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Bauermann, Erwin (1898–1962)

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Erwin Bauermann served as a Seventh-day Adventist pastor in Germany, assisting Seventh-day Adventists in North

Rhine-Westphalia to achieve state recognition.

Early Life and Ministry

Erwin Bauermann was born in 1898, at Stollen near Remscheid-Lüttringhausen, Germany. His mother was a member of the Adventist Church in Wuppertal-Barmen, and Erwin became an Adventist in Solingen in 1917. While fighting in World War I, Bauermann, a young soldier, boldly fought for a work-free Sabbath and suffered for it in prison. After his release, he became a determined advocate for religious freedom.¹

He received his theological training from the Mission Seminaries at Friedensau and Neandertal from 1920 to 1924. He later worked briefly as a pastor in Halle, with the Thuringian Conference² but was forced to leave ministry due to acquiring typhus. After his recovery, he could not be reinstated as a pastor because of the conference's lack of funds, and turned to trading eggs and cheese. Unfortunately, after the Nazi takeover he lost his job and frequently came in conflict with the authorities because he consistently rejected the Hitler greeting. He became known as an anti-national socialist.

Later Years and Contribution

During World War II, as a soldier, he refused military service and hoped to serve as a paramedic. Obedience to God was his first priority. As a result, he was condemned to death in December 1939 by a war court in Wuppertal.³ A judge who knew and appreciated the Seventh-day Adventists converted his sentence into a multi-year sentencing in different concentration camps (Esterwegen, Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen, among others). Even as a concentration camp prisoner, Erwin refused to work on the Sabbath despite torture.

In 1959 he met the former North Rhine-Westphalian Prime Minister, Fritz Steinhoff,⁴ a contact that paved the way for Seventh-day Adventists in Germany to acquire corporate rights in North Rhine Westphalia in 1957. He subsequently died in 1962.

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. H. Bauermann, "Erlebnisse während des Dritten Reiches," Unpublished manuscript, 2001, Historical Archives of Seventh-day Adventists in Europe, Friedensau.?
2. "Thuringian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1925), 114.?
3. Hauptstaatsarchiv Düsseldorf, RW 58/26380 as cited by Roland Blaich, "Religion under National Socialism: The Case of the German Adventist Church," *Central European History*, 26.3 (September 1993): 271.?
4. Steinhoff was Prime Minister from 1956 to 1958.?

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