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Jamie Rose Brinkman

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The Rise of Totalitarianism in Germany, As Seen in Albany Editorials: 1933-1941

Senior Honors Thesis for History at the University at Albany, SUNY

Written by: Jamie Rose Brinkman

Research Advisor: Richard Fogarty, Ph.D.

May 2013

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I

-Introduction-

On January 30, 1933, President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler Chancellor of Germany. Shortly following Hitler's appointment, all aspects of German life began to fall under the government's control. Freedom of press and religion as well as the country's economy and industry fell into the Reich's hands. American newspapers during the 1930s closely followed the events in Germany, fearing Nazi aggression might lead to another world war. American newspapers expressed opinions about the events in Germany through editorial pieces and political cartoons. These opinions reflected the writer's thinking, but also the biases of ownership, the need to satisfy an audience, and world events. Far from Germany, in Albany New York, newspapers played the same role and were influenced by the same factors.

This thesis examines the editorial pages of four newspapers – all read in Albany, New York - from 1933 to 1941. The city of Albany had multiple media outlets during these years. The *Knickerbocker Press* owned by Frank Gannett, media magnate and founder of Gannett Corporation, was one of two major dailies in the city. The *Knickerbocker Press* merged with another Gannett owned paper, the *Albany Evening News*, in 1937 to form the *Knickerbocker News*. The other major Albanian newspaper was the *Times Union*, owned by William Randolph Hearst. Hearst was another major media magnate and a rival to Gannett. The African American newspaper in Albany was the *New York Amsterdam News (NYAN)*. It is unlikely that Albany's African American population published their own newspaper, and it is just as likely that they read the *NYAN*. It was the second largest African American newspaper in circulation in 1930s America and it was published only 150 miles away, in New York City. Finally, the city's Jewish

population read the Jewish Telegraph Agency's *Daily News Bulletin*. Yiddish and American Jewish newspapers and periodicals featured the Jewish Telegraph Agency's (JTA) *Daily News Bulletin* within their pages.¹ It is not clear whether the JTA's news bulletin circulated in Albany, but due to its large circulation and popularity during the 1930s, it very likely did. The bulletin circulated reports and information that general circulation newspapers refused to print. Unlike the other three newspapers, the *Daily News Bulletin* lacked an editorial page. Instead it published news reports.

Scholarship on American media coverage of the rise of totalitarianism in Germany is much broader in scope. It focuses on national newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, and major cities, like New York City and Chicago. Many also focus on media coverage of specific events, particularly ones within the years 1938 to 1945. Beyond Belief, by Deborah Lipstadt explores the American press from 1933 to 1945, noting that "the press may not determine what the public thinks, but it does influence what it thinks *about*." Lipstadt, at the end of her analysis, could not believe how dispassionate newspapers were about the persecution of Jews in Europe. A majority of the material in Lipstadt's book comes from the daily *Press Information Bulletin*, a compilation of articles from five hundred of the largest American newspapers. This thesis, which examines the newspapers of a medium sized city, will add to broader perspective of Lipstadt's book. David Kennedy's Freedom from Fear provides a comprehensive guide to the travails faced by the American people from 1929 to 1945. In the chapter "The Gathering Storm," the author discusses the events in Europe during the 1930s, especially in Germany. Kennedy discusses American media coverage of the rise of the Nazi party and stresses that the American citizens' "sympathy stopped short of concrete support." He argues that though the

¹ Breitman, Richard. *Official Secrets*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1998.

American press had long reported on Nazi mistreatment of the Jews, some private organizations and government officials in the United States expressed dismay over the plight of the Jews. Kennedy also claims that the American press had long reported on Nazi mistreatment of the Jews.² Kennedy's book will provide good background material when discussing what life was like in Albany during the 1930s and 1940s. This thesis will provide a more detailed perspective to Kennedy's general and broad examination of the American media. Richard Breitman's Official Secrets explores the possibility that the British and American government knew more than they let on during the 1930s and consequently withheld information from the public. Breitman argues that instead of using the intelligence to show the world the plight of the Jews, the British simply hoarded it. This thesis uses the JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin*, mentioned by Breitman as a report that circulated in a majority of American Jewish and Yiddish newspapers and periodicals. Laurel Leff's book is also helpful and insightful. Leff's book, Buried by the Times, explores the *New York Times* burying and exclusion of articles about Jewish persecution. The *New York Times*, influenced by both national and international governments, ultimately decided to purposely avoid reports of Jewish persecution. Leff argues that Arthur Hays Sulzberger, the paper's publisher, deliberately chose to "bury" news in the back pages for ideological reasons, and made sure that the *Times* did not portray Jews as particular victims of Nazism. This thesis adds to Leff's opinion, that ownership and audience influenced what the newspaper published.

Ownership and audience not only influenced national newspapers, but also influenced newspapers published in mid-sized cities as well. The level of influence exercised by an owner greatly determined what the paper published. Frank Gannett, owner of the *Knickerbocker*

² Kennedy, David M. *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Press/News, refused to push his opinion onto any of his newspapers. Consequently, the editorial pages of Gannett's Albany newspapers reflected the opinions of actual Albany citizens. On the other hand, William Randolph Hearst greatly influenced what the *Times Union* published. Because Hearst was sympathetic to the Nazi government, his newspapers left out or buried articles about the rise of totalitarianism until 1938, when *Kristallnacht* changed his opinion. On top of ownership influence, papers were also influenced by audience. A general circulation newspaper like the *Knickerbocker Press/News* or *Times Union* had to be conscious of what it published in order to not upset any part of its broad audience. To some degree, smaller newspapers shared this fear. They could not anger their smaller audiences, as this could potentially lead to the loss of a majority of their byers. Therefore the small newspapers watched what they printed and editorialized for the African American community and the Jewish community, respectively.

Both ownership and audience were influenced by an underlying factor – context. Each newspaper published different editorials and political cartoons influenced by the events not only surrounding them. William Randolph Hearst, the owner of the *Times Union*, sympathized with Nazi cause for a majority of the 1930s and generally refused to publish any editorials portraying them in a negative light. This changed in late 1938, after *Kristallnacht*. Hearst had never fully agreed with the Nazi persecution of the Jews, but the cruelty seen on November 9th and 10th was the final straw. From that point on Hearst's newspapers, including the *Times Union*, were allowed to criticize the German government. It should be known though, that even after *Kristallnacht*, the editorials and political cartoons seen in the *Times Union*, generally criticized only the Jewish persecution, rarely talking about government censorship, control of economy, and Hitler himself. The *New York Amsterdam News* also focused on the Jewish persecution, but

instead used it as a comparison to racism faced in America. During the 1930s, the African American community wanted an anti-lynching bill passed. So the *NYAN* used the comparison between the German Jews and African Americans to try and influence its passage. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency's *Daily Message Bulletin* was also influenced by the world's events. From the beginning of Hitler's rule, the JTA was publishing editorials about the persecution of Jews, and to some extent the government control of press, economy, and religion. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s they published editorials about the events in Germany, in hopes that the rest of the world Jewry would help their kinsmen. The *Knickerbocker Press/News* published on the German government control of press, economy, and religion in a negative light from the start. The newspaper's opinion never wavered, as their dislike for Hitler and the Nazi Party remained strong well into the early 1940s.

The topic of this thesis is significant because a majority of the existing work on this subject is in a broader scope. A majority of the books and studies published focus on either the general American population or on major cities, such as New York City. Almost all books used national newspapers like the *New York Times* as part of its study. Also a startling amount of works published focus on the years 1938 to 1941 or to 1945, when media coverage of Germany sharply increased. Starting at 1933, this thesis will provide a perspective about earlier media coverage on the rise of totalitarianism in Germany. As a mid-sized city, Albany will make an interesting case study at the local level and add detail to the national picture painted by these other authors. This thesis shows how each newspaper's opinion changed throughout the 1930s and 1940s, or stayed the same.

II

-The City of Albany, New York During the 1930s and 1940s-

Albany, NY saw a period of change during the 1930s and 1940s. By the late 1920s, due to an increasing population and improvements in transportation, the borders of the city began pushing further westward away from the Hudson River. Albany's wealthy built out Western Avenue, extending the Pine Hills neighborhood. But, like most of the United States, Albany began to feel the full effects of the Great Depression by the early 1930s. Total wages fell over 27 percent and the city provided 2,200 families with fuel, food, and rent assistance.³ The numbers reflected the hard times faced by the rest of the nation. A majority of the population, which totaled 127,000, consisted predominately of blue collar workers. Throughout the 1930s, Albany transitioned away from its blue collar roots with the help of local and federal government relief. Many Albany citizens joined the Civilian Conservation Corps⁴, traveling the nation completing manual labor jobs related to the conservation and nature resources development.⁵ By the end of the decade, Albany was not generally considered a highly industrialized city. In fact by then, the city consisted primarily of a white collar community. A sizeable number of citizens were clerical and professional workers involved in government activities. Augmenting this number were workers in the administrative offices of railroads and public utility companies. Albany was fortunate to be the seat of New York State government, for state employment helped

³ Lemak, Jennifer A. "Albany, New York and the Great Migration." *Afro - Americans in New York Life and History* 32, no. 1 (2008): 47-74. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/200976009?accountid=14166>.

⁴ Tony Opalka, interviewed by author, Albany, NY, March 25, 2013.

⁵ National Archives. "Records of the Civilian Conservation Corps [CCC]." <http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/035.html> [accessed March 25, 2013.]

the city survive the Depression better than many other northeastern industrial cities, such as its neighbor Schenectady.⁶

According to the Jewish Communal Survey, the city consisted mainly of native white citizens. Foreign born citizens, including Italians, Canadians, Poles, and Germans, formed 11.7 percent of the population.⁷ Most immigrants settled in the lower East Side of the city until they rose from peddlers to merchants. The rise in statuses prompted immigrants to then move further uptown.⁸ Surprisingly, African Americans only formed 2.2 percent of the population,⁹ migrating from the South looking for employment. The small population of 3,300 African Americans settled in Arbor Hill, a desirable place for the Negro elite and those with upward mobility. Another sizeable neighborhood was created in the South End.¹⁰ The African American population faced some degree of discrimination. Black families lacked proper housing, good jobs, and equal opportunities in education due to discrimination. An oral history interview with Schenectady citizen James Stamper felt that the General Electric Company was very discriminatory because it was difficult for blacks to get jobs of any consequence.¹¹ On the other hand, the Jewish Communal Survey of 1940 stated that the State Teachers College had no segregated dormitories. The College's Dramatics Club had also cast an African American girl as the lead role in *Romeo and Juliet*. This decision was "fully accepted and caused no comment either in the College or elsewhere." The African American community also boasted of the Albany Interracial Council, a branch of the Urban League, as well as the Elks, Masons, and

⁶ Lemak, Jennifer A. "Albany, New York and the Great Migration." *Afro - Americans in New York Life and History* 32, no. 1 (2008): 47-74. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/200976009?accountid=14166>.

⁷ Albany, New York Jewish Community Collection.

⁸ Opalka, interview.

⁹ Albany, New York Jewish Community Collection.

