



1977

# The German Socialist Emigration in the United States, 1933 to 1945

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## Recommended Citation

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THE GERMAN SOCIALIST EMIGRATION  
IN THE UNITED STATES  
1933 TO 1945

by  
Albrecht Ragg

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

January

1977

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author thanks Dr. Thomas A. Knapp for his contributions as the Director of this dissertation. He is also thankful to Dr. James L. Penick and Dr. William J. Galush for their recommendations as members of the dissertation committee.



## LIFE

The author, Albrecht Ragg, was born September 3, 1935, in Deisslingen in Southern Germany.

His secondary education began in 1946 in Rottweil, Württemberg, where he was admitted to the Albertus Magnus Gymnasium, a "humanistic" high school specializing in ancient languages. After graduation in 1955, he entered the State Teachers' College in Weingarten, Württemberg, where he passed the First Service Examination in April, 1958. In September, 1962, after the mandatory four years of teaching experience, he passed the Second Service Examination which qualifies for life tenure and free comprehensive social security. The same month, he submitted his resignation in order to pursue a new course of studies.

First, he studied two semesters at the University of Paris, which offered a comprehensive program of courses in all subjects taught at the Sorbonne and relating to French civilization. In February and June, 1963, he received program diplomas, listing the ten subjects in which he passed a final examination. In November, 1963, he came to Chicago to learn English. The following year he entered Loyola University to do undergraduate and graduate work in History for which he received the degree of Master of Arts in June 1968. As a doctoral student, he served as teaching assistant and received a dissertation scholarship in April, 1972.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Antifaschistische Aktion
AADG	American Association for a Democratic Germany
ACWA	Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America
ADGB	Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund General German Confederation of Trade Unions
AFG	Association of Free Germans
AFGF	American Friends of German Freedom
AFL	American Federation of Labor
AKStK	Arbeiter Kranken- und Sterbe-Kasse Workmen's Benefit Fund
ALP	American Labor Party
AsD	Archiv der sozialen Demokratie
CAS	Centre Américain de Secours Marseille office of the Emergency Rescue Committee
CDG	Council for a Democratic Germany
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
DAKV	Deutsch Amerikanischer Kulturverband German American League for Culture
DVE	Deutsches Volksecho
EK	Emigrations-Korrespondenz
GAAAL	German American Anti-Axis League
GACD	German American Congress for Democracy
GAEC	German American Emergency Conference
Geade	Gewerkschaftliche Auslandsvertretung Deutschlands Exile Executive of the German Trade Unions

GLD	German Labor Delegation
GTUD	German Trade Union Delegation in the United States
HIAS	Hebrew Immigration Aid Society
HICEM	HIAS and ICA (Jewish Colonization Agency) Emigration Association
IBF	Internationale Bekleidungsarbeiter Föderation International Federation of Clothingworkers
IBS	Internationale Berufssekretariate International Union Trade Secretariates
ICC	International Coordination Council
IFTU	International Federation of Trade Unions
ILGWU	International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union
INC	Independent National Committee for the reelection of President Roosevelt
IRA	International Relief Association
ISK	Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampfbund International League for Socialist Struggle
ITF	International Transport Workers Federation
JDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
JDF	Jewish Daily Forward
JLC	Jewish Labor Committee
KPO	Kommunistische Partei - Opposition
LID	League of Industrial Democracy
NB	Gruppe Neubeginnen
NKFD	Nationalkomitee Freies Deutschland National Committee for a Free Germany
NVZ	Neue Volkszeitung
OSS	Office of Strategic Services

OWI	Office of War Information
PAC	President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees
SAP	Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Socialist Workers' Party
SDF	Social Democratic Federation
SI	Socialist International
Sopade	Sozialistische Partei Deutschlands Exile Executive of the German Social Democratic Party
SPA	Socialist Party of America
SPD	Sozialistische Partei Deutschlands Social Democratic Party of Germany
UAGD	United Americans of German Descent
UDA	Union for Democratic Action
VC-GATU	Victory Committee of the German American Trade Unions
WBF	Workmen's Benefit Fund
WC	Workmen's Circle

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The term socialism is used comprehensively in this paper. It includes communists, left wing socialists, centrist socialists, and Social Democrats. The attitudes of these various groups and parties towards each other during the Weimar Republic determined their attitude towards National Socialism. Together, they represented a majority movement but because of their division, they failed to pass the supreme political test of the 1920's by not preventing the rise of National Socialism. The communists thought that they could let the National Socialists do the job of disposing of the Social Democrats before taking over from an otherwise ephemeral fascist movement. The Social Democrats were blind to the National Socialist danger. Their official chief publicist, for example, Friedrich Stampfer, believed in November 1932 that the National Socialist movement had run its course and would fade away before long to leave the Social Democrats in their traditional position as the strongest party of the Weimar democratic system. Only the socialist splinter parties assessed the political situation realistically.

The shock of the National Socialist assumption of power had presumably awakened the Social Democrats and the communists to reality. In their emigration, they professed to be antifascists first and fore-

most. In order to be effective in that role, they had to stop doing abroad what had led to their failure at home. A disunited, self-disruptive emigration could not win the credibility it needed to be taken seriously in its various host countries. A reconciliation between communists and Social Democrats in a United Front would have been the most radical reversal of their previous rivalry. The concept of the Popular Front was based on an additional reconciliation between the socialist and the bourgeois groups. A more simple and practical change would have been an end to intra-socialist recriminations and an exclusive concentration on antifascism without any formal political group association. There was also the possibility of a so-called socialist concentration without communists. In these respects, this paper studies the attitudes and the activities of the German socialist emigration in the United States.

The political environment in this country added another dimension to the work of the socialist emigrants. American socialism had begun to decline in the 1920's before reaching significant proportions. After 1933, it fell into dissolution as the result of a belated polarization into right wing and left wing groups which, in Europe, had taken place earlier. In addition, these groups were mainly ethnic so that there were small German American conservative, centrist, and left wing socialist organizations with which the emigrants had to deal. The divisiveness of the German American groups could compound that of the emigrant groups. On the other hand, the former could furnish the latter with established organizations and publications.

The emigrant groups also needed contacts with the American union federations, with at least one of the two major political parties and with the government. The establishment of the latter was subject to political requirements which the emigrants could fulfill or fail to meet with the respective consequences for their political prospects. But they could adjust to American politics in more than one way. For the right wing socialists, for example, the choice depended on whether they would give precedence to antifascism or anti-communism. An association with the American Federation of Labor would strengthen their anti-communist bent which would, however, embarrass the government in its wartime alliance with Russia. In this sense, the American political situation offered the German socialist emigrants alternatives which they could perceive in terms of their political preferences.



## CHAPTER II

### THE STATE OF THE GERMAN AND OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE TWENTIES AND THIRTIES

The state of the German and of the American labor movement in the twenties and thirties conditioned the history of the German socialist emigration in the United States. The German labor movement of the Weimar Republic was divided. These divisions and their underlying ideologies carried over into the emigration. The major groups of the American labor movement were non-socialist. The small socialist movement of the United States declined in the 1920's in innumerable splits. By the time of the German socialist emigration, it had nearly disintegrated except for the Communist Party and certain unions.

The German Socialist Party never had a homogeneous ideology. During the First World War, it split over the issues of international solidarity and nationalist support of the German war effort into the two parties of the reduced Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Independent Socialist Party (USPD). From then on, the SPD became very defensive and distrusted all parties to its left.<sup>1</sup> The rise of communism and the German defeat in 1918 further complicated the crisis of the German labor movement. The German Communist Party (KPD) grew out of the leftist components of the USPD. The weakened Independent

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<sup>1</sup>Richard N. Hunt, German Social Democracy, 1918 - 1933 (Yale University Press, 1964), p. 254.

Socialist Party could not survive long in the center between the KPD and the SPD. By 1922, its majority rejoined the SPD but never felt comfortable there throughout the Weimar Republic.<sup>2</sup> The personal and ideological distance between the traditional and the reintegrated Social Democrats remained, and became unduly significant in the emigration. The issues which had led to the foundation of the USPD were not resolved with its disappearance. The right wing of the SPD imposed its policy of coalitions with non-socialist parties, the so-called policy of the Grosse Koalition (great coalition). In the process, it also assumed a compromising position towards German rearmament.<sup>3</sup> The left wing of the SPD amounted to nearly half the party at times but it was less confident and not proportionately represented in the national party executive.<sup>4</sup>

In this situation, the party would have benefitted from a sense of fairness and toleration. But the natural intolerance of the wartime SPD was intensified by the challenge of the KPD. The traditional SPD became absorbed by its anti-communism and, in this context, treated the dissenting wing of the party with suspicion.<sup>5</sup> This behavioral pattern reappeared in the emigration and especially in the American emigration.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 193-210.

<sup>3</sup>Hanno Drechsler, Die Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (Marburg, 1965), pp. 32-50.

<sup>4</sup>Hunt, German Social Democracy, pp. 210-229, 255.

<sup>5</sup>Hans J. L. Adolph, Otto Wels und die Politik der Deutschen Sozialdemokratie, 1894 - 1939 (Berlin, 1971), pp. 118-145.

The KPD was equally uncompromising towards its dissenting factions and in its opposition to the SPD. Each of the two parties believed that it could make its progress only over the dead body of the other. Thus, both parties failed to perceive the challenge of National Socialism.

The dissenters in both parties often realized that only socialist solidarity could stop National Socialism. But the SPD and the KPD dismissed these warnings from within their own ranks and pushed the dissenting factions out of the two major parties. As a result, there appeared in the late twenties and early thirties a number of splinter groups such as the Kommunistische Partei Opposition (KPO, Communist Party Opposition), the Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei (SAP, Socialist Workers' Party), the Internationale Sozialistische Kampfbund (ISK, International League for the Socialist Struggle, and the Gruppe Neube-ginnen (NB, Group New Beginning). These small parties were symbols of the blindness of the two major parties towards National Socialism. During the last years of the Weimar Republic, they issued numerous calls for a United Front against Hitler which were ignored.

In the emigration, they became relatively important. This circumstance only helped to continue their difficulties with the two major parties and especially with the SPD on the antecedents of the Weimar Republic. In fact, these antagonisms determined largely the history of the German socialist emigration, especially in the United States. They became the priorities of the German socialist emigration and created an emigrant atmosphere in which antifascism often receded into the background. The KPO, SAP, and ISK did not have organized groups in the United States but NB rivaled the Social Democratic group in sig-

nificance and served as rallying point for individual emigrants of the other splinter parties. The leaders of the latter often had curious careers in that they successively participated in several splinter groups. Even within the same group, they often belonged to different factions. Many of these leaders ended up in the American emigration where their party historical antecedents determined their mutual relationships in a mostly negative way. They usually chose to remain isolated. At best, they had loose relations with NB.

The KPO which was founded in early 1929 grew out of a rightist faction of the KPD.<sup>6</sup> This faction was predominant in the KPD in the early twenties and advocated a policy of German communist independence and of communist cooperation with other labor groups. It wanted to establish a United Front from above with the leadership of other socialist groups rather than a United Front from below that would only involve their membership. In accordance with the factional alignment in the Russian Communist Party, this was considered rightist. With the rise of Stalin, a leftist policy of opposition to all non-communist parties came into vogue. Its purpose was to displace the pre-Stalin leadership in the European communist parties. The rightists survived as a faction in the KPD. In 1928, they even challenged its leadership. But Stalin viewed this conflict in the light of his campaign against Trotskyist remnants in the various communist parties. The rightists were expelled in January and February 1929.

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<sup>6</sup>K. H. Tjaden, Struktur and Funktion der KPD-Opposition (Marburg, 1964).

The KPO was very active but had little success. In 1932, it split over the issue of a proper attitude towards the SAP. A minority advocated an association with all of the SAP on equal terms. It was expelled in January 1932 and joined the SAP where it played a controversial role.<sup>7</sup> The majority unsuccessfully pursued its re-admission to the KPD. Immediately after January 1933, it organized underground groups and established an Auslandskomitee (exile party executive committee) in France. In the Internationale Vereinigung der Kommunistischen Opposition (IVKO, International Association of the Communistic Opposition), the German emigrant group and the American KPO under Jay Lovestone played major roles. The IVKO fell apart in 1939 because of the revisionism of Lovestone who renamed his group the Independent Labor League of America.<sup>8</sup> As a result, the German emigrant group also split into a pro- and an anti-Lovestone faction. The former was evacuated to the United States.<sup>9</sup> The two main leaders of the latter did not get beyond Cuba. The International Relief Association (IRA) took care of the evacuation of KPO and other leftist emigrants to the United States or to other American countries.

Of the former KPO leaders in the United States, Erich Hausen and Hans Tittel belonged to the pro-Lovestone faction. Albert Schreiner had left the KPO orbit. Jakob Walcher, Paul Frölich, Rose

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 288-291; Drechsler, Die SAP, pp. 148-153.

<sup>8</sup> Tjaden, KPO, pp. 330, 331.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 339, 340.

Frölich-Wolfstein, Erna Halbe, Josef Lang and Karl Frank were the former leaders of the minority that joined the SAP.<sup>10</sup> Of these, Frank had an even more colorful career. He became the main leader of the NB emigration and played a major role in the American emigration. He was also instrumental in evacuating his former fellow minority leaders to the United States.

The SAP was founded by the purist faction of the SPD left wing in the fall of 1931.<sup>11</sup> This demonstrated the lack of cohesion of the left wing whose conciliatory faction remained in the SPD. In the confrontation over the Brüning government, the left wing was divided in its response to the right wing policy of toleration.<sup>12</sup> At the national congress of 1931, the party expelled the left wing leaders Kurt Rosenfeld and Max Seydewitz for refusing to tolerate any further government by emergency decrees.<sup>13</sup> During the more than two years before the National Socialist assumption of power, the SAP tried desperately but unsuccessfully to establish some kind of United Front against Hitler. The chief promoter of these antifascist attempts was Rosenfeld. He carried on this work in the American emigration where he was a prominent representative of the German American Popular Front.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Biographischer Anhang: p. 5: Karl Frank, Paul Frölich; p. 7: Erich Hausen; p. 8: Joseph Lang, "Leo"; p. 10: Albert Schreiner; p. 11: Hans Tittel; p. 12: Jakob Walcher; p. 13: Rose Wolfstein; also footnote 15 of chapter I, 1: pp. 80, 81: Walcher; footnote 16 of chapter I, 1: pp. 81, 82: Frölich.

<sup>11</sup> Hunt, German Social Democracy, pp. 230-240; Drechsler, Die SAP.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 56-63; Hunt, German Social Democracy, p. 231.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 233; Drechsler, Die SAP, pp. 87-99.

But in America, Rosenfeld could not cooperate with the SAP leaders who came to New York in 1940 and 1941. These were the former KPO minority leaders who later formed the aggressive left wing of the SAP.<sup>14</sup> Before they could seize control of the party Rosenfeld and Seydewitz dissolved the SAP in March 1933. But they proceeded with the convocation of a party congress.<sup>15</sup> There, they organized a SAP underground structure with a domestic executive committee in Germany and an exile executive committee in Prague and then in Paris. Before the beginning of the war, the SAP emigration in Paris disintegrated completely. One of its factions objected to close cooperation with communist emigrants because of the Stalinist purges in the Trotskyist party of Spain during the Civil War. It was eventually expelled and formed the group Neuer Weg (New Orientation). The remaining SAP emigrants still disagreed over the degree of cooperation with the communists. They would have split also if it had not been for the outbreak of the war and the resulting refugee crisis in France.<sup>16</sup>

A good number of the German socialists involved in the events surrounding the SAP emigrated to the United States. Because of their past differences, they failed to cooperate there. Of the former members of the conciliatory left wing of the SPD, there were Siegfried Aufhäuser, the president of the Allgemeiner Freier Angestellten Bund (AFA, General Independent White Collar Workers' Federation), the SPD

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 295-310.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 326-329.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 347-349.

executive member Georg Dietrich, Ernst Fränkel, E. J. Gumbel, the anti-militarist theorist Arkadij Gurland, Siegfried Mark, Gerhard Seger, the former general secretary of the Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft (German Society for International Peace) and member of the Reichstag, the Reichstag member Toni Sender, Hans Siemsen and Walther Victor.<sup>17</sup> Most of them had access neither to the established Social Democratic emigration in New York nor to the emigrants of the splinter groups with whom they used to sympathize. Other SAP leaders in America were the economic theorist Fritz Sternberg, Will Schaber, the later editor of the German Jewish immigrant weekly Aufbau, Ludwig Hacke, the former chairman of the SAP district of Southwestern Saxony. Of the socialists who had participated in SAP related United Front activities, there was the pacifist and economist Alfons Goldschmidt who later played a role in the German American Popular Front. There was also Helmut Wagner, a Saxon Social Democrat who was expelled from the SPD for organizing left wing opposition groups.<sup>18</sup> Most prominently of the group New Orientation, there was Erwin Bauer, a personal friend of Trotsky. The left wing SAP leaders who came to America have already been mentioned as former KPO right wingers. Before their evacuation to the United States, they crystallized into the two factions around Walcher and Frölich. Thus, all these SAP leaders contributed to the atomization of the German socialist emigration in the United States.

None of them played a role in the American emigration except

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 21, 22.

<sup>18</sup> Olaf Ihlau, Die Roten Kämpfer (Marburg, 1969), pp. 57, 58, 61, and 183.



Frank. He was expelled from the SAP for his tendency to join the SPD with a small group of SAP members. He had also impatiently tried to associate the miniscule SAP party militia, the Sozialistische Schutzbund (Socialist Defense League) of which he was the leader, with the Eiserne Front (Iron Front) militia of the SPD and its Weimar coalition partners. After this expulsion, he became an SPD member in 1932.<sup>19</sup> But he was unhappy there with the indolence of the SPD towards National Socialism and its unpreparedness for underground work.

The smallest of the four splinter groups discussed here was the International League for the Socialist Struggle (ISK).<sup>20</sup> It was a group of ethical socialists that was expelled from the SPD in 1926. This was again a symptom of the SPD mentality which could not tolerate the innocuous ISK idea of transforming society through moral leadership rather than by revolution. The League was a strong advocate of a United Front against fascism. For lack of a common working class candidate in the presidential elections of 1925, it recommended a vote for the communist candidate, Ernst Thälmann, as the lesser evil.<sup>21</sup> It realized that the agrarian and the lower middle class were especially liable to join the National Socialist movement and agreed with the other splinter groups that National Socialism once in power would be there to stay for a long while. After January 1933, the ISK transformed itself into an underground organization with an exile executive commit-

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<sup>19</sup>Tjaden, KPO, p. 207.

<sup>20</sup>Werner Link, Die Geschichte des Internationalen Jugendbundes und des Internationalen Sozialistischen Kampfbundes (Marburg, 1964).

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 154, 155.

tee. It cooperated among others with the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) in Amsterdam and with the Einheitsverband der Eisenbahner Deutschlands (Federation of the German National Railroad Workers).<sup>22</sup> But the arrests of 1937 and 1938 practically liquidated the ISK underground groups in Germany.

A number of ISK emigrants escaped to America. Anna Stein, a leading ISK educator; Klara Deppe, the former secretary of the Hamburg ISK district; and Hans Kakies arrived before the war. After the French defeat, about fifteen ISK functionaries escaped to the United States.<sup>23</sup> They received funds for their evacuation from one of their comrades in Switzerland. Among them were Erna Blencke, the former leader of a Hannover based underground group, and Eva and Erich Lewinski who cooperated with the Social Democratic refugee committee in Marseille and with the NB-related rescue committee in the United States. The ISK emigrants in America worked individually with American or German emigrant groups.

The most unusual of the socialist dissident organizations was the New Beginning Group.<sup>24</sup> It was founded in 1931 by Walter Löwenheim and was also called the Miles Group according to the pseudonym of its founder. It functioned within the SPD from which it recruited most of

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 216, 217.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 271, 272, 273.

<sup>24</sup> Kurt Kliem, Der Sozialistische Widerstand gegen das Dritte Reich dargestellt an der Gruppe Neu-Beginnen (Marburg, 1957), and Edinger, Lewis J., German Exile Politics. The Social Democratic Executive Committee in the Nazi Era (University of California Press, 1956). pp. 83-90, 96-98.

its members and from which it was never officially expelled. According to Löwenheim, only a new departure in theory and organization could defeat National Socialism. In the face of fascism, a socialist revolution was only potential. It required the patient and expert work of an elitist organization whose underground cadres laid the foundation of a counterrevolution. Thus, NB was the underground organization par excellence. But by 1935, Löwenheim conceded the failure of his theory and wanted to dissolve the NB Group. In this situation, the NB Auslandsleitung took over the organization. Its leader was Frank who had joined NB after 1933.

He reshaped the ideology of NB under the auspices of the Revolutionary Socialists of Austria. As a former Austrian socialist who had left for Germany at the age of twenty-five, he was acquainted with all Austrian socialist leaders and shared their activist approach to antifascism. This activism was based on a scientific realism that relied on a study of the socio-economic conditions rather than on revolutionary optimism. Even under favorable conditions, socialist progress could only come through activist leadership. This dynamic approach appealed to many European socialists who disliked the policy of appeasement of the English and the French governments. They saw in it a third alternative to communism and Social Democracy.

The NB Group had the best organized underground organization in Germany and a well connected executive committee abroad. The latter benefitted from the reputation of the Austrian emigrants who had made a courageous stand against the Dollfuss regime in 1934. It was favored by a number of European labor parties and American labor groups as well

as by the Second Socialist International in Brussels, whose executive secretary was the Austrian Friedrich Adler, and by some International Union Trade Secretariates in Amsterdam.

During the first and second emigration in Czechoslovakia and France, the issue of antifascism could unite the German socialists as little as during the Weimar Republic. Rather than solving the old problems of the relationships between the various parties, the defeat of the German labor movement created new ones. The proportion of strength between the two main parties and the splinter groups changed after January 1933. What the former lost the latter gained, so that especially the SPD lost its confidence about its position within the German labor movement in emigration and the splinter groups acquired a new sense of significance. They still shared a common antifascist ideology. Their reputation improved because their predictions about National Socialism had come true. Also, they were well prepared for underground and emigrant work. Numerically, they were at less of a disadvantage at home and abroad than before. The two main labor parties and the unions had lost their former mass membership while the splinter groups had always been top heavy with well qualified leaders. In the underground and abroad, the splinter groups could then compete with the former giants of the Weimar Republic. They differed, however, in their front ideologies. The SAP was the leader of the United Front advocates but the NB Group preferred a concentration of all non-communist labor groups. The former approach was more attuned to the communist, the latter to the Social Democratic emigration. Yet, neither of the two major parties made good use of its opportunity so that after the second

emigration, the German socialists were as divided as they had been at the beginning of the first.

The Social Democrats felt insecure under the changed circumstances of the emigration. The more militant European antifascists of the exile countries blamed them for their poor performance against National Socialism.<sup>25</sup> This lack of sympathy isolated the Social Democrats and made them more defensive. Also, defeat engendered internal quarrels. A number of SPD executives went abroad, first to the Saarland and then to Czechoslovakia. There, they experienced an abrupt change of heart and called for a militant antifascism. This annoyed the remaining executives in Berlin who had not yet given up all hope for legal party work. As a result, each of the rump executive bodies claimed the final party authority. The SPD leaders in Prague constituted themselves as the exile executive of the SPD, the so-called Sopade.<sup>26</sup> In the resulting confusion, impatient second level SPD leaders in Germany organized underground groups on their own initiative without recognizing the jurisdiction of the Sopade. They also cooperated with other socialist underground groups. The Sopade was an exile head without much of a base at home.<sup>27</sup> Also, Social Democratic emigrants in the Saarland, France and elsewhere organized their own Landesgruppen in the absence of any

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<sup>25</sup> Adolph, Otto Wels, pp. 291-305; and Edinger, German Exile Politics, pp. 99, 100: Edinger quotes Norman Thomas about the Sopade: "Exiles from their home country, ... men who made no more successful resistance to fascism when they were at home", could not lead the fight against Hitler; "it is to the younger generation in Germany that we must look."

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-33, and Adolph, Otto Wels, pp. 273-276 and pp. 277-285.

<sup>27</sup> Edinger, German Exile Politics, pp. 75-78.

central planning. They claimed autonomy from the Sopade. Together with other socialist emigrants, they established the first border stations for communication with adjacent underground groups in Germany. The Sopade tried only later to integrate this system of border stations.

With the victory of National Socialism, the leftist policy of German communism was outdated. But a rightist policy came into its own only after the VII. Congress of the Communist International in August 1935. The communist German emigrants had rejected previous feelers of the German splinter groups for an emigrant United Front. When the call from Moscow came they aimed at a comprehensive Popular Front rather than a socialist United Front. This strategy was geared to the defense of the Soviet Union and did little to promote unity among the German socialist emigration. It outflanked the splinter group emigrants on the right. Thus, the most consistent advocates of a front against Hitler were left behind. The response of the Social Democratic emigration was divided. The Sopade in Prague agreed to talks with German communist emigrants about practical matters but refused to issue a common manifesto. It maintained this attitude towards the Popular Front negotiations in Paris and other West European cities.<sup>28</sup> In the context of the French Popular Front, the SPD Landesgruppe Frankreich (the autonomous SPD emigrant group in France) and individual Social Democrats participated in the experiment which Heinrich Mann sponsored in February 1936. Albert Grzesinsky and Siegfried Aufhäuser, two later members of the Social Democratic group in New York, signed the manifesto of the meeting at the Hotel Lutetia. A group of SAP emigrants like Rosenfeld,

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<sup>28</sup> Adolph, Otto Wels, pp. 324-329.

Walcher, Frölich and Willi Brandt also signed the manifesto which was not followed up by other activities.<sup>29</sup> Later, the established Social Democrats in New York were equally indecisive in their attitude towards the first German American Popular Front. For several years, they did not know where their interests lay. After the conclusion of the Hitler Stalin Pact, they felt that anti-communism would give them the best identity available. The NB Group consistently abstained from United and Popular Front discussions during the first two emigrations. It was mainly interested in a socialist concentration.

The Sopade was equally inconsistent in its response towards cartel plans of the splinter groups. In its hour of need, it tried to regain its leadership with the revolutionary manifesto of January 28, 1934. This document conceded that "the old apparatus no longer exists" and pled for "new organizational forms". The Sopade offered to serve this revolutionary reorganization and promised to support "every group whose revolutionary spirit guarantees that its activity contributes to the downfall of the National Socialist dictatorship".<sup>30</sup> The Sopade relied on the illegal network of NB and other groups and granted them subsidies for their underground work. By 1935, this honeymoon was over. The Sopade felt betrayed by NB which had tried and failed to win an independent seat in the Socialist International to be deducted from the number of Sopade seats. A further altercation occurred with the care-

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<sup>29</sup> Drechsler, SAP, pp. 343-346.

