



On July 6, 1939, Dr. Adolf Rohrbach suddenly dies in Kampen, during a vacation with his wife on the Island of Sylt.

Reflecting on his career and the difficulties he encountered during the last ten years of his life, one cannot help but think that his early death is not a natural one...

Not only the recent unfortunate sea trials of his last creation, the We-271 amphibian flying boat, but his total dire financial situation, the escalating discord with the Nazi leaders, his loss of function at 'Weserflug', his lack of success in design in comparison with his peers, the increasing threat of war, all of these circumstances may well have generated in him a feeling of profound depression and despair.



The newspaper announcements differ on the cause of his death ('heart attack' vs. 'stroke').

One of his sisters reports later that the authorities refused to give her access to the official documents.

There are sufficient grounds not to exclude the possibility of suicide. The suicide may have been by his own decision or 'suggested' by the Nazi leaders, who, as is well known, played a deceitful role in the deaths of such prominent men as *Ernst Udet*, *Hans Jeschonnek* and *Erwin Rommel*. The intimate involvement of Göring and Milch in Rohrbach's financial affairs is in this respect rather ominous.

Although there is no direct proof and no suicide note has been reported to exist, in family circles close to Dr. Adolf Rohrbach, the feeling lives that the Nazi's have had a direct hand in the sudden death of their beloved brother and uncle. Some have even dared to call it murder.¹

¹) http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diskussion:Adolf_Rohrbach

Condolences

Flight Magazine, GB, July 1939

Obituary

AVIATION circles the world over learned with deep regret of the death in Berlin last week of Dr. Adolph Rohrbach, the famous German aircraft designer, at the early age of 51.

Dr. Rohrbach's aeronautical career dates back to the early days of flying. For a period both he and Dr. Claude Dornier were in the employ of the Zeppelin company, and while Dornier specialised, at quite an early date, in the design of flying boats, Rohrbach concentrated on landplanes, of which he designed a considerable number of types.

He was always rather ahead of his time, and it should be placed to his credit, now that he is no longer among us, that as early as 1917 he designed the big four-engine Zeppelin-Staaken cantilever monoplane, which was possibly too far advanced for the time, but which would not look out-of-date at the present time.

It should equally be placed to the discredit of the Allies that, at the end of the war, that machine was ordered by the Inter-Allied Air Commission to be broken up, a wanton and senseless piece of work which only people devoid of vision could have sanctioned.

Shortly after the war Adolph Rohrbach formed his own company and began the design and manufacture of landplanes and seaplanes.

The forerunner of the former was the Roland, and of the latter the Romar. Dr. Rohrbach should go down to history as the champion of high wing loadings. In this, as in so many other things, he was ahead of his time.

He used high wing loadings in the days before high-lift devices made them really practicable, but he did produce machines which had high operating speeds.

In the days when Wm. Beardmore and Co., Ltd., ran an aircraft department, they secured the British rights in the Rohrbach monoplane, the British version of which became known as the Inflexible (nicknamed by the A.I.D. the " B r i t t l e , " because a thing which was inflexible *must* be brittle).

In the flying boat field Rohrbach's name will always be associated with hulls of narrow beam and great depth – the " plank-on-edge " idea of yachting applied to flying boats.

In Adolph Rohrbach the aviation world has lost a brilliant man. Let us honour his memory not only for the work he did after the war, but equally for that which he did while he was our enemy.

Commentary

BY BARELY TWO MONTHS, ADOLF ROHRBACH MISSES BEING LABELED 'ENEMY' AGAIN.
FOR HIM NO MORE GOTHA BOMBERS, NOR ROHRBACH BOMBERS, CERTAINLY NO STUKAS.

HE ALSO ESCAPES THE AVRO LANCASTERS AND THE BOEING B-17s.

NOR SHALL HE HAVE ANY TIES WITH FORCED LABOR IN LEMWERDER AND TEMPELHOF,
OR THE HORROR OF BUCHENWALD AND DORA.

HOW FORTUNATE HE IS.

HE FINDS, JUST IN TIME, SILENCE ON SYLT, PEACE THEREAFTER.

GJS

Kurt Tank writes:

"Dr. Adolf Rohrbach war geistig ein äußerst zielstrebig, aber als Mensch ein sehr zierlicher, sehr liebenswürdiger und eigentlich immer heiterer Mann, von einer übermäßig bescheidenen Höflichkeit. Ich selbst habe von Rohrbach nie ein scharfes, ungeduldiges oder auch nur antreibendes Wort gehört, er hat mich immer gewähren lassen und mich damit - ob bewußt oder unbewußt, das kann ich nicht sagen - im stärksten Ausmaße gefördert, mein Verantwortungsgefühl verselbständigt..."



Rohrbach's grave stone
(by Arno Breker)
Berlin, Südwestkirchhof