¹⁰ Kennedy, William. *O Albany!* New York: Viking Press, 1983. 254-257.

¹¹ Lemak, Jennifer A. "Albany, New York and the Great Migration." *Afro - Americans in New York Life and History* 32, no. 1 (2008): 47-74. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/200976009?accountid=14166>.

Beauticians.¹² The 9,000 practicing Jews living in Albany made up about 6 percent of the population. The Jewish community settled down in the South End of Albany, particularly on South Pearl Street. Until about 1950 the South End remained a Jewish neighborhood with kosher meat markets, restaurants, Jewish-owned business, synagogues, and communal institutions. As Albany expanded, and as Jewish business owners became more successful, the Jewish population moved “up the hill” to Central Avenue and outward to Delaware Avenue.¹³

American society of the 1930s was not free of the stain of anti-Semitism.¹⁴ According to Leonard Dinnerstein’s book *Anti-Semitism in America*, due to the Great Depression, “American anti-Semitism was ‘more virulent and more vicious than at any time before or since’¹⁵ as rabid anti-Semites, almost without exception, envisioned an international Jewish conspiracy aimed at controlling the government of the United States.” Though Jews maintained a higher standard of living than any other ethnic group, they still lived close to what we now call “the poverty line” due to the depression and pervasive intolerance. Within months of Roosevelt taking office in 1933, rumors began to spread that Jews ran the government. Millions of Americans believed that the influence of many Jews employed by the new administration were responsible for Roosevelt’s “Jew Deal.”¹⁶ Traditional Catholics and Protestants were the ringleaders of anti-Semitism during the 1930s, and unsympathetic to the plight of the German Jews. Father Charles Coughlin, a Detroit priest known for his virulent anti-Semitism, complained that the American press and government were far more concerned over the fate of the German Jews than they were about the Catholics in Spain and Mexico. The Brooklyn Archdiocese’s weekly newspaper, the

¹² Albany, New York Jewish Community Collection.

¹³ Gerber, Morris O. *A Pictorial History of Albany’s Jewish Community*. Albany, NY, 1986, 152.

¹⁴ Kennedy, David M. *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. New York: Oxford Press, 199. 410

¹⁵ Handy, Robert. *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*. New York: Oxford University Press, 66.

¹⁶ Dinnerstein, Leonard. *Antisemitism in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. 105-106.

Tablet, consistently criticized the mainstream media for overplaying the persecution of Jews at the expense of the “far worse persecution of the Christians.”¹⁷ Degrees of anti-Semitism varied throughout the country.

It is not clear what level of anti-Semitism the Albany Jewish community encountered. Rabbi Bernard Bamberger of Congregation Beth Emeth recalled that during his time in Albany, from 1929-1944, “Jews for the most part took a self-reliant, but not truculent attitude. Though they were excluded from a few clubs, they mingled socially with gentiles to a greater extent than in most places.” Ira Zimmerman told a different story. He wrote that with the rise of Hitler, the “growing concern over the problem of local anti-Semitism resulted in the formation of the Albany Jewish War Veterans in 1935, and the Albany Jewish Community Council in 1938.” The Jewish Veterans once marched on a German Bund meeting in Troy, forcing the police to shut it down, as well as persuading an Albany meeting hall to cancel another Bund meeting. The Jewish Community Council’s leaders, Samuel E. Aronowitz and Sol Rubenstein, tried to keep anti-Semitic incidents out of the public eye whenever possible. The leaders used their political weight to affect change through persuasion.¹⁸ The leaders were able to stop both hate ads in the *Times Unions* and a local college coach’s anti-Semitic words. Anecdotal stories claim that Jews were not allowed to move in Loudonville, an upscale neighborhood right outside of the city.¹⁹ Though there was some anti-Semitism in Albany Zimmerman claimed, it was “never rabid, usually unorganized, and random.”²⁰

¹⁷ Leff, Laurel. *Buried by the Times*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 182.

¹⁸ Kennedy, William. *O Albany!* New York: Viking Press, 1983. 227-228.

¹⁹ Opalka, interview.

²⁰ Kennedy, William. *O Albany!* New York: Viking Press, 1983. 228.

III

-The Knickerbocker Press and Knickerbocker News-

Out of the four Albanian newspapers, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* featured the most coverage about the rise of totalitarianism in Germany during the 1930s. Like most newspapers of the time, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* featured editorials about the New Deal, Roosevelt's third term bid, and local events. But, the newspaper also closely followed the events in Germany, criticizing the government's growing control of press, religion, and economy. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s the *Knickerbocker Press/News* frequently published scathing articles that informed the Albany community of the increasing power of the Nazis. Unlike its competitor, the *Times Union*, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* freely ran editorials and political cartoons portraying Hitler and his party in a negative light. The newspaper was able to do so because its owner, Frank Gannett, gave local editors control of their papers, allowing them to publish any editorials and political cartoons they wanted.

The *Knickerbocker Press/News* owner, Frank E. Gannett, was a self-made man. Born on September 15, 1876, Gannett was one of four children in a family that struggled to make ends meet. To earn money, Frank became a newspaper delivery boy for the Rochester *Democrat & Chronicle*,²¹ where his interest in the newspaper business bloomed. While attending Cornell, Gannett honed his skills by not only becoming editor of the college's newspaper, but by becoming a newspaper article distributor as well. He bombarded telegraph editors of newspapers far and wide with news-worthy events. By the time he graduated, Frank's Cornell-based news items appeared in newspapers such as the Syracuse *Herald* and the Boston *Globe*.²² By the age

²¹ Williamson, Samuel. *Frank Gannett: A Biography* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 5-12.

²² Williamson, Samuel. *Frank Gannett: A Biography* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 35.

of twenty nine, Gannett became partial owner of the daily newspaper, the *Elmira Gazette*.²³ In 1923, at the age of forty eight, Gannett formed a new corporation, the Gannett Company, Inc. At the time of his death in 1957, his empire included twenty two newspapers, four radio and three TV stations.²⁴ Three of these newspapers, the *Knickerbocker Press*, the *Albany Evening News*, and eventually the *Knickerbocker News*, circulated in Albany, New York.

Gannett's arrival in Albany was a strategic move of retaliation. By 1918, Rochester was the anchor city of the quickly developing Gannett Empire. In 1922, Gannett's rival William Randolph Hearst arrived in Rochester to establish one of many Sunday newspapers in order to gain a governorship nomination.²⁵ In retaliation, Gannett purchased two Albanian newspapers in 1928, the *Knickerbocker Press* and the *Albany Evening News*, a morning paper and evening paper respectively. Until Gannett's arrival, Albany was often recognized as a "Hearst city." Hearst's newspapers in both Rochester and Albany soon began to fail. Hearst was not only losing \$125,000 a year in Rochester, but at one point the media magnate gave away automobiles to lure new subscribers. Gannett, to an extent, was losing money as well. While his evening paper the *Albany Evening News* was profitable, Gannett's morning paper, the *Knickerbocker Press*, was losing money at a large and steady rate. In 1937, Hearst came to Gannett with a proposal. If Frank left Albany, Hearst would fold his Rochester papers. Gannett immediately turned down this proposal. Hearst had sunk anywhere between six to eight million dollars into his Rochester newspapers, and by 1937 Gannett's men had lost all fear of their competition. So, Frank Gannett made William Randolph Hearst a counter proposal. He proposed that the two men reverse the fields of their Albany newspapers. Hearst if switched his *Times Union* out of the

²³ Williamson, Samuel, *Frank Gannett: A Biography* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 61-67.

²⁴ "Untitled." *Time*, December 16, 1957., 94, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 7, 2013).

²⁵ Williamson, Samuel, *Frank Gannett: A Biography* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 83-84.

evening field and into the morning,²⁶ Gannett would merge the *Knickerbocker Press* and *Albany Evening News* forming the evening newspaper *Knickerbocker News*. Consequently Hearst's *Times Union* was free to monopolize the morning news field while Gannett had control of the evening field.²⁷ As for Rochester, William Randolph Hearst decided to scrap his unprofitable newspapers. His only stipulation to the agreement was that Gannett had to buy his Rochester papers' presses and other equipment. This agreement was a bargain for Gannett.²⁸ From the agreement, Gannett gained two monopolies, one in Rochester and the other in the Albany evening field.²⁹

Gannett was also known for his policy of local autonomy. He believed that a newspaper could properly serve its city if its publisher, its editor, and all its employees were home folks who understood the city and its people."³⁰ Gannett wanted his readers to feel that the newspaper reflected local interests, not just uniform editorials manufactured by Gannett Corporation headquarters. Local editors and publishers were the molders of a community's opinion, not Gannett. Rather, Gannett was a "... chain publisher who hated chain papers." Instead of creating a deadening conformity of newspapers, the publisher encouraged his group of papers to vary their formatting, choose their own features, and construct editorial policies to suit their own communities. Gannett always boasted that "Nothing ever [went] out of [his] office with a 'must' on it. . ." The publisher's political pronouncements were always sent to the editors with the

²⁶ Williamson, Samuel, *Frank Gannett: A Biography* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 124-126.

²⁷ "Hearst Steps Nos. 2 & 3." *Time* 30, no. 2 (July 12, 1937): 32. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 7, 2013).

²⁸ Williamson, Samuel, *Frank Gannett: A Biography* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 124-126.

²⁹ "Hearst Steps Nos. 2 & 3." *Time* 30, no. 2 (July 12, 1937): 32. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 18, 2013).

³⁰ Williamson, Samuel T. *Frank Gannett*. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940. 128-130

notation “for your information and use, if desired”³¹ Editors felt free to ignore these pronouncements without worry of consequence, allowing them to put more focus on what they thought was important to editorialize and publish.

Not only did Gannett refuse to exercise his own influence, he refused to allow any outside influence as well. Throughout his career, Gannett made difficult decisions in order to preserve the value and trustworthiness of his newspapers. As the city editor of the *Ithaca News* in 1900, Gannett faced a dilemma. At the time, typhoid fever ran rampant in Ithaca, devastating its community. Gannett in turn, wrote scathing editorials about the fever and the polluted water supply causing it. The water company responsible for the polluted water threatened to stop advertising in the *News* if the offensive editorials did not stop. Faced with a difficult decision, Gannett simply told the water company “Take the advertising out, and I’ll keep the typhoid fever news in.” As one could guess, both the news and advertising stayed.³² In 1929 Gannett paid the International Paper Company \$2,781,158.30 in exchange for securities of four of his newspapers, including both the *Knickerbocker Press*, and the *Albany Evening News*. In a letter to the company’s president, Archibald R. Graustein, Gannett explained why he ended their financial alliance. He stated that their deal was originally a “straightforward, entirely legitimate business transaction, [that was] mutually advantageous and desirable.” He had recently publicly denied that the International Paper Company had any control over any management or editorial policies of the newspapers it financed. Therefore Gannett concluded his letter stating that he felt it best to “remove all possibility of a misinterpretation of the motive which actuated our relationship.”

³¹ 1957. "The Chain That Isn't." *Time* 70, no. 25: 57. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 4, 2013)

³² Williamson, Samuel T. *Frank Gannett*. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1940. 50-54.