<sup>30</sup> Erich Matthias, ed. Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland. Eine Dokumentation über die sozialdemokratische Emigration (Düsseldorf, 1968), pp. 215, 216, 217; Adolph, Otto Wels, pp. 306-308; Edinger, German Exile Politics, pp. 110-119.

less handling by the Sopade of its documents about illegal contacts of NB in Germany. When a concerned Sopade secretary leaked the documents to Frank, who showed it to Adler of the Socialist International, the Sopade charged the NB leader with bribery and conspiracy and cut off all subsidies.<sup>31</sup> This response of the exile executive was also conditioned by conspiratorial opposition within the Sopade which had little to do with NB.

After this change of attitude towards NB and other socialist groups, the Sopade relied more on its Mandatstheorie (the theory of its mandate) for its emigrant legitimation. It believed that it carried on the mandate and the authority of the Weimar SPD because all Sopade executives were elected or reelected at the emergency Reichskonferenz (national conference of party leaders) of April 26, 1933.<sup>32</sup> This gathering was a substitute for an ordinary national party convention which was no longer feasible. But the SPD leaders at this conference did not intend to convey an unlimited mandate for the twelve years of armed peace and international war of the Hitler era. They still anticipated a legal if reduced party activity and opposed the idea of emigration. The theory of the Sopade also disregarded the fact that a party mandate was at best issued to the full reelected SPD executive. But its Berlin section refused to recognize the authority of the emigrant section in Prague. Nevertheless, the Sopade based its rejection

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<sup>31</sup> Adolph, Otto Wels, pp. 314-323: "Neu-Beginnen und die Auseinandersetzung mit Paul Hertz".

<sup>32</sup> Matthiás, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, p. 72; also Adolph, Otto Wels, pp. 269-272 and Edinger, German Exile Politics, pp. 123-124.



of a socialist concentration during the thirties largely on its mandate theory.

The occasion for such a concentration arose in 1938 after the Austrian Anschluss and the German occupation of parts of Czechoslovakia. This caused the second emigration which concentrated most emigrant groups in France. In June, 1938, the leader of the Austrian socialist emigrants, Joseph Buttinger, addressed a call for the formation of a socialist cartel to the Sopade, the autonomous SPD emigrant group in France, to NB and eventually to the SAP. The Sopade participated in a debate on this issue in order to buy time and settle down in Paris. Eventually, it rejected the idea of socialist emigrant unity. It did not want to lose its supposedly unique position and was afraid of drowning in such a cartel arrangement. In a symbolic act of questionable legitimacy, it excluded Paul Hertz from the Sopade.<sup>33</sup> The emergency national conference had chosen him as one of three executives from the opposition to the former Weimar party executive. Throughout the first emigration, he promoted within the Sopade the idea of a socialist concentration. He also served as treasurer of NB and was on close terms with the NB emigrant leaders and with NB and other underground groups in Germany. The Social Democrats in New York followed the precedent of opposition to NB even though they could claim little of the controversial statutory authority of the Sopade. They did this at a time when the Sopade toned down its own resentment of NB and other splinter groups. Their main fear was that of being outdone by the NB organization in the United States. Thus, the stage was set for a

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

fruitless antagonism that bedeviled the history of the German socialist emigration in the United States.

The state of the American labor movement was not favorable for the German socialist emigration, either. The latter needed the sponsorship of American labor groups. But the demise of American socialism coincided with the German socialist emigration. This socialism had had a modest start at the end of the nineteenth century which culminated in the formation of the Socialist Labor Party (SLP). This still radical party had to give way to the reformist Socialist Party of America (SPA) in 1901.<sup>34</sup> The SPA reached its peak before the First World War with one-hundred-twenty-thousand members, and then suffered from its unpatriotic stand against American involvement in the war. After the Russian Revolution, the rise of communism engulfed American socialism in a debilitating series of party splits.<sup>35</sup> It decimated the SPA which unsuccessfully tried to recover in its third party politics of the twenties. But the dreams of a new progressive Labor Party did not materialize. The Christian Socialist revival of the SPA under Norman Thomas at the end of the twenties was also shortlived.<sup>36</sup> It actually contributed to the breakup of the SPA by introducing a new element into a troubled party with no digestive capacity. The major split of the SPA occurred in 1936. It produced a number of successor parties which

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<sup>34</sup> Melech Epstein, Jewish Labor in the United States (Trade Union Sponsoring Committee, New York, 1950), vol. I: 1882-1914, pp. 239-252.

<sup>35</sup> James Weinstein, The Decline of Socialism in America, 1912 - 1925 (New York, 1967), pp. 177-233.

<sup>36</sup> Bernard K. Johnpoll, Pacifist's Progress. Norman Thomas and the Decline of American Socialism (Chicago, 1970).

did better than their mother party. By 1942, the SPA was left with a membership of below one thousand. American communism started out with three parties. By Russian fiat, they were reduced to one by 1921. By that time, the Communist Party had lost most of the members whom it had taken over from the SPA. Then it fumbled through the twenties with changing directives from the Comintern. At the end of the twenties, it divested itself of its rightist opposition under Jay Lovestone and of its Trotskyist faction. Then it enjoyed some prosperity during the Popular Front period which coincided with the New Deal.

American socialism was largely an ethnic movement. This circumstance had advantages and disadvantages for the German socialist emigration. The American Socialist and Communist parties consisted partly of semi-autonomous language federations made up of local branches. At the time of the SLP, the German element was the strongest. But it declined with lessening immigration from Germany. By the end of the thirties, the German percentage in the SPA and its successor parties was negligible so that the socialist emigrants could not rely on much ethnic party support. The main German American legacy was the Neue Volkszeitung which became the symbol of establishment for the Social Democratic emigrants. The Communist German language federation was also small. It bequeathed mainly its journalistic facilities to the German splinter party emigration during the German American Popular Front period. German American unions played a minor role in the left wing antifascist phenomenon of the latter. The secondary German American labor organizations were also of debatable benefit to the socialist emigration. For the sake of fraternal and cultural benefits, they

overcame disruptive ideological tendencies by accommodating communist, left wing and right wing socialist factions within each organization. For this reason, they were ideal Popular Front organizations. But they did not lend themselves to partisan support of competing emigrant factions. The Social Democratic emigrant group failed in its efforts of monopolizing their support. It tried hard to do so because these secondary labor organizations represented the only, if limited, mass basis for the organizational efforts of the emigrants. These organizations also contained the readership for the emigrant edited newspapers which always had German American predecessors. The partisan emigrant approach was out of tune with the practice of the secondary labor organizations.

The Jewish labor groups turned out to be the most important for the German socialist emigrants. They eclipsed the German element after the mass emigration from the ghettos of Eastern Europe before and after 1900.<sup>37</sup> Most of these immigrants found employment with the Jewish garment manufacturers of New York and, to a lesser extent, in other East Coast cities and in Chicago.<sup>38</sup> The second wave of immigration was especially strong and provided the mass membership of the Jewish garment unions, of the Jewish language federation and of the Jewish

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<sup>37</sup> On Jewish labor in the United States, see: Elias Tcherikower, The Early Jewish Labor Movement in the United States (New York, 1961); Melech Epstein, Jewish Labor in the United States, Vol. I: 1882-1914 (New York, 1950) and Vol. II: 1914-1952 (New York, 1953); The Jew and Communism: The Story of Early Communist Victories and Ultimate Defeats in the Jewish Community of the United States, 1919-1941 (Trade Union Sponsoring Committee, New York, 1942).

<sup>38</sup> Tcherikower, The Early Jewish Labor Movement, pp. 162-178.

fraternal organizations. With it came Jewish socialists of the General Jewish Workers' Union who constituted a second generation of Jewish American leaders.<sup>39</sup> Because of these origins, Jewish socialist organizations were mainly regionalized in New York. In the communist exodus, many members of the Jewish language federation left the Socialist Party. In the rump SPA, the Jewish socialists were divided among the Old Guard and the Centrist factions. The Jewish partisans of the Old Guard played an important role in the breakup of the SPA and in the formation of its successor parties. The American Labor Party (ALP) and the Liberal Party in New York were Jewish parties that eventually completely replaced the Socialist Party of that state. The garment unions provided a synthesizing element in the Jewish labor movement. Despite their socialist background, they affiliated with the American Federation of Labor where they played an important role, especially during the New Deal. They were also the main advocates of industrial unionism and became instrumental in the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1936.

The Jewish socialists provided a link between American and European labor that was vital for the German socialist emigrants. They had an ideological and cultural affinity with European socialism because of their recent East European origins and their continuing ties with Jewish labor there. In the refugee crisis of 1940, they organized the evacuation of their European comrades. But they went beyond a

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<sup>39</sup> Bernard K. Johnpoll, The Politics of Futility. The General Jewish Workers' Bund of Poland, 1917-1943 (Cornell University, 1967), pp. 259-269.

limited ethnic purpose. They formed the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) to combat antisemitism at home and abroad. In this comprehensive purpose, they included German socialist emigrants in their rescue operation and became the main sponsors of these emigrants in this country. They also mediated between the emigrants and the AFL executive under William Green.

In general, the historical differences between the German and the American labor movement complicated the association between emigrant and American groups. Many American socialists disliked the German Social Democrats for their nationalist support of the war effort from 1914 to 1918 which split the German party. They sympathized with the USPD which later caused jealousies in the emigration. The Socialist Party of America had been exemplary in its nearly unanimous opposition to American military involvement.<sup>40</sup> It suffered for this stand materially but it emerged ideologically intact from the war years. What broke the spirit of the SPA was its inability to deal with the issue of communism after the Bolshevist Revolution.<sup>41</sup> At first, very few American socialists were unhappy about the establishment of the Soviet Union.<sup>42</sup> Even a right wing socialist like Abraham Cahan found occasional praise for the proletarian government in Russia.

Differences arose only over the applicability of Russian methods to the United States. The East European language federations,

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<sup>40</sup>Weinstein, The Decline of Socialism, pp. 178, 179.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 221, 222; and Theodore Draper, The Roots of American Communism (New York, 1957, second printing 1966), pp.164-175.

<sup>42</sup>Weinstein, The Decline of Socialism, pp. 242,244,245.

and especially the Russian federation, had swelled by recent immigration from Imperial Russia. After 1917, they got carried away by their pride in the Bolshevik Revolution. A majority of them believed that their extremism could succeed if they dared to apply the surgical knife to the body of the SPA and cut it down to the essential minority. A minority hoped to win over the whole Socialist Party to the new cause but was repudiated. After the initial splits, the fading SPA still opted for the class struggle and against compromising political coalitions of the Weimar type. In 1920, it was forced by a party referendum to apply for affiliation with the Communist International but could not comply with the conditions imposed by the latter. The German Social Democrats could not understand this lack of political discrimination in the Socialist Party of America. Only the successor parties of the SPA were sufficiently rightist for the taste of the German Social Democrats who by then had become emigrants.

The Christian Socialist revival under Norman Thomas only made the SPA more foreign to German socialists and led to a destructive polarization within the party. The Socialist Party could stand the increase in membership from below eight thousand to nearly twenty thousand that accompanied the new leadership of Thomas. But it could not survive the overdose of an infusion of new elements. These new members were young and middle class. They were mostly progressive intellectuals or Christian Socialists with a college background and a radical apprenticeship in the Intercollegiate Socialist Society.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Johnpoll, Norman Thomas, p. 59.

They did not fit easily into a labor party even though the ideological difference between progressivism, Christian Socialism and democratic socialism is marginal. Instead of narrowing this gulf, Thomas symbolized it with his animosity towards Morris Hillquit. He personally led the campaign for the ouster of the veteran national chairman from a merely honorary position.<sup>44</sup> He further strained the factional relations with his progressive political ventures such as his municipal efforts in New York which contributed to the demise of the Democratic Tammany Hall establishment in 1933.<sup>45</sup> Under these circumstances, the party failed to benefit from the propitious times of the depression. The defection of many socialists to the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt was less a cause than a symptom of socialist disunity.

Thomas might have saved the unity of the SPA if he had done the necessary mediation. Instead, he let his antipathy towards the Old Guard get the better of him and supported the progressive intellectuals even when he disagreed with their position.<sup>46</sup> He needed them in his party and was afraid of losing them if they became isolated. They were called the Militants, more because of their evangelical social zeal than for the radical vocabulary which served them as rhetoric in the contest for control of the party. To the German Social Democratic emigrants, the Militants were as repulsive as to the Old Guard of the SPA, especially after a Militant led delegation to the conference of

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 83, 91, 92.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., pp. 63, 64, 70, 74.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., pp. 80, 120-125.



the Socialist International of August 1933 in Paris humbled the guest delegation of the German unionist and Social Democratic emigrants for their recent indolence towards National Socialism and their inevitable defeat. Out of resentment for the Militants, the Old Guard defended the German Social Democratic record of antifascism.

The early socialist emigrants in the United States witnessed the further disruption of the SPA. Both the Old Guard and the Militants were determined to win control of the party or break it up.<sup>47</sup> The emigrants became inevitably involved in these factional struggles which influenced their history in the United States. They criticized, especially, the isolationist Declaration of Principles which the Militant minority submitted to the National convention of 1934 in Detroit. This Declaration proposed mass resistance and a general strike against American participation in a potential war. The new party constitution passed when Thomas threw in his lot and the votes of his delegate block with the Militant minority.<sup>48</sup> As a result, the Old Guard lost control of the national executive committee.<sup>49</sup>

It fought back vigorously and not always legitimately. First, it conducted an expensive campaign before the party referendum and lost. The new Declaration was narrowly accepted with a voter participation of only 50%.<sup>50</sup> At that point, control of the vital New York

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<sup>47</sup> Epstein, Jewish Labor, Vol. II, pp. 240-251.

<sup>48</sup> Johnpoll, Norman Thomas, p. 123.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 125, 126.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 127-130.

City and State organizations of the SPA was at stake. After the Old Guard dissolved some city branches and replaced them with paper branches, the Militants and Centrists set up a rival state organization that was recognized by the national executive.<sup>51</sup> The dénouement of the crisis came with the primary elections of the spring of 1936 which also decided about the number of delegates that each faction could send to the national convention in Cleveland. The pro-Thomas group won with 56% of the vote and thirty delegates to the Old Guard's twelve.<sup>52</sup> The latter could only fade out or bolt the party. Its delegation was not seated at the national convention when some of its leaders refused to rise for the singing of the International. They had already drawn up plans for a new party which they called the Social Democratic Federation (SDF).

The SDF was a small party which did not live up to the expectations of its founders.<sup>53</sup> The Socialist Party of Wisconsin joined the Farmer Labor Progressive Federation which was a member of the Progressive Party of Wisconsin. For this reason, the Social Democratic emigrant group could take no foothold in Milwaukee. It did take over the small German language branch of the SDF which it invited all Social Democratic emigrants to join. The moderate socialists of the garment unions did not fit into the SDF. They founded the American Labor Party (ALP) so that they could deliver their entire vote to Roosevelt and become independent New Deal partners. The ALP started out as a New

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 162-167.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>53</sup>Epstein, Jewish Labor, Vol. II, p. 246.

York organization. But its name was designed for national expansion which made, however, little progress. Nevertheless, the party played an important national role. The SDF was closely associated with the ALP, almost in the form of a member organization. It left most of the candidacies for city, state and Congressional offices to the ALP and supported all ALP candidates. By 1938, the American Labor Party replaced the Socialist Party in New York. The latter advised its members to join the new party.<sup>54</sup> During the war years, the ALP fell victim to a contest between its communist and progressive factions. In 1944, the progressive minority left the ALP and founded the Liberal Party which also played an important electoral role. The SDF remained an insignificant group.

After 1936, the SPA dwindled into non-existence.<sup>55</sup> Its isolationism drove out the internationalist faction in 1940 and 1941.<sup>56</sup> The latter constituted that portion of the SPA which sponsored the NB emigration in the United States. A group of internationalists, led by Reinhold Niebuhr, founded the Union for Democratic Action which supported the interventionist foreign policy of Roosevelt.<sup>57</sup> Later, another group dropped out which was centered around the United Auto Workers and included Leonard Woodcock and Paul Porter of Kenosha, Wisconsin, the site of the American Motors Company. Both of them had been

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<sup>54</sup> Johnpoll, Norman Thomas, p. 195.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 220-226.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 216, 246, 247.

members of the national executive committee of the SPA. Walter Reuther had left the SPA in 1938 already because of an electoral quarrel with the Trotskyist faction in the Socialist Party.<sup>58</sup> One of the last internationalists to leave was the conciliatory Alfred Baker Lewis, the leader of the Massachusetts party. The SPA affiliate League for Industrial Democracy also dissociated itself from Thomas and forced him to resign from its board. Two of its important officials were Mary Fox and Anna Caples, the latter of whom married the NB leader, Frank. All of the above leaders supported or joined the NB sponsor organization, the American Friends of German Freedom. Thus, the SPA had nearly disappeared by the end of the thirties. But its successor organizations sponsored either the Neubeginnen or the Social Democratic emigrant group in the United States.

The communist party adjusted somewhat to American conditions between 1918 and 1921, not without help from the Comintern. The revolutionary American purists were told by Lenin that left wing communism is "an infantile disorder". The two existing communist parties had to unite. Their members had to join the other American labor organizations in what was called a United Front from below. The united communist party was still something of an underground organization. By December 1921, it shed this vestige of revolutionary conspiracy with the formation of the open and legal Workers' Party which lasted until 1928. By that year, it had expelled its unruly factions and took on the name of Communist Party of America (CPA). A former left wing group

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

of the SPA was largely responsible for the change to the Workers' Party. This so-called Workers' Council had remained in the Socialist Party and agitated for the association of the latter with the Third or Communist International in order to salvage the whole SPA for the proletarian cause. After the failure of this strategy, the Workers' Council campaigned for an open communist party and won the approval of the Comintern.<sup>59</sup>

While the socialist movement was breaking up in the 1930's, the communist party was on an upswing, especially after 1935 when the Comintern issued the policy of the United and Popular Front from above. The CPA made a good public relations effort in these years and had a certain organizational momentum. It could rely on the pro-Sovietism and antifascism of many American intellectuals. The New Deal condoned the Popular Front which involved labor organizations like the CIO and even some unions of the AFL. Their support was valuable for Roosevelt. But the impressiveness of the Popular Front was more on the level of propaganda. Its actual strength is difficult to determine. It put the American socialists and ex-socialists on the defensive. They could not trust a party that had wrecked the American socialist movement. On the other hand, they did not know what to make of the official acquiescence in the Popular Front which made them feel uncertain in their anti-communism.

The German and Jewish sectors of the American labor movement formed the ethnic context of the German socialist emigration in the

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<sup>59</sup> Weinstein, The Decline of Socialism, pp. 247, 255; Draper, The Roots of American Communism, pp. 330-334; and American Communism and Soviet Russia (New York, 1960).

United States. The German language federation of the SPA began declining before the First World War. After the war, part of it left for the communist party. A percentage of the remaining component found itself in the Social Democratic Federation after the party split of 1936. The German Social Democratic emigrants had an easy time of dominating this small German language branch. The communist party had a German Bureau which coordinated and subordinated the various German party locals. Until 1925, its secretary had been Ludwig Lore.<sup>60</sup> He had played an important role in the socialist movement before and after the First World War. In the SPA, he became the editor of the New York Volkszeitung. It was established as the German American daily by the Socialist Labor Party and switched to the SPA with the German American socialists who were instrumental in founding that party. During the American years of Trotsky, Lore became a friend of the Russian revolutionary. In the confusion caused by the rise of communism, he played a waiting game as one of the main leaders of the Workers' Council. This also suited his position as editor of the Volkszeitung, which had a mixed readership after 1918. After the Workers' Council merged with the Workers' Party, the Volkszeitung was at the disposal of the German Bureau and became the official German American communist daily. When Stalin came to power, Lore had to pay for his Trotskism and for his earlier aloofness from the communist party. He was expelled in 1925 and carried on the Volkszeitung until 1931 as a paper in between the

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<sup>60</sup> Weinstein, The Decline of Socialism, pp. 189, 190, 255; and Draper, The Roots of American Communism, pp. 76, 180, 181, 342, footnote 28.



Communist and Socialist Parties in accordance with its centrist readership of the secondary German labor organizations. Without Lore, the Volkszeitung lasted until October 1932. It was discontinued because of factional difficulties, but reappeared two months later as the Neue Volkszeitung (NVZ) with mainly conservative sponsorship. In the thirties, Lore was only a marginal socialist figure. One of his associates in the Workers' Council and later in the CPA, the German American William F. Kruse, reappeared in 1942 in Chicago as the head of a German American Volksfront group.<sup>61</sup> As a right wing socialist paper, the Neue Volkszeitung became involved in the factional struggles that preceded the party split of May 1936. With that mission accomplished, the editorship of the NVZ was given to the Social Democratic emigrant, Gerhard Seger, the same month. The NVZ became the weekly of the German branch of the Social Democratic Federation, whose strong Jewish branch sponsored the conservative German emigrants. Both the SDF and the NVZ became rallying points for the official Social Democratic emigrant group.

Simultaneously with the NVZ in December 1932, appeared the Kampfsignal as the periodical of the left wing, non-communist socialists. It hoped to become a major voice of a German American United Front. But it could only maintain itself for a few years against the competition of the communist and Social Democratic press. Its publishers included many former supporters and colleagues of Lore. It was also supported by some left wing branches of the secondary German

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<sup>61</sup>Weinstein, The Decline of Socialism, pp. 171, 247; and Draper, The Roots of American Communism, pp. 330, 331, 332, 342 footnote 28.

American labor organizations such as the Arbeiter-Kranken-und Sterbe-Kasse (AKStK, Workmen's Benefit Fund), which will be discussed later. An important figure in the latter organization was Otto Sattler, one of the main centrist promoters of the German American United and Popular Front. The Kampfsignal bore the same name as the paper of the German SAP. Its supporters were in contact with the leaders of the German splinter party. The German SAP founder, Rosenfeld, emigrated to the United States where he cooperated closely with Sattler.<sup>62</sup>

After the expulsion of Lore, the German Bureau of the CPA had to publish a new paper. Der Arbeiter appeared from 1927 to 1937. It outlasted the period of communist leftism by two years. They were necessary in order to adjust to the new policy of the United and Popular Front. The result was the Deutsches Volksecho which was edited by German leftist emigrants.<sup>63</sup> Some of them were probably associated with the German Bureau. But this connection would, in any case, have been disguised during the Popular Front period.

An important affiliate of the German Bureau of the CPA was the federation of the Deutsche Arbeiterklubs of North America. They were United Front organizations but their formation predated the official policy switch of the Comintern. They tried to give organizational expression to the antifascism of the German American workers. In this function, they were at first officially independent of the German Bureau.

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<sup>62</sup> Robert E. Cazden, The Free German and Free Austrian Press and Booktrade in the United States, 1933-1950 (condensed published version of dissertation, Chicago, 1965), pp. 29, 30.

<sup>63</sup> Cazden, The Free German Press, pp. 38, 39, 42, 43.



The DAK Yorkville in New York City was organized in December 1932. Others followed in 1933 and 1934, including the DAK Milwaukee. They were federated in March 1934. The two main organizers of the DAK's were E. W. Mareg and Richard BekGran. The latter had come to the United States after the First World War. He joined the Communist Party in 1930 and became a functionary of its German Bureau. In 1935, the latter made an end to the precarious independence of the DAK's by requesting that their news bulletin become a supplement to Der Arbeiter, thus depriving it of its non-partisan character. Mareg and BekGran were disappointed about this change and left the CPA with a faction of the DAK's. They formed the Klub deutscher Antifaschisten (Club of German Antifascists) in New York, and supported the journal Gegen den Strom which BekGran published in imitation of the official paper of the German communist party opposition. Later, Gegen den Strom joined the Social Democratic emigrants in denouncing the NB leader Frank as a communist agent.<sup>64</sup>

The German American socialists also had a few parapolitical organizations such as the German American Forum and the German American Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold (National Flag Black-Red-Gold, the militia for the defense of the Weimar Republic). The Forum was the successor of the Wendekreis (Tropic). It was a socialist educational and propaganda organization. In the thirties, its president was Frank Bohn, who later headed the Social Democratic rescue effort in Southern France. It participated in the German American Popular Front for a short time with

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 30, 40, 41.

the Social Democratic emigrant Seger as its delegate. The American branch of the Reichsbanner had been organized in the late twenties by German Social Democratic immigrants from the Weimar Republic. Its Chicago City branch participated longer in the Popular Front than the New York branch.

There were also a number of German American unions of the AFL and CIO. They were either socialist, Social Democratic, pro-communist, independent laborite, conservative, or mixed. Regarding their participation in the Popular Front, it is not always clear whether an entire local or only a faction of it was a member. In Chicago, there remained few pro-Popular Front union locals after the movement for independent labor politics in the twenties and thirties. New York was better off with locals of the International Association of Machinists, of the Electrical Workers, Brewery Workers, and others.

More important and less politically oriented were the fraternal and cultural German American labor organizations. The largest of them was the Workmen's Benefit Fund (AKStK). It was founded during the time of Socialist Labor Party predominance in the 1880's and numbered one thousand members at its first convention in 1892. By 1901, its membership rose to thirty thousand and by 1931, to fifty-eight thousand. After some decline and recovery in the 1930's, it stabilized around fifty thousand by 1939. During the First World War, the AKStK naturally adhered to the antiwar resolution of the SPA. The editor of its monthly journal Solidarität or Solidarity was relieved of his post for his pro-German and pro-war attitude. He was replaced by Otto Sattler who held this position until after the Second World War. As a centrist socialist,

he cooperated closely with Rosenfeld and other leftist emigrants in the German American United and Popular Fronts. Kruse was also an official of the AKStK and used this position for his Popular Front activity.

The communist equivalent of the AKStK was the Arbeiter-Kranken- und Sterbe-Versicherung (Workmens' Benefit Insurance) in which Ludwig Lore was instrumental. It was the German American Branch of the International Workers' Order. Other communist organizations included several German American branches of the International Labor Defense like the Klara Zetkin branch of Yorkville, a German neighborhood on the East Side of Manhattan.

The main cultural organizations were the Naturfreunde (Nature Friends) and the Arbeitersängerbund (ASB, Federation of Workmen's Choirs). The latter was a federation of various individual groups that originated partly before 1900. Such local groups as the Ferdinand LaSalle Women's Choir and the DeLeon Men's Choir in Chicago were probably members of the ASB. The Nature Friends organization was started by German and Austrian immigrants around 1910. By 1939, there were twenty local branches in the United States with eighteen nature camps throughout the country. Camp Midvale in New Jersey became the scene of many Popular Front activities during the thirties. The movement originated around 1890 in Vienna, and spread rapidly throughout Europe with a membership in the hundred thousands. It made the contact of city workers with nature financially possible. The athletic clubs of the workers were mostly organized on a local level such as the Soziale Turnverein (the Social Turners) in Chicago. The Soziale Turnhalle (Social Turners' Hall) on Belmont and Lincoln Avenues served all German American labor

organizations, including the Popular Front, for major events.

