

Abstract

Carl von Ossietzky (1889 – 1938) was a German journalist, pacifist and the recipient of the 1935 Nobel Peace Prize. He held to democratic principles and became a member of the political parties Demokratische Vereinigung (Democratic Union, DV) and Republikanische Partei Deutschlands. Ossietzky worked for the journals “Das Freie Volk“ (official journal of DV), “Berliner Volkszeitung”, “Nation” and “Das Tage-Buch”. He also worked for the weekly magazine “Die Weltbühne”, which was the forum of free expression during the Weimar Republic, particularly for leftist intellectuals; in 1927 he was named editor-in-chief. At the onset of the First World War he joined the pacifistic association Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft (German Peace Society, DFG), which tried to combat pro-war propaganda. He also worked for another pacifistic movement, “Nie-Wieder-Krieg“ (“Never Again War“), and contributed to its titular newspaper. Ossietzky campaigned against German militarism and in his articles he pointed out the law-breaking of the Treaty of Versailles. The German government accused him therefore of high treason and brought him to court several times, culminating in his eventual conviction and incarceration in 1932. After the Nazi regime took over Germany, Ossietzky was sent to a concentration camp. He was then released in 1936 due to a strong international campaign for his nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize. In November 1936 Ossietzky was given the award for the previous year. Contemporary newspapers prove that the award was an international demonstration against the Nazi regime and at the same time a proclamation for peacekeeping.