The buyout resulted in a financial loss for Gannett and the four newspapers involved.³³ Even though some bonds were not callable, Gannett made it publicly known that no one was going to influence his newspapers. This assured readers that they could trust that the articles and editorials in their local newspapers were not being published as a result of outside influences.

Freed from an influential owner, the *Knickerbocker Press* editors expressed their own opinion about current events overseas. From the beginning of Hitler's reign, editorials in the *Press* were critical of the new German government. They believed that "between Hitler and Hindenberg, the German people [were] well on their way toward a new regime which amounts to a dictatorship."³⁴ The *Press* heavily criticized government control of religion, press, and economy, the persecution of Jews, and Hitler himself throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

From 1933 to 1941, the *Knickerbocker Press* and *News* focused on the German government's control of press, religion and economy. Since the topic hit close to home for the editors, the most scathing editorials were about government censorship of the press. Articles titled "Germany Shackles its Press" and "Controlling the German Press" called the free press of Germany a work of fiction. Editors pushed on, warning that "when disaster comes, it [would] be a catastrophe, because the people will not be properly informed how to meet it" due to Germany's "corrupt and stupid" ruling power, the Nazis.³⁵ By 1937, the *Knickerbocker Press* claimed that Nazi control of the press was a familiar story.³⁶ The editors were saddened that government censorship had become the norm in Germany, and that its citizens were largely misinformed or uninformed. *Knickerbocker* editors used the title "Germany and the Press" twice

³³ Gannett ends deal with paper concern. (1929, May 05). *New York Times (1923-Current File)*. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/105014984?accountid=14166>

³⁴ "The New Deal in Germany." *The Knickerbocker News*, March 9, 1933. 4.

³⁵ "Germany Shackles Its Press." *The Knickerbocker Press*. October 6, 1933. 4.

³⁶ "Controlling the Germany Press." *The Knickerbocker News*. January 4, 1937. 6.

within five months, emphasizing the control held by the government. “Censorship of the press amounts to about the same thing in whatever the name it is called by,”³⁷ wrote the editors, and a few months later added that “German newspapers once as enlightened and as outspoken as any in the world. . . [had fallen] into a rigid uniformity of thought.”³⁸ Articles about the German press decreased after 1938 as the United States became more focused on the war over seas.

Interestingly, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* criticized the German economy throughout the 1930s, though the United States’ economy was in a similar state due to the Great Depression. Editorial pieces focused on Germany’s economy circulated largely during 1934 and from 1938-1941. Editorials in the early 1930s focused on Germany’s failure to pay war debts and at one point, the subsequential curtailing of one Sunday meal a month across the country. This was an act of desperation in hopes that by eating one less Sunday meal a month, Germany could be less dependent upon food imports.³⁹ Five years later, in September of 1938, Hitler’s economic plan appeared to be successful, but editors hoped that because of the success, Germans saw the “advantage of peace and prosperity through intelligent economy, which war [inevitably] would wreck.”⁴⁰ The German people unfortunately did not see this advantage. Three years later, the *Knickerbocker Press* published editorials about the scarcities and heavy demands that made living conditions in Germany severe, with no promise of when it would end.⁴¹ By October of 1941, an editorial titled “Hitler Setting New World Record – Number He Will Starve This Winter,” cynically predicted that 137,000,000 people faced with cold and hunger could supply

³⁷ “Germany and the Press.” The *Knickerbocker Press*. April 10, 1933. 4.

³⁸ “Germany and the Press.” The *Knickerbocker Press*. September 9, 1933. 4.

³⁹ “Germany on Rations.” The *Knickerbocker Press*. September 18, 1933. 4.

⁴⁰ “German Economies.” The *Knickerbocker News*. September 8, 1938. 6

⁴¹ “German Life Hard.” The *Knickerbocker News*. May 22, 1941. 6

fuel for the figurative torch of rebellion.⁴² Editorials were angered by this, believing that Hitler was selfishly funding his army while pretending he had no responsibility for his “conquered peoples.”⁴³ Interestingly, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* only compared the German economy to the American economy a handful of times. The newspaper seemed to focus on keeping the two separate. There were plenty of articles about the New Deal, but rarely pointed out similarities to the German economy. The newspapers main focus was on Germany’s refusal to pay reparations.

During the first two years of Hitler’s reign, the *Knickerbocker Press* also focused on the Reich’s attempts to control of religion. In November 1933 Hitler planned to put all the Protestant churches under one head and make them all part of a “grandiose Nazi scheme of political control,” that “threatened to drive a wedge into the German state.”⁴⁴ In reaction to Hitler’s plan, Catholics allied themselves with the non-Nazi Protestants, establishing what the editors optimistically called a “powerful front against the Nazi authority.”⁴⁵ This powerful front continued on into December, when Nazi hatred for Jews led to demands of barring of the Old Testament from the German Protestant Church. A “storm of opposition from both Protestant and Catholic leaders” followed, with Reichbishop Mueller ordering that the use of the whole Bible not to be hindered. This “emphatic demonstration of protest,” the editor believed, “[had] won a notable victory” and it was “high time that the Nazis were taught [a] lesson.”⁴⁶ For the next two years the *Knickerbocker Press* published editorial pieces with title’s such as “Nazis at Prayer,” “Nazis and Catholics,” and “Opposing Hitler’s Church Rules.” All of the editorials criticized Hitler’s attempted control off religion, calling it an “ecclesiastical struggle” that could alter the

⁴² “Hitler Setting New World’s Record – Number He Will Starve This Winter.” *The Knickerbocker News*. October 7, 1941. 8.

⁴³ “Hitler Setting New World’s Record – Number He Will Starve This Winter.” *The Knickerbocker News*. October 7, 1941. 8.

⁴⁴ “Germany’s Religious Revolt.” *The Knickerbocker Press*. November 22, 1933. 4.

⁴⁵ “Germany’s Religious Revolt.” *The Knickerbocker Press*. November 22, 1933. 4.

⁴⁶ “Nazi Boomerang.” *The Knickerbocker Press*, December 19, 1933. 4.

position of the Chancellor and the National Socialistic movement itself.⁴⁷ Editors of the newspaper scathingly wrote that “the arrogance of the Nazi regime in attempting to fabricate a religion for Catholic and Lutheran Germany is only equaled by its ignorance of history, particularly the history of religion.”⁴⁸ Two years later, in May 1935, the government once again was on a religious crusade. It aimed to not only suppress all religion or atheism, but to create a special kind of religious practice that substituted Teutonic traditions for the Hebrew background of Christianity. “In other words,” the editor wrote, it was “merely another phase of the anti-Semitism campaign designed to tear out, root, and branch, every vestige of Jewish influence.”⁴⁹

This was not the first time the *Knickerbocker Press* made mention of Jewish persecution in Germany. Of all of the Albanian newspapers the *Knickerbocker Press/News* featured the most editorials about the Jewish persecution. Editorial pieces and political cartoons focusing on this persecution may not have appeared as frequently as other topics, but when they did appear each was as strongly opinionated and angry as the next. On May 16, 1933, the first editorial piece to acknowledge the mistreatment of Jews was published. Titled “Nazi Land Scheme,” the piece discussed the new land inheritance laws in Prussia that allowed only “a citizen of German blood” to inherit as a farmer, further implying Jewish or non-Aryan blood within four generations was unacceptable. This was not shocking to the editors though, as the note that this law was part of the “typical characteristic Nazi tendency to impose disabilities on the Jews.”⁵⁰ Within a month, another editorial piece appeared in the *Knickerbocker Press*, this time titled “Hitler, Jews, and the League.” The editor contemplated that if the leaders who were always clamoring to re-draw European boundaries “would devote their energies instead to a strengthening of treaties

⁴⁷ “Hitler and the Churches.” The *Knickerbocker Press*. December 5, 1933. 4.

⁴⁸ “St. Hitler!” The *Knickerbocker Press*. September 10, 1934. 8.

⁴⁹ “Germany’s New Religion.” The *Knickerbocker Press*. May 1, 1935. 4.

⁵⁰ “Nazi Land Scheme.” The *Knickerbocker Press*, May 16, 1933. 4.

protecting minorities, they would find that such tactics would for to ease the situation [in Europe.]”⁵¹ The *Knickerbocker Press* followed this with another editorial piece in October titled “Embarrassing for Germany.” When confronted by the League of Nations, a German spokesman could only say “that the Jewish problem in Germany ‘[was] of a very special character.’” The piece further urged that “the basis of the German attitude towards the Jews must be studied in a judicial was and its arguments analyzed and answered. [And] if from this appears that hatred and malice are the dominating motives for the anti-Jewish drive, the facts will speak for themselves.”⁵²

Coverage of Jewish persecution continued sporadically from 1935 to 1937, until seeing a large increase of coverage in late 1938 after Kristallnacht. Like many newspapers at the time, the *Knickerbocker News* was shocked and angered by the blatant anti-Semitism. For the next two months, the *Knickerbocker News*’ editorial page featured pieces and political cartoons heavily criticizing not only the Nazi’s actions, but calling for national and international action as well. Political cartoons from 1938 to 1941 seemed to question the morality of the world. Editors pessimistically portrayed the world as spectators to “a violation to civilization” in November. According to the paper’s editors, a “shamed world stood idle or passed on the other side of the road” had to decide to help victims of persecution or not, as a “spectator at a murder cannot be neutral.”⁵³ One cartoon showed a “stench of racial and religious persecution”⁵⁴ finding its way over the broad Atlantic to America while another showed two devil figures lurking over Spain, Germany, and Italy, bearing the names Hate and Intolerance.⁵⁵ A political cartoon accurately

⁵¹ “Hitler, Jew and League.” The *Knickerbocker Press*. June 10, 1933. 4.

⁵² “Embarrassing for Germany.” The *Knickerbocker Press*. October 10, 1933. 4

⁵³ “Spectator at a Murder.” The *Knickerbocker News*. November 14, 1938. 8.

⁵⁴ “It Has Far-Reaching Effects.” The *Knickerbocker News*. November 15, 1938

⁵⁵ “Twin Devils Abroad.” The *Knickerbocker News*. December 17, 1938. 4

portrayed the aftermath of Kristallnacht with an illustration of Hitler and Hideki Tojo kicking a human-faced ball around labeled “The World’s Conscience.”⁵⁶ Mention of Japan was uncommon throughout the 1930s, as a majority of the focus was on Stalin and Soviet Russia and Hitler and Germany. Editorials about Japan became more prominent after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, marking America’s entrance into World War II. A week later, an editorial piece titled “Moral Indignation” ran. The piece talked about how the moral indignation felt by people had the potential to be limitless. “We are a nation founded by exiles from persecution and to sympathize with the German Jews is natural,” the editor claimed, and Americans could “serve practically by giving funds to assist removal to new homes.”⁵⁷ Unfortunately, like most newspapers, outrage stopped short of a call for action. Not once did an editorial piece or political cartoon call for Albanians to help the German Jews.