The Jewish socialist organizations had imitated, at first, the structure of the German establishment. After some experimentation, the early Jewish socialist groups were consolidated as an autonomous branch of the Socialist Labor Party. Jewish socialists of the SLP then organized the union federation of the Vereinigte Yiddishe Gewerkschaften or United Hebrew Trades (UHT) which paralleled the Vereinigte Deutsche Gewerkschaften (United German Trades). Then, they founded individual unions as members of the UHT. These affiliated with the AFL in accordance with German American reformism which abhorred dual unionism.<sup>65</sup> Also, in 1892, the fraternal organization of the Arbeiterring or Workmen's Circle (WC) was founded in New York. It became a national organization in 1910.<sup>66</sup>

One problem of early Jewish socialism was the alienation between socialist leaders and Yiddish working people from Eastern Europe. The first generation of these leaders was more Russian and intellectual than ethnic and political. They spoke Russian even in private and were part of the socialist component of the Russian Enlightenment that followed the Crimean War. These international socialists were more interested in ideological debate than in labor organization. One of these debating societies was the Russian Labor Lyceum in New York. Under the influence of German American socialists, they turned toward the Yiddish

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<sup>65</sup> Tcherikower, The Early Jewish Labor Movement, pp. 316, 317, 319, 322, 327; and Epstein, Jewish Labor, Vol. I: pp. 168-191.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 298-317.

speaking working class and started seriously to organize American Jewish labor.<sup>67</sup> Two important leaders of the first generation were Morris Hillquit and Abraham Cahan. The former immigrated to the United States in 1888 and eventually became the chairman of the Socialist Party. The latter came in 1882 and became the foremost Jewish socialist journalist.

The main work of Cahan was the Jewish Daily Forward. In 1897, he was instrumental in planning and establishing this Jewish socialist daily which was named after the Vörwärts of the much admired German Social Democratic Party.<sup>68</sup> This development paralleled the breakup of the SLP which had controlled all socialist papers. Cahan planned an independent popular daily with the motto of "for the party but not by, or of, the party". Under his editorship, the Forward reached a circulation of seventy-two thousand in 1907, and of over two hundred thousand in its second decade. On this basis, Cahan had a strong influence on the development of the Jewish labor movement. The Forward nearly monopolized Jewish socialist propaganda and played a strong role in Jewish labor disputes. It often also controlled the strike funds. Thus, Cahan came to occupy a unique position in the Jewish and American labor movement. He developed the habit of acting independently and uncompromisingly, and resented the ascendancy of the second generation of Jewish socialist leaders. He displayed his stubbornness especially during the factional fights within the SPA in the 1930's. His partisan-

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 138-144.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 273, 275, 318-334.

ship for the German Social Democrats was equally onesided and disruptive.

The decisive impulse to the American Jewish labor movement came from the mass immigration of the post-1905 pogroms and its second generation Jewish socialist leaders. The Jewish garment unions grew rapidly and became cohesive organizations with a determined membership and a common ideology. The roots of these qualities were in the East European labor movement whose General Jewish Workers' Union or Bund had made considerable progress around 1900. The main American Jewish unions were the garment unions of the International Ladies' Garment Workers (ILGWU), the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), and the United Hat and Cap Makers and Millinery Workers (UHCMWU). There were also Jewish unions of the furriers, painters and construction workers. The Workmen's Circle also prospered on the new immigration and rose to a membership of fifty thousand by 1915 and to over one hundred thousand in later years. The ILGWU was founded in 1901 as the successor of previous UHT unions. After years of expansion, it declined during the factional struggles of the twenties and the misery of the Depression. But during the New Deal it rose to a membership of over two hundred and fifty thousand and became the third largest union of the AFL.<sup>69</sup> Its president, David Dubinsky, became a vice president of the AFL. He cooperated loyally with Roosevelt and was instrumental in founding the American Labor Party and the Liberal Party for this purpose.

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., pp. 362-386; Vol. II, pp. 192, 383-385.

Dubinsky was a typical second generation leader.<sup>70</sup> He was born in Brest Litovsk in 1892. At the age of fifteen, he became the secretary of a Bund union local. After repeated arrests, he was condemned to exile in Siberia but escaped on the march there and came to New York in 1911. He worked in the SPA but concentrated on his career in the garment unions. As the leader of the strongest garment union, he also had an influence on the German socialist emigration in the United States.

The ACWA was founded in 1914 as a rival union of the United Garment Workers, an affiliate of the UHT and the AFL.<sup>71</sup> In the strike of 1910 against the Jewish garment manufacturers in Chicago, the United Garment Workers insensitively betrayed the tailors of Chicago who revolted afterwards against their national union and founded their own union of men's clothing workers four years later. The ACWA soon outdistanced its rival and reached a membership of one hundred twenty thousand. After a compromise with the United Garment Workers, it was reconciled with the AFL for the two years from 1934 to 1936. Before and after this short AFL membership, it was an independent union and was always more radical than the ILGWU. It spearheaded the drive for industrial unionism which ended with the formation of the CIO. It remained in the American Labor Party after the ILGWU had left the ALP for the Liberal Party. Sidney Hillman was the president of the ACWA for over thirty years.<sup>72</sup> He had been one of the main leaders of the revolt

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 395-401.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 40-55: "Born out of rebellion".

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 392-395; and Madison, Charles A. Eminent American Jews, 1776 to the Present (New York, 1970), pp. 313-337.

against the United Garment Workers. He was born in Lithuania in 1887 and joined the Bund at the age of sixteen. After six months in jail, he left Russia during the post-1905 reaction and arrived in the United States in 1907. As a union leader of national stature, he held such posts as associate director of the War Production Board. For the German Social Democratic emigrants, he was too far to the left.

The most important Jewish leader for the German socialist emigrants was Charney B. Vladek.<sup>73</sup> He was born in Minsk in 1886. At a young age, he became a professional organizer for the Bund. "Vladek" was his underground name which he later assumed permanently. His reputation as an orator won him the name of "the second Lasalle". At the exile convention of the Russian socialists in London in 1907, Lenin tried to win the votes of the Bund delegates by individually inviting them to lunch. To his later regret, Vladek voted for the group of Lenin which broke away from the group of Plekhanov. In 1908, Vladek emigrated to the United States. He joined the SPA and had a significant political career. He was the main conciliator in the SPA and despaired over its breakup in 1936, which probably contributed to his early death in 1938. During the thirties, he promoted underground work in Poland and encouraged the German socialist emigrants on his visits to Europe. He had an evenhanded approach to the latter and invited representatives of the German garment unions, the Social Democratic and the NB emigration to the United States. Had he lived longer, he would have established some unity in the German socialist emigration in the United

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<sup>73</sup> Johnpoll, Norman Thomas, pp. 128, 129, 166, 171; and Epstein, Jewish Labor, Vol. II, pp. 244, 246, 384-388.



States. The uneasy relationship between Vladek and Cahan had its after-effects on the German socialist emigrants in America. It symbolized the antagonism between the first and second generation of Jewish socialist leaders which was largely resolved by the thirties except for the Jewish Daily Forward. Cahan held on to the control of his creation and of the Forward Publishing Association which was a stronghold of the Jewish Old Guard. As one of the main promoters of the Yiddish language and literature and as a writer and poet of considerable talents, Vladek became general manager of the Forward in 1916 but could not dislodge Cahan. The latter survived him by many years and played partisan politics with the German socialist emigrants.

After 1933, Vladek and Dubinsky were the two Jewish leaders most instrumental in organizing American union aid for European underground work. At first, they were concerned with the fate of the Bund in Poland under the rightist government of Pilsudski. But they were also interested in assisting illegal groups in Germany and German socialist emigrant groups. For these purposes, they initiated the Anti-Hitler Labor League. The 1934 national convention of the AFL in San Francisco discussed and accepted their proposal. They had also invited Walter Citrine, the president of the International Federation of Trade Unions, to speak on behalf of the European underground and emigrant labor movement. William Green, the president of the AFL, served as chairman of the Labor League which established a Labor Chest for the collection of funds. Dubinsky raised \$64,000 the same year from the ILGWU.

During the conflicts over the CIO, the Labor League fell into abeyance and was eventually replaced by the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC).<sup>74</sup> The AFL gave an ultimatum to the garment unions as the organizers of the Committee on Industrial Organization. The latter then left the AFL and became the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The ACWA participated in the CIO. The ILGWU saved face by becoming independent for two years before rejoining the AFL in 1937.<sup>75</sup> For these reasons, the Jewish labor organizations had to rely on themselves in their fight against antisemitism at home and abroad. The Jewish Labor Committee comprised mainly the garment unions, the Workmen's Circle and the American branch of the Bund. Until 1941, it contributed \$224,000 to the European underground labor movement. In the refugee crisis of the first war years, it organized the evacuation of several hundred Bundists and European socialists to America.

But the American labor movement could not provide adequate sponsorship for the German socialist emigrants. The remnant groups of American socialism involved these emigrants in their own complexities which reinforced an already well established German factionalism. Because of this preoccupation with organizational politics, the anti-fascist work of the socialist emigrants took second place. They accomplished very little in the decade from 1935 to 1945. The period of the German American Popular Front exemplifies the limits of interaction between emigrant and American groups in an ethnic socialist context.

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., pp. 258, 259, 402-409.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., pp. 212-226.

## CHAPTER III

### THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE GERMAN AMERICAN

#### POPULAR FRONT 1934 - 1939

The German American component of the Popular Front movement is difficult to define. It was a native movement in which a few socialist emigrants served as leaders. The ascendancy of the emigrants was a gradual process that took place at the pace and rate of their arrival from Europe. An analysis of the German American Popular Front is, therefore, a study in the complexity of political association and interaction. The divisions of American and German socialism were confusing already when considered separately. Their combination in Popular Front organizations of unclear initiatives and relations produced patterns even more difficult to disentangle. In the associations between ideologically equivalent native and emigrant factions some native organizations, and nearly all native newspapers ended up under emigrant control. The resulting ethnic mergers constituted the building blocks of a Popular Front in which the respective ideologies and goals could coexist only precariously in various phases of a double ascendancy. Native control gave way to emigrant control. Within this development, centrist prominence was followed by a short period of limited factional balance which then succumbed to leftist leadership. These oscillations followed the chronology of the United and Popular Fronts. The United Front was a centrist invention for dealing with fascism. The commu-

nists accepted it officially only in 1935 and then only as a prerequisite of their Popular Front. The native and emigrant Social Democrats went along temporarily only because of their involvement in the secondary and United Front-like German American labor organizations whose participation in the Popular Front they could not prevent. When the Social Democrats formed their own political groups after the breakup of the Socialist Party, they left the centrists at the mercy of the leftists. With the decline of the SPA, the centrists no longer had a party political home and became stuck in the Popular Front. The latter brought some centrist and leftist socialist emigrants together. But it also reinforced the Social Democratic phobia of intersocialist cooperation.

The first native Popular Front of centrist initiative was the Antifaschistische Aktion (Antifascist Action Committee). It folded when the still unreformed communists tried to take it over. The centrists then attempted a non-partisan Popular Front in the Deutsch-Amerikanische Kultur Verband (DAKV, German American League for Culture) that consisted of the secondary labor organizations and of some educational party affiliates. It went through all the phases mentioned above. Rosenfeld reinforced the native centrists. The Social Democratic emigrant, Seger, became its president until May 1936, the month the Social Democratic Federation was formed, and Seger became the editor of the Neue Volkszeitung. After that, some Social Democratic labor groups still belonged to the DAKV and the moderate German American, Frank Bohn, became its president until 1938. But for the year after the exit of Seger, the initiative in the DAKV went to the Popular Front group of Chicago.

The latter consisted of the editors of the monthly Volksfront and of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft fortschrittlicher deutsch-amerikanischer Vereine (Action Committee of the Progressive German American Societies). The Action Committee was founded in the spring of 1935, that is, before the DAKV. It included also some emigrants but their proportion cannot be sufficiently established. Its organizer, Erich von Schrötter, a recent immigrant from Austria, was also the chief editor of the Volksfront. This Chicago group became the DAKV Chicago. For a while, it disposed of the only newspaper in the DAKV. Its ideology was an Austrian type antifascist activism whose antiwar stand paralleled Midwestern isolationism. The DAKV Chicago soon launched a campaign for expansion in the Midwest and the Far West in the hope of winning a proportional share of national executive authority at the first national convention of the DAKV.

But the leftist emigrants in New York upstaged the Chicagoans and took them under their protection. They had arrived in this country in 1937 and 1938 and edited the Deutsches Volksecho (DVE), the communist Popular Front successor of the Arbeiter. They first established their ascendancy in the DAKV New York before synchronizing their preparations for the national convention with the DAKV Chicago. For more time, the convention was postponed until 1938. In the meantime, the representative of the DAKV New York made himself comfortable in the DAKV Chicago. He rivaled the organizational work of Schrötter and became co-editor of the Volksfront. The latter then fell in line with the emigrant policy of all out support for President Roosevelt. Part of the leftist preparation for the national convention was the campaign for an Einheitszeitung.

The latter would have combined the two New York papers of the Volksecho and the Volkszeitung and left the Volksfront intact. It conveniently provided a positive appeal to the secondary labor organizations to the detriment of the Social Democrats.

At the national convention, the emigrant-immigrant coalition converted its Popular Front ascendancy into executive control of the DAKV. It shifted the executive seat to Chicago, out of reach of interference by non-leftist groups in New York. The leftists strengthened their position further with continued expansion. The Chicago DAKV attempted inter-ethnic antifascism in Chicago and in Hollywood. The New York DAKV was strengthened by two new member organizations, the Volksfrontgruppe deutscher Emigranten (Popular Front Group of German Emigrants) under Rosenfeld and the German American Writers' Association. The latter included emigrant and native writers of socialist and liberal persuasion but its leftist emigrants were predominant.

The political and diplomatic developments in Europe were unfavorable to the Popular Front movement. The latter lost its momentum with the defeat of the front governments in France and Spain. It failed because of the appeasement policy of France and England and the resulting diplomatic deal between Stalin and Hitler. In the period of DAKV decline, the Neue Volkszeitung tried unsuccessfully to wean the secondary labor organizations away from the DAKV. After the Hitler-Stalin Pact, it openly denounced the DAKV and tried to organize its own ethnic labor front. The DAKV could not adjust to the new situation at its second national convention in September 1939 in Cleveland. It reverted to a cultural and domestic emphasis in its ideology which

concentrated on social and educational legislation. But its main attempt of changing its image failed. German American conservative cultural organizations wanted to deal even less with the DAKV in 1939 than before. Under these circumstances, the Volksecho and the Volksfront stopped publication. The first phase of the German American Volksfront was over. The DAKV survived with the low profile of a passive federation of some locals of the secondary labor organizations. The political climate of the years from 1939 to 1941 favored the activities of the Social Democratic emigrants.

The development of the Antifascist Action Committee exemplifies the fate of centrist initiative in socialist front politics. The success of the latter hinged on the attitude of the left and right wing factions. The centrists could only count on the interest of their United Front partners in the secondary labor organizations. Sattler and his followers in the Workmen's Benefit Fund initiated the Antifascist Action Committee. For its foundation, eighty representatives of German American labor organizations met at the New York Labor Temple in February 1933.<sup>1</sup> As a political thinker and motivator and as the editor of the Solidarity, Sattler had a certain moral influence but the extent of his statutory leadership in the Benefit Fund is unclear. In the Action Committee the centrist factions of his and other secondary labor organizations had to deal with communist groups like the German branch

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<sup>1</sup>Volksfront, (monthly, from November 1935 to March 1938; weekly, from April 1938 to September 1939; published by the Action Committee of Progressive German Societies in Chicago from November 1935 to February 1936; by the German American League for Culture in Chicago from March 1936 to September 1939), 3 June 1938; see also Die Einheitsfront (newspaper published in one issue by the Anti-fascist Action Committee, New York), August 1934.

of the Communist Party, the publishers of the Arbeiter, the Federation of the Deutsch Amerikanische Arbeiterklubs (German American Workers' Clubs), and the Rote Hilfe (Red Aid). For political balance, the German language group of the Socialist Party and the publishers of the Neue Volkszeitung represented the Socialist side.<sup>2</sup> This fragile coalition was able to publish its Einheitsfront only in the single issue of August 1934. When the communists succeeded in making support of their Arbeiter a condition for further membership in the Action Committee, the German language group of the SPA, the representatives of the NVZ and of other groups, left the front organization.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of the experience with the Action Committee, the German American League for Culture was organized on a different basis as its name implied. It excluded political parties and consisted only of the secondary labor organizations. Its main initiators were, again, Sattler and the Benefit Fund, "the heart of the DAKV". Planning started in the early summer of 1935, before the critical Comintern Congress in Brussels, and ended with the formation of the League on September 23.<sup>4</sup>

The ideology of the early DAKV was ethnically and domestically oriented. According to Sattler, the secondary labor organizations were afraid of National Socialist infiltration and of anti-German reaction in this country. The Benefit Fund amended its constitution by restrict-

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Robert E. Cazden, The Free German and Free Austrian Press and Booktrade in the United States, 1933 to 1950 (Dissertation, Chicago, 1965; condensed published version), pp. 41, 42.

<sup>4</sup>Volksfront, February 1936 and 3 June 1958.



ing membership to antifascist German Americans. The coalition of the DAKV could perform even better the public relations task of identifying its members with antifascism. To the general German American constituency, Sattler presented antifascism in the form of an ethnic patriotism which synthesized the German and the American heritage by way of the German American contribution to the civilization of this country. This patriotism was simultaneously pro-German and pro-American and was supposed to counter the National Socialist appeal to the German Americans.

Some of the ideas of Sattler were somewhat farfetched. He conceded that the German American socialists had neglected the "Heimatgefühl" (nostalgia for the province of birth) which results from the ties to the home province rather than to the whole country of origin, as the scene of childhood memories and the residence of relatives. He complemented these local values with the proposal of cultivating "a conscious and deliberate link with Germany as a nation and with the German cultural heritage".<sup>5</sup> For this purpose, Sattler proposed a German cultural program designed to preserve the use of the German language in the United States. He deplored the failure of the early German American schools founded by German American progressives. As a substitute, he proposed that German American students enroll in the German classes of public schools and colleges. The DAKV also planned to establish German libraries and eventually an academy of German culture. Sattler did his own research in German American history and contributed numerous articles to the Volksecho and the Volksfront. With the help of this transi-

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

tional link, the German heritage could also motivate a good immigrant to defend American liberties. The drawback of this approach was that the conservative German Americans refused to follow a socialist lead in the cultural sphere.

Sattler claimed later that his formula made the League for Culture a lasting front organization. This was true insofar as it limited membership to the secondary labor organizations. But these integrated fraternal and cultural organizations were already based on the principle of a United Front to which the DAKV added nothing new. In turn, they were exposed to new stress by their membership in the federation. Their own factional struggles intensified when their pro- and anti-DAKV segments contested the elections for their national executives. The reason for the relative longevity of the DAKV was that the secondary labor organizations were solid enough to withstand these disruptions. Some of the secondary labor organizations of the League, like the Workers' Clubs, were party affiliates and represented party interests. They just happened to coincide with the purposes of the DAKV when the Comintern proclaimed the Popular Front and the Socialists could not leave a federation of the crucial secondary organizations to the sole care of the communists.

The Socialists were quite prominent in the early DAKV. One of their main delegates was the Social Democratic emigrant, Seger. He represented the German American Forum of which Frank Bohn was the president.<sup>6</sup> Seger was already a member of the constituting committee

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., November 1935.

and then became the first president of the DAKV. In this function, he was an active organizer and was interested in the merger of the Chicago Popular Front group with the Kulturverband. During a promotional visit to Chicago, he shared the speaker's forum and the main addresses with Schrötter in a mass meeting of the Chicago group. According to the Volksfront, Seger "spoke with his usual objectivity and fairness".<sup>7</sup> He was interested in the Chicago Popular Front for the same reason that he joined the DAKV. Both organizations consisted mainly of the fraternal and cultural labor organizations which constituted the main readership of the Neue Volkszeitung.

Two months later, the Chicago Popular Front was in, and Seger was out of the DAKV. As the new editor of the NVZ, he could no longer remain president of the cultural federation. Also, after the breakup of the SPA and the formation of the Social Democratic Federation, the conservative socialists had their own political home and intended to play more of a right wing role. The NVZ fell in line with this policy and became critical of the DAKV. The implacable anti-communist Cahan of the Jewish Daily Forward had a hand in these developments. Officially, Seger resigned from the DAKV because of an alleged communist conspiracy to seize the main executive positions in the federation.<sup>8</sup> In vacating its presidency, Seger actually helped the leftists to take over.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., February 1936 and March 1936.

<sup>8</sup> Cazden, The Free German and Free Austrian Press, p. 44. See also Radkau, Die deutsche Emigration in den USA, p. 172.

The admission of the Chicago group was expected to consolidate the DAKV rather than to shift its center to Chicago. As the Eastern DAKV, the Chicago group consisted mainly of the secondary labor organizations. It claimed the adherence of thirty-five groups which included the Workers' Benefit Fund, the Nature Friends, the labor choirs, the athletic clubs, several unions, and the Reichsbanner (a German American branch of the militia for the defense of the Weimar Republic).<sup>9</sup> But there were more recent immigrants and emigrants in the Chicago Popular Front. According to Maria Schrötter, the emigrants numbered several hundred but there is no other evidence to confirm this claim. As a result of its peculiar composition, the Chicago group was more ambitious and energetic than the Eastern DAKV. In its ideology, it paid attention to both America and Europe.

Schrötter was a typical exponent of this attitude. He was a recent immigrant from Graz, Austria. Before the First World War, he had taught German literature at the University of Chicago for several years. In 1925, he returned to the same position. Then, he switched to Northwestern University, which dismissed him in 1928 in a purge of leftist professors. According to his wife, he had not been politically active in Austria. But he called himself once "an old revolutionary". He was an activist antifascist of the Austrian type and conducted the Chicago Popular Front accordingly. His activism and his ideology reinforced each other.

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<sup>9</sup>Volksfront, November 1935 and July 1936.

Schrötter expressed his views often in the Volksfront which he edited since November 1935. Fascism was the crisis stage of capitalism and was on the rise in all industrialized countries. This was good Marxism. In the view of Schrötter, there was a fascist threat to Austria and America from within and without. The Chicago Popular Front could fight fascism on the spot rather than wait for developments in Germany and Italy. Also, all industrialized nations were imperialistic and contributed in some way to the international tensions that could set off another war. In the crisis of 1935, England, France and Italy would have liked to divide up the "Ethiopean roast" but they nearly fell out with each other in the process. The imperialist interests of the United States focused on East Asia and contained similar risks.<sup>10</sup> To the Volksfront, the intentions of President Roosevelt in 1936 were suspect. He was "wavering, ... he is unreliable. ... Should [Senator] Borah win the succession we could be certain that a pacifist is in command and that America will not participate in a war." For the Popular Front, "the best thing for 1936 would be: no new world conflagration".<sup>11</sup>

The remedy against fascism was the traditional socialist pacifism, the solidarity of the workers of the world against war which had failed twenty years ago. But Schrötter thought that the workers had learned the lesson of the First World War: "This is not 1914. We have learned something. The United Front must be achieved in the whole world. Only a strong United Front will be capable of preventing a war

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., November 1935.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., January 1936 and September 1936.

that is already approaching from the East and the West."<sup>12</sup> The result would be "the victory march of the liberation of all peoples" from fascism and imperialism. For the United States also, "the Popular Front idea is probably the only salvation". Schrötter warned that "Roosevelt and his entourage are not unconditionally on the side of freedom" for the colonies. Therefore, the Popular Front "must counter the threat that comes from Landon, Coughlin, Lemke and, or Roosevelt".<sup>13</sup> This approach was also the solution for Germany. It was only "a matter of time and of the United Front before the local disturbances would merge into a powerful mass movement against Hitler". The Chicago paper appealed to the Sopade in Prague to assist such a German front.<sup>14</sup> The role of the Soviet Union was secondary in this front theory. The pro-Sovietism of Schrötter paralleled that of many American liberals and intellectuals in the thirties.<sup>15</sup>

This positive ideology was geared for political action. The Chicago group was aggressive and activist. It fought the local German

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., December 1935.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., September 1936. Charles E. Coughlin, the "radio priest" was a violent opponent of the Second New Deal. He felt that the inflationary currency policies of the latter did not go far enough. In 1934 he founded, therefore, the National Union for Social Justice which became the Union Party of the presidential elections of 1936. As a compromise candidate, he chose Congressman William Lemke who did not really fit into this third party movement and was not a talented campaigner. As a result, the cause of "Liberty Bell Bill" suffered some cracks in the elections.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., December 1935.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., January 1937.

American National Socialists not only in its newspaper but also in the streets.<sup>16</sup> It organized demonstrations against their meetings which were often protected by the police. Its members went inside the meeting places and participated in the discussions. In a meeting of March 1938, Schrötter resisted some local stormtroopers who wanted to eject him. He was arrested by the police and had to appear in court.<sup>17</sup> Such incidents made good headlines in the Volksfront and even in the Chicago papers. This side effect was not unintentional.

With this mentality, it is not surprising that the Chicago group advocated a political front rather than the non-partisan cultural concept of the DAKV. Its inability to find political partners by early 1936 facilitated its merger with the DAKV. But as the DAKV Chicago, it did not forsake a political orientation. An explanation in the Volks-

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<sup>16</sup>The German American National Socialists were organized in the German American Bund. It succeeded in 1935 the Friends of the New Germany which in turn was an outgrowth of the pre-1933 Teutonia Club. The Bund was a very small organization. By 1939, it had fifty five locals of which seventeen were in New York. According to Fortune Magazine, its membership amounted to no more than two thousand five hundred while the statistics of the Justice Department counted forty-five locals with six thousand six hundred seventeen members. The Weckruf, the publication of the Bund, had one thousand one hundred sixty subscribers in Chicago and only two hundred in New York. The Volksfront remarked somewhat apologetically that the main fascist danger lay in the number of fellow travelers. Even the German government became disenchanted with the awkward activities of the Bund. Its president Fritz Kuhn was physically prevented by the German ambassador Diekhof from rising for a speech at the German Day rally of 1937 in New York. The German government had decided that it was not interested in the fomentation of anti-German feelings in the United States. For references about the Bund and Kuhn, see Sander A. Diamond, The Nazi movement in the United States, 1924-1941 (Cornell University Press, 1974); Radkau, Die deutsche Emigration in den USA, pp. 66 to 69; also Volksfront, 15 December 1937; 22 July 1938; 8 April 1939.

