Appeal of the German Labor Front after the Dissolution of the Free Trade Unions: Then as Now, We Remain Comrades (May 2, 1933)

Abstract

The worldwide depression and persistent widespread unemployment had been undermining the cohesion and morale of the labor movement for years and had seriously destabilized the trade unions. Only a few months into the Hitler regime, German workers were stripped of all the institutions that had traditionally represented them. Between May and July 1933, their main political parties, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the German Communist Party (KPD) were prohibited, and all trade unions were dissolved and replaced by the German Labor Front [*Deutsche Arbeitsfront* or DAF], a unified association of employers and employees connected with the NSDAP. It should be noted, however, that labor, tariff, and contract questions were actually resolved by the "trustees for labor" appointed by the Reich Ministry of Labor. According to Nazi propaganda, the new system would put an end to class differences and conflict and build the foundation for a national community marked by harmony and solidarity. In reality, however, workers lost the organs that had represented their political interests up to that point, as well as their right to form independent organizations and to strike. Control over working conditions now lay entirely with the employers and the trustees.

Source

Source: "Then as now, we remain comrades." Appeal of the German Labor Front after the dissolution of the trade unions on May 2, 1933.
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