The aspect of the new German government criticized the most by the *Knickerbocker Press* and *Knickerbocker News* was, of course, its leader Adolf Hitler. It was clear from the start of his reign that Gannett newspapers disliked Hitler, labeling him as a “loud-mouthed demagogue”⁵⁸ and that “two years ago [in 1931] it seemed impossible that Hitler would ever be taken seriously in Germany.”⁵⁹ Later that year, the editors chastised Hitler for “playing with fire when he toys with the emotions of his people”⁶⁰ by failing to fill his economic promises. Disdained editorials continued throughout the 1930s, heavily critiquing Hitler’s rule. A political cartoon from 1938 titled “Windbag in a Tough Spot”⁶¹ ridiculed Hitler and his lengthy yet valueless words. Another political cartoon from the same month showed Hitler, standing on his

⁵⁶ “Having a Field Day.” *The Knickerbocker News*. November 19, 1938. 4.

⁵⁷ “Moral Indignation.” *The Knickerbocker News*. November 23, 1938. 4.

⁵⁸ “The Test of Hitler.” *The Knickerbocker Press*. May 17, 1933. 4.

⁵⁹ “Nazis and Austria.” *The Knickerbocker Press*. August 1, 1933. 4.

⁶⁰ “Hitler Plays With Fire.” *The Knickerbocker Press*. October 26, 1933. 4.

⁶¹ “Windbag in a Tough Spot.” *The Knickerbocker News*. September 14, 1938.

“soapbox”, with his foot placed on “The Civilized World’s” bowing head. “The Civilized World” symbolized British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who on the same day flew out to meet Hitler and prevent him from taking the Sudetenland. Chamberlain was handed an ultimatum, and in order to prevent a second world war appeased the dictator and allowed Germany to gain control of the area. Titled “Megalomania,”⁶² the cartoon once again displayed the newspaper’s strong dislike for the dictator. In the months leading up to the United States’ entrance into World War II, the editors’ disdain for Hitler continued, calling him a “stranger to truth”⁶³ and overly ambitious.

By the time America entered World War II, Gannett’s newspapers had already covered eight years of German government control, persecutions, and Hitler. Out of three aspects- press, religion, and economy- religion, including Jewish persecution, received the most coverage in the *Knickerbocker Press/News* editorial pages.

IV

-The *Times Union*-

Unlike the *Knickerbocker Press/News*, the editorials in the *Times Union* did not cover the rise of totalitarianism in Germany. The newspaper largely ignored the growth of the Nazi party throughout a majority of the 1930s. Nor was there any mention of government control of religion, press, or government, all of which the *Knickerbocker Press/News* covered. Instead, editorial pieces and cartoons criticized President Roosevelt and the New Deal and wrote about social events and New York City social life. The paper’s decision to ignore the events in Germany was due to its owner, William Randolph Hearst, who until 1938 sympathized with the

⁶² “Megalomania.” The *Knickerbocker News*. September 22, 1938. 8.

⁶³ “Hitler’s Speech Bares Fears and Should Encourage Democracy.” The *Knickerbocker News*. January 31, 1941.

Fascist movement. On rare occasions, an editorial piece or cartoon ran that criticized the German persecution of Jews, the only part of Hitler's rule that Hearst disagreed with. Editorials sharply increased after Kristallnacht, though only about Jewish persecution. The newspaper continued to ignore government control of press and economy, mentioning it a handful of times through the 1930s and 1940s.

Gannett's rival, William Randolph Hearst, not only had a different upbringing, but a different business approach as well. Born to millionaire mining engineer George Hearst and Phoebe Apperson Hearst in 1863, William grew up with a silver spoon in mouth. As the only child of two over-indulgent parents, Hearst quickly became an unruly child. Hearst's parents sent him to St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, where he was quickly expelled "for the good of the school." During his short time at boarding school, Hearst became interested in newspapers and subscribed to the austere *London Times*. After his expulsion, William returned to San Francisco where he spent his time being homeschooled in preparation for Harvard. Hearst's antics continued upon his entrance into Harvard, as it was a "period where he was unsure of himself, and tried to hide a feeling of inferiority by spending large sums of money on clothes and campus pranks." Besides pranks and parties, the only other interest to Hearst was journalism. While at college Hearst became business manager of the *Lampoon*, the campus comic paper, and frequently visited the Boston *Globe* plant where he learned about newspaper mechanism. He also closely studied the daily editions of Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World* with journalistic plans budding in his mind. Harvard expelled Hearst after he had a chamber pot with the photograph of the recipient adorning the inside bottom delivered to every faculty member. The prank publicly reflected Hearst's attitude towards things and persons of intellect.

Before his return to California, Hearst worked for the New York *World* for a short

amount of time. While in New York, Hearst's father asked what his son planned on doing after the Harvard escapade. Hearst asked for the San Francisco *Examiner*, a newspaper acquired by his father in 1880. The request took George Hearst by surprise. In California, newspapers were not considered legitimate enterprises by the public and regarded journalists just as poorly. Hearst's request also alarmed his mother, for the family belonged to the city's elite. But Hearst was adamant, convinced he could run a newspaper successfully⁶⁴. On March 4, 1887 William Randolph Hearst became the editor and owner of the San Francisco *Examiner*. After the death of his father Hearst ultimately secured half of the family's fortune from his mother. With an indispensable bank account at his disposal, Hearst went after what he wanted most, power.⁶⁵

Hearst worked hard to make the *Examiner* a successful paper and the eventual success of the paper emboldened Hearst to move eastward. In 1895, Hearst purchased the New York *Morning Journal* from John McLean. Hearst's arrival in New York City started a bitter circulation war between he and Joseph Pulitzer, as Hearst wanted nothing more than to challenge his former idol's supremacy. Throughout the course of the next few years Hearst wooed many of Pulitzer's staff to the *Morning Journal*.⁶⁶ The war between Hearst and Pulitzer also sparked the creation of the term yellow journalism. Of course, Hearst was no stranger to yellow journalism tactics. The editor never opposed printing fiction and intentionally false statements as fact, even in his early *Examiner Days*.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ "The King Is Dead." *Time* 58, no. 8 (August 20, 1951): 45. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed March 22, 2013).

⁶⁵ Lundberg, Ferdinand. *Imperial Hearst: A Social Biography*. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1970. 20-23.

⁶⁶ Lundberg, Ferdinand. *Imperial Hearst: A Social Biography*. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1970. 49-63.

⁶⁷ Lundberg, Ferdinand. *Imperial Hearst: A Social Biography*. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1970. 34.

William Randolph Hearst also exercised great influence over what his newspapers published. As a child, the publisher grew up in a society where a newspaper was a necessary mouthpiece for a man running for political office. This knowledge stayed with Hearst, a man greatly involved in politics his whole life, and often published his own personal opinions in his newspapers. Many local editors had to wait to hear from headquarters before publishing their own papers, often receiving messages that began with “The Chief suggests. . .”⁶⁸ Any of Hearst’s own editorials usually ran in all of his twenty six newspapers.⁶⁹ Newspapers like the Detroit *Tines* seldom ran anything but preapproved editorials focusing on national news. “Gigantic cartoons and other boiler plate⁷⁰” poured out of Hearst headquarters to be used by local editors until William Hearst Jr. implemented changes in May 1952.⁷¹

To this day, people debate Hearst’s political leanings. Many, like Hearst biographer Ferdinand Lundberg claimed the publisher was a fascist. According to Lundberg in 1936, “it was inevitable that Hearst should become the most influential American fascist, aping his friends Alfred Hugenberg, the German publisher, and Lord Rothermere, the English publisher.” In 1934 the publisher gave Hitler’s regime his blessing and attended an extended series of discussions with high up Nazi officials. By 1936 Lundberg declared Hearst as “a keystone of American fascism.”⁷² Some historians, like Rodney Carlisle, saw Hearst as an isolationist with anti-Communist beliefs. Though “critical of the totalitarian excesses of the Nazis, he believe that

⁶⁸ "The King Is Dead." *Time* 58, no. 8 (August 20, 1951): 45. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed March 22, 2013).

⁶⁹ Carlisle, Rodney. "The Foreign Policy Views of an Isolationist Press Lord: W.R. Hears and the International Crisis, 1936-1941." *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (July 1974): 217-227

⁷⁰ "The Quiet Revolution." *Time* 59, no. 21 (May 26, 1952): 46. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed March 23, 2013).

⁷¹ "The Quiet Revolution." *Time* 59, no. 21 (May 26, 1952): 46. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed March 23, 2013).

⁷² Lundberg, Ferdinand. *Imperial Hearst: A Social Biography*. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1970. 343-344.

Americans should offer friendly advice, but stay out of German affairs.”⁷³ His sympathetic remarks about some of Nazi Germany’s policies in the early and mid-1930s, and his publication of articles by both Hitler and Mussolini reinforced Hearst’s image among the American Jewish community as a reactionary, and possibly even a closet anti-Semite.⁷⁴ As a result of his fascist sympathies, Hearst newspapers often buried or disregarded news of totalitarianism, particularly the persecution of the Jews.

In 1924, William Randolph Hearst purchased the Albany *Times Union* from former Governor Martin Glynn. The acquisition gave him the biggest circulation of any publisher in upstate New York. On the first day of Hearst ownership, the newspaper proclaimed that “there [would] be no change in the policy of the *Times-Union*. It [would] continue to be the people’s paper.”⁷⁵ Hearst kept his promise to an extent. The *Times-Union* seemed to be an odd mixture of generic headquarters produced editorials and the editorials of local editors. Though the *Knickerbocker Press/News* had more editorial coverage of rise of totalitarianism, the *Times Union* did occasionally voice its opinion as well.

Surprisingly editorials about Jewish persecution circulated as early as 1933, despite Hearst’s fascist sympathies. Throughout 1933 the *Times Union* featured an editorial column written by Claude Bowers, an American author and ambassador to Spain during its Civil War.⁷⁶ Though he recognized that British and French refusal to enforce “nonintervention” and German and Italian violations were responsible for the deaths of thousands, Bowers continually supported

⁷³ Carlisle, Rodney. “The Foreign Policy Views of an Isolationist Press Lord: W.R. Hears and the International Crisis, 1936-1941.” *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (July 1974): 217-227

⁷⁴ Medoff, Dr. Rafael. “Hearst and the Holocaust.” The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies. <http://wymaninstitute.org/articles/2009-4-hearst.php>, last modified April 2009.

⁷⁵ “Forward, Hearst!” *Time* 3, no. 15 (April 14, 1924): 22. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed March 24, 2013).

⁷⁶ “Claude Gernade Bowers.” *Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6Th Edition*(February 2013): 1. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 6, 2013).

the American neutrality policy.⁷⁷ In his column, Bowers viciously criticized the German Chancellor, calling him “an enemy to democracy” and a “bitter enemy of the Jews.” In February it remained “to be seen if [Hitler was] foolish enough to attempt to translate his prejudice into government action,” for “this [was] the 20th century. And ‘a decent respect for the opinion of mankind’ [was] an asset even for a government.”⁷⁸ Bowers attack on the German government’s persecution of Jews continued in March, claiming that the “medieval persecution of the Jews in Germany [was being] savagely denounced” by the rest of the world.⁷⁹ Political cartoons featured on the editorial pages aided Bowers criticism. On March 31st a cartoon titled “The Tree Doctor?” appeared in the *Times Union*. The cartoon showed Hitler, with a swastika shaped body, chopping down the “Germany” tree with two axes labeled “Race Hatred” and “Suppression of Freedom.” A caption below the cartoon asked if Germany’s “political and economic ills [could] be cured with the poison of racial antagonism?” and suggests that “Herr Hitler should consider these questions.” Besides Bowers column, the *Times Union* editorial pages rarely showcased anti-Nazi pieces, largely due to the influence of Hearst.