<sup>17</sup>Chicago Daily News, 3 March 1938.

convergence of spontaneous popular groups is completed. - Let us proceed with 'the organization of the antifascist front of attack.'<sup>20</sup>

It alleged that the idea for the conference had originated with several progressive organizations of Wisconsin. The purpose of the conference was to promote the political Popular Front. A delegate from Chicago criticized the DAKV for being "still on the defensive and even too weak for a successful defense" against National Socialist advances in the German American societies. A delegate from Detroit was displeased with "the purely negative attitude of most organized antifascists". He advised "a new orientation" through "self-criticism, a practical presentation of ideas, tactical versatility and speedy action". He stated flatly that "neutrality is no longer possible today" and that "not even the League for Culture could completely isolate itself from political questions". In fact, "the political parties had an important function in the Kulturkampf (the fight for cultural values)". Campaigning for a farmer-labor party would "not conflict with the principles of the League for Culture." The conference decided to appeal to the national DAKV for the admission of political parties.<sup>21</sup>

In the Chicago paper, this antifascist conference was described as a genuine Popular Front movement. It consisted of thirty delegates from four states. They reached "full unanimity" in their discussions. It was "amazing that people from four different American states who had not previously talked or corresponded with each other wanted in princi-

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., July 1936 and September 1936.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.



ple all the same thing". Schrötter encouraged them by pointing to the progress of the Popular Front in France and Spain. He emphasized the need for the kind of "central combination in the local sphere" which the Midwestern Popular Front was. He hoped that the conference would become "the first step for the unification of all German speaking circles of America". A permanent committee of six representatives was formed. The Volksfront became the official organ of the Midwestern Popular Front to which it devoted a special section of every issue. A delegate of the DAKV New York was invited to witness these proceedings. He understood that the DAKV Chicago was not willing to wait for the national DAKV with the organization of a political front.<sup>22</sup>

The Chicago group still had to reap the full benefits of its local expansion. For this purpose, it adopted a new constitution for the Midwest, together with the DAKV Detroit, and asked the national executive to accept its statutes as a constitutional proposal to a prospective national convention. According to the new arrangement, the latter would take place annually and elect each time a new executive. The national convention would proportionately represent the local DAKV organizations. For each thousand of its membership pool, a local DAKV was entitled to one delegate.<sup>23</sup> In this way, the Chicago group could make its weight felt in the national executive. The main problem was the numerical definition of the local membership. It is difficult to determine how a Benefit Fund local, for example, became part of the DAKV. But all its members were counted on the inflated DAKV list.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., November 1936.

In the fall of 1936, the Chicago group had already an organizational headstart for the convention which was to take place in New York in March 1937. It pressed its advantage with a further expansion in California in the winter of 1937. In January of that year, it sent Erich Rix on a lecture tour of the Far West.<sup>24</sup> He was a former official of the Transport Workers' Union of Northern Germany and editor of a union paper there. He had been arrested in February 1933 and sent to a concentration camp. After his release, friends helped him to come to Chicago.<sup>25</sup> In April 1937, he finally founded a DAKV local in San Francisco. It had a membership pool of only three thousand which was a sign of a modest labor base of secondary organizations such as the Benefit Fund.<sup>26</sup> It came still in time for the national convention. After the appearance of the Volksecho in New York, the latter was postponed by a full year to June 1938 in Chicago.

The editors of the Volksecho first established themselves on the Popular Front scene in New York. They did so by acquiring an autonomous front position and winning a corresponding influence in the DAKV. The Volksecho became the organ of the DAKV in New York in the absence

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., January 1937.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Mrs. Marie Schrötter, 10 December 1973; Questionnaire, Erich Krewet, pseudonym Erich Rix, filled out on 25 October 1969, Dokumentation zur Emigration, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Federal Republic of Germany: Krewet was born in 1900 in Wuppertal, Barmen. In 1935, after his imprisonment, he fled to Antwerp in Belgium to join the German group of the International Transport Workers' Federation. He came to the United States in 1936 and stayed here until 1957. After the war, he unsuccessfully appealed his exclusion by the National Socialist government from employment as a sailor.

<sup>26</sup> Volksfront, 15 April 1937 and 15 June 1937.

of any other front newspaper. It appeared first in February 1937.<sup>27</sup> Its editor was Stefan Heym who had arrived in the United States shortly before. During the Weimar Republic, his poems had appeared in socialist and liberal papers.<sup>28</sup> Today, his literacy reputation is international. During the war, he received several medals in the American army. But in 1953, he sent them back to President Eisenhower and left the United States for East Germany because of the McCarthy hearings. Another Volksecho writer was the leftist emigrant, Martin Hall. He was an irrepressible organizer and covered the whole country in his Popular Front career from the East to the Midwest and the Far West. After the war, he became prominent in the propaganda division of the East German government. Other Volksecho writers were the emigrants Rosenfeld, Goldschmidt,<sup>29</sup> Karl Obermann and Walter Schönstedt.

The ideology of the Volksecho was the Popular Front concept of the Comintern. It centered around the defense of the Soviet Union by

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<sup>27</sup> Deutsches Volksecho, (New York weekly, published from February 1937 to September 1939), 20 February 1937.

<sup>28</sup> Radkau, Die deutsche Emigration, p. 170.

<sup>29</sup> Alfons Goldschmidt was very interested in the international Popular Front. His advocacy of a Latin American Popular Front was due to his past economic research. In 1929, he had founded the Wirtschaftsinstitut Latein Amerika (Economic Institute for Latin America). He was also treasurer of the Deutsch-Amerikanisches Hilfskomitee zur Unterstützung des spanischen Freiheitskampfes (German American Committee for Aid to the Spanish Fight for Freedom). In February 1938, he reported the collection of \$3,410.21. Albert Einstein warmly supported the committee. The Volksecho cosponsored the American good will tour of Ludwig Renn who was a general in the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. Renn was a German aristocrat, officer, and writer with the original name of Vieth von Golzenau.

collective security. A sanitary cordon of Popular Front governments was to keep National Socialist Germany in check. The Volksecho liked the interventionist tendencies of President Roosevelt. It supported him fully and asked him in a letter of April 1938 to join the international Popular Front.<sup>30</sup> It discarded the socialist theory of fascism in all industrialized countries. National Socialism became an isolated evil in a worldwide contest with democracy. The alternatives of "historical significance" were regression or progress, barbarism or civilization, slavery or freedom. The Volksecho asked all German Americans to "confess unqualified loyalty to the democratic principles of the United States".<sup>31</sup>

The Volksecho was in a good position to gain influence in the German American Popular Front. The latter was more the affair of ideologically committed individuals than of spontaneous masses. It depended on pointed propaganda. With the control over information, the Volksecho and the Volksfront could shape Popular Front opinion. The former called this its service to the popular movement. Critics of the front media would have had to rely on them for voicing their reservations. The two newspapers were as important as the delegate system for maintaining communication between the member organizations of the DAKV. In every issue, they published the weekly Vereinskalender

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<sup>30</sup> Volksfront, 9 April 1938.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 29 April 1938 and 16 September 1938.

(organizations' schedules) and discussed the activities of the member organizations. They could exert pressure on these groups by criticizing or praising them. They could also dress up their reports on the groups by suppressing negative developments and emphasizing positive ones. Besides their publicistic advantage, the publishing associations of the two front papers acted as front centers of their own. These consisted of delegates from the constituting groups of the DAKV and held monthly conferences. They organized picnics, summer festivals, discussion forums, protest meetings and demonstrations either alone, with some of the DAKV member organizations or with friendly outside organizations.

During 1937 and early 1938, the Volksecho insistently wooed the secondary labor organizations especially in preparation for the national convention of the DAKV. It patronized the meetings and conventions. It admonished the German American Workers' Clubs to "fulfill their mission as one of the main elements of the German American antifascist movement".<sup>32</sup> They were told to "get on their way to the masses" and to "bring together all progressive elements even beyond the confines of the workers".<sup>33</sup> The Volksecho approved the change of name to German American Clubs for this purpose. The national convention of the latter in April 1938 gave unconditional support to the Volksecho. It decided further to develop the United and Popular Fronts and to extend its work to the South and West. It resolved to appeal to Roosevelt for his

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<sup>32</sup>Volksecho, 27 March 1937.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 3 April 1937.

support of collective security and to campaign for the repeal of the Neutrality laws.<sup>34</sup> The Volksecho also promoted the Federation of Workmen's Choirs and the Nature Friends. In its view, the latter had become "points of concentration for the antifascist German population".<sup>35</sup> They were expected to grow into "a powerful organization" and were recommended for their integration into "the new unionist front".<sup>36</sup> Both groups repeatedly paid tribute to the Volksecho.

The only competition of the Volksecho for the influence over the secondary labor organizations came from the Neue Volkszeitung. Before the national convention of the DAKV, the Volksecho took special care in neutralizing the Social Democratic appeal by starting a campaign for an Einheitszeitung (Consolidated Newspaper). The latter would have absorbed the two New York papers, depriving the Social Democrats of their mouthpiece while leaving the Chicago Volksfront intact. The NVZ had to reject this scheme. It was thus put on the defensive and was stigmatized as uncooperative which served the propaganda purposes of the Volksecho. In May 1937, Hall had still professed his interest in coexistence with the Volkszeitung. There was, in his opinion ample space for several newspapers in a field of a few million German American workers.<sup>37</sup> A week later, he asked already for cooperation between the two papers.<sup>38</sup> During the summer, the Volksecho prepared

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 9 April 1938.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 22 May 1937.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 29 May 1937.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 1 May 1937.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 8 May 1937.

its call for the Einheitszeitung. It built up publicity for the national convention of the Federation of Workmen's Choirs which took place in September, in Cleveland. There, the Brooklyn branch of the Federation introduced a motion for an Einheitszeitung which was unanimously adopted, that is, by twenty-two positive votes and forty-six abstentions. Hall covered the convention extensively and reported in a headline that "the Federation of the Workmen's Choirs decides the unification of the anti-fascist press". He elaborated that "the actual duplicating and, unfortunately, often opposing work" of the two papers was self-defeating. Only a unified front press could conduct the counterattack against the Nazi agitation in the United States.<sup>39</sup>

The Volksecho then wrote to all secondary labor organizations for support of the Cleveland resolution. In every issue of both front papers, another local of another labor organization reiterated the call for an Einheitszeitung. Goldschmidt denied that Seger had made a new paper out of the old NVZ and scored "his lack of evident journalistic experience". He thought that Seger "writes badly and his information and skill are insufficient".<sup>40</sup>

The NVZ reacted very awkwardly. In his address at the choirs' convention, Seger admitted that he was "unfortunately not in the popular situation of the Volksecho representative". In its protest letter

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 11 September 1937; Neue Volkszeitung, (New York weekly, published by the Progressive Publishing Association from 1933 to 1949), 9 October 1937; Radkau, Die deutsche Emigration, p. 171.

<sup>40</sup> Volksecho, 25 December 1937.

to the secondary labor organizations, the NVZ argued that it was the older paper. The Volksecho and the Volksfront were "Gegengründungen" (counter-foundations). They could discontinue publication if a single antifascist paper was essential. Somewhat facetiously, the NVZ also mentioned its obligation to honor its advertisement contracts.<sup>41</sup> During his visits to most of the secondary labor organizations, Seger claimed that the NVZ was committed to "the scientific socialism of Marx and Engels". The special temporary task of antifascism could not absorb this general tradition. The NVZ devoted only a third of its space to the antifascist cause while reserving another third for the social and political problems of Europe and the remaining third for the developments in the United States. The NVZ was more than an antifascist newspaper of emigrants like the Volksecho. It was not only against something but also for something, namely socialism. It could not assume a liberal mask like the Volksecho. It could not give up its opposition to capitalism for temporary tactical reasons. Seger added, somewhat contemptuously that the liberal conversion that was implied in the Popular Front ideology made the existence of communist parties superfluous. For conducting a liberal Popular Front policy, the League for Human Rights would suffice. Seger made the rhetorical offer that there would have been no insuperable objections to a request by the DAKV for the use of one page of the NVZ as a special Popular Front section. He suspected that the Volksecho wanted to benefit from the superior resources of the NVZ.<sup>42</sup> All these rationalizations could not prevent the success

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 18 September 1937.

<sup>42</sup> Volkszeitung, 6 November 1937.



States whereto he returned in 1936.<sup>44</sup> His novel "Das Lob des Lebens" was serialized in the Volksecho.

For a complete preparation for the national convention, the leftist emigrants in New York had to synchronize their Popular Front work with the DAKV Chicago. They brought the Volksfront in editorial line with the Volksecho. This task fell to Hall, who came to Chicago at the end of 1937. The Chicagoans could only emphasize their past merits. In expectation of Hall, the Volksfront invited its readers to "imagine what the antifascist movement in America would be like today without the work of the progressive Germans of Chicago ... and their newspaper".<sup>45</sup> Shortly after the arrival of Hall, Schrötter reflected about his past as an old revolutionary.<sup>46</sup> His wife resented especially the arrogance of Hall.<sup>47</sup> Under these circumstances, the compliance of Schrötter is surprising. Perhaps his hands were tied by the communist members of the Chicago group like the emigrant Arthur Necker. Perhaps he realized that only the cooperation between the New York leftists and the Chicago activists could outmaneuver the German American and emigrant centrists of New York. The Volksecho praised him as "an old and well known co-fighter of our cause".<sup>48</sup> Hall soon rivaled the organizational activity of Schrötter. He spoke with Schrötter or without him at the

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<sup>44</sup> Volksfront, March 1937.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 15 June 1937.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 15 January 1938.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Maria Schrötter, 10 December 1973.

<sup>48</sup> Volksecho, 30 April 1938.

meetings of the DAKV and of its member organizations. At one of them, he confidently "predicted which forces in Germany will finally stop Hitler".<sup>49</sup> He became co-editor of the Volksfront in January 1938 and editor of an equal status on 22 April 1938. On that date, the Volksfront finally appeared as a weekly, just a little over a month before the national convention. In a front page article, Hall claimed that with this weekly appearance "the Midwest and the Far West of the United States received an independent, progressive German language newspaper that did not exist before".<sup>50</sup> He reserved the front page to himself for such occasions as the Munich Pact, a keynote address for the new year, the German occupation of Czechoslovakia or the military and party purges of 1938 in the Soviet Union.

The Volksfront soon voiced the policy of the Comintern. President Roosevelt finally became its hero, too. It defended his domestic and foreign policy, "the perfection of inner democracy" and the defense of international democracy. It rejected the third party attempts of Governor LaFollette of Wisconsin which it had previously favored. LaFollette was inclined to limit assistance to unemployed workers in favor of suffering farmers. Only a third party promoted by the AFL and the CIO would have met with its approval.<sup>51</sup> When Congress threatened to cut \$150 million from the Work Projects Administration emergency budget in February 1939, the Volksfront called this a concentrated

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<sup>49</sup> Volksfront, March 1938.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 2 April 1938.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 7 January 1939 and 11 February 1939.

The meeting of the DAKV New York also discussed the Chicago proposal for a new constitution of which the Volksfront plan was only one article. According to the NVZ, the delegates received no advance copies of the constitution. The proposal was read to them only at the meeting so that they had little time for deliberation. Also, the national executive in New York failed to make an alternative proposal. It was even suspected by the NVZ of conspiring to liquidate itself in favor of a new executive in Chicago. The Volkszeitung finally charged the communist groups of the DAKV with claiming double and paper representations for the national convention.<sup>55</sup> This outside criticism by someone who could have done better from within was not very effective with the secondary labor organizations.

The leftist activist coalition reached its main objectives at the national convention: the adoption of its constitution, the election of its candidates to the national executive and the selection of Chicago as the new executive seat. As the result of nearly two years of preparation, it controlled a majority of delegates. Most of the representative speakers of the nine DAKV city locals favored the coalition. Eric Sanger, the leader of the German American Club Astoria, and Karl Meyer, the president of the Arbeitersanger, spoke for New York; Arthur Necker, the new president of the DAKV Chicago, for that local; Anton Jacobs, a writer of the Volksfront, for the Detroit local, and Schonstedt for the locals of Philadelphia and Baltimore. Arthur Hesse, the business manager of the Volksfront, represented San Francisco by proxy. This conven-

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<sup>55</sup>Volkszeitung, 21 May 1938.

tion elected an almost all Chicago national executive. Hall became vice president after his co-nominees Schrötter and Necker declined in his favor. Schrötter was unanimously elected national secretary with Necker as his deputy. The positions of treasurer, protocol secretary and legal consultant were also occupied by Chicagoans. This was almost necessary because of the controversial shift of the executive to Chicago. The liberal Dr. Rudolf Brandl, a former editor of the Frankfurter Zeitung and director of the Ullstein Publishing House archives in Berlin, lost his prominence in the DAKV. He was offered the low position of secondary protocol secretary under the condition that he move to Chicago. But his main job was in New York as editor of the German Jewish immigrant paper Aufbau.<sup>56</sup> Sattler was unanimously elected president of the DAKV. But this was not the strongest executive position. Also, he lived in New York which further impaired his executive effectiveness. Thomas Mann had sent a letter of commendation to the national convention and then accepted a DAKV vice presidency for a while.

There was a certain amount of opposition at the convention which the leftist activist coalition had to conciliate in order to preserve a minimal harmony. The reports of the two front papers emphasized the unity and unanimity of the proceedings of the convention.<sup>57</sup> But in its final report, the Volksfront was nevertheless satisfied that the

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<sup>56</sup> Volksfront, 15 January 1938.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 17 June 1938.

conference could be held "despite all difficulties".<sup>58</sup> The coalition leaders had to be very diplomatic in handling the delicate problem of the role of Sattler and the Benefit Fund. They allowed for a certain measure of ideological diversity and passed by the opportunity of giving policy speeches of their own. They also refrained from pushing controversial issues too far. They had to outmaneuver Sattler and the Benefit Fund without over-alienating them. The latter were indispensable as "the heart of the DAKV". Hall took it upon himself to nominate Sattler for the presidency and to deliver the official laudation: "None of us has acquired more merits for the progressive development in the German American field or has contributed more to the general development of the DAKV and none of us commands such great personal and moral authority as our friend Sattler."<sup>59</sup> Nobody at the convention criticized the latter for reaffirming the non-partisan character of the DAKV. He held to the centrist illusion that it did not matter "whether someone is a socialist, a communist or a democrat . . . . The main thing is that he is a sincere enemy of National Socialism."<sup>60</sup> But he conceded "the relatively weak influence of the League of Culture in the German American field" and offered the remedy of a greater emphasis on the German background and on German and German American cultural values.<sup>61</sup> This was not enough for the activists of Chicago. In an implicit criticism

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 3 June 1938.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 17 June 1938.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 3 June 1938.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

of the centrist DAKV, the Volksfront pointed out that the new constitution "liberated the DAKV from the narrowness of a small circle that was more or less restricted to the progressive labor organizations".<sup>62</sup> It justified the transfer of the executive to Chicago with "the great possibilities for the development of the progressive German population in the Midwest" and with the argument that the whole country could be better propagandized from that central point. The DAKV Chicago was free to follow a more dynamic Popular Front policy. For the New York leftists, any further comment was redundant after their success at the convention.

Schrötter himself still clung to some remnants of his independent Popular Front theory. He still considered National Socialism as part of a larger problem and believed that "if we do not have any higher general goals and concentrate exclusively on the Nazis in Germany we cannot escape the reproach of anti-Germanism. We oppose the Nazis only within the context of the general fight against fascism and for democracy." He felt that the Popular Front had to deal with the rise of American fascist organizations beyond the small German American Bund. He was not as tolerant of the American political and economic system as the leftist advocates of the Comintern policy. For him, there were two overlapping fronts: "A freedom loving America is the last safe bulwark against world fascism alone, Soviet Russia against world fascism and capitalism."<sup>63</sup> The Popular Front took only a temporary precedence over

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 17 June 1938.

the ultimate goals of socialism.

The purpose of harmony was also served "by wisely giving up resolutions of secondary importance". On the recommendations of Sattler and Schönstedt, the committee on resolutions withdrew two motions which "might not find unanimous acceptance". The first contained an honorable citation of the Chicago group for the weekly publication of the Volksfront. The second resolution reminded the delegates of the campaign for the Einheitszeitung by asking that all mutual recriminations between the two front papers and the NVZ be dropped. Thus, the coalition did a complete job at the national convention.<sup>64</sup>

After the convention, the DAKV made creditable efforts in further Popular Front organization with limited success. The DAKV Chicago pursued an inter-ethnic Popular Front in the Midwest and on the West Coast. For Schrötter this was a natural course. Chicago had sizable minorities of all the former ethnic components of the Austro-Hungarian Empire which were then all threatened by Germany. The DAKV Chicago participated in a mass meeting to commemorate Hitler's assumption of power with such groups as the Czechoslovak National Alliance of America, the Hungarian Democratic Federation, the Lithuanian Progressive Organizations, and the Jewish People's Committee.<sup>65</sup> This meeting resulted in the formation of a Joint Council of National Groups of which the DAKV Chicago became a member.<sup>66</sup> Thus, the latter gained

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 3 June 1938.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 28 January 1939.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 4 February 1939.

some liberal recognition by way of inter-ethnic associations.

The further expansion on the West Coast, which had hardly any secondary labor organizations, was carried out by Hall in 1938 and 1939. He was mainly interested in Los Angeles and Hollywood which had become a center of German Jewish immigration and of American Jewish migration after 1933. It was a promising field for Popular Front antifascism. Various antifascist organizations existed already which the DAKV could potentially join. There were also many German exile writers, dramatists, actors and other artists in the area. Among the writers were Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, Bertold Brecht, Lion Feuchtwanger, Bruno Frank and Carl Zuckmayer. Their reputations went beyond ethnic and labor limits, and their very professions symbolized the antifascist principle of free artistic expression for which they had been persecuted. Their literary contributions to the front press and the front press reports about their activities had an unlimited propagandistic value. But Hall's exploits were rather modest. In September 1938, he founded a DAKV local in Los Angeles that consisted of sixty members from three organizations like the German American war veterans of California. Bruno Frank, who was known for his protests against the atrocities of the First World War, promised his cooperation. This embryonic DAKV participated in the activities of the Council of Nations which consisted of antifascist groups with Central European origins. A mass meeting was planned for October with an All Nations' Show directed by Max Reinhardt, the best known theater director of Republican Berlin.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 24 September 1938; also Volksecho, 1 October 1938.



In 1939, Hall went back to the West Coast. The Volksfront serialized his travel diary which he sent from Portland, Oregon.

The Eastern DAKV founded new locals in Rochester, New York and Reading, Pennsylvania.<sup>68</sup> The DAKV New York, which was then headed by Sanger of the communist German American Club, tried desperately to make some Popular Front connections with non-labor groups.<sup>69</sup> The Volksecho campaigned continuously for this forward move. From dubious evidence, it detected a change of mood in the non-labor organizations. In October 1938, it derived hope from the fact that only a bare third of the ten thousand German Americans who gathered for the Deutsche Tag (German Day) meeting in New York "raised their hands for the Hitler salute". There was "only one solitary and badly visible swastika" on display. The Volksecho discovered a "process of reorientation among German Americans" which was supposedly based on a popular "rank and file movement" within their organizations.<sup>70</sup> This warranted optimism for a comprehensive Popular Front. The German Day was organized by the Vereinigte Deutsche Gesellschaften (Confederated German Societies) to which belonged also the Steuben and the Karl Schurz societies.<sup>71</sup> The Volksecho defined this federation as a center block with which the left block of the DAKV was to effect a Popular Front as a matter of "historical mission". This front would oppose the fascist block of the National

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<sup>68</sup> Volksfront, May 1939.

<sup>69</sup> Volksecho, 28 May 1938.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 8 October 1938.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 7 January 1939.

their efforts mainly on the Benefit Fund as the largest organization. Seger defended the past Social Democratic approach of reserve and procrastination by conceding that "an organization like the Workmen's Benefit Fund must, of course, not be jeopardized or even destroyed by political discussion".<sup>75</sup> But political discussion was exactly what he had in mind under the new circumstances. For the quadrannual convention of the Fund in New York, he admonished the delegates "that the political activation of the masses of the AKStK should be a special goal for the next four years". He advised the leaders of the organization to reform their "bad conscience toward revolutionary socialism". He saw the AKStK as the nucleus of a new labor party and recommended "political pioneer work for the formation of an independent labor movement in the United States". Within such a movement, there was no room for a Popular Front.<sup>76</sup>

But Seger commented only indirectly on the DAKV. In his speech to the AKStK delegates, he explained why the NVZ did not believe in "cooperation with the adherents of the Soviet dictatorship". In an ensuing article, he expressed satisfaction with the eighth resolution of the convention which objected to "any kind of dictatorship". He interpreted it as a refusal of "fighting the fascist dictatorships together with the advocates of a differently colored dictatorship". Then, he exhorted the Benefit Fund that "the unity of the movement, the uniformity of the fight, the strength of the organization and the purity

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<sup>75</sup>Volkszeitung, 10 June 1939.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 1 July 1939.

of the political ideas require the rejection of the wrong allies".<sup>77</sup>

Despite the decline of the Popular Front, the Social Democrats did not make many inroads on the AKStK. It is difficult to assess the factional balance within the Benefit Fund, but it did not seem to have shifted radically in 1939. The previous year, the Group for the Representation of the Proletarian Interests had asked the Progressive Group in the AKStK to discuss a coalition of the two factions. The Progressive Group claimed that it had already absorbed all factions and that the former consisted exclusively of communists. It insisted that there existed already "a unity of action in the fight against war and fascism". These Progressives were probably centrist rather than conservative members of the Krankenkasse.<sup>78</sup> At the convention, Sattler proclaimed that "we remain the arch enemies of Nazism and fascism and I remain so as editor of the journal [Solidarity]. In this respect, there will be no compromise."<sup>79</sup> The resolutions of the convention demanded the continued unity of the socialist workers and asked for financial and political contributions to the work of the DAKV. Another appeal asked all branches of the Benefit Fund to join the DAKV. Heym reported in the Volksecho that "a reactionary mood" at the convention was overcome and that the organization remained fortunately "on the side of the fighting proletariat". The "reactionaries" had criticized financial and moral aid to the Spanish Popular Front. Except for the

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Volksecho, 19 March 1938 and 16 April 1938.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 24 June 1939 and 1 July 1939.

communists, the AKStK remained united on the issue of a potential war. It demanded a referendum about American participation unless the United States would be attacked directly.<sup>80</sup>

After the conclusion of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, the NVZ finally asked the secondary labor organizations directly to repudiate the DAKV. Seger publicized the refusal of the Volksecho and of the Volksfront to condemn the pact and invited "the AKStK, the Federation of Workmen's Choirs, the labor athletic unions, in short, all German labor organizations of America [to] make a decision". He considered anybody hopeless "who has still not understood that you can't sit down at the same table with communists". There were "now only adherents of democracy and adherents of dictatorship". Seger asked those who agreed with the NVZ to decline any further cooperation with the DAKV. He admitted that "the NVZ had shown extraordinary restraint towards the DAKV during the past two years [and] had generally avoided to publicly confront organizations who cooperated with communists". It had done so, according to Seger, not because it considered cooperation with communists possible but "for the sake of the fight against National Socialism". He stated categorically that "there is now an end to this".<sup>81</sup> In December of 1939, the NVZ called for a boycott of the German Day rally of the DAKV and, for the first time, refused to report about this meeting of "a branch of Stalinists".<sup>82</sup> It defined itself as "the only German language news-

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 11 February 1939.

