as a pretext for abandoning the most-indebted developing countries of Latin America and Asia to this new priority," reported *O Estado* on Dec. 1.

Unity but no neutrality

The day after the funeral, under the headline, "It Would Be Illogical to Loosen our Ties to the Western Community," the nationally circulated German daily *Die Welt* printed excerpts from the speech that the murdered Alfred Herrhausen was to have delivered in New York on Dec. 4, before the Atlantic Bridge group. The speech was Herrhausen's vision of "German unity" achieved in concord with Germany's historic ties to the West, and an adamant rejection of any "neutrality," or, Germany breaking with the West "to go it alone."

Herrhausen began by hailing the Germans of the German Democratic Republic for their peaceful revolution: "In the last two months the citizens of the G.D.R., exhibiting great courage, have forced their government to make political changes, which previously no one would have considered as even possible." Then, Herrhausen stated: "The opening of the Wall has brought up the question of German reunification. Perhaps we'd rather use the term 'unity.' In my view, a united German state is absolutely desirable, not because of the geographical size or power which such a size could dispense, but because this—historically, culturally and from the human side—is for me, a natural striving. . . . Now, in some parts of the Western world it's feared that Germany through reunification could leave NATO and seek neutrality. Some observers believe that that is exactly what could save Gorbachov from the political turbulence in Eastern Europe. In my view, such a demand would not be advisable. Nobody, not even the Soviets, could be interested in having an isolated large country in the middle of Europe, swaying back and forth between East and West. As far as my countrymen are concerned, if confronted with such a prospect, they'd say: 'No thank you.' "

And finally: "It would be illogical to loosen our ties to the Western Community . . . our government and our parliament have made it more than clear that the Federal Republic is in no way thinking of going it alone."

Mrs. Micaela Geiger, vice-president of the Christian Democratic parliamentary group in Bonn, said that Alfred Herrhausen had a well worked-out plan for a second "economic miracle" like that of the Federal Republic, to implement in East Germany. The Deutsche Bank president had hinted at this in an interview published in the *Wall Street Journal* on Nov. 20: "Germany, a reunified Germany will be an enormous, strong economic force. . . . And when you as a bank are strongly positioned within this country, then I think you are destined to play a major role in global banking."