Kristallnacht appeared to be the turning point for Hearst. The night of violence, that ended with nearly a hundred Jews murdered, thousands of Jewish homes and businesses ransacked, and two hundred synagogues burned down, convinced Hearst that Hitler was “making the flag of National Socialism a symbol of national savagery.”⁸⁰ A November 14, 1938 report by the German Ambassador Dieckhoff expressed his concerns that “Dewey, Hoover, Hearst and many others who in the past were relatively reserved and even sometimes expressed sympathy to

⁷⁷ Smith, Kevin. 2009. "Reassessing Roosevelt's View of Chamberlain after Munich: Ideological Affinity in the Geoffrey Thompson-Claude Bowers Correspondence." *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 5: 839-864. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 6, 2013).

⁷⁸ Bowers, Claude. “Hitler: What His Triumph Means.” *The Times Union*. February 3, 1933. 22.

⁷⁹ Bowers, Claude. “The Test of Hitler’s Fitness to Rule.” *The Times Union*. March 23, 1933. 24

⁸⁰ “The Pogrom in Germany --- A March Backward into Medieval Terror.” *The Times Union*. November 16, 1938. 18.

Germany, are now publicly adopting such a violent and bitter attitude against us.”⁸¹ Hearst’s newspapers reflected his change in opinion. When news of the mass murder of Europe’s Jews in concentration camps began reaching the United States in 1941, Hearst’s newspapers gave it prominent coverage.⁸² Editorials claimed that “there [was] no distinctively ‘Jewish question,’” because “above all [it was] a human question.” “It was not only the Jews that was threatened with annihilation,” but every “individual man and woman in every country on Earth.”⁸³ By contrast, newspapers such as the *New York Times* routinely confined the news to the back pages and rarely featured editorial pieces, as author Laurel Leff documented in her book *Buried by The Times*.

The number of editorials in the *Times Union* about totalitarianism in Germany sharply increased after Kristallnacht. Interestingly, the majority of editorial pieces and political cartoons after 1938 either blamed the German government’s actions on Communism or claimed that Fascism and Communism were almost the same. This strong anti-Communist campaign in the *Times Union* could have been influenced by Hearst. The editorials and cartoons almost blame Germany’s Communist ally, Russia, for negatively influencing the Reich. These pieces reflected Hearst’s opinion post-Kristallnacht. Even though he publicly withdrew his support for the German government, it used his anti-Communist views to make excuses for the rise of totalitarianism in Germany. A week after the Night of Broken Glass, editors claimed that the pogrom in Germany was “a march backward into medieval terror.” The editorial piece claimed that though Hitler had the best of intentions, setting out to liberate his country and redeeming

⁸¹ “Reactions to Kristallnacht in the United States: A Report by the German Ambassador in Washington, Dieckhoff, 14 November 1938.” *Documents on German foreign policy 1918-1945*. Series D, Vol. IV pg 561-562.

<http://www.zupdom.com/icons->

[multimedia/ClientsArea/HoH/LIBARC/ARCHIVE/Chapters/Terror/Kristall/ReactiUS.html](http://www.zupdom.com/icons-multimedia/ClientsArea/HoH/LIBARC/ARCHIVE/Chapters/Terror/Kristall/ReactiUS.html)

⁸² Medoff, Dr. Rafael. “Hearst and the Holocaust.” The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies.

<http://wymaninstitute.org/articles/2009-4-hearst.php>, last modified April 2009.

⁸³ “De Casseres, Benjamin. “The March of Events.” *The Times Union*. August 17, 1939. 16.

Germany on an international level, he was taking his country down the wrong path. Unlike the *Knickerbocker Press/News*, who clearly disliked Hitler, the *Times Union* still displayed some level of sympathy toward the Fuhrer. Hitler was “giving comfort to those who in the past depicted the Germans as Huns” and “vindicating those who but recently had fed to the world the tales of German atrocities.” On top of this, “by his treatment of a helpless minority today when you are strong you are forfeiting for centuries to come the claim of Germany to fair treatment at the hands of other nations.” Hitler, the editorial believed, had “debased Germany, under the brown terror, to the depths of Stalin’s purgatory” and he “may continue to cry out against the red terror of Communism, but by your deeds you have strengthened the hands of the Soviet terrorists and solidified the forces of vengeance everywhere.”

The editors also drew similarities between Germany and Russia saying that “there [was] but one page in current history which matches the diabolical reprisals against the entire Jewish population of German,” and “that page [was] Stalin’s extermination and expropriation of five million peasants in his man-made famine of 1933.”⁸⁴ In November of 1938, an editorial identified Communism as the “the breeder of Fascism.” Editors claimed that “there [was] in this country a Fascist movement undoubtedly. And for the same reason that Fascism is growing everywhere-BOLSHEVISM.” To preserve Americanism Marxism, the breeder of Fascism had to be destroyed. The editorial warned that if Communism was not extirpated from the country that Fascism was bound to spread.⁸⁵ An editorial published in the *Times Union* later that month further blamed the German persecution of Jewish on Communism in an editorial titled “The Mother of Pogroms.” Editors claimed that “the recent frightful pogrom in Germany against the Jews [was] merely an adaptation of the Russian pogrom.” According to the editorial, all modern

⁸⁴ “The Pogrom in Germany --- A March Backward into Medieval Terror.” *The Times Union*. November 16, 1938. 18.

⁸⁵ “Destroy Communism, Breeder of Fascism.” *The Times Union*. November 8, 1938. 16.

economic, political, and religious hatreds stemmed from Communism. Red Russia had taught Germany, Italy, Spain, China, and Japan all that was threatening to democracy. If “democracies [were] to survive they MUST suppress Communism and its consequent Nazism.”⁸⁶ A November 1938 political cartoon portrayed Communism and Nazism as co-conspirators, creating class and racial hatred as a consequence of revolutionary radicalism.⁸⁷ Another cartoon titled “Double Discovery!” showed the planet Mars remarking on two dark, black blots, Communism and Fascism, growing on the Earth.⁸⁸ By the end of 1939, the *Times Union* saw the USSR as ambidextrous, proudly supporting Communism and Fascism.⁸⁹

The *Times Union* editorials about Germany and the Soviet Union displayed Hearst’s anti-Communist leanings. After Kristallnacht in 1938, editorials and political cartoons blaming the German cruelty on Communist influence began to appear. This is interesting, as the USSR and Germany were not formally aligned until 1939 by the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. Hearst’s anti-Communism campaign created a sense of sympathy for Hitler and the Nazi Party.

Even though the *Times Union* blamed Communist influence, the paper still acknowledged the German government’s persecution of the Jews was unjust and shameful. A political cartoon claimed that civilization’s blackest page in modern history was the Nazi persecution of the Jews.⁹⁰ In December 1938, an editorial titled “We Don’t Know How Lucky We Are” pointed how just how lucky America was compared to the rest of the world. Written in the form of a letter to Santa, each member of the Axis powers wish for what they want most. All Hitler

⁸⁶ “The Mother of Pogroms.” *The Times Union*. November 25, 1938. 16.

⁸⁷ “Witches’ Brew.” *The Times Union*. November 2, 1938. 16.

⁸⁸ “Double Discovery.” *The Times Union*. August 1, 1939. 8.

⁸⁹ “Ambidextrous.” *The Times Union*. September 1, 1939. 10.

⁹⁰ “Its Blackest Page.” *The Times Union*. December 7, 1938. 18.

wanted for Christmas was for Santa to bring him “the Balkans, the Ukraine, African colonies, England’s and America’s trade, helpless minorities to persecute, and the seeds of race hatred.

Not only did the editorial pages chastise Germany’s persecution of its Jews, but chastised Hitler as well. One political cartoon portrayed Hitler as a pagan, worshipping a statue of a devil named “Brutality.”⁹¹ Another openly mocked Hitler by comparing him to King Canute, an eleventh century king who was so proud that he thought his command could hold back the ocean’s tide.⁹² The cartoon showed a king named persecution yelling stop to a wave of world condemnation, symbolizing the overwhelming amount of backlash Hitler faced in light of Kristallnacht.⁹³ Political cartoons mocking the Fuhrer continued well into 1939 and the 1940s. An August 1939 cartoon showed Hitler studying the countries that made up his plans for the “Triumphal Arch of Greater Germany.” Cast aside was the Keystone of Respect for Human Rights with a tag labeled “Verboten!,” the German word for forbidden.⁹⁴ A political cartoon that showed Lady Liberty lifting the light of democracy and liberty high against the blackout of hate in Europe was used twice within a month.⁹⁵ The cartoon’s description claimed that “all forms of totalitarian government-of enslaving collectivism, regardless of label-represent a reaction back to the black Medievalism which [America] was founded to combat,” and therefore needed to “keep the home fires [of democracy and liberty] burning” in order to defeat it.”⁹⁶ Editorial pieces also expressed disbelief. An editorial titled “Nazi Insanity,” listed all restrictions promulgated by the

⁹¹ “Paganism.” *The Times Union*. November 26, 1938. 6.

⁹² Sommerville, J.P. Wisconsin University. “King Canute (=Cnut) and the waves.” <https://faculty.history.wisc.edu/sommerville/123/Canute%20Waves.htm> [accessed March 31, 2013].

⁹³ “King Kanute.” *The Times Union*. December 1, 1938. 18.

⁹⁴ “Rejected!” *The Times Union*. August 15, 1939. 22.

⁹⁵ “The Light Must Live.” *The Times Union*. October 5, 1939. 23.

⁹⁶ “Keep the Home Fires Burning.” *The Times Union*. September 5, 1939. 14.

Nazi labor ministry claiming, “there [was] nothing in all of the history of so-called civilized states as ‘insane’ as the barbarous persecution and tortures of the Jews of Germany.”⁹⁷

The *Times Union* saw a change of opinion that changed what the newspaper editorialized and published. Though no longer seen as Nazi sympathizers, the newspaper did not disfavor Hitler as much as the *Knickerbocker Press/News* did. Even though the *Times Union* criticized the persecution of the Jews by the German government, it used Communism as a scapegoat for their cruelties. Government control of press, economy, and religion were usually neglected as well. Despite Hearst’s change in opinion, and consequentially the newspaper’s opinion, the *Times Union* continued to remain relatively quiet about the German government’s control of life.

