# Ludwig Quidde: Historian, Politician, and Peace Activist (undated)

## Abstract

The historian, politician, and peace activist Ludwig Quidde (1858-1941) was already a harsh critic of German militarism in general and the German Kaiser in particular in the 1890s. In 1894, he published a pamphlet entitled Caligula: A Study of Roman Imperial Insanity, which was construed at the time as an attack on Wilhelm II. Quidde narrowly escaped conviction for *lèse majesté* only by denying the charges and thereby forcing the prosecution into the awkward position of insisting upon the similarities between Caligula and Wilhelm II. The incident nonetheless effectively ended his scholarly career. (Professors in Germany, it is important to note, were all members of the German civil service and, as such, government employees.)

Quidde subsequently worked for the German Peace Society, becoming its president in 1914. At the outbreak of the war, he moved to neutral Switzerland. In 1919, he became a German Democratic Party delegate to the Weimar National Assembly. In 1921, as chairman of the pacifist umbrella organization "German Peace Cartel," Quidde became the leading representative and integrating force of the German peace movement. In 1924, he was briefly arrested on charges of treason for his monograph *German Pacifism during the World War, 1914-1918*. In 1927, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize together with Ferdinand Edouard Buisson (1841-1932), the founder of the French "League for Human Rights." In 1933, he emigrated to Switzerland. From there, he continued his attempts to support the pacifist movement and, in 1935, founded the *Comité de secours aux pacifistes exilés*, an assistance organization for emigré pacifists.

## Source

Source: Portrait of Ludwig Quidde, undated. Deutsches Historisches Museum

DHM

Recommended Citation: Ludwig Quidde: Historian, Politician, and Peace Activist (undated), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/wilhelmine-germany-and-the-first-world-war-1890-1918/ghdi:image-2136> [September 05, 2026].