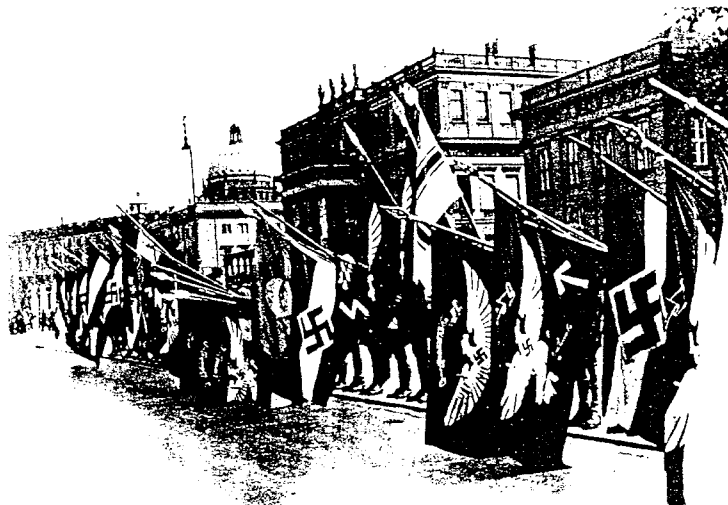


by a Catalina aircraft of 210 Squadron – fr. Sullom Voe in the Shetland Isles. U 476 was so badly damaged that she could no longer dive. The surviving members of the crew spent 14 hours in a rubber dinghy until U 990 arrived at midnight and took them on board. She then sank U 476 with a torpedo. Only a few hours later U 990 was herself sunk by a Liberator bomber of 59 Squadron based at Bally Kelly in Nothern Ireland. The survivors from both U-boats were picked up by a Patrol boat and landed at Trondheim. Otto Niethmann was indeed lucky to survive the war – after 54 months in U-boats – because 76% of German Submariners did not return to base.

Letters were also received from Fritz and Günther STRUCK, hoping to re-establish contact with Harold Ford and Derek Lees who had stayed in their Hamburg home. Both Scouts have been traced. They were dismayed to learn of the death in 1943, of the third brother – Hans – who also came to Tamworth. (148) The four have now resumed their exchange of letters – after an interval lasting half a century.

Peter Riecken-Thomsen was only seven years old when his brother Heinz THOMSEN came to England, but he writes ... 'Within my family we discussed that journey a lot. We also had reports and newspaper cuttings from English newspapers. In July 1943 my brother was home on leave. He went to visit all the parents of his comrades. At this time 12 of them were already killed. All this he wrote down in a poetry-album. Because of that I was always able to look it up. In September 1943 my brother got killed as well at the eastern front.'



149. Auslanders with their flags

It is evident, from the correspondence above, that there are still clear and happy memories in Hamburg – as in Tamworth – of that exchange of visits, even though 52 years have passed.

Notes.

1. Such towers, with the inevitable flag, were a feature of many larger camps; and they sometimes incorporated a high reviewing platform, from which speeches could be made by visiting dignitaries.
2. An unpleasant pasta dish – after which Derek Lees and others were promptly sick!
3. He still treasured a framed engraving of Hamburg Town Hall – presented to his father 'In Anerkennung deine Fahrt durch Deutschland 1937. Gestet vom Stamm IV Jungbann 76. The Author was saddened by the news of George Kemper's death only ten days after this first meeting.
4. I suspect she meant 'aluminium'. Hopwas Woods stand on high ground and overlook a wide stretch of country – though without any notable 'targets' for a future enemy airman.
5. Readers interested in research might like to know that this section only came about because a dealer friend found (145) in Hamburg. Written on the back is ... 'In memory of a happy visit to Tamworth. G. Kemper.' This photograph was subsequently published in the Tamworth Herald.
6. U 476 was neither a lucky, nor a successful boat. Records show that she did not sink a single allied ship during her 10 months of service, and 33 of her crew died when she was lost.

17. Auslands H.J. & the European Youth League



150. The Leaders, from Japan, Germany & Italy – and The Led, from Germany & Croatia.

17.1. Auslands H.J.1

The children of German nationals [*Reichs-deutsche*] living outside the boundaries of the Reich were very much encouraged to become members of the Hitler Youth and so to take their part in the Homeland's struggle. On their uniforms they wore the appropriate '*Reichs-deutsche Jugend Ausland*' *Armdreieck*. This distinguished them from *Volks-deutsch* Hitler Youths [who had foreign nationality, although born to parents of German extraction]. These youngsters wore the *Dreieck* bearing the name of their country, and membership was open to other foreign nationals who were sympathetic to the Nazi ideal.¹ Great numbers of youngsters, from both categories, were encouraged and helped to visit Germany – as members of an organised group.

