

“A Touring Troupe”: Caricature of the Rump Parliament’s Move from Frankfurt to Stuttgart on May 30, 1849 (1849)

Abstract

As more and more representatives to the Frankfurt National Assembly lost—or surrendered—their mandate in the face of a strengthening counterrevolution, and as the entire parliament ran the risk of being dissolved by the repressive forces of reaction, a minority of predominantly radical-democratic representatives decided to move the parliament to Stuttgart. The choice of location was influenced by the fact that Württemberg was the largest of those federal states receptive to a constitution. It was also outside Prussia’s sphere of influence, and the representatives hoped to finally be able to push through a constitution there. Only 117 of the original 812 representatives to the Frankfurt National Parliament were left after the move to Stuttgart. Thus, the legislative body that assembled there was referred to as the “Rump Parliament.” The caricature reproduced below presents the Rump Parliament as a troupe wandering to their next “guest performance.” (The sign in the upper left-hand corner indicates that they are indeed heading toward Stuttgart.) The members of this “touring company” walk alongside a cart piled high with hefty law tomes [*Gesetze*], imperial records [*Reichs-Acten*], bayonets, a bundle of correspondence, an inkwell, and even a model of [St. Paul’s Church](#), the symbol of national unity. For contemporary viewers, the two long-haired figures in wide-brimmed feathered hats would have evoked immediate associations with revolutionary figures of the radical left such as [Friedrich Hecker](#) (1811–1881). The dwarfish figure on the right appears to be overtaxed by the imperial insignia that he carries (imperial orb, scepter, and sword). He may allude to criticisms of the Rump Parliament’s ability to represent the people. In the end, the Rump Parliament’s attempt to recommence parliamentary proceedings and push the constitution through was short-lived: on June 18, 1849, Württemberg state troops dissolved the assembly by force. Wood engraving by an unknown artist, *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* (1849).

Source



Source: *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, vol. XII, no. 311 (1849), p. 384. Leipzig, July 16, 1849. Available online at: <https://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=izl&datum=18490616&seite=16&zoom=33>

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