

Prussian Electoral Reform (1909)

Abstract

Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg (1856-1921) replaced Bernhard von Bülow (1849-1929) as minister president of Prussia and German chancellor in 1909. He promised to be more open to reform than his predecessor, thus arousing suspicion and scorn among conservative members of the Prussian nobility who saw their privileges endangered by the new chancellor's project to expand the franchise in Prussia. This cartoon appeared in *Simplicissimus* in October 1909, shortly after Bethmann Hollweg's appointment. It represents a liberal take on the Prussian gentry and their hostility toward electoral reform. The rotund gentleman in the front points Bethmann Hollweg in the direction of the ballot box [*Wahlurne*] and challenges him, "Go on, little Bethmann, if you have the courage!" Prussian landowners [*Junker*] threaten Bethmann Hollweg with pitchforks should he move any closer to the box – and thus closer to reform.

Source



Source: *Simplicissimus*, no. 28, October 11, 1909, cover.

http://www.simplicissimus.info/uploads/tx_lombkswjournaldb/pdf/1/14/14_28.pdf

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