With the advent of the war it was no longer possible for Youths in many parts of the world to travel to Germany. And other *Hitlerjugend* groups – such as those in Australia and South Africa – had ceased to exist. Nevertheless, with the German conquest of much of Europe, new fields for recruiting had opened up. *Hitlerjugend* or neo-Hitler Youth [collaborationist] organisations were formed in many occupied countries. There were those who dreamed of unifying these – together with the *Hitlerjugend* and the *Gioventi Italiana del Littorio*, *GIL*, [Italian State Youth] – into one vast and grandiose European Youth League.

17.2. The Kongress in Vienna.

The most ambitious undertaking in the *Ausland* field of H.J. activities was held in September 1942, when Baldur von Schirach made a somewhat premature start on what he considered to be his post-war work. Together with Artur Axmann he organised the 'First European Youth Congress', inviting representatives from the Youth Organisations of most Axis, Occupied and Neutral countries to meet in Vienna.² This *Kongress*, disparagingly referred to as 'Baldur's Children's Party', was deplored by Ribbentrop – who considered it tactless with so many so-recently defeated countries; and by Dr Goebbels – who suppressed all but a mere mention of it in the German Press.³

17.3. Confidential Reports from Vienna.

A four page report from Vienna survives in the United States Archives, where another document, initialled by *Reichshauptamtsleiter* Tiessler, indicates that a copy was made for *Reichsleiter* Martin Bormann.² Tiessler told him that the report was first received by Dr Goebbels, and that he [Tiessler] has also had a very similar account from one of his own men in Vienna.

The full report is written in unrestrained terms, and the following condensed but unexpurgated excerpts do throw a most revealing light on the event, and on those who attended. [One must bear in mind – and this is strongly emphasised in the report itself – that all of what follows took place at the beginning of the fourth year of the war].

The whole topic of *Auslands* Hitler Youth activities will be dealt with at length – and fully illustrated – in our Volume II.

Stiftelsen norsk Okkupasjonshistorie, 2014. High Delegation were predominantly elderly, top-ranking persons. From the Reich 99% Youth, viz Hitler Jugend representatives. (150)

Expenditure: 6 Million Reichmarks authorised the Reichs Treas.

Hotels: Entire First Class hotels were cleared, and the whole Senate of the People's Court forced to quit the Hotel Ambassador – and to bring forward their Hearings!

Catering: For everyone taking part there were considerable bonuses. All of the numerous official meals were completely [ration] coupon-free [and doubtless cost-free] to delegates, whilst the chauffeurs had to wait outside and provide for themselves. In addition, the hotels received considerable special allocations of fish and fowl etc. (Banquets were twice a day and very substantial).

Drinks: It is not 100% confirmed, but from a very good source, that in Vienna 15,000 bottles of sparkling wine were collected and guzzled, and are entirely consumed. (Youth!) [Compare this figure with a total of 1600 participants – many of whom were only youngsters!](150)

Flowers: 2 Railway vans of flowers. 1 from Berlin, and 1 most certainly from Holland, cost 300,000 RM. (151) There were no flowers to be had in the whole of Vienna. None could be found [even] for presentation to the 113 bearers of the 'Oakleaves', until some were 'organised' from the Congress stock.

Autos: Far more than 100 luxury limousines, fitted with new tyres, and unlimited petrol, available for all journeys, and private trips too. Ahead of the cars drove Waffen SS motorcycle-outriders and each car had a white-clad guide.

Further Events In public bars along the Ringstrasse there was dancing to Jazz bands. There was no closing-time, it went on right through to early morning. Brothel visits were also organised, really relished by the Italian and Spanish delegations.

Conduct of the Foreign Delegations. a) The Italian Delegation had brought a refrigerated wagon load of groceries with them, as they assumed there was little food available here. b) The Spanish Delegation first attended High Mass and then visited the brothels. In general the Spaniards did not express themselves favourably about the Reich and its war prospects. c) The greater part of the foreign representatives behaved themselves very restrainedly, but many questions were asked by them, and much information was given out by our inexperienced youths. The population was often asked questions too. There was an impression that the number of 'eavesdroppers' ... older as well as inexperienced – sent here to act as agents and spies – was not inconsiderable. The general question of Rationing was often discussed here, comparisons between banquets and general rations were made by the foreigners. In this connection, in the privacy of a Congress, the 'false facades' were spoken of.

Organisation ... goodwill there may have been, but no practical knowledge. Hence outrageous because of expenditure with little result. In addition, nobody wanted to be consulted. The Passport office behaved passively. The RPA_s kept away until the closing event. A compulsory audience was brought in for the so-called intellectual lectures – hence little interest and little effect. Really interested members of the general public came too, but they had to remain outside the halls – because of overcrowding.

