

ITEM NO. 4230/55

SPECIAL ATTENTION: Mr. Griffith

PRIORITY
BS
May 20
XIV/711

EAST GERMANY

FOREIGN RELATIONS

EAST GERMANY'S "HYGIENE MUSEUM" PARTICIPATES
IN GRAZ SPRING FAIR - AUSTRIAN SUCCESSFULLY
OBJECTS TO ANTI - AMERICAN PROPAGANDA.

SOURCE GRAZ: Own observations.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: May 3 1955.

EVAL. COMMENT: None.

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The GDR participated in this year's GRAZ Spring Fair /GRAZER Südost Messe,/ open from April 30 to May 8 1955, for the first time since the end of the war. It was represented solely by the "Deutsches Hygiene Museum" in DRESDEN.

In the "Health and Hygiene Exhibition", located in "Halle XVI," the exhibits displayed by the "Hygiene Museum" attracted more attention than those in any other booth. Between 1000 and 1200 hours on May 3, more visitors were assembled around the East German exhibits than were to be found in the rest of the hall.

Peasants and workers, who obviously come in just "to see everything," walk disinterestedly past the photographs, glistening chrome and glass displays in the Austrian firms' sections. Then, turning a corner, their attention is caught by an exhibition by no means large, but assembled by people who know what appeals to the ordinary man.

The first thing they see is the "Glass woman," a life-size, plexiglass figure on a pedestal, which shows the layout of the human nervous system. Opposite the "Glass woman", two screens

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show photographs of the "Hygiene Museum" and brightly colored posters with slogans such as "Breast feed your child!" Between these, two plastic, life-size figures of a man and a woman flank the entrance to the other exhibits. The male figure shows all the human muscles and sinews, while its female counterpart is in sections and can be dismantled to reveal the inner organs. Several persons were seen to do this with great zest and interest.

Inside the booth, the left hand wall is occupied by plastic reproductions of sections of the human anatomy. All show the typical symptoms of various diseases, ranging from mumps to cancer in its advanced stages, and seem to have a particular attraction for elderly persons. In front of these plastics are jars of clinical specimens/intestines, bones, etc./ all preserved either in formaline or by the "Prof. Stalholz" process. One such set of specimens, showing the development of the human embryo, attracts most of the younger male and female visitors.

On the right, a small switchboard with labels bearing advice to farmers e.g. "Do not overload hoists," enables visitors to illuminate the pertinent sections of a model farm with barn and stables. Two teenagers played with this for at least ten minutes. Two other models show a typically "hygienic" and "unhygienic" farm, stressing the importance of water supply and speedy repairs to roofs. Behind these models, poster like pictures of vermin cover the walls, advice being given on how to deal with rodents, flies, bugs and fleas. In each case, a stuffed specimen or large model of the animal lies on the shelf just underneath, attracting the attention of young and old.

Here among the vermin and nowhere else, was anti-US propaganda. Underneath the pictures of fleas, a local farmer suddenly noticed the words: "In Korea, the American interveners used infected fleas to spread bubonic plague /In Korea wurden von den amerikanischen Interventen mit Pest infizierte Flöhe zur Verbreitung der Beulenpest verwandt." / He promptly complained to an Austrian official, saying: "This is one of BRANDWEINER's lies! This is nothing but propaganda for the Communists!" Shocked, the official said: "Nobody has noticed this until now. It is unheard of! It will be removed!" A photograph was taken of the offending poster and two workers set about covering up the text. The farmer, satisfied, departed smiling happily.

Strangely enough, the East German exhibition lacks pro-Communist slogans and, in most cases, visitors do not even realise,

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that this is a Communist booth. Asked about this, an Austrian supervisor said he thought "that permission to exhibit had been given to the "Hygiene Museum" on a no-propaganda condition." He also said the exhibition "is merely a resumption of prewar usage" and that he did "not know" if attempts were being made to draw up delivery contracts with local dealers.

Attempts to locate and interview and East German representative proved fruitless.

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