

Protests during the Church Congress in Leipzig (July 9, 1989)

Abstract

To protest the exclusion of political issues from the Saxon Church Congress of July 6-9, 1989, grassroots groups in Leipzig organized an alternative event, which they called “Statt Kirchentag” [“Instead of the Church Congress”]. The event took place in St. Lucas Church and drew roughly 2,500 participants. After the final church service of the official Church Congress, a demonstration was held for democracy and against electoral fraud; participants marched into downtown Leipzig despite being hindered by the Stasi. This photograph shows a group of demonstrators around a banner upon which the word “Democracy” is emblazoned in German and Chinese. This was a reference to the bloody suppression of student protests in Beijing in June 1989 – a move upon which the GDR state leadership had openly congratulated the Chinese government. Additionally, to symbolize global solidarity, demonstrators are holding pieces of string knotted together.

Source



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