

Helmut Kohl – father of reunification

■ **Apr 3, 1930:** **Helmut Kohl** born into conservative, Roman Catholic family in Ludwigshafen, Germany – third child of civil servant **Hans Kohl** and wife **Cäcilie**

■ **Early life:** Drafted into army in World War II but misses combat. Joins **Christian Democratic Union** (CDU) party in 1947. Earns doctorate in politics in 1958

■ **1960:** Marries **Hannelore Renner** (right). Couple have two sons, **Walter** (born 1963) and **Peter** (1965)

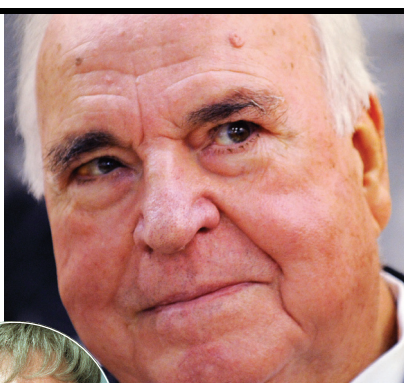
■ **Entry into politics:** Wins legislative seat in West German state of Rhineland-Palatinate (1959). Elected as state's minister-president (1969) and CDU chair (1973)

■ **1976:** Runs for chancellor in federal elections but loses vote to **Helmut Schmidt**



■ **1982:** Becomes chancellor after Schmidt loses vote of no-confidence. Kohl easily re-elected in 1987

■ **1988:** Receives Charlemagne Award with then French President **François Mitterrand** for efforts towards European unification



■ **1989:** Collapse of Berlin Wall and Soviet control over eastern Europe. Kohl takes lead role in advocating East and West German reunification

■ **1990:** Signing of reunification treaty. Kohl elected chancellor of unified Germany

■ **1993:** Joins other European leaders to promote Maastricht Treaty and monetary union

■ **1998:** German voters reject Kohl after 16 years as chancellor

■ **1999:** Awarded U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom by **Bill Clinton**

■ **2001:** Pays substantial fine to avoid fraud charges over misuse of CDU party funds. Hannelore commits suicide after long illness

■ **2002:** Retires from politics

■ **2008:** Suffers stroke and fall. Marries his 43-year-old partner, **Maike Richter**, while still in hospital

■ **Jun 16, 2017:** **Helmut Kohl** dies aged 87

