

Protestant Girls' Youth Group before its Dissolution (April 1, 1934)

Abstract

Initially, Protestant youth groups were more united than their Catholic counterparts in welcoming the new state that emerged after the Nazi takeover. They considered themselves part of the “national movement,” and conflicts with the Hitler Youth [*Hitler-Jugend* or HJ], the official state instrument of youth education, were limited at first to mostly organizational matters, since Protestant youth groups were of the opinion that they should continue to maintain their structural autonomy. The Hitler Youth’s treatment of Protestant youth groups varied locally, but incidents of violence and intimidation were reported as early as 1933. It soon became obvious that the Nazi regime would not tolerate any competition to its own youth organizations, the Hitler Youth and the League of German Girls [*Bund Deutscher Mädel* or BDM]. On July 29, 1933, Reich Youth Leader Baldur von Schirach issued a decree prohibiting concurrent membership in a confessional youth group and the HJ or BDM. On December 18 of the same year, Reich Bishop Ludwig Müller acted against the will of most Protestant youth groups by signing an agreement declaring that these groups would be incorporated into the HJ/BDM. Some groups disbanded to spare their young members automatic entry into the HJ or BDM. One such group is pictured below: the Protestant Girls’ Group of Berlin/Borsigwalde, which disbanded in April 1934. On July 23, 1935, Heinrich Himmler finally prohibited all confessional youth groups.

Source



Source: Girls' group of the Protestant Youth Organization in Berlin/Borsigwalde before its dissolution by the National Socialists. Photo: Ursula Scherler.

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