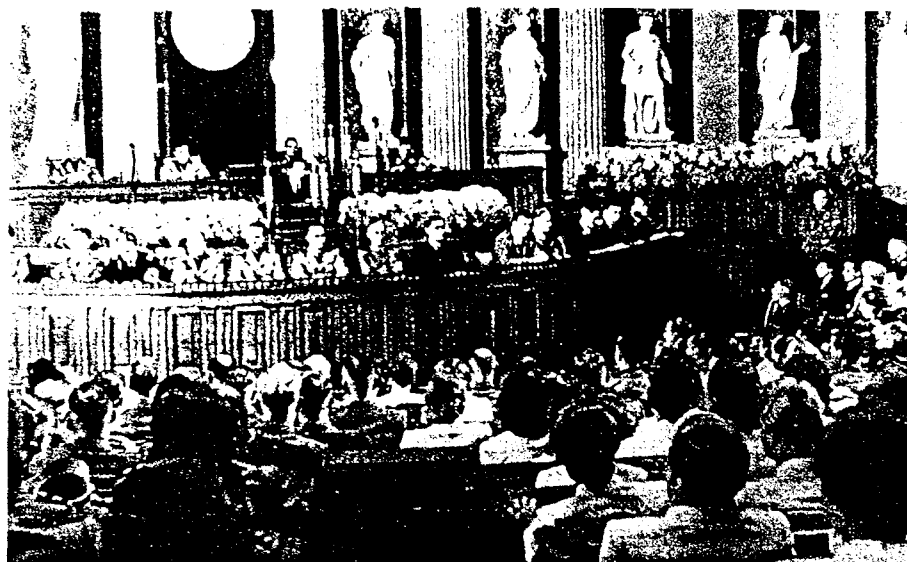
Effect on the Population. The opening of the Congress was like a vision of peace. On the threshold of the fourth year of the war the population had accepted this expenditure very critically. In the trams, trains, bars one often heard discussions about the Congress, in very disapproving form. They actually approved of the European Re-construction and the right of Germany to lead Europe but a) Youth should have behaved modestly – on all sides you are met with the words 'Plutocratic Youth' (ie. cars, best hotels, banquets, "Girls" etc. b) The Congress should have been held in a German city, closed to the public – in the common interest. The press photos, eg. the signing of the agreement, were generally described as apeing the great politicians. (152)

The behaviour of the German Youth Leaders was in many ways arrogant. If civilians or other hotel guests were sitting in the bar "What do these people want now?" was loudly expressed. And the hotel staff are quoted as saying 'While it is certain the Female Youth Leaders had their luggage in their own rooms – they were mostly elsewhere themselves'. In short it means that this was not a Youth Conference in the German style, but one which could be likened to upper class bourgeois youth in the atmosphere of an hotel lobby. The positive results are exceedingly small, eg keeping in hand the initiative of what would have been possible through the foundation of a Youth Headquarters in Germany, has been completely missed.

The 1943 Congress will be held in Rome. The Italians are starting work immediately. The comments made by the Italian delegates are to be repeated 'We are going to show the Germans what can be made of a European Youth Congress'. One gets the impression that the European idea of Youth in Germany is going to be ridden to death as a result of the wrong construction of the organisation.

In conclusion, the arrogance of the general Youth Leadership is to be stressed again and again – with the deepest regret – as the population keeps a certain distance, awaiting more youthful activities with anxiety. I repeatedly hear "What will these people do next?" And, "The Führer could certainly not have wanted to have that from his Hitler Youth!"

Vienna. 22.9.42. Signeddl. (Unfortunately most of the signature is illegible).



151. The First European Youth Congress in session – with flowers!



152. Signing the Agreement. Italian Youth Leader Vidussoni, (left) and Artur Axmann (right) with Baldur von Schirach standing behind him – taking second place for a change.



153. Souvenirs. For an 'Honoured Guest' - and for the others too.

17.6 Congress Souvenirs.

Small brooch type souvenir badges [of the type known to collectors as 'Tinnies'] were available. They came in two patterns, being copied from both sides of the handsome bronzed medallion that was presented to each 'Honoured Guest'. {153} Nevertheless, several of the latter would have been far from delighted had they seen their own personal 'write up' in the Report. Eg ...

'The Spanish Delegate: A Lawyer, strongly Catholic, (High Mass - and after that the Brothel!) He chaired the committee on 'Family and Education'.

'The Hungarian representative, a Lt Field Marshall, whose activities [with youths - it is implied] will not stand further investigation.'