V

-The New York Amsterdam News-

Like the *Times Union*, the *New York Amsterdam News* focused on the German persecution of Jews during the 1930s and 1940s. The difference was that the *Amsterdam News* (NYAN) editorials used the persecution of the Jews to draw comparisons to the racism African Americans faced in the United States. Editorials and political cartoons criticized the United States’s hypocrisy, as it neglected its problems at home. The NYAN heavily pushed for the passing of an anti-lynching bill by showing even Hitler was drawing comparisons. The newspaper’s editorial page closely followed the Scottsboro Nine Trial, the New Deal, the events in Ethiopia, and other news that pertained to the African American population. Almost every mention of Germany was used as a tool to help achieve the goal of racial equality in the nation.

⁹⁷ “Nazi Insanity.” *The Times Union*. December 16, 1941. 20.

On December 4, 1909, James H. Anderson published the first issue of the *New York Amsterdam News*. At the time, he only had ten dollars in his pocket, six sheets of paper, a lead pencil, and a dressmaker's table. Little did Anderson know, his ten dollar investment eventually turned the *New York Amsterdam News* into one of New York's largest and most influential Black-owned and operated business institutions.⁹⁸

Anderson worked hard to make his paper successful. He sold the *NYAN*, which was named after the avenue he lived on, out of his house for two cents a copy. The *NYAN* offices moved to Harlem in 1910, where a growing African American presence contributed to the newspaper's success. Between the 1910s and 1920s, renowned Black journalists such as T. Thomas Fortune wrote for and edited the paper. After the death of one of the earliest publishers, Edward Warren, Anderson sold his stock in the paper to Warren's widow Sadie Warren in 1926. Ms. Warren struggled to keep the *Amsterdam News* afloat for the next ten years. In 1936 she sold the newspaper to Powell Savory Corporation, then owned by two of the country's leading African American entrepreneurs, Dr. C.B. Powell and Dr. Phillip M.H. Savory. After gaining control of the newspaper, Powell assumed the role of editor/publisher while Savory became the secretary/treasurer.⁹⁹

Under Powell Savory Corporation management the paper became a member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) in 1930, becoming the second Black newspaper admitted to the organization.¹⁰⁰ The *Amsterdam News* flourished under the stewardship of Dr. Powell. The new semi-weekly newspaper began taking on national news along with local news. The paper

⁹⁸ The *New York Amsterdam News*, "History, About Us." <http://www.amsterdamnews.com/history/> [accessed March 13, 2013].

⁹⁹ African American Registry, "The New York Amsterdam News Founded." http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/new-york-amsterdam-news-founded [accessed March 18, 2013].

¹⁰⁰ New York Public Library, "New York Amsterdam News." <http://www.nypl.org/collections/articles-databases/new-york-amsterdam-news-1922-1993> [accessed March 15, 2013]

strongly shaped the “advancement and realization of Black aspirations” and quickly became the “most frequently quoted Black weekly in the world.”¹⁰¹

By the 1930s and 1940s, the *New York Amsterdam News* (NYAN) was one of four leading African American newspapers. Second in popularity only to the *Chicago Defender*, the NYAN “was the mouthpiece for one of the largest African American communities in the United States.”¹⁰² At the height of its popularity, the newspaper had over 100,000 subscribers.

The paper reached its peak in the 1940s, and saw its best national and international coverage during this time. The NYAN was a strong advocate of desegregating the United States military¹⁰³ and highly critical of President Roosevelt’s New Deal. Editors focused on lynchings, the New Deal, and the Scottsboro Nine Trial.

Editorials about totalitarianism, on the other hand, were a rarity. An overwhelming majority of these editorials focused on similarities between the persecution the Jews faced in Germany and African Americans faced in the United States. The *Amsterdam News* wanted to draw attention to the country’s hypocrisy, hoping that it would shift the country’s attention to the persecution on its own soil. Angry editors wondered why America did not pay the same amount attention to its African American population, “who [had] long suffered and still [suffered] from a similar type of proscription due to their racial origin.”¹⁰⁴ Even the Germans pointed out the parallel between the Reich’s treatment of the Jews and America’s treatment of African Americans. In 1934, Hitler defended his actions against German Jews by pointing out similar

¹⁰¹ The *New York Amsterdam News*, “History, About Us.” <http://www.amsterdamnews.com/history/> [accessed March 13, 2013].

¹⁰² PBS, “Newspapers, “The Amsterdam News. Founding Editor-James H. Anderson.” http://www.pbs.org/blackpress/news_bios/newbios/nwsprr/amsterdam/amstrdm.htm [accessed March 13, 2013].

¹⁰³ New York Public Library, “New York Amsterdam News.”

¹⁰⁴ “Home and Abroad.” The *New York Amsterdam News*. March 29, 1933. 12.

activities against African Americans in the United States.¹⁰⁵ Despite the comparisons, things remained unchanged in America. In an editorial the *NYAN* showed that like Arthur Garfield Hays, Americans, argued that “In America it is only the private citizens who persecute the Negro; in Germany it is the State that thwarts the Jew.”¹⁰⁶ Editors bitterly added that the difference may not be so apparent to African Americans, who lived in constant fear of lynching and denied jobs based on the color of their skin. Political cartoonists criticized the American government as well. African Americans demanded an anti-lynching bill, a bill that President Franklin Roosevelt refused to support. They no longer wanted to live in fear of violence or persecution. In a May 1934 cartoon, Uncle Sam was seen angrily yelling “Awful! Outrageous! Shameful!” in reference to Japan’s imperialistic policy towards China and Hitler’s persecution of the Jews. Cartoonist William Chase urged the hypocritical Sam to “turn around” and see that the problems in his country were not so different.¹⁰⁷

The fight for an anti-lynching law continued on well into the 1940s and 1950s. This is reflected within the editorial pages of the *Amsterdam News*. A lull in Germany-focused editorial pieces then happened during the mid-1930s. At this time the newspaper focused the events in Ethiopia and the 1936 Olympics. The *NYAN*’s critical attitude picked up again in the early 1940s. Interestingly, by 1940 Hitler was actually criticizing the United States, pointing out their hypocrisy. A political cartoon titled “The Good Ole’ U.S.A.” showed Hitler reading a US newspaper with the headline “Texas Murder Spurs Campaign For Anti-Lynching Bill.” A text over Hitler’s head read “And they’ve got the nerve to tell me how to run my business!”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ “Slap in the Face.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. February 21, 1934. 14.

¹⁰⁶ “What’s the Difference?” *The New York Amsterdam News*. November 15, 1933. 12.

¹⁰⁷ “Turn Around, Sam.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. May 12, 1934. 12.

¹⁰⁸ “The Good Ole’ U.S.A.” *the New York Amsterdam News*. 1940. 14.

The African American and American Jewish communities have a long history of cooperation and tension.¹⁰⁹ Both had been categorized as “racial others,” and generally sympathized and related to the other’s plight. By the mid twentieth century both communities were in the midst of combating anti-Semitism or racism. The two found many parallels in their quests for equality and began working together on common interests. Dr. S. Margoshes, editor of the national Jewish daily *The Day*, urged Jews and African Americans to support one another. Margoshes argued in 1936 that “to a degree, we [the Jews and African Americans] are literally in the same boat,” and that “as the seas of savagery of fanatical intolerance, of cruelty continue to beat against us we must increasingly be convince that we can be save only if, realizing our perilous condition, we act together, helping each other.” Editors added onto Dr. Margoshes statement, saying that with slight changes, those words could have easily been written by a socially alert African American leader to his people. They also warned readers that “if we turn the mob against the Jews, to whom may we turn when the noose hangs over our heads?”¹¹⁰

But the working relationship between the African American and Jewish communities was not perfect. Two years later, editors were angered by the words of Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. In a sermon to his congregation, the famous Rabbi lashed out at the Jewish people for having an inferiority complex. He claimed that any of them “could be the only Jew in a vulgar Palm Beach hotel and you can be sure you would be despised, because, like the Negro in Harlem, you are trying to escape from yourself. Normally seen as a patronizing yet understanding friend to African Americans, editors wanted clarification of Dr. Wise’s words. For if he did not mean to condemn equally those Jews and African Americans ashamed of their race, the newspaper

¹⁰⁹ Temple University Libraries, “Jewish-African American Relations.” <http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/people-and-places/jewish-african-american-relations>. [accessed March 19, 2013].

¹¹⁰ “Negroes and the Jews.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. February 15, 1936. 12.

wanted Rabbi Wise and African Americans to part ways. The article ended with a snarky question directed at Wise, asking him if the German Jews “contention for citizenship status or the contention of their brothers outside Germany to be interpreted as ‘escaping from their race?’”¹¹¹ African Americans refused to be seen as anything less than equal to the Jewish people, whose plight was so similar to their own. Tensions rose once again in 1940, when Jewish merchants in the South broke off negotiations and stated that they planned to continue “following the pattern of the South. Outraged editorial writer and head of the NCAAP Roy Wilkins wrote that it was “the kind of thing Negroes ought to condemn and condemn unstintedly, for here are Jews acting not as individuals, but in a group backing a low and vicious policy against black people, just because they are black.”¹¹² Political cartoonists also criticized the attitudes of some American Jews. A 1941 cartoon titled “Of ALL People!” showed a non-Aryan in Nazi Germany being whipped by a man strongly resembling Hitler. At the bottom, the same non-Aryan in America refused an African American couple admittance to a restaurant, snidely saying “Sorry, we don’t serve Negroes!”¹¹³ These actions, portrayed in the *Amsterdam News*, made the relationship between the African American and American Jewish communities strained. Yet, the two groups continued to support each other well into the 1960s.

Political cartoons and editorials in the *NYAN* also drew comparisons between Hitler, the Nazi Party, and the Klu Klux Klan. A political cartoon published in 1933 depicted the Chancellor as just “Another Klansman.”¹¹⁴ In the cartoon, Hitler hoisted up a swastika in one hand while the other holds a whip. Looking closer, the shadow behind him was not his own. It was the shadow of a KKK member, holding a burning cross high above his head and a whip in

¹¹¹ “Explain, Please, Rabbi Wise.” *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 6, 1937.12.

¹¹² Wilkins, Roy. “Watchtower.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. June 15, 1940. 14.

¹¹³ “Of ALL People.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. June, 1941. 14.

¹¹⁴ “Another Clansman.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. 1933. 12.

the other. Two years later, a political cartoon titled “An Old Flame Flares” labeled the KKK as a “Nazi Organization Here Attacks Negroes As Menace To White Man’s Civilization.”¹¹⁵

Comparisons became real when newspapers reported the formation of a new branch of the Klan. Known as the American Fascisti, the “green shirts” put on a drive to purge the United States of all radical influence.¹¹⁶

The *New York Amsterdam News* editorials also reported about the inequalities faced by African American athletes, especially during the 1936 Summer Olympics. In an open letter to black athletes, the newspaper urged that “as members of a minority group whose persecution the Nazis have encouraged, as citizens of a country in which all liberty has not yet been destroyed” to refuse to participate in the Games. Cartoonists believed the black track stars could muss Hitler up with their refusal.¹¹⁷ A year later the newspaper seemed to change its mind about the Olympic Games. Hitler, who saw Max Schmeling’s defeat of Joe Louis as proof of German Aryan supremacy,¹¹⁸ was “probably shivering with horror these days” from watching “his vaunted Aryans bow in defeat before black stars from America.”

