

Helmut Schmidt in his Office in the New Federal Chancellery (July 7, 1976)

Abstract

Helmut Schmidt was the first federal chancellor to occupy the new Chancellery in Bonn, which was completed in 1976. With its consciously understated, matter-of-fact architecture, the Chancellery reminded Schmidt of “a savings bank in the Rhineland.” Thus, he devoted special attention to the interior decoration of his new offices: as an expression of the Federal Republic’s cultural-political and historical identity, Schmidt installed works by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Erich Heckel, and other artists associated with classical modernism, a movement that the National Socialists had defamed as “degenerate.” As can be seen in this photograph, Schmidt also had a portrait of SPD co-founder August Bebel hung behind his desk.

Source



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