There is no specific mention in the report, of any woman who attended the Congress. But I learn from Holland, that Lien van Eck, recipient of my medallion, was a Dutch woman, and a very senior Leader of the *Nationale Jeugdstorm* who 'worked at the right-hand of Anton Mussert'.⁶

17.7 Nemesis.

After the war had ended, when all of Europe was being searched for collaborators, the Allies discovered a list giving the names of every Congress delegate. These were indicted as Quislings and could not save themselves by claiming that they had only wanted a united Europe.

Notes.

1. In British terms 'Ausland' would best translate as 'Overseas'.

2. Germany and Italy issued the invitations, to the National Youth Leader of Spain, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Croatia, Netherlands, Norway, Rumania, Slovakia and Hungary; also the Flemish and Walloon Youth Leaders. There were envoys from Japan and Portugal too. Kaufmann suggests that these leaders could speak in the name of 44 million 10-18 year olds - and that the foundation of the European Youth League had finally and completely put an end to Lord Baden Powell's World Scout Movement, on the continent of Europe.^x

3. But he could not keep it out of *Die Jugend des Führers* published that same year 'with the approval of the R.J.F.' from which {149 & 150} are taken. The little Doctor had a vitriolic turn of phrase, and very little respect for von Schirach*. His comments after reading this report would have been interesting - at the very least! Unfortunately it seems probable that the Goebbels' Diaries which cover this period have been lost for ever ... but some say they are in Russian hands. So - if *Glasnost* continues - we may yet come to know what he wrote in September 1942. * Eg. 'Schirach hasn't the faintest idea about total war and tries again and again to torpedo it. ... and [he] no longer sees the interests of the Reich clearly. That is too bad, for at bottom Schirach is a good boy, who merely lacks the necessary political experience ...' Diary entry 24/4/43.

4. Oakleaves - to the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross.

5. *Reichspropagandaamt* [State Propaganda Dept. Vienna] which Berlin subsequently engaged in an urgent, even frantic, exchange of telegrams and teleprinter messages concerning the *Kongress*.

6. Last minute researches suggest that this might in fact be a different van Eck. Further information will be welcomed.

18 End of the Dream



Although the *Hitler Jugend* ... '*Träger der Zukunft*' [Pillar of the future] and '*Garantor der Zukunft*' [Guarantor of the Future] ... came to number almost ten million boys and girls, in a highly organised and unified body, it was never disbanded by its Leader - it just faded away, as did Axmann - into the ruins of the Third Reich. Perhaps it is significant that almost immediately afterwards, Allied Newsreel films could show German boys, most of whom are wearing the black shorts of their Hitler Youth uniform - quite happily helping Occupation Troops and Officials to burn Nazi emblems, posters and the like.

Only a few days before that, many of them would have felt as did 13 year old Reinhold Kerstan, when he heard - from drunken German soldiers - that Adolf Hitler was dead ...^d

'Gradually I realised that every word they said was true. They told of Hitler's death with so much conviction I knew they weren't teasing ... The voices faded - or perhaps I had just stopped listening. Adolf Hitler, my beloved *Führer*, had died. Crushed with grief, I crawled back into a corner of the freight car and started to weep. Yes, I cried, great wracking sobs that had built up in me for years. The old admonition, "A Hitler Youth never cries," meant nothing to me now that he was gone. I was no longer a Hitler Youth. It was over, the dream, the fantasy. No one could ever take his place. The tears, unstoppable, poured down my face.'

Perhaps the demise of the *Hitlerjugend* is best summed up by Henriette von Schirach, wife of Baldur von Schirach, writing of her experience whilst being held in the prison at Bad Tolz, on Christmas Eve 1945 ...^p

'I was given a bucket and the remains of an old uniform and told I would have to clean the prison lavatories. I protested that the cloth was too thick, and was given a torn flag instead. The ragged red-white-red with the black insignia had once been a Hitler Youth flag - the flag which a lost generation had carried, loved, and idolised.'

AUTHOR'S CLOSING NOTE.

The information in this book has been gathered in many ways and from very varied sources - oral and visual. The printed word, on a topic such as this, has all too often been produced from a position of considerable prejudice ... compare, for example, the writings of Baldur von Schirach with those of Erika Mann! Some of these sources - or my understanding of them - may well be at fault. Therefore I will welcome any comments or corrections from those having differing opinions, greater knowledge, or better still some experience of - or within - the *Hitlerjugend*. But best of all I would like to hear from anyone who may recognise himself, herself, or even the event, in any photograph, document, or quote which it has been possible to include - in the limited space available. Please address letters to me:-
C/o 2 The Broadway, Friern Barnet Road, London N11 3DU.

Philip Baker. June 1989.