<sup>81</sup> Volkszeitung, 2 September 1939.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 30 December 1939.

paper in the United States that, in accordance with its socialist principles has continuously, fought against dictatorships of all shades."<sup>83</sup> The German American Popular Front nearly disappeared in the fall of 1939. But the Social Democratic emigrants could claim no credit for this fact. They even failed to reap the benefits from it which they had expected.

The German American Popular Front tried to adjust to the new situation of the non-aggression treaty and the resulting war with little success. It did so at the second national convention in Cleveland which had been postponed from June to early September for obscure reasons. The best defense for the DAKV was another attempt at reaching safe, middle class waters. The Popular Front was supposed to save the United Front. According to Hall, "the needs of the day and the maturity of the evolution make it necessary and possible to expand the KV beyond the circle of the purely class-conscious labor organizations".<sup>84</sup> Sattler agreed that it was most important "to make a consistent effort of winning over bourgeois organizations".<sup>85</sup> In the new situation, this strategy required ideological changes. In the resulting controversy over the proper adjustments, the leftists imposed their unworkable approach on the centrists. At the convention, Sattler introduced a motion to condemn the Hitler-Stalin Pact. But the leftists could not disown the latter. The Volksecho blamed it on the isolation of the Soviet

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 9 September 1939.

<sup>84</sup> Volksecho, 10 September 1939.

<sup>85</sup> Volkszeitung, 9 September 1939.

Union which needed more time to prepare for the onslaught of the German armies.<sup>86</sup> The leftists referred the motion of Sattler to the committee on resolutions. There, they theorized that "the foreign policy of Russia did not concern the work of the League directly". The committee submitted a counter-resolution against condemnation "because of the unpredictable consequences ... and because the situation could change rapidly". The thirty-five delegates from a dozen cities accepted the second resolution "by all against four votes". The Volksecho reported this development only some ten days after the convention, in its last issue.<sup>87</sup> As a result of this stand, the German American Popular Front lost one of its main purposes, the defense of the Soviet Union by collective security. But it could not benefit from this diplomatic change which was, propagandistically, much worse than the concept of collective security.

In this dilemma, the leftists resorted to substitute ways of improving the image of the DAKV. The delegation from Philadelphia felt that the DAKV was "not only an anti-Nazi organization, but an auxiliary organization for all German Americans". Hall belatedly proposed to emphasize the transformation of the DAKV "from a purely negative anti-Nazi organization to a positive German American cultural organization". He deplored the fact that the cultural work of the League was "still its greatest weakness". It was "sporadic and never systematic". It required "a serious, systematic educational program that familiarizes

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<sup>86</sup> Volksecho, 26 August 1939.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 16 September 1939.

German Americans and Americans with German language, literature and music". It should extend to "the field of civilization", that is, it should "pursue German American interests in the public school system, the public housing system, etc."<sup>88</sup> Thus, the DAKV switched its emphasis from foreign to domestic policy. It stood "for a progressive internal policy" with a "minimum program of democracy for all German Americans"<sup>89</sup> That meant "no lowering of salaries, no elimination of the WPA"<sup>90</sup>

The leftists also paid attention to the nationality issue and to ethnic protection. The Volksecho deplored that many German Americans denied their German origins. This contributed to the misconception that "Germandom and National Socialism are identical"<sup>91</sup> Hall also suggested that a strong DAKV could raise its voice after the war "when a new Versailles must be prevented to ensure the renaissance of a free democratic Germany". The convention should lay the foundation for this assistance. As a comprehensive purpose of a better Popular Front, the leftists offered "the protection of the loyal German Americans in the face of the war situation and of the danger of a rising anti-German hatred in the United States"<sup>92</sup>

With these ideological concessions, the DAKV hoped to qualify

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 2 September 1939.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 19 August 1939.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 16 September 1939.

for cooperation with the conservative German American societies.<sup>93</sup>

The president of the Wisconsin Zentralverband deutschstämmiger Vereine (Confederation of German Societies) accepted an invitation to the conference. With him, the German American Turners, a non-labor organization, and the Steuben Society were envisioned as members of a National Cartel Organization of German Americans. This middle class strategy could not work for a DAKV that identified with the Hitler-Stalin Pact. The Neue Volkszeitung correctly diagnosed it as a sign of decline. Hall covered this bleak outlook up with a show of confidence. Ignoring the latest international developments, he called the period from mid-1938 to the fall of 1939 "a year of progress". In his speech to the convention, he described the development of the DAKV "from a loose federation of individual city locals ... to a relatively solid national organization with a national executive".<sup>94</sup> He added that the latter was of one mind and had never had any serious differences of opinion. But with "the reorganization of the national executive" and other measures, the Popular Front assumed a lower profile which was not conducive to a publicity oriented movement. Sattler was unanimously re-elected president. Schrötter remained national secretary but Hall and Necker did not retain their vice presidential posts. Hall became national organizer instead. In a time of reduced activity, this was more a recognition of past services. A national secretariate of five members would reside in Chicago while the full executive of fifteen members would meet every six months in a central location. The national con-

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.



vention would be held only bi-annually unless half of the DAKV locals demanded an earlier date. The Volksecho and the Volksfront discontinued publication shortly after the convention. The latter planned to issue a monthly DAKV bulletin for 1¢ apiece.<sup>95</sup> The first phase of the German American Popular Front was over. The DAKV survived only in obscurity. The next two years of the German socialist emigration belonged to the Social Democratic and the New Beginning groups.

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<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GERMAN EMIGRATION BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR: THE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORTS OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, THE UNIONISTS AND THE NEW BEGINNING GROUP

These three Social Democratic groups were not equally competent in their organizational efforts in this country. The Sopade and the emigrants of the Allgemeine Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (ADGB, General German Trade Union Federation) had the best opportunities for establishing branches in the United States and for consistently cultivating good relations with American labor groups. But they were preoccupied with European events and did not make any long term plans. They represented the Weimar labor establishment and did not feel the need for winning the recognition of an American labor movement whose socialist sector was alien to them, disorganized and small. The AFL was powerful but anti-socialist. At times of financial distress, the unionist and SPD emigrants made ill-conceived attempts at raising instant American funds.

The unionist emigrants made Martin Plett1 the American representative of their belated Gewerkschaftliche Auslandsvertretung Deutschlands (Geade, Exile Committee of the German Trade Unions). But Plett1 lacked the proper attitude to the plans of his American sponsors and remained too isolated. The Sopade was equally shortsighted. After

failing to establish an early representation on the basis of already existing contacts, it sent a number of individual volunteer fundraisers to the United States at haphazard intervals: Seger in 1934 and 1935, Sollmann in 1937, and Stampfer in 1939 and 1940. At the occasion of Stampfer's first trip to America, the Sopade finally established an American branch, the German Labor Delegation (GLD). By then, the latter had already been preceded by the Gruppe Neu Beginnen.

Unlike the other two groups, NB had no American contacts in 1933. But its emigrant leader Frank seized the opportunity of Vladek's visit to Europe in 1935. Eager for a status which the Sopade tried to deny the NB Group, Frank realized that political work in the United States was important for a long term emigration. Before the end of his first visit to America in 1935, the NB Group had the nucleus of an American sponsor organization in the American Friends of German Freedom (AFGF). But the number of American sponsors was mainly limited to the Jewish labor leaders and the progressive minority in the Socialist Party. Even as a latecomer, the German Labor Delegation was not willing to share the vital support of the Jewish labor organizations with NB. It resented the American success of Frank and tried to dislodge the New Beginning Group from its favorable position. In this process, antifascist unity was again sacrificed to emigrant rivalry. This behavior of the German socialist emigration limited the extent of its political work in the United States. It disillusioned the American sponsors and turned their antagonisms to the disadvantage of the German socialist emigration. In the Jewish Labor Committee, the pro-NB and pro-GLD factions neutralized each other's initiatives for the

respective German emigrant groups.

Long range Social Democratic planning would have required the establishment of an official branch of the Sopade in the United States in 1933 or 1934, before the split of the SPA in 1936. The Sopade was then financially independent and could have been an equal partner of American socialists. In this way, the SPD executive and the later Social Democratic emigrants in New York could have won the willing cooperation of the unionist emigration instead of arrogating unionist functions under the pressure of later circumstances. Neither could they have been challenged by New Beginning which was, instead, allowed a headstart. They would also have had to be more tolerant of dissenting groups. Vladek would have insisted on moderation. But the Sopade lacked the necessary vision. It was only interested in Europe and expected an early end to National Socialism. By the time of its bankruptcy, the Sopade was considered doomed so that American socialists and unionists were reluctant to waste money on it. The opposing socialist emigrant groups were only good for partisan American purposes.

Immediately after the National Socialist assumption of power, Siegfried Lipschitz encouraged American socialists and unionists to cooperate with the Sopade. He had run the Social Democratic press service in New York since 1929.<sup>1</sup> Especially American Jewish socialists

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<sup>1</sup>Federal Republic of Germany, Political Archives of the Auswärtiges Amt, Bonn, Ausbürgerungen, 23. Liste, L-Z. Dr. Siegfried Lipschitz: Preussische Gestapo to Reichsministerium des Innern, 15 November 1934. This document further elaborates that Lipschitz became a journalist after serving in the German army and studying law and economics in Berlin and Vienna. He represented various liberal German

and unionists were interested in contacts with the Sopade and in extension of its work to the United States. But Lipschitz found the task of mediation frustrating. Part of his problems with the Sopade were his own ideas about antifascist work in the United States. The executives disliked his patronizing criticism and activism and his insistence on socialist renewal and cooperation. For a while, he had been editor-in-chief of the old New York Volkszeitung which suggests that he was too radical for the Sopade. Lipschitz deplored that the Weimar SPD had not responded to his exhortations of thoroughly informing American public opinion about the dangers of a National Socialist victory. In 1933, he was convinced that antifascist publicity in America by the SPD was more important than ever, and more important than in Europe because of "the support which we may receive from all sides of American public opinion for our fight against the Hitler regime". He described how many "government agencies, organizations, newspapers, etc." had asked him "to be kept up to date about the developments within the German socialist and labor movement and to be informed regularly about all declarations, decisions, etc. of our movement". Reciprocally, he hoped to contribute to the Neue Vorwärts and to all other publications of the Sopade.<sup>2</sup> Beyond that, Lipschitz proposed the formation of an official branch of the party in this country

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newspapers in the Far East. Then, he spent four years in Mexico as the head of the Social Democratic press service in that country before being promoted to the same task in the United States.

<sup>2</sup> Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, Bonn, Emigrations-Korespondenz (later referred to as EK), Lipschitz to Werte Genossen [Sopade], 21 June 1933, Mappe 72.

on the ground that a mere press service would not suffice for the necessary work in the United States. He considered his loyalty unquestionable and made himself available to the emigrant executives "at any time and in any way necessary in this fight against the reigning German tyranny".<sup>3</sup> He informed them that he planned to attend the conference of the Socialist International in Paris in August 1933, where he expected to discuss these American matters with them personally. Stampfer represented the Sopade in Paris and seemed very interested in the proposals of Lipschitz. He promised to report them to the full executive in Prague.<sup>4</sup>

But the Sopade was not interested. It was disappointed by the criticism of the SPA delegation to the Paris conference. Soon after his return from Europe, Lipschitz questioned Stampfer about the progress in the matter of an American Sopade branch and insisted again on the necessity for an immediate decision. He explained again that his plans were not only supported by the SPA but also by the American unions and by the leadership of the AFL. He offered to be an honorary Sopade representative and expected compensation only for the cost of running an office. The latter could in his opinion maintain close contacts with the government agencies in Washington and extend its work from a central point to the Latin American countries which were especially vulnerable to National Socialist propaganda.<sup>5</sup> It can be

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Lipschitz to Sopade, 7 July 1933, EK Mappe 72.

<sup>5</sup> Lipschitz to Friedrich Stampfer, 27 September 1933, EK Mappe 72.

assumed that an SPD branch of long standing would not have been ignored by the American government.

Without the establishment of a Sopade branch, Lipschitz continued his work within the antifascist activities of the American socialists. He wrote the pamphlet "Swastika over Germany" which was printed by the Rand School, the propaganda stronghold of the Old Guard in the SPA.<sup>6</sup> Shortly after his return from Europe in the fall of 1933, "the Socialist Party and the antifascist unions" organized the Labor Conference to Combat Hitlerism, a forerunner of the Labor League. According to Lipschitz, the ACWA and the ILGWU belonged to the Conference together with other Jewish labor organizations like the Workmen's Circle and "German party and labor groups".<sup>7</sup> The Labor Conference decided to form locals throughout the United States and established an office for publicity, the Transatlantic Information Service (TIS). It was run by Lipschitz who then had an American substitute for the defunct Social Democratic press service. He expected the Sopade to cooperate closely with the Labor Conference and with the TIS. He solicited a regular correspondence which was to include telegrams on special occasions. He emphasized that "these international contacts are all the more necessary as we might at some unforeseen moment be terribly dependent on them".

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<sup>6</sup>Political Archives AA, Bonn, Ausbürgerungen, 23. Liste, L-Z, Dr. Siegfried Lipschitz: Bericht der Deutschen Botschaft in Washington, 10 June 1933.

<sup>7</sup>Transatlantic Information Service, New York, Lipschitz to Parteivorstand, Prag, 31 January 1934, EK Mappe 138.

This was a reference to a potential revolutionary change in Germany about which Lipschitz shared the general illusions. In March 1934, he doubted whether the Sopade was prepared for such an eventuality and was afraid "that the approaching hour of destiny will find us inhibited by unresolved questions".<sup>8</sup> He praised the Revolutionary Manifesto of the Sopade as a necessary beginning but urged more revolutionary seriousness. He believed that "the time has come to officially shed the garb of the old Social Democracy and to unite under a new banner, in name also". In so doing, the Sopade could overcome the general criticism of the Social Democratic performance before and after January 1933. Lipschitz urged this change out of loyalty to the SPD which ought to defend itself against the charges from within and without its ranks that its Revolutionary Manifesto was only "new wine in old containers". He expected the Sopade to assume the revolutionary leadership against National Socialism and reintegrate the dissident socialist groups into a common effort.<sup>9</sup> He also advocated more far-reaching plans which would have "an electrifying appeal to youth and to the world". He considered it necessary to unite "the defeated German and Austrian forces into a 'Grossdeutsche' socialist party" which would pursue "the goal of a united socialist 'Grossdeutschland' imbued with true Social Democratic spirit".<sup>10</sup> Such ideas could not go

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<sup>8</sup> Lipschitz to Stampfer, 2 March 1934, EK Mappe 138.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



over too well with the Sopade which viewed the internationally favored and more radical Austrians with distrust.

The Sopade nearly ignored the Labor Conference and left Lipschitz to his own devices. He had to remind the executives that Vladek, the general manager of the Jewish Daily Forward, had asked them for delivery of all Sopade publications including the issues of the year old Neue Vorwärts. He told them without making much of an impression that "comrade Vladek is easily the most active American personality in the fight against the Nazis, here and over there".<sup>11</sup> In the absence of good overseas relations, Lipschitz vigorously pursued the American goals of the TIS with the assistance of the Jewish Daily Forward. He conducted "a systematic press and radio campaign" against the Third Reich, the Nazi propaganda in the United States, and against American antisemitism. His information went to more than five hundred newspapers and magazines, to numerous organizations and individuals.<sup>12</sup>

The German government was concerned about the activities of Lipschitz because of its fear of anti-German feelings in the United States. The German embassy in Washington was upset about the circular letters of the TIS to the American press and about the wide influence of the Information Service which reached Chicago, St. Louis and Omaha.<sup>13</sup> The Prussian Gestapo complained that American public opinion was easily impressed and that Lipschitz "inflicted substantial damage on National Socialistic Germany and its economic relations with America", especially

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<sup>11</sup>Lipschitz to Stampfer, 30 April 1934, EK Mappe 138.

<sup>12</sup>Lipschitz to Sopade, 31 January 1934, EK Mappe 138.

<sup>13</sup>Political Archives AA, Bonn, Ausbürgerungen, 23. Liste, Bericht der Deutschen Botschaft in Washington, 26 January 1934.

through the proclamation of a boycott against German goods.<sup>14</sup> To forward its information to German newspapers was considered as "the ultimate impudence" of the TIS.<sup>15</sup> By March 1935, the German consulate general in New York was satisfied to report that "the anti-German activities of Lipschitz have apparently subsided". According to a special agent, the TIS existed no longer and Lipschitz had accepted a position with the AFL.<sup>16</sup> Despite "his limited circumstances", the German embassy considered it advisable to postpone depriving Lipschitz of his German citizenship which would only bring him undeserved publicity.<sup>17</sup> The Gestapo waited until August 1937 before resubmitting a proposal for the Ausbürgerung (deprivation of citizenship) of Lipschitz to the Ministry of the Interior which had then no more objections.<sup>18</sup>

The disappearance of the TIS was due to an expansion of the Labor Conference. The latter was concerned that a strictly Jewish fight against fascism would stimulate rather than contain antisemitism. The Labor Conference was only precariously inter-ethnic with the mem-

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., Preussische Gestapo to Reichsministerium des Innern, 15 November 1934.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Bericht der Deutschen Botschaft in Washington, 26 January 1934.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., Bericht des Deutschen Generalkonsulats in New York, 6 March 1935.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., Bericht der Deutschen Botschaft in Washington, 18 January 1936.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Preussische Gestapo to Reichsministerium des Innern, 20 August 1937; also Reichsministerium des Innern - Preussische Gestapo, 3 September 1937.

bership of such elements as "the German party and labor groups". According to Lipschitz, these "German organizations of a socialist hue have been active despite their weakness and have organized numerous meetings". But the Neue Volkszeitung did in his opinion "not fully live up to [our] expectations".<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, the Labor Conference refused to associate with communist groups. According to Lipschitz, the German communist emigrant Willi Münzenberg, a Popular Front theorizer and organizer in Paris, "thoroughly failed" in his purpose of winning American Jewish union funds during his visit to the United States in the summer of 1934.<sup>20</sup> Lipschitz also refused to mediate in August 1934 between the American Committee against Fascist Oppression in Germany and his "friends in the Socialist Party". He did not recommend the communist proposals for a United Front around "the solidarity campaign for the political prisoners in Germany",<sup>21</sup> which were forwarded to him by the American Münzenberg associate, Louis Gibarti. Under these circumstances, the American Jewish labor groups wanted "to conduct the fight on a strictly unionist basis" and tried to involve the AFL. They persuaded William Green to make boycott declarations

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<sup>19</sup> Lipschitz to Sopade, 31 January 1934, EK - Mappe 138.

<sup>20</sup> Lipschitz to Stampfer, 21 August 1934, EK - Mappe 138. Münzenberg had his own convictions about the Popular Front which was officially proclaimed by the Comintern a year later, in August 1935. He was expelled from the KPD in 1939 for his independence of mind and action and shortly thereafter died mysteriously in a forest near Grenoble, France.

<sup>21</sup> Archiv des Bundesvorstandes des Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes (DGB), Düsseldorf, Emigrationsnachlass Martin Plettl: Louis Gibarti to Lipschitz, 2 August 1934.

against German goods and issue antifascist appeals. In February 1934, Green and other AFL leaders presided over a "Hands across the Seas Dinner" which the Labor Conference organized in New York "as a symbol of solidarity with the German labor movement". Finally, the national convention of the AFL in San Francisco, in the late summer of 1934, devoted a full day "to the discussion of fascist problems".<sup>22</sup> Then, it established the Anti-Hitler Labor League and instituted a Labor Chest for the Relief and Liberation of Workers in Europe. Lipschitz kept his public relations job in the League so that the general consulate in New York had been correct in reporting his employment by the AFL. In October 1934, the Sopade finally responded to the entreaties of Lipschitz by sending Segar on a trip to the United States. It will be discussed after the following report on the relations between German and American unionists.

The problems of Plettl in the American emigration were related to the lost reputation of the ADGB leaders after their misguided attempt at appeasing the Hitler government. The union emigrants faced an unfriendly European union movement which tried to take the organization of underground work in Germany into its own hands. This was all the easier since the German union leaders were not prepared for such work and took more than two years to establish an emigrant representation. What hurt them most was this loss of international status in addition to their defeat at home. They were used to being the principals of the European union movement. They intended to rehabilitate themselves and

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<sup>22</sup>Lipschitz to Stampfer, 21 August 1934, Mappe 138 EK.

regain some of their former stature by assuming a belated control of all underground work in Germany. No German union was to deal directly with the union internationals. Thus continued an unhealthy antagonism. The relationship between Plett1 and the American Jewish union leaders duplicated the European situation. Plett1 could help to raise funds which were handed over to the union internationals. He suffered from this disregard which intensified his traumatic European experience. He became obsessed with regaining European respectability for the German union emigration but that development took too long. It was retarded in the view of Plett1 by a conspiracy between New Beginning and the union internationals against the ADGB emigration. When Vladek became also enamoured with NB the task of Plett1 seemed hopeless.

With his union background, his visit to the United States had not required much negotiation. He had been president of the Deutsche Bekleidungsarbeiter Verband (DBV), Union of the German Clothing Workers) from 1920 to 1933, and also president of the Internationale Bekleidungsarbeiter Föderation (IBF, International Clothing Workers' Federation) from 1924 to 1935. In 1933, he was imprisoned for a while in Berlin and fled to the IBF in Amsterdam after his release in May. It was natural for the American garment unions to sponsor Plett1 for a six-month tour of the Eastern and Midwestern United States in the fall of 1933 on behalf of the Labor Conference.<sup>23</sup> He took it safe and stayed in America, where he died in 1958. His emigrant activity was limited to the three years from 1933 to 1936. It ended with the decline of the Labor League.

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<sup>23</sup>Lipschitz to Sopade, 31 January 1934, Mapped 138 EK.

Plett1 was absorbed by the developments of the German union emigration in Europe. In 1933, at the congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions, the latter played only "the shameful role of tolerated spectators", a discrimination that Plett1 felt still "burning on [his] forehead" three years later. He felt like "a fugitive from a defeated army" and was depressed over "the scorn for the German loser".<sup>24</sup> In the two years before the organization of a German emigrant representation, the IFTU and the IBS, the labor internationals, tried to coordinate the unionist underground work in Germany. They formed the Coordination Committee for Illegal Activities among whose members were Edo Fimmen of the International Transportworkers' Federation (ITF) and T. von der Heeg, the secretary of Plett1's IBF. They advocated dynamic underground work comparable to the program of the New Beginning Group with whom they had various connections inside and outside of Germany. The German unionist emigrants were afraid of an NB conspiracy in the international organizations: "Miles - SI (Friedrich Adler), Miles - IFTU (Walter Schevenels), Miles - ITF (Edo Fimmen)".<sup>25</sup> Plett1 and his fellow ADGB emigrants maintained the same liberal attitude as the Sopade and called the Coordination Committee the "Soviet of Amsterdam"<sup>26</sup> which allegedly rejected "out of hand all those whose names are connected with the old German trade union movement; since [their] 'political' program is identical with political revolutionary romanti-

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<sup>24</sup>Plett1 to Schliestedt, 11 May 1936, Nachlass Plett1.

<sup>25</sup>Schliestedt to F[ritz] Kummer, quoted in F[ritz Kummer] to Marten Hendrick (Plett1), 17 May 1935, Nachlass Plett1.

<sup>26</sup>Schliestedt to Plett1, 5 February 1936, Nachlass Plett1.

cism, it entails a priori the exclusion of the old trade unionists who cannot go along with this line under any circumstances".<sup>27</sup> Plettl failed to get a response from the secretary of his own IBF despite repeated requests for information. Simultaneously, his presidency of the IBF ended in 1935.

In his search for rehabilitation, Plettl was one of the most emphatic organizers of an ADGB representation abroad. He discussed his plans by correspondence with his unionist colleagues in Czechoslovakia, France, Holland and Denmark.<sup>28</sup> They called a conference of emigrant leaders and representatives of German underground groups to Reichenberg, Czechoslovakia, in the summer of 1935. It decided to form an exile committee (Geade) and a Reichsleitung (national underground committee) in Germany. Both were to guarantee the organizational independence of the German trade union groups in Germany and abroad.<sup>29</sup> Individual union groups were no longer to deal directly with Amsterdam or Brussels but with the national committee. The Geade would mediate between the latter and the labor internationals. In September 1935, the Geade was recognized by the IFTU in time for the AFL convention in October.

Plettl pursued his European interests in 1936. He made "far-

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<sup>27</sup> F[ritz Kummer] to Marten Hendrick (Plettl), 17 May 1935, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>28</sup> Schliestedt to Plettl, 17 May 1935, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>29</sup> Kreyssig, im Namen des Internationalen Gewerkschaftsbundes to Internationale Berufssekretariate, 9 August 1935, Nachlass Plettl.

reaching plans" for the Geade and proposed "to centralize and to win a preponderant influence" in the IFTU.<sup>30</sup> He intended to travel to London for the IFTU congress of 1936 and proposed a prior meeting of Geade representatives in order to discuss the offensive strategy for the congress.. He objected especially to the comprehensive representation of the German speaking countries by an Austrian unionist, and insisted on a direct representation of the Geade in the IFTU. He also promoted the idea of "an inevitable war" in order to persuade the IFTU into considering the opposition against Hitler rather than against Franco as the main issue of its future policy within which the Geade would acquire a central importance.<sup>31</sup> His European strategy was that of "a concentric approach". He impressed on the other Geade representatives the need for "hammering" from all points of the German emigration sphere at the reluctant union internationals for recognition. Plettl could not, however, take his trip to London for lack of money and for fear of being refused reentry into the United States on his temporary visitor's visa. The Geade did not become what Plettl wanted it to be. It could not catch up with the developments in the United States.

While waiting, Plettl had to defer to the reality of the American situation. He necessarily agreed to "the concentration of contributions in the IFTU" and in the IBS.<sup>32</sup> The two internationals received

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<sup>30</sup> Plettl to Kreyssig, 16 May 1936, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>31</sup> Plettl to Schliestedt, 11 May 1936; also Schliestedt to Plettl, 13 October 1936, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>32</sup> Plettl to Fritz Heinrich, 22 September 1937, Nachlass Plettl.



