

Obituary: Helmut Schmidt Smoke and fire

赫尔穆特·施密特 烟与火

Helmut Schmidt, Social Democrat chancellor of West Germany, died on November 10th, aged 96

赫尔穆特·施密特，西德的社会民主党总理，逝于 11 月 10 日，终年 96 岁

HE WAS so clever, and so rude with it, that his listeners sometimes realised too late that they had been outwitted and insulted. Helmut Schmidt did not just find fools tiresome. He obliterated them. The facts were clear and the logic impeccable. So disagreement was a sign of idiocy.

他的聪明和粗暴时常会让听众意识到自己上当受骗和受到羞辱的时候已经太晚了。赫尔穆特·施密特不仅发现了傻瓜令人讨厌，他还消灭了他们。既然事实清楚，逻辑不可辩驳，那么，再有不同的意见就是白痴的表现。

He was impatient, too, with his own party, which failed to realise the constraints and dilemmas of power. It wanted him to spend money West Germany did not have, and to compromise with terrorists who belonged in jail. He was impatient with the anti-nuclear left, who failed to realise that nuclear-power stations were safe, and that the Soviet empire thrived on allies' weakness. And he was impatient with post-Watergate America, which seemed to have lost its will to lead.

他还对没能意识到权力的约束和困境的他的政党感到不耐烦。这个政党曾经想让他花西德没有的钱，同应当被关在监狱里的恐怖分子妥协。他对没能认识到核电站是安全的、苏联帝国是靠着盟友的软弱才繁荣起来的反核左派感到不耐烦。最后，他对似乎已经失去了领导意愿的后水门时代的美国感到不耐烦。

In good causes and in bad he was imperious. His addiction to nicotine trumped convention and courtesy. He smoked whenever and wherever he felt like it, even in non-smoking compartments of railway carriages. "Can you ask Mr Schmidt to put his cigarette out?" a passenger asked the conductor. "Would you mind telling him yourself?" came the timid reply.

不管在不在理，他都希望别人听命于他。他的烟瘾胜过了公德和礼貌。只要想抽，他就会不分时间场合地来上一根，哪怕是在火车的非吸烟车厢中。“你能让施密特先生把烟灭了吗？”一位乘客问乘务员。“对不起，麻烦你自己给他说好吗？”得到却是一个怯生生回答。

Yet his brains, eloquence and willpower were unmatched in German politics. They brought him through the Nazi period, thrown out of the Hitler Youth for disloyalty but with an Iron Cross for bravery. He was one-quarter Jewish, which he concealed when he married his wife Loki and needed to prove his Aryan background. Only late in his career did an army document emerge which described him as ideologically sound.

然而，在德国政坛，他的头脑、口才和毅力却是独一无二的。它们让他走过了纳粹时代，因为不忠诚而被开除出希特勒青年团，却因为勇敢而得到了铁十字勋章。他是四分之一的犹太人，他在与妻子 Loki 结婚并需要证明他的雅利安人背景时隐瞒了这一点。直到一份描述他意识形态可靠的军方文件出现为止。

In post-war West Germany he flourished, making a successful career in Hamburg's city government. By commandeering army units to deal with the floods of 1962 he broke a taboo, and the law, but gaining a deserved reputation as a doer.

在战后的西德，他名声大震，在汉堡市政府走上了一条成功之路。他以征调军队应对 1962 年的洪水的行为打破了当时的一项禁忌，违反了法律，却赢得了实干家的美誉。

He replaced Willy Brandt (the victim of an East German espionage operation) in 1974, at a time when the West was reeling from the oil-price shock, terrorism and America's humiliation in Vietnam. With his friend Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (another fluent English-speaker), he launched the idea of summit governance to deal with the world's economic woes. G7 meetings in those days were brief, informal affairs with real conversations and real decisions, not the micromanaged showpieces of today. Agreements made then laid the foundations for the modern European Union.

他在西方正在承受油价冲击、恐怖主义和美国在越南失败之苦的 1974 年，取代了（东德间谍行动的一位受害者）维利·勃兰特。他同他的朋友吉斯卡尔·德斯坦德（另一位能够流利地讲英语的人）首倡了以峰会治理来应对全球经济困境的思想。那时的 G7 会议，议题简明，气氛随便，有着真正的对话和真正的决策的，不像今天这样净管些不该管的琐事。当时签订的各种协议为当代欧洲联盟打下了基础。

Other leaders did not find him easy to deal with. He detested the weakness of Jimmy Carter's administration, and the two men got on badly. His foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, recalled that "Schmidt was of the opinion that the world would be fairer if he was president of the United States and Carter the German chancellor." The Israeli leader Menachem Begin called him "unprincipled, avaricious, heartless and lacking in human feeling" after he said that Germans living in a divided nation should feel sympathy for Palestinian self-determination.

