



Resolution: No Bismarck Monument on the Czornehoh/Čornobóh

Lorient, Brittany 6.11.2021

Background:

The Bismarck monument on the Czornehoh/Čornobóh near Bautzen has not stood for 70 years. The AfD-affiliated association "Bautzener Liedertafel - Verein für Liedgut und Heimatpflege e. V." (association for fostering traditional songs and values) would like to donate a new Bismarck monument to the city of Bautzen and the main committee of the city council has agreed to this. Due to protests among the Sorbian population, a debate has flared up as to whether and how to design the square on the Czornehoh/Čornobóh.

Otto von Bismarck has a political significance and is still highly controversial today. He was chancellor of the German Empire and completed the unification of Germany. Moreover, Bismarck was a monarchist and anti-democrat. His policy towards minorities living in Germany is described as particularly aggressive, especially regarding to the Sorbian and Polish populations. They were targeted by constant reprisals and assimilation processes. Sorbian and Polish education was banned, associations supervised and events prohibited. Bismarck's policy still affects the development of the Sorbian minority today.

We as the Sorbian youth association Pawk e. V. are very concerned about this development. Pawk e.V. stands for a diverse, colourful, open society without exclusion, discrimination and hatred towards minorities. This is the exact opposite of what Bismarck represented as a politician and person.

In the first paragraph of the main statutes of the city of Bautzen, the city council commits itself to the peaceful coexistence of Sorbs and Germans. We see the previous achievements in the coexistence of Germans and Sorbs as endangered by the renewed erection of a Bismarck monument.

Youth of European Nationalities (YEN) is the largest network of youth organisations of autochthonous, national and linguistic minorities in Europe. Under the slogan "Living Diversity", YEN represents the interests of young members of national, ethnic and linguistic minorities. Currently 42 member organizations from 18 countries are represented in YEN.

The general assembly of the Youth of European Nationalities on the 6th of November 2021 unanimously decided, to :

- call on the city council of Bautzen to vote against the erection of a Bismarck monument. Thus, we join the demand of the Sorbian Institute in Bautzen and the Federation of the Lusatian Sorbs, the Domowina.
- support the proposal by Caren Lay (Die Linke, MP) to honour the Sorbian writer Jurij Brězan, who is respected and recognised beyond the borders of Lusatia, instead of Bismarck. This would correspond to the first paragraph of the main statute of the city of Bautzen.