"several thousand dollars" in early 1934.<sup>33</sup> But the German unionists continually complained to Plettl that Italian, Polish and Spanish concerns received preference. He considered it, however, pointless to pass on their direct financial requests to the Labor Chest.<sup>34</sup> Instead, he told his fellow emigrants to refrain from overcriticizing the IFTU when they would meet Vladek on his trip to Europe in the summer of 1935. He advised them to tolerate the fixed idea of dealing exclusively with the internationals since "we will achieve our goals best by letting [the American unionists] persist in their initiative and their good faith in its fairness".<sup>35</sup> But Vladek ignored the German unionists whom Plettl had recommended to him. Besides some Sopade leaders, he met some IBS secretaries, the secretary of the Socialist International and Frank, who was favored by the Austrian Adler and thus benefitted from the reputation of the Austrian socialists after their courageous but unsuccessful stand against the Dollfuss government. Vladek invited Frank to visit the United States in the fall of 1935.

At that time, Plettl hoped to win a few points in prestige as the American Geade representative in Atlantic City where the AFL convention took place. He had not gone to the important convention in San Francisco in 1934 where his new employer, the Labor League, was formed. Apparently, he did not want to ask the ILGWU for the train-

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<sup>33</sup> Plettl to Friedrich Adler, 15 March 1934; also Max Braun to Plettl, 24 February 1935, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>34</sup> Schliestedt to Plettl, 13 October 1936, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>35</sup> Plettl to Schliestedt, Hartig, Reissner, Kummer, 7 August 1935, Nachlass Plettl.

fare to the West Coast. For the convention in Atlantic City, he was resolved to shed his modesty and to speak in the name of the German union emigration. It gave him a feeling of continuity since he had been a member of the German study commission which had attended the AFL convention of 1925 in the same city in order to sound out the possibility of an AFL membership in the IFTU.

But by 1936, Plettl neared the end of his emigrant activity. The American labor movement was disrupted by the split of the Socialist Party and by the challenge of the CIO. Since the main unions of the Labor League spearheaded the movement for industrial organization, the Labor League and the Labor Chest lost their organizational basis. Plettl hoped that "the rift will not be permanent" so that "in the interests of the European tasks, this well-functioning institution [of the Labor Chest] will be maintained and will not be reduced to our original organizations", the Jewish unions. That was exactly what happened. The Labor League fell into abeyance. Plettl retired to Florida where he lived for the next twenty years.

A long term approach would have been better for the union emigration. As Geade representative in New York, Plettl could have continued working with the Jewish Labor Committee and with Lipschitz with whom he had corresponded and met frequently. He was also the president of the Deutsche Freiheitsbund (League for German Freedom), "a politically neutral organization opposed to the Friends of the New Germany".<sup>36</sup> In New York, he would have entered into contact with the

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<sup>36</sup>Gerhard Seger to Parteivorstand, 10 November 1934, EK Mappe 119.

later arriving Social Democratic emigrants. In 1940 and 1941 he could have persuaded the Jewish Labor Committee to rescue some of the unionist refugees from Southern France whom the German Labor Delegation neglected. Such reinforcements would have obviated the later conflict between the GLD and a second union representation.

The fate of Plettl showed that the Labor League was more interested in politicians than in unionists. The request of Lipschitz for "a prominent party speaker" led finally to the first visit of Seger from October 1934 to June 1935.<sup>37</sup> Lipschitz promised that he would do everything in his power to make the tour successful and hoped that Seger would "not be too late" for an enthusiastic American reception. He conceded that "public interest was momentarily concentrated on the Austrians" in this year of their courageous resistance. But he was dissatisfied with the performance of the socialist mayor of Vienna whose tour he had arranged. The latter was already sixty-five years old and "avoided any discussion of political and power questions" which Lipschitz considered important "in the interests of the future and of the necessary appeal to youth". He confessed to Stampfer that "the time has come when we have to brutally assume the initiative and cannot afford the luxury of looking back to the past with nostalgia". For these reasons, the choice of Seger seemed "fortunate" to him.<sup>38</sup>

Seger had an ideal antifascist record for a speaking and fund-raising tour. He had spent most of 1933 in the concentration camp of

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<sup>37</sup> Lipschitz to Parteivorstand, Prag, 31 January 1934 EK Mappe 138.

<sup>38</sup> Lipschitz to Stampfer, 2 March 1934, EK Mappe 138.

Oranienburg from where he escaped in December 1933. In retaliation, his wife and two year old child were arrested and then released under English ecclesiastical, parliamentary and diplomatic pressure.<sup>39</sup> He described his ordeal in the report "Oranienburg" which sold eighty thousand copies in Sweden alone within half a year. But significantly, he could not find a publisher in England or the United States.<sup>40</sup> His recent loss of citizenship in the company of two German princes made also promotive news.

Yet, the tour of Seger was not successful. He had not been part of the rightwing establishment of the SPD. His good publicity enabled him to pay his own way and gave him the opportunity to pursue an independent emigrant career. His recommendation by the Sopade reflected this ambiguity. It read that "comrade Seger supports the political work of the party during his trip to the United States in the name of the SPD executive".<sup>41</sup> More crucially, Seger took sides with the Old Guard in the factional disputes within the SPA. The Militant majority charged that the Old Guard exploited his tour for propaganda benefits in the party struggle. The factional problems began with his reception in New York. He arrived together with the Austrian Julius Deutsch who had led the socialist defense against the Heimwehr militia (national guard) and who later became a general of the International

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<sup>39</sup> Seiger to Parteivorstand, 18 May 1934, EK Mappe 119; also Radkau, Die deutsche Emigration in den USA, p. 146.

<sup>40</sup> Seiger to Paul Hertz, 19 August 1934, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>41</sup> Sopade recommendation for Seiger, 16 October 1934, EK Mappe 119.

Brigades in the Spanish Civil War. The two socialists were welcomed at the pier by a large delegation from the Jewish unions, the Socialist Party, the League for German Freedom, and other German American organizations together with "thousands of young socialists" with red flags. They carried the Austrian German pair on their shoulders to the waiting cars that brought them to the Socialist Party headquarters in a procession of music bands and thousands of marchers with hundreds of torchbearers lining the streets.<sup>42</sup> According to Lipschitz, this welcome and its publicity in the American press caused "a disruption of the Nazi propaganda in this country that could not be overestimated".<sup>43</sup>

Yet, Seger was not pleased. He felt upstaged by the Militant majority of the Socialist Party. He believed that the latter misused the reception and the tour of Deutsch for publicity purposes in the contest over control of the New York party organizations.<sup>44</sup> He sided with the minority. In his view, only "the New York [City] and a few other organizations correspond to the German party", that is the SPD. He sarcastically compared the twenty-two thousand SPA members to the one hundred twenty million people of the United States. The Socialist Party was only "a miniscule sect" which in turn consisted of "more factions than members". He declared the national executive in Chicago "controlled by half-communists" and explained to the Sopade that "it is better and more useful for the financial purposes if I do not appear

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<sup>42</sup> Lipschitz to Stampfer, 2 November 1934, EK Mappe 138.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Seger to Crummenerl, 18 November 1934, EK Mappe 119.

too often as a speaker of this party because of the relationship between the American unions and this insane sect". According to Seger, the SPA even mismanaged the tour of Deutsch because their "wild revolutionary determination ... was inversely proportional to [their] ability of organizing a simple speaking tour". Seger complained that certain comrades were "not very friendly" towards him. According to hearsay, the national secretary was "not interested in arranging the American travels of German traitors". Seger claimed however that the latter and many others changed their views after listening to his presentation of the Social Democratic case in the Weimar Republic. Deutsch also conciliated by asking Seger to continue his program because he was required to leave the United States prematurely.<sup>45</sup> Under these political circumstances, Seger relied "on organizations quite different from the Socialist Party".<sup>46</sup>

Yet, his attitude towards the Socialist Party probably hurt his work with the Labor League. Vladek, who tried desperately to save the SPA, was also the treasurer of the Labor League. He continued his practice of dealing financially only with the labor internationals which had a joint European Committee for distributing American funds. Seger received a set fee of \$25 for every meeting of his speaking tour for the Labor Chest<sup>47</sup> which lasted for two months beginning in January

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<sup>45</sup>Seher to Sopade, 10 November 1934, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>46</sup>Seher to Toni Sender, 29 November 1934, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>47</sup>Seher to Vladek, 18 November 1934, EK Mappe 119.

1935 and extended from New York to Los Angeles.<sup>48</sup> Vladek delivered this money, some \$1,056, personally to the Sopade during his trip to Europe shortly after Seger's departure.<sup>49</sup> For other Labor Chest funds, the Sopade depended on the European Committee. Inevitably, controversy arose over how much the Committee received and what was the proper Sopade share. At the farewell dinner for Seger, Vladek reportedly mentioned that the Labor Chest had raised \$28,000 for Europe up to June 1935. The European Committee received \$5,000 from Vladek in November 1934. In the spring of 1935, the president of the IFTU told the Sopade that the Labor Chest had sent \$15,000 up to then. Later, he claimed that the Seger tour had netted \$2,500 of that sum, a figure which made no sense to Seger. The latter kept urging the Sopade to request its due share. Vladek had already told him in November 1934, at the start of the tour, that the Sopade should "insist on a really substantial portion that corresponds to the importance of Germany, of our work and of my cooperation". In this sense, Seger argued that "nobody has worked as hard for the enlightenment about fascism in the United States as I". Then, he negotiated "long and repeatedly" with Vladek. But the latter referred him back to the European Committee which alone decided about the deservingness of underground groups. The IFTU had given most of the American funds to illegal groups in Germany of whom Seger professed to have heard for the first time. He

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<sup>48</sup> Seger to Sopade, 10 November 1934; also Seger to Crummenerl, 18 November 1934, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>49</sup> Seger to Crummenerl, 18 July 1935, EK Mappe 119.

told the Sopade in disgust that he did not want to "further concern himself with the issue especially since my experiences in the United States were not very pleasant".<sup>50</sup> He also complained that "the part of his speaking tour which was organized by the American Federation of Labor was not very successful". He considered the latter "unprepared for the organization of a campaign of political meetings" since it had "no cadres of functionaries or at least of employees who have organizational experience".<sup>51</sup>

The other engagements of Seger were not very successful either. They included "a mass meeting" of the League for German Freedom and a meeting of the German branch of the New York Socialist Party. Both of them were relatively well attended with audiences of seven to nine hundred people. But Seger commented that "a German speaker is naturally disappointed".<sup>52</sup> His Chicago appearances included speeches at the Universities of Northwestern and Chicago and "two dinners with the richest men in town", one of them at the house of the lawyer Levinson who had drafted the Kellogg Pact. From these wealthy Jewish businessmen, the Sopade received "a first installment" of \$500.<sup>53</sup> The press reaction to his Chicago appearances was insignificant. According to Seger, only opponents of President Roosevelt could get good publicity

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<sup>50</sup> Seger to Crummenerl, 18 November 1934, 19 June 1935; 18 July 1935, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>51</sup> Seger to Crummenerl, 18 July 1935; also Seger to Sopade, 19 June 1935, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>52</sup> Lipschitz to Stampfer, 2 November 1934, EK Mappe 138; also Seger to Sopade, 10 November 1934, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>53</sup> Seger to Crummenerl, 18 July 1935, EK Mappe 119.



there. His total record consisted of one hundred fifty-three speeches and ninety-four interviews in fifty-five cities and twenty-one states during an itinerary of over thirty thousand miles.<sup>54</sup> In the final analysis, Seger considered his tour "politically successful, ... much less successful in the collection of funds for our illegal activities!"<sup>55</sup> The Sopade was still used to spending large sums.

For his second time in the United States, Seger had a different concept. He thought he had enough experience and connections for establishing himself in the United States independently of the Labor League. But he wanted to involve the Sopade more in his plans. At the end of his first trip, he wrote the exile executives that "our anti-fascist propaganda is lacking a centralized systematic direction. If we would create one we could accomplish something". He would be well equipped to be the agent of such a Sopade effort in the United States, especially with his prospect of joining the staff of the Neue Volkszeitung in August 1935. Seger did not have the time to go to Prague. The Sopade executive, Siegfried Crummenerl, met with him in St. Gallen, Switzerland, in order to discuss the next American trip.<sup>56</sup> Seger told the Sopade that he had already "so many speaking engagements for the coming season" that he had decided to settle in America with his family. He hoped to collect \$8,000 to \$10,000. He emphasized, however, the need "for a planned action covering all the states ... instead of my

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<sup>54</sup> Seger to Sopade, 19 June 1935, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>55</sup> Seger to Crummenerl, 18 July 1935, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>56</sup> Seger to Sopade, 19 June 1935; also Seger to Crummenerl, 19 June 1935, EK Mappe 119.

more or less sporadic appearance". He advocated a 'real 'drive' in the American style". This required the establishment of a party representation. Seger intimated that his permanent position with the NVZ could give "the political work in the United States the necessary stability so that a solid center for our party work could be established". He volunteered for such a project unless the Sopade had "other personnel intentions". In this context, he asked: "By the way, your permanent representative here, is that Dr. Lipschitz?"<sup>57</sup> His ignorance of the status of Lipschitz was indicative of the Sopade attitude towards him. If the latter had planned to establish a party branch it would have sent somebody else.

For his fundraising efforts, Seger wanted to address the liberal middle class besides the labor groups. He was aware of the difficulties of such an undertaking. According to him, collection for charity was more popular than for political causes. Especially Jewish groups preferred to contribute to emigrant aid societies rather than to socialist and antifascist groups. They were afraid of generating more antisemitism by interfering in internal German affairs. Criticism of the Social Democratic role in the fall of the Weimar Republic was another obstacle to fundraising. This criticism was especially prevalent in liberal middle class circles. They had "a devastating conception of the 'failure' of German Social Democracy so that the communists and the enormously popular Miles Group [NB] have an easier access to funds even from rightist groups". Seger attributed the anti-Social Democratic attitude

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<sup>57</sup> Sege to Crummenerl, 6 November 1935, EK Mappe 119.

of many intellectuals and liberals to the influence of the Nation and the New Republic. It meant that "this mood is based on a complete ignorance of the subject and can be overcome immediately by an authoritative presentation of the real state of affairs". Despite his confidence, Seger did not raise much money for the Sopade. He did renounce his speaker's fee in its favor since he had a permanent job with the NVZ.<sup>58</sup> But there was practically no correspondence between him and Prague after 1935. He pursued his emigrant career independently of the Sopade as editor of the NVZ, short time president of the DAKV and principal member of the Social Democratic Federation. After the outbreak of the Second World War, he had even more ambitious plans which will be discussed in the context of the German Labor Delegation. He hoped for a political career in the United States and did not return to Germany after the war.

When a concerted Social Democratic effort was not forthcoming Vladek looked for more contacts with the German exile and underground movement. During his trip to Europe in the summer of 1935, he also explored the situation of the latter. The general secretaries of the Socialist International and of the International Federation of Trade Unions recommended the NB Group and its exile leader, Frank, to him. Such European socialists as Léon Blum, the organizer of the French Popular Front, and Sir Stafford Cripps of the English Socialist League also favored the NB Group. Vladek was impressed with the exile and underground work of the latter which in the beginning acted as a con-

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

sultant to the Sopade in this field.<sup>59</sup> NB provided many of the underground reports for the Deutschlandberichte of the Sopade. It cooperated with Social Democratic underground groups like the Zehn Punkte Gruppe (Ten Points Group) which repudiated the Sopade<sup>60</sup> and with the remnants of the Sozialistische Arbeiter Jugend (Socialist Workers' Youth Organization) in Berlin. Vladek knew that the leaders of the latter had been expelled from the SPD in early 1933 for preparing an underground cadre system when the party still believed in a legal existence. Also, the salaries of NB leaders were considerably lower than those of the Sopade executives and NB devoted a larger proportion of its income to illegal work. The latter resembled the activities of the Bund in Czarist Russia which had shaped the political attitudes of Vladek. After the Sopade executives, the American Bundist also wanted to meet Frank. But he missed the NB leader in Prague who then followed him to Brussels, his last European stop. There, he invited Frank to visit the United States and advised him to adopt the covername of Paul Hagen for his American activities.<sup>61</sup> That remained the emigrant name of Frank in the United States. As a well known mediator in the SPA, Vladek was interested in a united German effort against National Socialism. His interest in NB continued his previous solicitude for the Sopade and the German unionists. He also favored the NB policy of a

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<sup>59</sup> Hoover Institute for War, Peace and Revolution, Stanford, California, Karl Frank Papers, Box 5, folder Neubeginnen, Inquiry by the Office of Strategic Services, 15 May 1942.

<sup>60</sup> Paul Hertz, Erklärung zum Falle Paul Hagen, Karl Frank Papers.

<sup>61</sup> Autobiographical data about Karl Frank; also Answer to an inquiry by the OSS, box 5, folder Neubeginnen, Frank Papers.

socialist concentration. Contrary to the assumptions of the Sopade, it was not the identification of NB as a Social Democratic group which endeared it to Vladek but the NB ideology and practice. Neither was it the end of Sopade subsidies which caused NB to look for American funds. The financial success of NB in the United States only duplicated its European fund raising efforts. It had received 5,000 sfrs from the Swiss Socialist Party and from the Swiss unions, 90,000 ffrs from the French Section of the Socialist International under Léon Blum, 500 pounds from the Socialist League of Sir Stafford Cripps and 50,000 crowns from the Czech Social Democratic Party.<sup>62</sup> The Sopade could have been as successful as NB in the United States if it had cooperated better with Vladek and adopted a more positive attitude towards other socialist groups.

The first fund raising campaign of Frank lasted from the fall of 1935 to early 1936 and nearly coincided with the second campaign of Seger. In 1935 already, Frank organized an NB center in the United States, the American Friends of German Freedom (AFGF). The latter skillfully avoided a reference to socialism in favor of an appeal to freedom. It was more an American sponsor group than an overseas branch of a German political group. It was "a small, rather private organization"<sup>63</sup> until early 1939 when it expanded its activities and became "a more public organization". According to Frank, its first supporters were Jewish labor leaders which included besides Vladek, Julius

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<sup>62</sup>Inquiry by the OSS, 15 May 1942, box 5, folder Neubeginnen, Frank Papers.

<sup>63</sup>Mary Fox to Paul Hagen, 18 November 1939, box 8, folder F, Frank Papers.

Hochman and Max Zaritsky. There were also Socialists like Reinhold Niebuhr and Norman Thomas and the League for Industrial Democracy of which Thomas was chairman, Niebuhr vice president, Mary Fox executive secretary and Vladek a member of the board of directors. During his first American visit, Frank lived at the house of Thomas so that he could not have gone far beyond the circles of the Labor League and of the Socialist Party in New York.<sup>64</sup> With the help of Vladek and the American Friends of German Freedom, Frank raised about \$7,000 or \$8,000. This amount represented about one third of the total NB budget of that year. It was much more than Seger had been able to collect.

As could be expected, the Sopade became concerned about these developments.<sup>65</sup> It had just terminated its subsidies to NB and hoped to see that group decline. Thus, the successful work of NB in the United States rekindled Sopade antagonism and gave more urgency to further Sopade efforts in the United States. In the latter, the SPD executive was encouraged by Cahan who hated Thomas and opposed the attempts of Vladek to save the SPA. In this process, the Sopade sat on the wrong chair of American sponsorship. Even though Cahan himself reported to Wels that Frank collected only "a few thousand dollars with the help of Vladek" during his first visit, the Social Democratic emigrants circulated rumours of much higher sums, usually \$10,000. According to some statements, he raised \$100,000 during his first tour. Others claimed that he received \$10,000 from Chicago sources alone.<sup>66</sup> These

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Sopade to Seger, 18 September 1936, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>66</sup> Abraham Cahan to Otto Wels, 21 May 1936, EK Mappe 58.

exaggerated figures implied criticism of Frank's fund raising methods.

Cahan displayed more openly his political motivation. After the first visit of Frank, he changed his attitude towards the NB leader whom he had first met in 1934 at the convention of the British Trade Union Congress. Adler had introduced his friend to the patriarch socialist from America. Admittedly, the conversation with Frank was "clearheaded and realistic" and "he made a good impression on me". But in 1936, Cahan wanted to hear from his friend Wels "without delay, what you think of Willi Müller [European covername of Frank]?"<sup>67</sup> He told Wels that "as you know, we completely support the policy of the PV [Partei Vorstand (party executive)] and I want to prevent anything that might further the interests of the NB Group in any way". He resented that Frank had stayed at the house of Thomas and met "mainly with the leftist Socialists who cause us so much trouble and do so much damage with their cooperation with the communists".<sup>68</sup> Actually, the pacifist Thomas group was the first from which the AFGF disengaged after the outbreak of the war. Cahan's antagonism towards NB was kept in check until 1938, that is "as long as Vladek was alive" who "protected our interests".

The long response from Prague opened a campaign for the character assassination of Frank in the United States. The account of Wels about the past of Frank opened with the two points that were most incriminating in the United States: the NB leader was a former communist

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<sup>67</sup> Cahan to Sollmann, 16 August 1936, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>68</sup> Cahan to Wels, 21 May 1936, EK Mappe 58.

and a kidnaper. The account omitted the political context of the latter charge. Together with a fellow communist in Berlin, Frank had forcibly prevented a representative of the Social Democratic Vorwärts who later became a National Socialist from making a radio address in favor of naval rearmament. Instead of the Vorwärts speaker, a communist spoke against it. The SPD had just come out of the elections of 1928 as the strongest party after an appeal for more food to the needy rather than for new cruisers for the navy. In the process of forming a coalition government, the Social Democrats reversed themselves. In his letter, Wels continued the conspiracy theme by recalling that he had rejected a 1932 offer by Frank of bringing a faction of the SAP back into the SPD as the attempt of "a communist emissary" to infiltrate the party. In order to excuse the later Sopade dealings with the NB Group in the emigration, Wels made the Austrian socialists Adler and Bauer responsible for the survival of NB. The 40,000 Mark of subsidies for the latter came out of a total budget of more than three million Mark and were expended "in order to synthesize what forces were still left in Germany" after 1933. This generosity was allegedly repaid with ingratitude when Frank "soon led all oppositional intriguing against us".<sup>69</sup>

The rupture with NB came according to Wels when Frank bribed Otto Schönfeld, the secretary of Wels, into surrendering secret Sopade documents. Actually, Schönfeld turned them over voluntarily. They

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<sup>69</sup> Sopade to Cahan, 12 June 1936, EK Mappe 58.



consisted of a report about NB at the time of its cooperation with the Sopade and contained the names and addresses of friends of Frank and Schönfeld in Germany. It was accessible to everybody in the SPD office. One of its secretaries was later discovered to be a Gestapo agent on whose intelligence many illegal socialists went to concentration camps, including Schönfeld's father.<sup>70</sup> After this incident, Schönfeld continued as Sopade secretary and held other positions of trust. The most arrogant conspiratorial act was according to Wels the attempt by Frank at winning NB representation in the Socialist International. In his summary, the Sopade chairman characterized Frank as "a professional conspirator" who was by 1936 only "a maverick with a few friends". Only "his American visit has set him afloat again". Wels explained that the Sopade had "absolutely no relations with him".<sup>71</sup> Cahan renewed his continental friendships with a visit to Europe in 1936 despite his seventy-seven years. Then, he vigorously sponsored the plan of a fund raising campaign of the Sopade member Wilhelm Sollmann.

The visit of Sollmann was another instance of how the Sopade bungled its American relations. Instead of working out a permanent arrangement with its man on base, it added another failure to that of Seger. The main problem was that the Sopade was only interested in raising funds instead of establishing a political base in the United States. The latter was a difficult goal to pursue as long as the exile executive tried to circumvent the American labor movement instead of

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<sup>70</sup> Erklärung von Otto Schönfeld, 6 November 1943, box 7, folder 4, Frank Papers.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

coming to grips with it. The Sopade choice for a second envoy was no better than the first. Sollmann was not representative of the Sopade. Even though the latter had subsidized his newspaper Die Deutsche Freiheit in Saarbrücken and then in Luxemburg with initially 10,000 ffrs a month and had paid a salary of 1,200 ffrs a month to him and his associate, Sollmann maintained an ideological independence with his Volkssozialismus (Ethnic socialism). His loyalty was more a matter of personal relations with his equals and old friends, Wels and Crummenerl. He did not recognize the Sopade as the official voice of the SPD and reserved the right of speaking for himself. Later, he resented Sopade propaganda that identified too closely with the Allied war effort. He was also more interested in establishing himself personally in America. With the help of his English Quaker friends, he eventually became a lecturer at Swarthmore College near Philadelphia. In the United States, he soon detached himself from the Social Democratic executive and emigration. In a probable reversal of his motives, he explained that he wanted to be an American.

This reasoning did not apply to his conservative political relations with the former German chancellor Brüning and with the leftist National Socialist Otto Strasser. He was excited when Gottfried Treviranus informed him that "Brüning has repeatedly asked about me [Sollmann]". He expected that Brüning "will certainly find an opportunity for a discussion with me" in the United States. There, he visited the former chancellor several times and corresponded with him throughout the war years. He also used the influence of Brüning for trying to get an American visa for Strasser. He had met with the

latter occasionally and corresponded with him until 1942. He assured Wels in 1936 that he was only interested in "objective discussions" and did not think of publicly cooperating with Strasser. But he was unable to "predict which alliances the future will force on us".<sup>72</sup> Sollmann considered the antisemitism of Strasser as mild. It would grant citizenship to those Jews who could meet certain qualifications. Not accidentally, he was occasionally the recipient of antisemitic party correspondence which complained about the prominence of Jewish Social Democrats and their responsibility for the plight of the party. The ethnic socialist Sollmann deplored, himself, the persistence of the Marxist ideology in the SPD and explained to Wels that "my national affiliation with Germany emanates from my peasant blood".<sup>73</sup> This choice of a representative exemplifies the ineptitude of the Sopade which hoped to raise large funds from Jewish organizations in America. It also meant that the Sopade did not yet grasp the importance of the American Jewish labor movement. As a first generation leader, Cahan was out-dated. His maverick position depended on his old control of the Jewish Daily Forward.

Seger did not grasp the situation either. He prepared the visit of Sollmann in the same way that he had organized his own speaking tours as those of an emigrant doing individual business with his own selection of disparate American organizations. There was at first also a personal problem. The Sopade treasurer Crummenerl, who was a personal friend of

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<sup>72</sup>Sollmann to Wels, 31 December 1935, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>73</sup>Sollmann to Wels, 7 December 1936, EK Mappe 122.

