

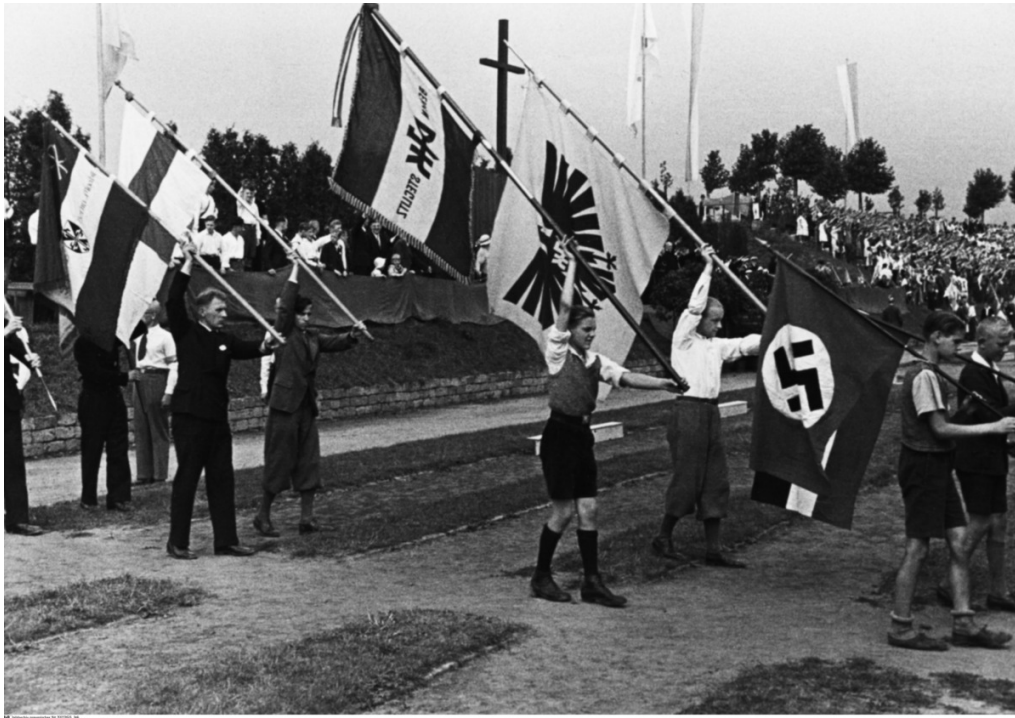
Meeting of Catholic Youth Organizations in Berlin-Neukölln (August 20, 1933)

Abstract

The Catholic Church's general ideological rejection of National Socialism was reflected in its youth organizations. After Hitler seized power, these groups were not prepared to dissolve or give up their work to make way for the Hitler Youth [*Hitler-Jugend* or HJ]; the HJ in turn terrorized these organizations during their events, destroyed Catholic youth centers, and beat up youth-group members. The ratification of the Reich Concordat in September 1933 gave Catholic youth organizations the protection to continue their work more or less legally until 1937 – but they still weren't spared Nazi harassment. The leadership of the Hitler Youth and other organizations of the Nazi state sought to scare off members of Catholic youth organizations by exerting pressure on parents, schools, and companies that took on apprentices and trainees. As of July 29, 1933, members of confessional youth groups were banned from membership in the HJ or the League of German Girls [*Bund Deutscher Mädel* or BDM], and in 1934 they were banned from membership in the German Labor Front [*Deutsche Arbeitsfront* or DAF] as well, which made finding an apprenticeship or a job extremely difficult. Despite Himmler's July 23, 1935, ban on all confessional youth groups, Catholic youth groups continued to exist, particularly in rural areas, and sometimes even operated illegally as underground organizations. Only in 1938/39 did the Nazis manage to completely eliminate all of these groups.

This photograph shows various Catholic youth organizations entering the Neukölln sports stadium in Berlin on the occasion of a Catholic youth meeting in August 1933. The boy in the middle of the picture carries the banner of the Catholic Sports Association [*Deutsche Jugendkraft* or DJK]. Some local DJK chapters had been banned as early as 1933, and its national head, Adalbert Probst, was arrested by the Gestapo on July 1, 1934, and shot the next day. In 1935, the DJK was eventually banned as part of the "coordination" [*Gleichschaltung*] of all sports associations. In the lower right corner, another boy carries a swastika flag as the symbol of the German Reich.

Source



Source: Catholic youth meeting in the Neukölln stadium. Unknown photographer. bpk-Bildagentur, image number 30013628. For rights inquiries, please contact Art Resource at requests@artres.com (North America) or bpk-Bildagentur at kontakt@bpk-bildagentur.de (for all other countries).

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