



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[West German Communist Propaganda Poster] Die beiden Supermächte bereiten den Krieg vor!

Stock#: 85484
Map Maker: Kommunistische Bund
Westdeutschland
Date: 1978
Place: Frankfurt am Rhein
Color: Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 24.8 x 37.8 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Maoist West German Party Warning of the Coming War Between the Soviet Union and America - April 7, 1978 Rally Poster

A spectacular example of the cutting satire and graphic art that dominated European political cartography at the height of the Cold War.

The poster was produced in 1978 by the Communist League of West Germany (German: Kommunistische Bund Westdeutschland, KBW), a Maoist splinter group representing the communist left in West German politics from 1974 to about 1981 (the KBW became inactive in 1982 and was dissolved entirely in 1985).



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The KBW created this broadside at a time of strife for the organization. In 1977, the President of Lower Saxony, Ernst Albrecht, proposed a ban on the three Maoist groups active in West Germany. The KBW was forced to relocate from Mannheim to Frankfurt and reorganize. To mobilize support, KBW leaders coordinated a massive rally all over Germany on April 7, 1978. This broadside was issued to publicize the rally, with meeting times and places in different German cities listed at the bottom of the sheet.

The theme of the rally was a protest against the perceived greed and war-mongering of the world's two superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. The artist depicts the two nations poised against one another in a classic Cold War stance beneath a headline: "Both superpowers are preparing for the war!"

While the confrontation of East versus West was not an unusual theme in maps of this era, the artist has dramatically enhanced this broadside by depicting the leaders of both nations as grotesque figures with grotesque desires for world dominance. On the left, we find Jimmy Carter, holding a Bible, extending the fingers of a monstrous hand across the rest of the world in a blatant accusation of America's influence and its desire for global dominance. Below and opposite, we find a similar depiction of the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, whose equally distorted hand extends from the Soviet Union towards the west, while his other arm embraces a small Russian girl bringing him flowers.

The imagery of the poster is, in other words, one in which the world's two superpowers are equally guilty of their desire for global power and influence and similarly indifferent to the suffering caused by its imperialistic policies. The authors propose a solution to this geopolitical stalemate in the legacy of Mao Tse Tung. At the bottom of the image, a quote from Chairman Mao serves as a call to action: "As regards the question of World War, there are only two possible outcomes. One is that the War brings about the Revolution, the other is that the Revolution prevents the War."

Designed to promote a political rally sponsored by a fringe political group, the poster would have hung (very briefly) on the walls of factory floors and in dormitories to promote the rally. As such, the life expectancy would have been very brief.

Rarity

The poster is is unrecorded.

There are no holdings in institutional collections or on the private market. The Deutsche Historische Museum holds a handbill (about 8 x 5 inches) with same title, but apparently only Brezhnev is listed.



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Detailed Condition: