

The Burial of Karl Liebknecht and other Murdered Revolutionaries (January 25, 1919)

Abstract

On January 25, 1919, thirty-one revolutionaries killed during the January uprising were buried in a mass grave in the Berlin-Friedrichsfelde cemetery. Among the dead was Karl Liebknecht, who like Rosa Luxemburg had been arrested and shot by the free corps. Because Luxemburg's body wasn't found until months later, only an empty coffin could be buried for her on this day. Press reports initially adopted the official explanation of the military, which claimed that Liebknecht had been shot trying to escape and that Luxemburg had been killed by an angry mob. Later, the officers involved in the murders were placed before a court martial, but they were either acquitted or did not have to serve their prison sentence. The exact circumstances of these deaths were only researched decades later. Meanwhile, increasingly vocal criticism of the SPD transitional government could be heard not just among workers and soldiers but also in the bourgeoisie, who blamed the government for the violence and for the murderers going unpunished. As this photograph shows, a huge crowd took part in the funeral procession, which became a mass demonstration of KPD and USPD supporters. In order to prevent an escalation of the demonstration, government and free corps troops conducted many "security checks" in the city.

Source



Source: Funeral of Karl Liebknecht, murdered on January 15, 1919, and the other victims of the revolution, January 25, 1919.

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