其他领导人没有发现他容易相处。他曾对吉米·卡特政府的软弱表示了极大的不满，两人相处的非常糟糕。他的外长汉斯-迪特里希·根舍曾经回忆道，“施密特当时的看法是，要是他是美国总统、卡特是德国总理的话，世界会更加美好。”在他发表了生活在一个分裂国家中的德国人应当对巴勒斯坦人的民族自决表示同情的言论后，以色列领导人贝京称他“没有原则立场、贪得无厌、没心没肺，而且缺乏人类感情”。

Fairness, not fads

公平而不狂热

His toughness towards the nihilist terrorists of the Red Army Faction outraged many liberal-minded Germans, who felt that extensive snooping, interrogations and quasi-military justice had dreadful echoes of the Nazi period. They flinched when he urged America to beef up its nuclear presence in Europe in response to the Soviet Union's growing stockpile of medium-range missiles. But for him social democracy was based on fairness, not fads. He had no time for greenery, feminism or culture wars. Anyone with a vision should go and see a doctor, he once said. Far more important was bolstering the welfare system, building more houses and making Germany safe at home and abroad.

他对西德红军旅恐怖分子的强硬态度曾经惹恼了许多思想开明的德国人，他们认为大范围的监听、审讯和半军事化审判让人想起了纳粹时代的可怕。当他敦促美国增加在欧洲的核存在以应对苏联日渐增加的中程导弹时，他们退缩了。但是，对他来说，社会民主的基础是公平而不是一时的狂热。他没空去关注温室效应、女权主义和文化战争。他曾经说过，有这种愿景的人都应该去看医生。在当时来说，打造福利体系、建造更多的住房，让德国人在国内和国外都有安全感才是最最重要的事情。

Unfortunately his Social Democratic party thought differently, as did, increasingly, his liberal coalition partner, the FDP. Flexibility and charm were not Mr Schmidt's strong points. A bit more of both might have saved him.

不幸的是，他的社会民主党就像信奉自由主义的合作伙伴自由民主党一样，同他有不一样的

想法。灵活和魅力不是施密特的强项，如果两样东西多那么一点话，它们也许会救了他。

His nemesis was Helmut Kohl, the beefy Christian Democrat leader. Mr Schmidt underestimated his rival, mocking his mumbled provincial diction. He himself was an accomplished music and art critic, as elegant a wordsmith in prose as in speech. Mr Kohl's main interest outside politics was food. But the conservative leader's willingness to listen and do deals made Mr Schmidt look arrogant and out of touch. As his coalition disintegrated, the chancellor, in government since 1969, suddenly found himself in the political wilderness. His party (like many in Europe spooked by Ronald Reagan's unabashed anti-communism) veered leftwards.

他的死敌是基督教民主党领导人赫尔穆特·科尔。施密特小看了这位“重量级”的对手，曾经对他含糊不清的地方口音大加嘲笑。他本人是一个颇有成就的音乐和艺术评论家，说起话来，用词文雅。科尔在政治之外的主要兴趣是美食。但是，这位保守派领导人的倾听和合作意愿却让施密特看上去傲慢无礼和不可接近。当他的联合政府解体时，这位自 1969 年以来就一直是政府总理的人，突然发现自己成了孤家寡人。他的政党（就像当时许多被里根毫不畏惧的反共产主义所吓倒的欧洲政党一样）倒向了左派。

Mr Schmidt, still puffing away on his beloved menthols (stockpiled in case of a ban) and playing the piano (of which he had a near-professional mastery), varied his views hardly an iota. As publisher of Die Zeit, Germany's most heavyweight weekly, he became its leading commentator—more influential there in shaping opinion, perhaps, than as an embattled chancellor. He deplored worries about climate change: population growth was a far bigger problem. Intervention in other countries' affairs was a mistake (though he made an exception for Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine: that was a justified response to Western meddling). Unpopular views—but the facts and logic were clear. Anyone who disagreed was stupid.

当时仍在吞云吐雾（他抽剩下来的过滤嘴因为一项禁令都被保存了起来）、仍在弹钢琴（他的钢琴水平接近大师级）的施密特丝毫也没有改变他的观点。作为德国的重量级周刊——《时代周报》的发行人，他成了这家报纸的首席评论员——在形成舆论方面，这个位置也许要比一位苦苦挣扎的总理更有影响力。他探讨了对于气候变化的种种担忧：人口增长是一个更大的问题。介入他国事务的干预是一个错误（尽管他曾经为普京在乌克兰的战争破了一次例：那是对西方干预的一种合情合理的应对）。不受欢迎的观点——但是事实和逻辑都是清晰的。谁不同意，谁就是傻子。