Sollmann, did not like him.<sup>74</sup> But Sollmann had a conciliatory conversation with Seger during the latter's interim return to Europe in the summer of 1935.<sup>75</sup> In July and September 1936, the Sopade asked Seger directly to support the plans of Sollmann<sup>76</sup> who eventually reported that Seger "seems to promote me now vigorously".<sup>77</sup> The two of them agreed that an American agent should plan the tour for a commission of 25%. After five negative answers,<sup>78</sup> Seger still felt that Sollmann should not even bother with "the political labor movement in America" which included Vladek. He argued that it was "very weak" and had also suffered a split recently. A close identification with it would jeopardize arrangements with other American organizations. Wels agreed with Seger. Despite the setbacks with an individual arrangement, he was still determined "to do everything possible in order to bring off the American mission".<sup>79</sup> He still thought that one of the possible things was to ignore Vladek who had made strenuous efforts for NB.

Sollmann was pulling opposite strings. When Vladek was again in Europe in the summer of 1936 at the same time as Cahan and planned to visit Prague, Sollmann tentatively approached his dissenting Sopade colleague and NB supporter, Hertz, with the request: "Why don't you

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<sup>74</sup> Sopade to Seger, 9 July 1936; 18 September 1936, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>75</sup> Sollmann to Crummenerl, 3 September 1935, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>76</sup> Sopade to Seger, 9 July 1936 and 18 September 1936, EK Mappe 119.

<sup>77</sup> Sollmann to Crummenerl, 18 September 1936, EKMappe 122.

<sup>78</sup> Sollmann to Crummenerl, 6 July 1936, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>79</sup> Wels to Sollmann, 9 July 1936, EK Mappe 122.

mobilize your connections for my American trip with which I am somewhat in love?"<sup>80</sup> But he also tried to exploit the connection with Cahan while simultaneously excluding Cahan from a full preparation of his trip. He asked the Old Guard socialist to reconfirm the approval of his American plans. The latter promised to "do everything in my power to make the trip possible". But he asked for a delay until the controversies in the Socialist Party were resolved. He conceded that "our comrades in America - I mean the loyal Social Democrats - are somewhat confused about the background of the socialist work in Germany". But he confirmed that "we remain loyal to the old executive and its comrades. We are not interested in NB and all the other left wings".<sup>81</sup> He reiterated his resentment of Frank's residence in the house of Thomas "who tried to oust Morris Hillquit and who collaborated with the American Trotskists and other 'unofficial communists'". Thomas was "a muddle-headed demagogue of the cheapest type but we, the 'Old Guard', that is the loyal old Social Democracy, separated irrevocable from these people and founded the Social Democratic Federation".<sup>82</sup> He explained that the SDF retained the Jewish Daily Forward and the majority of the party members including the Jewish and the German speaking branches and "all loyal socialists of the American movement". He remarked on the Vladek group that "only a handful of our people are still trying to sit

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<sup>80</sup> Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, Bonn, Nachlass Paul Hertz, microfilm of the Paul Hertz Papers at the Institute for Social History in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Sollmann to Hertz, 9 July 1936, film reel 14.

<sup>81</sup> Cahan to Sollmann, 18 August 1936, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

on two chairs. One of them introduced W. Müller [Frank] to the Jewish labor organizations ... so that he received about \$10,000. Later, they told me that, in their opinion, all this was done with my knowledge and approval."<sup>83</sup> Cahan was determined to foil the plans that Vladek had with NB. He did not need the further prodding which Sollmann suggested to Wels.<sup>84</sup>

As Cahan used Sollmann, so the latter used the former. A friend of Cahan who was a correspondent for the New York Times wrote a laudatory article about Sollmann just before the arrival of the Sopade representative in January 1937. It called him "the greatest political figure losing his citizenship at this time, ... one of the outstanding leaders of German Democracy, ... an authorized representative of the underground movement in Germany".<sup>85</sup> After this, Cahan's name was omitted from the letterhead of the invitations which the Sollmann Reception Committee sent out. As its secretary, Seger included the names of such dissenting emigrants as Sender and Rosenfeld. He considered it especially important to use the names of protestants like Niebuhr, Tillich and the executive secretary of the Christian Committee for the Aid of German Refugees.<sup>86</sup> Because of this plan of approaching American protestant organizations, Seger advised that Sollmann should "not be branded right away as a party politician". This would close

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Sollmann to Wels, 18 August 1936, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>85</sup> New York Times, 4 December 1936, article on Sollmann.

<sup>86</sup> Sollmann to Wels, 31 December 1936, EK Mappe 122.

many doors for him since "even well educated Americans unhesitatingly interchange socialists, communists and anarchists which is all red to them".<sup>87</sup> Actually, the non-socialist protestants were not all that antifascist, certainly not pro-socialist and sometimes suspect of anti-semitism. Seger wanted to avoid the impression that the Sopade representative was "engaged only by Jews". This raises the suspicion that Sollmann with his conservative and reactionary connections was deliberately chosen to appeal to American protestant and other organizations and that the detachment from the American Jewish labor groups was calculated or, as it turned out, miscalculated. Sollmann hoped that Cahan would understand these tactics.<sup>88</sup> Later, he was incensed that the American Jewish Congress refused to engage him. The speaking tour of Sollmann was as uncoordinated as it could possibly have been.

The Social Democratic expectations that had engendered the quasi-businesslike concept of the Sollmann mission were completely out of place. Wels admitted that "after five years of Hitler dictatorship, our accounts are substantially lower ... and the time will come when they will be empty". He projected that a monthly contribution of \$4,000 from the United States would allow the Sopade to carry on as before. He regarded American Jewish institutions as inexhaustible suppliers of funds and could not believe that they would contribute to Jewish emigrants but not to antifascist groups.<sup>89</sup> Sollmann set the

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<sup>87</sup> Seger to Sollmann, 19 December 1936, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>88</sup> Sollmann to Hertz, 6 March 1937, film reel 14, Nachlass Hertz.

<sup>89</sup> Wels to Sollmann, 10 November 1937, EK Mappe 122.

Sopade straight about his fund raising potential. He considered himself "lucky if I could raise \$4,000 only once". He thought that he was doing a good job politically but conceded that the collection of funds was more difficult than he had imagined.<sup>90</sup> By the end of 1937, he had sent little money to Prague.

Sollmann had various explanations for this failure. He claimed that his fund raising was "only so difficult because the Sopade is thoroughly despised except by a few people" like Cahan.<sup>91</sup> He was outraged by the favorable comments of Stampfer in the Neuer Vorwärts about the Popular Front discussions of Breitscheid and other Social Democrats in Paris. He was desolate about the way in which "the heritage of the greatest political movement the world had ever known [the SPD] was squandered by little souls". He then explicitly denied the Sopade "the future right to issue authoritative political judgements". With similar escapades, they were jeopardizing his future cooperation. This was ungrateful since he was the only productive executive in 1937 "in contrast to all of you".<sup>92</sup> Sollmann also believed that in their effort "to starve out [the Sopade] financially", the NB Group had denounced him as antisemitic with American Jewish organizations. An article about his ethnic socialism by an NB member had appeared in the Sozialistische Aktion which Hertz edited for the Sopade.<sup>93</sup> It was apparent-

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<sup>90</sup> Sollmann to Crummenerl, 3 December 1937, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>91</sup> Sollmann to Hertz, 4 November 1937, film reel 14, Nachlass Hertz.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Declaration Paul Hertz, question C, document received from Mrs. Frank.



ly translated into English and distributed to American Jewish organizations. But, according to Hertz, the Neue Volkszeitung itself had published an interview with Sollmann in which the latter frankly discussed his relations with Strasser. Hertz admitted that he had sent "some of my American friends" copies of his correspondence with Sollmann from the years 1935 and 1936 about the notions of this ethnic socialist on nationalism and the Jewish question. He wanted to "avoid the impression that the underground movement endorsed these ideas".<sup>94</sup> This was probably the source of the charge that Frank had sent letters to Thomas and to the president of the American Jewish Congress.<sup>95</sup> Sollmann later admitted that he had no direct proof for this. He talked to Thomas and the AJC president but could not overcome the shame of having to defend himself publicly against a charge of antisemitism. Neither could he regain "full trust in any of the 'comrades' who believed such unfounded rumours".<sup>96</sup> It helped him to find his way out of the socialist emigration. His attitude towards the Jews was peculiar. He probably took some of the prejudices against them for facts which did not, however, justify any unequal treatment. In his own mind, therefore, he was not antisemitic.

Despite the above explanations, Sollmann found out the cause of

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<sup>94</sup> Sollmann to Hertz, February 1937; also Sollmann to Sopade, February 1937; also Hertz to Sollmann, 24 April 1937, film reel 14, Nachlass Hertz.

<sup>95</sup> Sollmann to Sopade, 12 April 1937, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>96</sup> Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, Bonn, Nachlass Friedrich Stampfer, Sollmann to Stampfer, 21 February 1939, group I, section 13, Nr. 640.

his failure. He realized that without contributions from the Jewish unions he could not get very far. He told the Sopade about Vladek that "I do not believe that anything can be accomplished without him".<sup>97</sup> Cahan was "the only loyal American friend ... we have here". But the latter was limited. If he were "ten or twenty years younger everything would be much easier but the younger Vladek has overtaken him long ago".<sup>98</sup> Instead of blaming himself and the Sopade for the bad relations with the Jewish labor leaders, Sollmann scored the thirst for "radicalism" and "the complete lack of political instincts" of the NB contributors. The concession he suggested was only palliative. He asked the Sopade to "please, think about whether you can not come up with something like a Social Democratic United Front". He had the Rote Stoss-trupp (Red Avant-Garde) in mind "or whatever the little group is called that rejoined you recently".<sup>99</sup> The Sopade and Sollmann had not yet overcome their sense of superiority over the American and American Jewish labor movement which derived from their prominence before the defeat by National Socialism.

The results of the following visits of Frank contrasted even more with the Social Democratic failure than the first one. His second visit lasted from April to June 1937 and netted \$12,000. During this stay, he married Anna Caples and became an American citizen. His third visit lasted from December 1938 to the spring of 1939. At that time,

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<sup>97</sup> Sollmann to Crummenerl, 3 December 1937, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

the AFGF was expanded and started publishing its Inside Germany Reports. With the imminence of war, Frank decided to stay in the United States. He returned once more to Europe in June 1939 in order to transfer the NB exile committee from Paris to London in anticipation of a French defeat. In a response to an inquiry by the Office of Strategic Services, he estimated the total sum of American contributions to NB between 1935 and 1942 at \$90,000 to \$100,000. Until 1935, the Sopade treasurer Crummenerl overlooked the NB funds. In 1936, Hertz became the trustee of NB finances at the suggestions of the SI secretary, Adler, the NB exile committee and several underground organizers. Hertz handled the NB funds through a committee of three that included himself and Frank. The American funds passed through a committee in New York. It transferred them to Sir Stafford Cripps in England who handed them over to the Hertz committee.<sup>100</sup>

Despite these arrangements, Frank had to face all kinds of Social Democratic accusations. His visits became occasions for an escalation of Social Democratic recriminations. In this process, the relations between the two groups deteriorated beyond the mediation attempts by some Jewish labor leaders. The tables turned for the two groups when Vladek died at the early age of fifty-two in October 1938.<sup>101</sup> The death of this influential NB sponsor gave free reins to

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<sup>100</sup> Paul Hertz, Erklärung im Falle Paul Hagen; also Autobiographical data and OSS Inquiry, 15 May 1942, box 5, folder Neubeginnen; also Paul Hertz to Dear Comrade, 19 June 1940, box 7, folder 4, Frank Papers.

<sup>101</sup> Frank, Autobiographical data, p. 9, document received from Mrs. Frank.

the antagonism of Cahan. By this accident, the Social Democrats recovered some of the ground they had lost through their lack of imaginative planning. But they abused it to the detriment of the whole German socialist emigration in the United States. After 1938, it was difficult to stem the tide of Social Democratic recriminations. On hearsay information, Seger charged among other things, that Frank had embezzled NB funds.<sup>102</sup> He promised to retract these accusations publicly but failed to do so after the death of Vladek. It turned out that Frank had not led a luxurious life in an Austrian spa but merely spent some days with his daughter of his previous marriage before returning to the United States for good.

In the fall of 1937, the general secretary of the Workmen's Circle, Joseph Baskin, who was also a member of the JLC, tried unsuccessfully to bring about a friendly agreement between the Sopade and NB. During his tour of Poland, he made a detour to Prague and offered his "mediation in case of serious intentions for an understanding". He had an interview with Stampfer in order to sound out the attitude of the Sopade. Stampfer reacted positively as always but he discussed the interview only with Wels, Vogel and Crummenerl rather than with the full Sopade so that Hertz was excluded. As the outcome of this meeting, Stampfer informed Baskin that the Sopade was not interested in discussions with other groups. Under these circumstances, Baskin did not return to Prague. He regretted that the Sopade people were

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<sup>102</sup>Paul Levy to Hertz, 7 February 1938; 14 February 1938; 5 September 1938; 18 September 1938; also Hertz to Levy; 2 September 1938; also Hertz to Hagen, 16 July 1940, film reel 14, Nachlass Hertz.

"blind, stubborn and live in the past".<sup>103</sup> The Sopade and the Social Democrats in New York did not want to co-exist with NB. They hoped to supplant the latter in the favors of the Jewish Labor Committee.

They made their first serious organizational effort in the spring of 1939, not because they were concerned with the political situation in case of war but because they were bankrupt. The Sopade had to discontinue two of its three publications, the Zeitschrift für Sozialismus in 1936 and the Sozialistische Aktion in 1938 after the expulsion of Hertz. It could not publish the Neuer Vorwärts much longer without American help. If it stopped publishing the Vorwärts prematurely it could expect no assistance at all. In this emergency, the Sopade decided to approach the Jewish Labor Committee and the AFL and to establish a permanent representation in the United States for these purposes.<sup>104</sup> The latter was logically called German Labor Delegation. The Sopade finally discarded the salesman's concept of soliciting donations for antifascist speeches in favor of negotiating with fellow labor groups. In order to initiate these plans, it sent the Jewish executive Stampfer to the United States. He was the one Sopade member best known and regarded by the American Jewish labor leaders. He was also the best public relations man of the exile executive. He was a party professional who had edited the national party daily Vorwärts since 1916. As an ethical rather than a Marxist socialist, he represented well the right wing Sopade.

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<sup>103</sup> Hertz to Baskin, 9 September 1937, film reel 14, Nachlass Hertz.

<sup>104</sup> Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Einleitung, p. 35.

By the time of Stampfer's first visit in January and February 1939, the friends of Cahan had a majority in the JLC. The latter promised large sums on the scale of the contributions to NB. But their passage through the Committee took beyond the time of Stampfer's visit. The latter also met with the president of the AFL. With his right wing Social Democratic ideology, he thought that the Sopade had to choose the democratic AFL over the pro-communist CIO. He expected much from this national union federation without realizing that it was worlds apart from the socialist unions of the Weimar Republic. Stampfer told Green that the Sopade funds for the fight against Hitler were nearly exhausted and that the executive needed \$50,000 annually for continuing its work. For the current year, \$25,000 would be enough.<sup>105</sup> According to plan, Stampfer and the Social Democratic emigrants in New York formed the German Labor Delegation which was to pursue the relations with the JLC and the AFL. The rather obscure Rudolf Katz became the secretary of the GLD. He had come directly to the United States in the mid-thirties and had not been in contact with the SPD executives either during the Weimar Republic or during the emigration. In New York, he became a member of the editorial staff of the Neue Volkszeitung and the secretary of the German language branch of the Social Democratic Federation. He was ready to do the political work of the GLD for which he had few competitors among a Social Democratic emigrant group that had grown larger during the late thirties. It included Aufhäuser, Max Brauer, the former mayor of Altona, Grzesinsky and

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<sup>105</sup> Stampfer to William Green, 23 February 1939, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 49, p. 381.

Hans Staudinger, former Assistant Secretary of Commerce in the Prussian government and later professor at the New School for Social Research in New York.

After the departure of Stampfer, the GLD could not lead the negotiations which he had opened to a very good conclusion. The JLC promised first \$15,000 and then \$10,000 for 1939.<sup>106</sup> Katz and Staudinger pleaded continually for an early partial payment and were finally granted \$4,000 in May 1939 and a smaller sum later. The rest of the \$10,000 remained outstanding.<sup>107</sup> In order to further its relations with the JLC, the GLD invited Dubinsky, Zaritsky and Baskin to join its American sponsor committee. Seger addressed the AFL convention in Cincinnati in October 1939 but no contributions were forthcoming from the giant union federation. In the field of the non-labor Jewish organizations, the GLD made no progress either. It contacted the two main conservative organizations, the American Jewish Committee and the order of Bne Brith which spent large sums on the fight against antisemitism. The AJC represented the Jewish business community which had Central European ethnic origins. It was reluctant to support revolutionary activities in Germany and was afraid of an antisemitic reaction in the isolationist United States. The Order of Bne Brith shared these reservations. Besides antisemitism, it combated communism and did not take the German Social Democrats for what they said they were. A

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<sup>106</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 11 March 1939, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 51, pp. 383-387.

<sup>107</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 22 May 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 62, pp. 400, 401; also Stampfer to Sopade, 7 February 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 86, pp. 440, 441.

delegation under Katz met with the director of the American Jewish Committee and told him that the Sopade needed about \$75,000 for 1939. The latter offered only to convene an informal meeting with a few individual AJC members to whom the GLD would have to report again.<sup>108</sup>

The wealthy labor lawyer, George Backer, who had recently bought the New York Post represented some potential AJC contributors and also made some offers of his own. He held out the prospect of \$25,000 which would become speedily available in case of major developments like a war. But he procrastinated interminably so that Katz and Staudinger gave up on him after innumerable calls.<sup>109</sup>

In the meantime, the GLD tried to bolster its labor image. It asked the labor international and the president of the exile committee of the German labor unions for endorsements.<sup>110</sup> The latter reacted with a letter to Green which stressed the independence of the unionist resistance and emigration. He agreed with the Sopade on the communist question and on the repudiation of the splinter groups, that is mainly NB. But he asked Green directly for support "for our inner-German union activities".<sup>111</sup> The GLD could also intercede with the AFL for

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<sup>108</sup> Aktennotiz über eine Unterredung mit Waldmann, signed Katz, 24 March 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 55, p. 390.

<sup>109</sup> Aktennotiz über eine Unterredung von Staudinger und Katz mit Backer, 22 March 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 53, pp. 388, 389.

<sup>110</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 11 March 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 51, p. 385.

<sup>111</sup> Fritz Tarnow to William Green, 8 May 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 60, pp. 395-398.



contributions to the unionist emigration. The labor internationals did not endorse the GLD as a union representation.

The main cause for the problems of the GLD was the antagonism towards NB which was supposed to alleviate them. The GLD was indignant about the official formation of the American Friends of German Freedom in May 1939 and about the sponsorship of the AFGF by some Jewish labor leaders. Adolph Held, the chairman of the JLC and the president of the Amalgamated Bank of the Jewish unions, accepted the job of overseeing the AFGF finances. Since the Social Democrats had not yet publicized their own committee they felt upstaged by the "Konkurrenzfirma" [rival company]. They decided to publish their material immediately so that "we will still make it an hour ahead of them".<sup>112</sup> In the fall of 1939, the GLD became upset again over "the problem New Beginning and the activity of Dr. Hertz". The AFGF celebrated the arrival of the latter in New York with a well organized fund raising dinner. Its financial results were so good that Hertz felt they could not be equalled by any other organization. Simultaneously, the AFGF published Nr. 48 of the Sozialdemokratische Informationsbriefe of the NB exile committee, in New York. The GLD was incensed about this usurption of its identity and about "Dr. Hertz running to our American comrades [of the JLC] and presenting himself as a Social Democratic leader, an underground worker and a future Social Democratic restorer".<sup>113</sup> It decided on a

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<sup>112</sup> Staudinger to Stampfer, 23 May 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 63, pp. 401, 402.

<sup>113</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 14 November 1939, Matthias and Lin, Nr. 79, pp. 427, 428.

general campaign of enlightenment which was directed at "all American organizations and unions", especially at the JLC. Katz realized that the GLD could "on the other hand not become vicious in public because the Americans must not be bothered with internal differences".<sup>114</sup> Yet, one of the GLD counter-measures was an article in the NVZ which claimed that "every dollar contributed to this purpose [NB] will be a dollar thrown out the window".<sup>115</sup> Cahan followed with an even more vituperative article in the JDF. It accused the NB organization of both viciously attacking the Social Democrats "as a type of counter-revolutionary reactionaries" and illegitimately appropriating the Social Democratic name for its own purposes. The latter offense was according to the JDF editor in step "with old communist tradition" while the former could only be committed by a "Communist-Nazi agent or a totally blind fanatic". With little consideration for reality, Cahan claimed that "all German Social Democrats ... support the exiled party executive" and that the NB Group had "never held any practical influence in Germany". Any contributions to this group were wasted and only the GLD deserved American support.<sup>116</sup> Katz suggested that the Sopade express special thanks to Cahan, "the great old man", for this article.

With these methods, Katz expected a GLD victory in the fight for the favors of the JLC. The publicity against the Hertz dinner

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 18 November 1939.

<sup>116</sup> Artikel von Cahan, "Eine Warnung an alle Freunde der Deutschen Freiheitsbewegung", Jewish Daily Forward, 29 November 1939, Übersetzung als Anlage zu Matthias and Link, Nr. 80, pp. 428-431.

caused "a small internal storm" or, in his phrase of two weeks later, "a great storm inside the JLC". The article by Cahan was "an energetic attempt at keeping three people ... away from NB",<sup>117</sup> Baskin, Zaritsky and Held. Katz was confident that "the overwhelming majority [of the JLC] under the leadership of Cahan is on our side".<sup>118</sup> But Cahan could not dominate the JLC. Each of its members relied on his individual authority as the leader of a labor organization which made voluntary contributions to the JLC. In response to the Cahan article, the minority prevailed on the JLC to request information about Hertz and NB from the general secretary of the Socialist International. As anticipated, the grade from Adler for NB was "A-plus". He described the Group as a movement for the restoration of German socialism. Stampfer considered this response as an interference by the SI secretary who was "preparing a new split for the sake of his private enjoyment".<sup>119</sup> The JLC minority could block appropriations to the GLD so that neither of the two German emigrant groups received anything. Held told Staudinger that his position as treasurer of the AFGF had "no special significance" and that he supported "all movements which seem capable of fighting the Nazis".<sup>120</sup> Then, he reproached Katz and Stampfer for leaving him ig-

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<sup>117</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 3 December 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 81, pp. 431-433; also Sitzung der German Labor Delegation, 13 December 1939, Matthias and Link, Nr. 82, pp. 433, 434; also Nachlass Stampfer, group I, section 9, Nr. 429.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 24 February 1940, EK Mappe 132.

<sup>120</sup> Katz, Notiz; 22 May 1939, group I, section 9, Nr. 399, Nachlass Stampfer.

norant of the deep dissensions between Hertz and the Sopade and for not sparing him the "bitter fights with his friends". Katz thought that with this statement, Held only wanted to cover his tactical retreat. Actually, Held told Katz that "personally, he stood behind us, not behind NB". He claimed to have directed the rejection of an appropriation to NB because "he opposed divisiveness and considered the PV as the competent institution". But Held continually postponed a decision about a GLD appropriation for 1940. All the Social Democrats received was the rest of the appropriation of 1939.

The latter development took place during the second visit of Stampfer from January to May 1940 which was supposed to overcome the stagnation in the GLD negotiations, and was inspired by the successful AFGF dinner for Hertz. The GLD wanted to similarly celebrate Stampfer with a dinner with AFL executives or a meeting that featured Brüning, Thomas Mann and Hermann Rauschnig, the former mayor of Danzig who had repudiated the National Socialists in his emigration with his best-selling "Revolution of Nihilism". These plans annoyed Stampfer. He did not consider his presence in America indispensable. He suspected that the GLD had not followed up his initiatives of 1939 vigorously enough. After his arrival in New York, he sought the solution therefore in a reorganization of the GLD.<sup>121</sup> In his opinion, Katz was not a good organizer; he was only "a good assistant, no more". He also was too busy making a living and could not efficiently conduct the affairs of the GLD on a part time basis for \$30 a month. Stampfer thought that

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<sup>121</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 15 February 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 88, p. 444.

the Sopade could rid itself of financial worries "if we had the courage of instituting a full-fledged bureau here".<sup>122</sup> The executive Rinner replied from Paris that he had been the first one to make this proposal while others hesitated to affront Katz. But by 1940, the Sopade was too destitute "to assume continuous responsibilities of this kind".<sup>123</sup> There was also no suitable substitute for Katz. After this Sopade reaction, Stampfer temporized on the issue. By the time of his final return to the United States in the fall of 1940, it was too late to dislodge Katz.

Stampfer soon conceded that he had held illusions about the potential results of his first visit, both regarding the JLC and the AFL. In 1940, he became even more pessimistic than the GLD members, and told the Sopade at one time that he was "loaded with skepticism up to my neck".<sup>124</sup> At the end of January he addressed the meeting of the Executive Committee of the AFL in Miami. The latter promised to support the GLD and the Sopade in all respects possible. But Dubinsky, one of the AFL vice presidents, warned Stampfer that the support of the AFL Executive Committee was of purely political significance. Stampfer repeated to the Sopade that he considered the decision of Miami "as a gesture of sympathy without practical consequences". This was in his opinion still "a moral success ... [that] improved our

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<sup>122</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 29 March 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 94, p. 454; also Rinner to Stampfer, 8 March 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 91, p. 449.

<sup>123</sup> Rinner to Stampfer, 8 March 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 91, p. 449.

<sup>124</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 7 February 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 86, p. 441.

prestige substantially". The Sopade and the GLD were recognized "as an important political factor" by an AFL that played an important role in American politics and whose president was a personal friend of Roosevelt.<sup>125</sup>

The warning of Dubinsky came true. The AFL depended on the union locals for financial contributions. Green encouraged all national and international unions, state federations and central unions of the AFL to give financial assistance to the GLD who represented "the old German Labor Movement ... whose free, democratic, independent unions ... were similar to our own American Federation of Labor unions".<sup>126</sup> Stampfer visited many national union offices in Washington as well as the New York Federation of Labor. He realized that the task of contacting local unions was unlimited since there were about forty thousand of them. He tried to organize a special committee of AFL unionists under the direction of Matthew Woll to keep up the AFL fund raising campaign after his departure. But Woll was not to be pressed into the service of a socialist emigrant. He promised to raise money for the GLD and the Sopade within his AFL Labor League for Human Rights which predictably came to nothing. Green made a personal contribution of \$250 which some Jewish labor leaders considered prejudicial. It prevented the New York union of musicians from contributing \$1,000 since they did not want to go beyond matching Green's sum. The

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<sup>125</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 25 January 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 85, p. 439; also Stampfer to Sopade, 9 February 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 87, p. 442.