American citizens, and the entire world for that matter, knew little about the Nazi’s persecution of the German Africans. Out of the four newspapers examined, the *Amsterdam News* was the only one that mentioned the Reich’s persecution of German Africans. Though this recognition was only seen in February 1934, it is still important to note that editors acknowledged the fact the Jewish people were not the only ones being persecuted in Germany. That month, the government demanded that all Negroid children of German be sterilized.

¹¹⁵ “An Old Flame Flares.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. June 1935. 12.

¹¹⁶ “American Fascists.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. July 28, 1934. 12.

¹¹⁷ “Muss Him Up.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. August 31, 1935. 12.

¹¹⁸ “Bound for Berlin.” *The New York Amsterdam News*. July 18, 1936. 12.

Though the actual demand was not mouthed by Hitler, editors sarcastically added that “one does not have to be a profound student of modern history to know that no demand is made publicly in the Third Reich without the sanction or order of the Nazi chieftain.”¹¹⁹ Perhaps that is why a political cartoon showed Hitler as a shadowy figure, convincing Germans to publicly want “All colored Germans must be sterilized!”¹²⁰ Strangely, Hitler had a sizeable number of African American followers, despite sharing a similar plight with German Jews. Perhaps this is why a week later, an editorial interpreted Hitler’s rampage as a slap in the face to his African American supporters. Editors hoped that Hitler’s black supporters would realize that the sterilization of German African children was “a logical step in the Hitler program of ‘race purification,’” and served as a warning to those who allowed “petty prejudices” to cloud their judgment.”

Just as ownership influenced the *Knickerbocker Press/News* and the *Times Union*, type of audience influenced the *NYAN*. Therefore, the opinions of the *New York Amsterdam News* differed from other newspapers because it focused on pleasing one specific audience, the African American community. Unlike the *Knickerbocker Press/News* and the *Times Union*, both major Albanian dailies, the *NYAN* did not have to be as cautious when publishing scathing editorials and political cartoons. The paper only focused on producing editorials and articles relevant to African Americans. The newspaper never backed down from printing editorials criticizing American hypocrisy, lynching, and inequalities faced by the African American community. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency’s *Daily Message Bulletin*, was similarly influenced by specific audience.

¹¹⁹ “A Slap in the Face.” The *New York Amsterdam News*. February 21, 1934. 12.

¹²⁰ “On the Rampage.” The *New York Amsterdam News*. February 14, 1934. 12.

VI

-The Jewish Telegraphic Agency's Daily Message Bulletin-

Though the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's *Daily Message Bulletin* did feature an editorial page, it was quite different from those of the other newspapers. The editorial section of the *Daily Message Bulletin* typically featured guest editors and ran editorials from other newspapers around the world. Strangely, they did not run these editorials with the original title. Instead, the newspaper often gave it a different title, and then gave the original title, the newspaper it was from followed by the republished editorial. The editorial section, gave a humanistic voice to the *Daily Message Bulletin*, and published news that was not usually seen in other newspapers. According to Laurel Leff in a JTA article, "at no time in history were JTA correspondents more needed than during the twelve long years of the Hitler regime... And at no time did its correspondents face more peril to their livelihood and lives."¹²¹ The JTA was one of the few news sources at the time to report on the persecution and then the annihilation of Europe's Jews, often providing the first and sometimes only, reports on the unfolding Holocaust.

The Agency began to face a number of problems as soon as Hitler came to power in 1933. The JTA after all, was in a country that was determined to deprive all Jews of their rights. The agency also faced the Nazi regime's physical attacks on its operations and rhetorical attacks on its integrity. Jacob Landau, JTA's founder and editor reported that "much of the JTA's superb reporting from Germany... was labeled Jewish anti-Nazi propaganda." Around 1933 resistance began to develop in the world press as well. Many refused to accept news involving Jews and others from what was considered a partisan Jewish source. Regardless, the JTA

¹²¹ Leff, Laurel. "The Holocaust From Behind Enemy Lines." *The Jewish Telegraphic Agency Daily Message Bulletin*, ca. 2008. Accessed April 7, 2013. <http://archive.jta.org/topic/holocaust>.

maintained its mission of serving as the eyes and ears of the world's Jewry. The *Daily Message Bulletin* chronicled the ensuing anti-Semitic legislation, property confiscations, sporadic violence, round-ups and deportations. According to Leff, the JTA's most important contribution was in reporting the fate of the Jews in eastern Poland and the Soviet Union after Germany broke the Nazi-Soviet pact and invaded in June 1941.¹²² The JTA frequently featured editorials as well. Many were written by JTA correspondents as well as guest reporters, such as Rabbi Wm. F. Rosenblum. The editorials in the *Bulletin* reflected how some of the Jewish population felt about the rise of totalitarianism in Germany. The editorials published in the JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin* were an important addition to the information featured in other periodicals and newspapers.

The Jewish Telegraph Agency (JTA) was founded in 1925, during the waning days of World War I by Jacob Landau. The war made the twenty five year old journalist realize that what happened in a country during and after wartime affects more than just its own people – that nation's fate is bound to the fate of surrounding nations. He also realized that with the continuing mass migration of Jews to the Americas meant that more and more families were separated by oceans, and now had personal interest in what was happening halfway around the globe. There was now a need for a mechanism to transmit vital information of what was happening to Jewish communities in various parts of the world. The Jewish people needed its own reliable source of information that could keep leaders informed and motivate the Jewish community into action. It was with this realization that Landau founded the Jewish

¹²² Leff, Laurel. "The Holocaust From Behind Enemy Lines." The Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*, ca. 2008. Accessed April 7, 2013. <http://archive.jta.org/topic/holocaust>.

Correspondence Bureau, later renamed the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. Interestingly it was the first news agency that not only gathered news, but also distributed it in every part of the world.¹²³

The publication of a Jewish daily newspaper in a field totally unexplored was distinctly an undertaking of pioneers, especially in newspaper-ridden America. The JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin* was published daily, with an exception of Saturdays and Jewish high holidays. Though the bulletin only contained information that took ten minutes to read, all the information was of distinct interest and unavailable through any other source. The *Daily Message Bulletin* received information from not only the capitals of the world, but also smaller centers where Jewish life was pulsating, where the struggle for existence was hardest and where Jewish contributions to the economic, cultural, and political life of the world were being made.¹²⁴

According to Richard Breitman's book *Official Secrets*, the JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin* was the main source of information for most English-language American Jewish weeklies and periodicals. On occasion, JTA items reached the mainstream press as well.¹²⁵ Some newspapers, like the *New York Times*, refused to use the *Daily News Bulletin*. Publishers, like the *New York Times*' Arthur Hays Sulzberger, found the idea of "Jewish news" offensive and the service untrustworthy.¹²⁶ In 1937, despite repeated entreaties from JTA editors, the *New York Times* dropped the Agency's services.¹²⁷ The Associated Press Other New York

¹²³ Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "History." <http://www.jta.org/about/history> [accessed April 6, 2013].

¹²⁴ Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "The Jewish Daily Bulletin, Smallest Yet Most Effective Newspaper." <http://archive.jta.org/article/1933/03/16/2798401/the-jewish-daily-bulletin-smallest-yet-most-effective-newspaper> [accessed April 6, 2013].

¹²⁵ Breitman, Richard. *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998. 127.

¹²⁶ Leff, Laurel. *Buried by the Times*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 47.

¹²⁷ Leff, Laurel. "The Holocaust From Behind Enemy Lines." The Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*, ca. 2008. Accessed April 7, 2013. <http://archive.jta.org/topic/holocaust>.

newspapers, including the *Herald* and *Post* continued to subscribe to the Agency's services and gave prominent display to JTA news.¹²⁸

The JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin* editorial pieces generally focused the most on the German persecution of Jews. Like the *Knickerbocker Press/News*, the *Daily Message Bulletin* editorial pieces were published starting in the earliest years of Hitler's reign. The earliest editorial column about the events in Germany featured in the *Daily Message Bulletin* was published on April 23, 1933. The editorial, titled "A Call for Unity," claimed that "the fight against anti-Semitism [would] unquestionably be the most important task confronting our community for the next decade."¹²⁹ Therefore a united, intelligent, and well-organized international fight against the persecution of German Jews was not only a necessity, but the world Jewry's duty. The editorial was followed by another titled "A Further Plea for Unity" the next month. Many prominent Jewish leaders publicly proclaimed their different opinions, "[bewildering] the public at large and [proved] detrimental to the effectiveness of protest actions."¹³⁰ Editors wanted nothing more than for the Jewish community to pull to together, despite their differences, in order to present a united front against anti-Semitism. Pleas to settle the difference between organizations, like American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress continued on. Editor Arthur Lampport supported these pleas, saying that "there [could] be no division when the cry of our brothers is ringing in our ears" and that it was "no time to continue social snobbishness that might have existed among American Jews."¹³¹ But, Professor Mordecai Kaplan editorialized that the Jewish population was too prone to become obsessed with the problem of anti-Semitism and to forget their own life. Therefore at "the very time when

¹²⁸ Leff, Laurel. *Buried by the Times*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 47.

¹²⁹ "A CALL FOR UNITY." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. April 23, 1933.

¹³⁰ "A FURTHER PLEA FOR UNITY." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. May 7, 1933.

¹³¹ "Editorials." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. June 4, 1933.

[they] smart from the wounds inflicted upon us by our enemies that our attention should be directed to the consideration of our communal affairs and to the ordering of our social and cultural institutions.”¹³² It seemed that Kaplan, amongst others, wanted the Jewish community to get everything in order on the home front before combating anti-Semitism abroad.

Regardless of the differences within the American Jewish community, editorials about anti-Semitism and the persecution of Jews continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s. In March 1934, an editorial reported that the greater portion of German Jewry had been ruined, and the persecution of Jewish intellectuals had been carried out mercilessly. “Those who could not escape from Germany were either placed in concentration camps, or forced out of their positions and thus deprived of their livelihood.”¹³³ This is the first time an Albanian editorial mentioned concentration camps. Most newspapers forgot about the German government’s youngest and most innocent victims, the Jewish children, but not the JTA. The same editorial that reported on the persecution of Jewish Intellectuals also mentioned German persecution of Jewish children, who were “the most pathetic victims of the Nazi regime, have been degraded and persecuted by Nazi teachers and by their ‘Aryan’ schoolmates.”¹³⁴

Editorial notes in April 1934 exclaimed that the German government had “resorted to force and violence, and is particularly persecuting the Jewish element of the German population with ruthless cruelty.”¹³⁵ A *Birkenhead News* editorial featured in the *Daily Message Bulletin* drew comparisons between Otto von Bismarck and Hitler. The editorial claimed that “just as Bismarck used the Jew fifty years ago as the scapegoat for the establishment of his policy, so

¹³² “WHITHER JEWISH SOCIAL WORK?” Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. June 18, 1933.

¹³³ “Now Editorial Notes-Hitler’s New Boycott.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. March 14, 1934.

¹³⁴ “Now Editorial Notes-Hitler’s New Boycott.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. March 14, 1934.

¹³⁵ “Now—Editorial Notes.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. April 16, 1934.

