FRIEDENSNOTE NR. 60 · BACKSTAGE

Weiches Wasser

Diether Dehm wrote a song about the gentle power of nonviolent resistance for the SPD, back when the party was still part of the peace movement.

Diether Dehm is the rock star among left-wing politicians. He wrote and produced hits like „1000 und eine Nacht“ and sang himself as well („Bella Ciao“, „7 Tage lang“). He has a special fondness for the workers' and protest song. In the early 1980s there was still a powerful peace movement in Germany. Unlike today, it was not smeared as „right-wing“; yet it was of course fought by warmongers all the same. This is the story of a song that is at once a piece of contemporary history — as a peace song and, in another version, as the party anthem of the SPD, one that Willy Brandt himself had set in motion. And the lyricist Dehm proved to be nothing short of a prophet: „Europe has had war twice. The next one will be the last.“

PUBLISHED	16. March 2024
AUTHOR	Dieter Dehm
SONG	Das weiche Wasser bricht den Stein
PERFORMER	Dieter Dehm

ALBUM

Dass ein gutes Deutschland blühe! Arbeiterlieder – von damals und jetzt, 2023

In 1980 I became a spokesman for „Künstler für den Frieden“, who, with the „Krefelder Appell“ and in a broad alliance, organised a large rally in Bonn on 10 October 1981 against the so-called NATO Double-Track Decision by SPD Chancellor Helmut Schmidt — that is, against the US nuclear missiles. When the Dutch pop band „Bots“ was invited to take part, we worked under great time pressure on a singable song for the peace movement. Hans already had — as with „7 Tage lang“ — a Breton folk melody, to which I then wrote the lyrics. Other signatories of the Krefeld Appeal against the Pershings added the odd word here and there; among them Wolf Biermann, back when he was not yet the NATO jackal Biermann.

At another peace concert the song was also heard by Willy Brandt, who asked me whether I could rewrite it for the SPD’s 125th anniversary — because the then official SPD party anthem „Wann wir schreiten“ had after all been written by someone who later became a Nazi (see Ossietzky 4, 2022). This is how my second version came about, which in 1988 Willy Brandt, together with Senta Berger, Götz George, Albert Mangelsdorff, Hans Werner Henze and Heinz Rudolf Kunze, presented for the jubilee under the title „Das Parteilied“ on record and in the Berlin Reichstag. At first it was sung as the new SPD party anthem at all party conventions. A later SPD leadership then did away with it — and replaced it once again with „Wann wir schreiten“.

The version presented here, from my most recent CD („Dass ein gutes Deutschland blühe! Arbeiterlieder – von damals und jetzt“), is thus a merging of the peace song and the earlier SPD song.

LISTEN & WATCH

FIRST PUBLISHED ON MANOVA

www.manova.news/artikel/weiches-wasser

THE SONG IN ITS ORIGINAL · YOUTUBE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eagp6ayThzc&source_ve_path=MTc4NDI0

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dieter Dehm

Diether Dehm, Jahrgang 1950, ist promovierter Psychosomatiker, Musiker und Autor. Er war 16 Jahre lang Mitglied des Deutschen Bundestages für SPD und Die Linke. Er ist als Theater-, Musical-, Romanautor und Liederschreiber unter anderem für Klaus Lage, bots, Joe Cocker, Katarina Witt, Ute Lemper, Giesela May, Dieter Hallervorden, Udo Lindenberg, Zupfgeigenhansel, Heinz Rudolf Kunze, Uwe Steimle, Reiner Kröhnert tätig.

Seine bekanntesten Werke sind „Tausendmal berührt“, „Faust auf Faust“, „Was wollen wir trinken 7 Tage“, „Das Weiche Wasser“ und „Monopoli“. Er hat kürzlich bei seinem Hit „Tausendmal berührt“ den Showstar Florian Silbereisen verpflichtet, nicht länger aus woken Gründen auf das Wort „Indianer“ zu verzichten.

Source: https://friedensnoten.de/en/articles/weiches-wasser/