Hitler was using the Jew in exactly the same manner today.”¹³⁶ A June 1935 British newspaper the *Manchester Guardian* editorial titled “The Jews in Germany” was published, and under the *Bulletin* title “Treatment of Jews by Nazis Varies,” described the varying level of discrimination faced by German Jews. According to the editorial, anti-Semitism is the worst in Berlin and in the South, especially in the districts that Franconian district leader Julius Streicher controlled. Everywhere else Jews were not only kept out of the armed and civil services, but by indirect means out of all the professions and universities. Interestingly the *Manchester Guardian* seemed optimistic, believing that “a country with the civilized traditions of Germany [could not] and [would not] permanently seek to base itself on racial persecution.”¹³⁷ Sadly the *Manchester Guardian* was wrong, as persecution of the Jews not only intensified, but spread as the Nazi’s gained more power and control of Europe. On December 7, 1941, the day Pearl Harbor was bombed, an editorial featured in The *New York Herald-Tribune* warned that “the Jews [were] merely the first to suffer under Hitlerism,” and that the “savage maltreatment of the Jews was the first ominous sign of the madness that Hitlerism contained within itself.”¹³⁸ The political, civil, and economic rights of Jews were assaulted, and the population was subjected to indignities, arrests, beatings, and slayings. The *Herald-Tribune* acknowledge that the persecution of Jews was nothing less than systematic extermination, which was uncommon amongst newspapers of the time. The editorial urged that the “madness must be eliminated, not simply to save what remains of Europe’s Jewry, but to preserve the sanity of the world.”¹³⁹

¹³⁶ World Press Digest-SAYS HITLER FOLLOWS BISMARCK ON JEWS.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. March 1, 1935.

¹³⁷ “World Press Digest-TREATMENT OF JEWS BY NAZIS VARIES.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. June 27, 1935.

¹³⁸ “The Jews Are Merely First to Suffer Under Hitlerism, N. Y. Herald-Tribune Warns.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency. December 7, 1941.

¹³⁹ “The Jews Are Merely First to Suffer Under Hitlerism, N. Y. Herald-Tribune Warns.” Jewish Telegraphic Agency. December 7, 1941.

The JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin* also discussed the German government control of press and economy. Editorial notes from April 1934 found the German "revolution for freedom" to be unique, as it had "suppressed freedom of the press, freedom of speech, [and] freedom of conscience."¹⁴⁰ Like the *Knickerbocker Press/News*, the *Daily Message Bulletin* heavily criticized the German government's control of the press. An editorial reprinted from *Editor and Publisher* exclaimed that "the censorship that has destroyed the public usefulness of the press [was] was greased now for Hitler and all he stands for."¹⁴¹ Editorials about censorship were far and few, but like most newspapers acknowledged the fact German voices were being stifled by their government. Another editorial piece in March 1935, remarked just how strong the censorship in Nazi Germany was. "With all their skill and equipment American and English correspondents could not penetrate the fog of propaganda, deliberate falsehood of public officials, and sealed courts...Modern history holds no comparable chapter of national degeneracy."¹⁴² A December 1939 article titled "Nazis Press Efforts to Stir Up Anti-Jewish Feeling in England; Spread Leaflets from Osi," pointed out that in Germany, free speech and writing were suppressed."¹⁴³

In August 1934 an editorial in the *Daily Message Bulletin* shockingly gave Hitler credit for confessing his ignorance in the fields of international relations and economics and required the help of experts. This was not without insult though, telling its readers to "give the devil his due, even if he's a big devil and its a small due."¹⁴⁴ An October 1939 editorial featured in the

¹⁴⁰ "Now—Editorial Notes." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. April 16, 1934.

¹⁴¹ "Weekly Raps Nazi Lies As 'Gross Insult.'" Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. July 17, 1934.

¹⁴² "World Press Digest-CAUSTIC COMMENT ON REICH CENSORSHIPS." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. March 1, 1935.

¹⁴³ "Nazis Press Efforts to Stir Up Anti-Jewish Feeling in England; Spread Leaflets from Osi." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin* December 12, 1939.

¹⁴⁴ Trattner, Ernest. "Editorials-The Nazi Need of Experts." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. August 6, 1934.

New York Post was republished in and reported on by the *Daily Message Bulletin*. The JTA's *Bulletin* reported that the *Post* claimed that the new five percent tax levied by the Nazis on all Jewish property "[indicated] the turmoil within the Germany economy." For eleven months, the editorial declared, "the sadistic pogrom against the Jews [had] been conducted with reduced energy."¹⁴⁵ The German government was so desperate to relieve the country's shortage of medical staff that they surprisingly appealed to German Jewish doctors, who had escaped, to return to their country.

The JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin* relayed information to the American Jewish community about the events in Germany during the 1930s and 1940s. Unlike the *Times Union* and *Knickerbocker Press/News*, the *Daily Message Bulletin* was only interested in news relevant to its audience, the Jews. It understood that American Jews had a personal interest in events overseas, as they still had many family members living in Europe. Therefore the JTA was depended on by the world Jewry for vital information.

VII

-Conclusion-

The four Albanian newspapers examined each covered the rise of totalitarianism in Germany differently. The opinions of three newspapers, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* and the JTA's *Daily Message Bulletin* and the *New York Amsterdam News*, remained the same. Only the opinion of the *Times Union* changed during the 1930s. These differences and change in opinion were due to three major factors, ownership, audience, and context.

¹⁴⁵ "New Nazi Tax on Jews Reveals Turmoil in Reich Economy, Post Holds." Jewish Telegraphic Agency *Daily Message Bulletin*. October 26, 1939.

Ownership greatly effected what both the *Knickerbocker Press/News* and *Times Union* published throughout the 1930s and early 1940s. Without Frank Gannett influencing the *Knickerbocker Press/News*, editorials freely criticized German government control of religion, press, and economy as well as its leader, Adolf Hitler. Out of the four newspapers, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* discussed the government control of German press and economy. Considering the fact that the newspapers editor's greatly disliked Hitler, this was no surprise. The newspaper criticized every aspect of the Hitler's reign, and was unafraid to publicize negative aspects of the dictator's reign. They were able to negatively editorialize the rise of totalitarianism in Germany because Gannett gave free reign to his local editors. He wanted each newspaper he owned to reflect the opinions of the local subscribers. Therefore the newspaper's remained unchanged throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Hitler was seen as a loud-mouth menace and government control of everyday life increased in an alarming rate. Though the newspaper did publish a considerably large number of editorials and political cartoons about the rise of totalitarianism, it did remain cautious about what it ran. Since it was one of two newspapers in general circulation, the *Knickerbocker Press/News* had to be careful not to upset its audience. So though it published a considerable amount of editorial pieces and political cartoons about persecution of German Jews, it did not print as much as a news service, like the JTA. The *Knickerbocker Press/News* kept the Albanian community more updated on the event in Germany than the other newspaper in general circulation, the *Times Union*.

The *Times Union*, like the *Knickerbocker Press/News* was greatly affected by its audience. As the other newspaper in general circulation in Albany, the *Times Union* was incredibly conscious about what it editorialized. The newspaper, out of fear of upsetting its subscribers, only published editorials about the German press once or twice throughout the 1930s

and early 1940s. Its attention was more focused on FDR, the New Deal, and other national news. Compared to the *Knickerbocker Press/News* the *Times Union* played it safe. Along with worrying about its audience, the newspaper also had to worry about not upsetting its owner, William Randolph Hearst. Until late 1938, Hearst sympathized with the Nazi's cause. Therefore, he usually did not permit his newspapers to publish anything that would cast a negative light on the German government. Only a handful of editorials and cartoons were published from 1933 to 1938. It was not until Kristallnacht, when Hearst's opinion about Hitler and the Nazi government changed, that the newspaper's opinion changed. While the editorials and political cartoons in the *Knickerbocker Press/News* reflected the opinions of the local editors, the editorial pages in the *Times Union* were greatly influenced and consequentially focused around the opinions of Hearst. Therefore, not only did audience influence affect the newspaper, but ownership did as well.

Audience also played a major in what newspapers published about the rise of totalitarianism in Germany. Besides the *Knickerbocker Press/News*, the JTA's *Daily News Bulletin* was the only Albanian newspaper to criticize the German government throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Although the paper ran editorials about government control of press and economy, a majority of editorials published were about the anti-Semitism European Jews faced. Unlike papers in main circulation, the *Daily Message Bulletin* did not have to worry about upsetting the general population. Therefore the JTA ran so many articles and editorials about the persecution of Jews in the *Daily Message Bulletin* for two main reasons. First, the news service knew that many American Jews had a personal interest in the events in Germany, as many still had family members living overseas. Therefore the *Daily Message Bulletin* tended to publish more editorials about persecution than any other Albanian newspaper. The editors knew that this

was the information the American Jewish community was looking for, and without having to worry about upsetting the general population, published it without hesitation. Second the JTA hoped that by publishing editorials about the persecution and consequentially calling for action, American Jews would rise to the occasion and help their European brethren. Many newspapers dropped the JTA's services for this reason. Regardless, the JTA remained focused on serving the Jewish Community and published stories about persecution in Europe.

The *New York Amsterdam News* was similar to the *Daily Message Bulletin* in this aspect. The *NYAN* was focused on serving only one part of the population, the African American community. Out of all four Albanian newspapers, the *Amsterdam News* by far published the least amount of editorials and political cartoons about the rise of totalitarianism in Germany. The African American community was more focused on defeating racism at home than combatting anti-Semitism abroad. Therefore, the *NYAN* published more editorial pieces and political cartoons about the Scottsboro Boys trial, the anti-lynching bill, and FDR's New Deal. The only component of the Nazi rule that the newspaper did editorialize was the anti-Semitism and persecution faced by German Jews. Unlike the JTA, who used editorials as a call for help, the *NYAN* used editorials and political cartoons about the persecution as a comparison to the racism faced by African Americans. The *NYAN* editors knew that the African American population did not have an interest in the increasing government control of German press or economy, all they wanted to stop living in fear of violence. Therefore the newspaper voiced the African American community's cry for justice at home first before the country helped overseas. It knew that African Americans wanted the government to pass an anti-lynching bill, so they used similarities between the two communities' plights in hopes that the government would do so.

What the four newspapers did have in common was that none of them were static in coverage. As circumstances in Germany or the United States changed, the content of the editorial pages changed. Out of the four, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency and the *Knickerbocker Press/News* were the two who gave their audiences the most comprehensive picture of the events in Germany. Both often published editorials and political cartoons showcasing their dislike for Hitler, and the government control of press, economy, and religion. The type of editorials the *Times Union* changed during the late 1930s. Unimaginable events in Germany, in particular Kristallnacht, altered the newspaper's perspectives. More editorials about the Jewish persecution in Germany sharply increased after 1938. The *New York Amsterdam News* followed the German persecution of Jews carefully in order to draw comparisons to the racism faced at home.

The 1930s and 1940s was a period of great change within and outside the city of Albany. The newspapers, affected by both audience and ownership, reflected the current events happening within the community and overseas, particularly in Germany. What they editorialized and how often was different for each paper.

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