<sup>126</sup> Green an die Funktionäre der Gewerkschaften der AFL, 28 February 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 88, p. 445.

union of the hat and capmakers of Zaritsky donated \$500. It was symptomatic of the fund raising difficulties of Stampfer that he pursued the hopeless task of eliciting aid from Backer. The latter rejected the idea of a \$15,000 loan against the credit of the future German labor movement.

The negotiations with the JLC netted \$3,000, that is the rest of the appropriation of 1939. It saved the Neue Vorwärts for a few more months until the German invasion of France. The JLC deferred interminably a decision over an appropriation of \$10,000 for 1940. It was held up by a pending appropriation of \$2,000 to Hertz. The millionaire socialist Alfred Baker Lewis from Boston, who was also one of the GLD sponsors, tried to mediate between the two German emigrant groups. After corresponding with Seger, Hertz, Frank, and others, he suggested that "the communist issue be dead" in reference to NB. The latter had refused any involvement in the Popular Front negotiations in Paris in which several Social Democratic emigrants had participated, including the later GLD chairmen Aufhäuser and Grzesinsky. Nor did the Boston socialist consider the GLD qualified to criticize the underground record of NB. He told Seger that it would in his opinion be "relatively easy to get together with them [NB] if an effort were made to do so". In reference to the cooperation in the German socialist underground, he thought "it would be reasonable and statesmanlike to try to do the same thing among the emigrés Germans. It would be helpful and not harmful as far as I can see."<sup>127</sup> But the GLD was bent on

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<sup>127</sup> Alfred Baker Lewis to Seger, 16 March 1940; also Fred Sanderson to Lewis, 31 March 1940, film reel 14, Nachlass Hertz.

disposing of the NB Group. When the JLC asked Stampfer for advice, the Sopade executive answered that the Labor Committee should know itself what to do with its money; that the \$2,000 would, however, be used "to fight us".<sup>128</sup> Held kept reassuring Stampfer about another \$10,000 for the Sopade saying that it was only a matter of a few days before they would be approved. Actually, he postponed a final decision because he feared "a blow-up over the questionable \$2,000" for NB. By the time of Stampfer's departure in May 1940, the JLC had not yet reached a decision. Stampfer considered this "a truly grotesque situation ... [in which] NB is obstructive against us and a divisive agent in the JLC".<sup>129</sup> The events in France relieved the JLC of making a decision. After the Fall of France, all JLC contributions were reserved for the rescue of the refugees.

Thus, the Sopade became serious about its American relations at an inopportune time and in the wrong way. It was bankrupt financially and politically. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the hope for an inner-German solution to National Socialism faded away. A military confrontation intensified Western nationalism which did not help the Sopade and the GLD either. The former sank to the role of an undesirable applicant for asylum. With its intolerance, the latter destroyed the rest of its credibility after the loss of its political

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<sup>128</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 9 March 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 92, pp. 451, 452.

<sup>129</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 15 March 1940, EK Mapped 132; also Stampfer to Sopade, 10 April 1940, Matthias and Link, Nr. 100, pp. 464, 465.



usefulness. With their own background, most of the Jewish labor leaders found a plurality of German socialist emigrant groups natural. But they could not abide the degree of antagonism between the latter, especially not during the refugee crisis of 1940 and 1941.

## CHAPTER V

### THE POLITICS OF RESCUE

The outbreak of the Second World War confronted the German socialist emigrant groups in the United States with the practical task of rescuing their comrades from Southern France. This required cooperation and offered the chance of disregarding ideological differences in a common endeavor. But more consistently with their past antagonisms, the political aspirations of these groups interfered with the humanitarian task of rescue. This resulted in a limited performance in the service of their comrades. In the pursuit of its political ambitions, the German Labor Delegation obstructed not only some of the efforts of its New Beginning competitors, it also neglected its own Social Democratic and unionist refugees in Southern France. It made sure that the Sopade executives did not come to New York where they would have eclipsed the GLD. Eventually, it ignored the limited number of Social Democratic refugees whom it had helped to escape to America.

In their rescue work, the socialist groups had to labor against the negative refugee policies of the French and the American governments. With its anti-semitic and anti-socialist attitude, the French government of Pétain and Laval made life for the German and European refugees difficult and prohibited their escape. In the United States, the Roosevelt administration was sympathetic towards Jewish and anti-

fascist refugees. But it could not do much for them because of the anti-alien mood of the country during and after the Depression. The policies of the French and the American governments explain sufficiently why a large number of socialist and other refugees were left stranded in Vichy France. In this context, it is difficult to judge the rescue work of the German socialist emigrant groups for their comrades in Southern France. Some of the emigrant groups in New York did their best for the refugees with limited success. But regardless of the general circumstances, the German Labor Delegation often neglected its duties towards its fellow Social Democrats and unionists.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, the refugees were no longer safe in France. The French government treated them as enemy aliens. It subjected all male Germans between the ages of seventeen and sixty-five to internment in sixty so-called centres de rassemblements (gathering centers). Simultaneously, they were liable to military service or to work in labor battalions or formations de prestataires. The last of the internees were released by mid-January 1940. Nine thousand of them joined the régiments de marche, the foreign volunteer units of the French army, and five thousand the prestataires formations. After the attack on France in May 1940, the French government ordered a second internment of all German men and women. With the approach of the German armies, their situation became precarious. They were moved from camp to camp or released, according to the individual judgement of the camp commanders. They mingled with the stream of the

French refugees trying to escape to Southwestern France.<sup>1</sup>

The new French government in Vichy was much harder on the refugees than its predecessor. Its own inclinations were in tune with German demands. It was obliged by article 19 of the armistice to "surrender upon demand all Germans named by the German government".<sup>2</sup> Delegations of the German and Italian armistice commissions were stationed in the major cities of the free zone. A new policy of internment established concentration camps and labor camps for the refugees. The conditions and the treatment in these camps were often appalling. Epidemics were rampant. The suicide and death rates were high. In the camp of Gurs, one thousand and fifty-five out of thirteen thousand five hundred refugees died. In mid-November 1940, the concentration camps were transformed into regular camps under civil authority. The poor and the specially suspect refugees were retained; those with independent means were released and assigned to forced residency mostly in provincial small towns and villages where they could not initiate their

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<sup>1</sup>Kurt R. Grossmann, Emigration: Die Geschichte der Hitler-Flüchtlinge, 1933-1945 (Frankfurt: 1969), pp. 12, 58, 59. See also Arthur Köstler, The scum of the earth (London: 1949), p. 186, and Lucien Steinberg, "The scum of the earth, ein Beitrag zur Situation der deutschsprachigen Emigration in Frankreich zu Beginn des Zweiten Weltkrieges", Widerstand, Verfolgung und Emigration, Studien und Berichte aus dem Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, (n.d. ), pp. 104-117.

<sup>2</sup>Varian Fry, Surrender on Demand, the dramatic story of the underground organization set up by Americans in France to rescue anti-Nazis from the Gestapo (New York: Random House, Inc., 1945), Foreword p. X.

emigration. The conditions in the transformed camps did not improve significantly.<sup>3</sup>

During this emergency, the refugees received aid from twenty-six mostly American relief organizations. Many of these also gave assistance in emigration even during the months when emigration was illegal. They became very important in the evacuation of the socialist refugees. Among them were the American Friends Service Committee of the Quakers, the Unitarian Service Committee, the Jewish Comité d'Assistance aux Réfugiés with thirteen subcommittees in the unoccupied zone, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Emigration Association of the Hebrew Immigration and Aid Society, the Emergency Rescue Committee and the International Relief Association. The French headquarters of these organizations were mostly in Marseille.<sup>4</sup>

The grace period for evacuation was circumstantial. Nobody could predict its duration. Its end was expected for as early as the spring of 1941. In early 1942, Laval promised the German government the extradition of ten thousand German refugees in order to stave off occupation. He ordered the provincial prefects to supply the lists and the refugees. In November 1942, the German armies finally occupied the rest of France. From the Vichy camps, the German government deported

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<sup>3</sup>Friedrich Heine to German Labor Delegation, 25 December 1940, EK Mappe 51. See also: Heine to Nielsson Thorsten, 30 May 1941, EK Mappe 51, and Grossmann, Emigration, pp. 205, 208.

<sup>4</sup>Grossmann, Emigration, p. 206. See also: Heine, list of twenty-six relief committees in unoccupied France, 1 March 1941, EK Mappe 51; and Korrespondenz Max Diamant, Teil 3, list of American relief agencies, AsD.

almost two hundred thousand refugees to its extermination camps in Central Europe. Among the deportees were a number of socialist refugees.<sup>5</sup>

Despite these dangers to the refugees, the Vichy government made escape from France almost impossible. It was illegal to leave without an exit visa. Until July 1940, the Bureau de Circulation Militaire and the provincial prefectures had the authority to issue exit visas. But then, the Ministry of the Interior monopolized this authority and refused to issue exit visas to German refugees for the rest of 1940. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sold them unofficially to rich refugees for 25,000 ffrs or about \$625 apiece.<sup>6</sup> In January 1941, the Ministry of the Interior unexpectedly reversed itself. The refugees could then embark on French ships in Marseille for Martinique from where they could continue their voyage. Foreign lines could not operate in Marseille because of the war.

The French visa policy complicated the task of evacuation. During the time of illegal exit, the rescue committees had to cover up their major activity with social work for the refugees. They were subjected to periodical police raids and were pressured to close down their offices. It was very difficult for them to negotiate the release from camp of refugees for whom they had acquired an American visa. Sometimes, they bribed the guards or the camp commander. Sometimes, the

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<sup>5</sup>Grossmann, Emigration, pp. 209, 210.

<sup>6</sup>Vladimer Vochoč, Memorandum of the Emergency Bureau for the Rescue of German Anti-Nazi Refugees in London to the French Ministry of the Interior, May 1945, pp. 1-6, AsD.

refugees managed to escape by themselves. Marseille was the only place where the refugees could acquire the necessary emigration papers from the foreign consulates. But for traveling there, they needed a permit for safe conduct which had usually a time limit that was too short for the bureaucratic delays at the consulates. Also, a refugee in Marseille was automatically suspected of pursuing illegal exit. There were frequent police raids in the hotels and in the streets. With or without proper papers, a refugee could be arrested, sent back to forced residence or to a camp in the provinces. For a short while in the summer of 1940, the American consulate general in Marseille did not hand over an American visa without presentation of an exit visa, which was unobtainable. When a representative of the Emergency Rescue Committee complained to Eleanor Roosevelt the State Department changed that practice.

During the time of illegal exit, Lisbon was the only continental port where the refugees could embark for overseas. The French police and the Italian armistice authorities easily controlled the harbor of Marseille. The only way to Lisbon was the landroute to the Pyrenees and through Spain and Portugal. This required Spanish and Portuguese transit visas which were not always easy to get. Traveling to, and crossing, the French Spanish border was illegal. Sympathetic French border officials at Cerbère often let the refugees pass on the train to Spain. Others arrested them and returned them to the camps or to forced residency. Suicide was not an unusual solution to these problems. A number of refugees left on carefully reconnoitered footpaths over the hills that circumvented the border guards. The Spanish

border officials usually accepted them and put an entrada stamp on their transit visas. Refugees without entrada stamps were later arrested and sent back to the border for a proper repetition of entry.

The acquisition of Spanish and Portuguese transit visas was subject to varying conditions. Until October 1940, the Portuguese consulates issued a transit visa for 200 ffrs or about \$5.00 to any holder of an acceptable passport and of a visa of final destination. The possession of a Portuguese transit visa qualified for a Spanish transit visa. But the large stream of refugees made the Portuguese government uneasy. Between 1940 and 1942, forty thousand refugees passed through Lisbon.<sup>7</sup> Most of them waited there for weeks and months for a place on a ship or even for an overseas visa. They became often welfare cases that were tended precariously by American relief organizations like the Unitarian Service Committee. Eventually, the Portuguese authorities limited the transit stay in Lisbon to a number of weeks and arrested those refugees that could not comply. Also, the Portuguese consulates were instructed to issue a transit visa only on presentation of a paid ship ticket. The Spanish government also caused problems. On 25 September 1940, it instructed the Spanish consulates to submit all visa requests to Madrid where they could be better screened. After a visit in Madrid by Heinrich Himmler, the chief of the Gestapo, the Spanish border opened and closed intermittently for arbitrary periods of time. Later, Spanish transit visas became contingent on French exit visas. With the spring of 1941, the Spanish government refused transit visas

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<sup>7</sup>Oscar Handlin, A Continuing Task. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1914-1964 (1964), p. 87.



to male refugees of military age. This necessitated illegal entry into Spain and the use of counterfeit visas and entrade stamps. Few refugees succeeded in crossing Spain under these conditions.

The dispensation of transoceanic tickets in Lisbon was organized by the HICEM, the Emigration Association of the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigration Aid Society (HIAS) and of the older Jewish Colonization Agency (ICA) that dated back to 1881. According to an agreement with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee which conducted rescue operations in Germany and German occupied countries, the HICEM covered Vichy France and related evacuation countries, including Portugal. It usually bought bulk space from various ocean passenger lines. For the places that remained after the accommodation of its own clients, it accepted the applications of other rescue committees such as the Emergency Rescue Committee, the German Labor Delegation and the International Relief Association. It waited for the cables of these committees from New York confirming payment or guarantee of payment for the passages. Sometimes, the HICEM granted subsidies to individual clients of the socialist rescue committees.

The shipowners usually exploited individual refugees. Under the conditions of war, only a few Greek, Portuguese and American passenger lines could operate out of Lisbon. Shippage was limited so that there were always many more refugees than the lines could accommodate. This made evacuation a lucrative business. Individual tickets sold on the black market at inflated prices. A \$185 ticket cost an additional \$100 to \$150. Better tickets were traded for \$200 to \$1,000 more than

their base prices.<sup>8</sup> The ships were often in deplorable condition. Sanitary facilities were insufficient for an overcrowd of exhausted or ill refugees. Many died during an interminable voyage of weeks and sometimes months. A ship might dock at one or more Caribbean or Mexican ports before sailing on to New York. The HICEM and the Portuguese government sometimes succeeded in imposing improvements of the ships on the reluctant shipowners.

The evacuation of refugees from Vichy France was difficult but not impossible. The rescue organizations had to coordinate their operations in France, Spain, Portugal and America under constantly changing conditions in each country. They could only evacuate a minority of their clients. The American visa policy made their task more difficult and contributed to the partial failure of the work of rescue.

The Roosevelt administration left the quota immigration system untouched because the president could not do without the support of a group of anti-alien Democratic Congressmen from the South. The State Department was in tune with the latter. Its visa administration had the result that the German quota was not even fully used during the refugee crisis. From July 1940 to June 1941, during the main rescue year, the German quota use was only 47.7%. By the summer of 1941, new legislation practically stopped further immigration with its relative and LPC clauses. Refugees with relatives left in Germany were considered vulnerable to extortion of intelligence services and refugees who

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<sup>8</sup>Curt Geyer to Ollenhauer, Vogel, 13 March 1941, EK Mappe 44.

were likely to become public charges were also unwelcome.<sup>9</sup>

Unlike immigrant visas, visitor visas were open to executive regulation. In their administration, the government had some leeway which it used to pacify such political supporters as the Jewish labor unions. It created the emergency visa which suspended the six months time limit of the visitor visa but obligated its holder to leave the United States as soon as possible and start preparing for departure immediately after arrival. The processing of special visa applications fell to the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees (PAC). But the American consuls in Europe soon complained about this curtailment of their visa authority. The State Department made good use of their complaints in persuading the president in mid-September 1940 to sanction severe restrictions of the emergency visa program.

Thus, the benefits of this program for the German socialist refugees were modest. The Jewish Labor Committee had compiled a list of European labor leaders and intellectuals which a delegation under AFL president William Green handed over to the State Department on 2 July 1940. About four hundred of the refugees on the JLC or AFL list or, as it was occasionally called, the Dubinsky list, received emergency visas. A number of clients of the Emergency Rescue Committee also obtained such visas during the operative phase of the program in the

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<sup>9</sup>On the immigration policy of the Roosevelt administration, see Henry L. Feingold, The Politics of Rescue, the Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1970); Saul S. Friedman, No Haven for the Oppressed, United States Policy toward Jewish Refugees, 1938-1945 (Wayne State University Press: 1973); and David S. Wyman, Paper Walls, America and the Refugee Crisis, 1938-1941 (Amherst University Press: 1968).

summer of 1940. Later, special visas were very difficult to get.<sup>10</sup>

The testimony of the refugee committees confirmed these problems. A representative of the Emergency Rescue Committee told Eleanor Roosevelt in November 1940 that since mid-September no new emergency visas had been granted to political refugees. On October 17, Frank wrote to Ruth Fischer in Lisbon about how "the consular service ... paralyzed the original good will of part of the administration and reduced the results which seemed at first possible. The people in the administration ... have more and more slowed down; even the active rest is split". He elaborated that "for the last four or five weeks, permanent committees have been meeting weekly. Each time, they say the issue has been salvaged once more but each time the counter current turned out to be stronger." Frank was also pessimistic about further sponsorship for the rescue committees. He felt that "organizable good will ... has dropped to zero". This applied also to the unions who "after pushing through their first list of about three hundred refugees which contained at least one third Mensheviks and Bundists ... have neither the

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<sup>10</sup> Besides the discussions by Feingold, Friedmann and Wyman on the emergency visa program, see also: Dokumentation zur Emigration, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Bericht von Hilde Walters: She mentions a summary affidavit by William Green for about two hundred refugees on the JLC-AFL list. See also: William Green to Stampfer, 27 August 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 103, p. 467; Jewish Labor Committee, Memorandum to the British Labor Party and to the Trade Union Congress, July 1941, EK Mappe 196; Hagen to Elfriede Eisler (Ruth Fischer), 17 October 1940, Frank Papers, box 8, folder E: Frank estimated that the first JLC-AFL list contained the names of about three hundred refugees in Southern France. See also: Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, I, EK Mappe 51; Katz to Stampfer, 21 September 1940, Stampfer Nachlass, section I, group 9, Nr. 431; Ibid., Nr. 444; Rudolf Katz, Die exilierte deutsche demokratische Linke in USA, 1955, p. 9; Hagen to Hertz, 12 July 1940, Nachlass Hertz, reel 15.

chance nor the desire to force through a second list". The difficulties for gaining approval of the first AFL list had been "gigantic".<sup>11</sup> Frank was exaggerating to a refugee whom he did not favor. But his assessment of the problems with the special visa program was correct.

The French and the American visa policy limited the work of the German socialist rescue committees. The bureaucratic visa procedures required the unceasing efforts of these committees without allowing them to accomplish much. Raising the necessary funds was also a frustrating job. But as former refugees, the German socialist emigrants in the United States could be expected to do their best against any odds.

Unfortunately, they did not always live up to the demands of the refugee crisis. Not even for this humanitarian task could they muster the necessary antifascist solidarity. They continued fighting each other rather than their common enemy. Their antifascist performance fell short of their antifascist claim. Sometimes they were absorbed in political rather than humanitarian ambitions. The former interfered with the latter especially in the neglect of undesirable refugees. Their lack of foresight was already an indication of this attitude. They organized rescue committees only in the extremity of the French defeat. A more timely and systematic job would have achieved better results.

It is not surprising that after the war some former emigrants covered up the partial failure of their rescue work. They did this in

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<sup>11</sup> Hagen to Elfriede Eisler, 17 October 1940, Frank Papers, box 8, folder E.

the context of the domestic and international situation of postwar Germany. A record of good work in America and of successful relations with Americans could help their political image in the era of the Cold War when their conservative opponents tried to brand them as communists. In his postwar memoir, Stampfer claims: "The fact is that most of the emigrants succeeded with the help of the United States to leave France before the extradition began."<sup>12</sup> In his short memoir of 1955, Katz reflects on his achievements as one of the main rescue organizers by using the phrase of "the miracle of the rescue".<sup>13</sup> The introduction to the documentation from the Stampfer Papers repeats this uncritical view when it gives the grade of "highest merits" to the German Labor Delegation for its organization of the rescue effort in 1940 and 1941. The selection of documents does not substantiate "this great achievement".<sup>14</sup> These postwar reports also covered up the politics that influenced the rescue work of the emigrants.

Against these later claims, it is important to establish the record of the emigrant rescue work. The second part of this chapter will therefore deal with the two main socialist rescue efforts, those of the American Friends of German Freedom and their Emergency Rescue Committee (ERC) and of the German Labor Delegation. It will discuss how much money these groups raised for their rescue work and how many

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<sup>12</sup> Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, p. 118.

<sup>13</sup> Rudolf Katz, Die exilierte deutsche demokratische Linke in USA, p. 30, Nachlass Stampfer, section I, group 9, Nr. 444.

<sup>14</sup> Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, p. 35.

refugees they were able to evacuate. The description of these tasks will exemplify the political conditions of the rescue work. The relationship between the two socialist committees will further elucidate their politics of rescue.

The American Friends of German Freedom had a hard time getting their rescue work under way. Their first two attempts failed because of political obstacles. As a third attempt, they founded the Emergency Rescue Committee. The first rescue committee started in the spring of 1940 before the French defeat. It had an initial fund of \$3,000. Hertz was to come from Los Angeles to New York to support the committee with his independent status as an elected member of the Sopade. A friend in Washington probed the possibility of emergency visas.<sup>15</sup> But the committee failed because Frank as its main organizer became the victim of the character assassination of the German Labor Delegation. In the spring of 1940, he asked for an investigation of the charges against him. A socialist arbitration committee chaired by an American convened shortly before the German invasion of France. But the GLD representatives protracted the sessions into the spring of 1941 and intrigued against Frank as a politician under investigation.

In order to neutralize this handicap, the AFGF tried to organize an international committee which included Austrian and Russian emigrants. They invited Thomas Mann to represent its German section.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Hagen to Hertz, 17 June 1940, Nachlass Hertz, reel 15.

<sup>16</sup> Hagen to Hertz, 2 July 1940, Nachlass Hertz, reel 15.

They also hoped for the membership of the GLD which could then no longer sabotage their efforts. The GLD tended to cooperate for potential benefits. But it continued its policy of monopolizing the support of the Jewish Labor Committee, especially in the matter of the emergency visas. It opposed any share of the international committee in the several hundred blanco visas of the first list which the JLC and the AFL had acquired with a summary affidavit by AFL president Green.<sup>17</sup> It persuaded the JLC chairman, Minkof, to drop the NB-clients from the "Dubinsky list" with the argument that their names had been submitted by a politically unreliable person. Hertz thought that "it was unbelievably mean of the Sopade people [the GLD] to secure the elimination of our people from the list, no matter what explanation they might offer".<sup>18</sup> Frank worked strenuously for their reinstatement, with partial success. Buttinger, who had made large contributions that had also benefitted the GLD, backed him. Together, they appealed to Julius Hochman, who was one of the JLC members friendly towards the AFGF. The latter called a partial JLC meeting in which he objected to the methods of Minkof, and secured the reinstatement of six NB clients.<sup>19</sup> Frank mentioned, however, specifically more than six from the two groups of NB applicants, of which the second group contained "our own most endangered people", while the first group included refugees like Konrad

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., Hagen to Hertz, 12 July 1940.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Hertz to Hagen, 16 July 1940.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Hagen to Hertz, 17 July 1940.



Heiden.<sup>20</sup> All other eighteen NB applicants were rejected. After this squabble over blanco visas, the AFGF initiated the Emergency Rescue Committee.

For several reasons, the ERC was a committee that was able to go about its business. Mainly, the issue over the easy blanco visas was settled. The GLD was satisfied that the AFGF had to acquire any further visas on its own. Also, the structure of the ERC covered up its main connection with the AFGF. This was especially important for the isolated refugee work that the ERC had to do. The American sponsor organization of NB appeared as only one of several members in this third committee. But the representatives of the other member groups were mostly former friends of Frank like Buttinger of the Austrian socialist emigrants, Walcher and Frölich of the SAP, members of the Gruppe Neuer Weg, a former SAP faction, and members of the ISK. The dynamic force behind the ERC was the AFGF and Frank. Kingdon of the AFGF national committee was chairman of the ERC,<sup>21</sup> Anna Frank-Caples its second secretary. With some modification, the ERC was a continuation of the abovementioned international committee. Even the GLD was still represented by Katz who liked to treat the Emergency Rescue Committee as a non-political, philanthropic group of bourgeois benefactors.

The ERC succeeded in portraying a non-political image by its work for the refugee journalists, writers and artists. This could pass

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<sup>20</sup>Vogel to Emergency Rescue Committee, 26 April 1941, EK Mappe 139.

<sup>21</sup>Katz to Stampfer, 21 September 1940; Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 105, p. 472.

as a culturally antifascist endeavor in terms of freedom of opinion and expression. Many of the writers and journalists were, however, leftists to the point that they considered the Social Democrats as conservative. It was natural for the AFGF to practice socialist solidarity towards these refugees. But the ERC was not selective in its aid. It helped all antifascist literary refugees. Temporarily, a group of non-socialist writers became even preponderant in the ERC. Frank claimed that in mid-August 1940, the committee had "completely fallen under the influence of German bourgeois writers who had very different ideas from ours on the merits of particular refugee cases". In this situation, the AFGF beat a tactical retreat that demonstrated its importance. According to Frank, "we pulled back and limited ourselves more or less to our own closest party members. Things have improved though, lately."<sup>22</sup>

The AFGF also mobilized most of the financial sources of the ERC. Buttinger was able to be one of the individual contributors because of his American marriage. Ingrid Warburg, of the Warburg banking family, took a friendly interest in the AFGF and in the ERC. According to Varian M. Fry, who directed the ERC operations in Marseille, she "made [the rescue work] possible". The firm of Harold Oram in New York conducted publicity and fund raising campaigns for the AFGF that also benefitted the ERC. It generally served liberal groups. Anna Frank-Caples worked there since 1939 or before. According to Hertz, one fund raising dinner in particular could not be equalled in financial

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<sup>22</sup> Hagen to Elfriede Eisler, 17 October 1940, Frank Papers, box 8, folder E.

success by other political groups. Nevertheless, the ERC had early financial problems. They were exemplified by the hope that Hertz, in faraway Los Angeles, could raise "a large sum".<sup>23</sup>

The ERC was energetic in its quest for refugee visas. Frank and Buttinger had reasonable hopes for the independent acquisition of blanco visas after a conversation with Eleanor Roosevelt. But she could apparently not persuade the president into taking this kind of risk a few months before the elections. Katz noted with satisfaction that the ERC lacked the important protection of the AFL and was also suspected by Washington of pro-communism. He insisted that the ERC sponsored communists and fellow travelers whom the Smith Act excluded from the United States.<sup>24</sup> Actually, the ERC was reluctant to jeopardize its precarious reputation but refused to abandon its ex-communist refugee clients. After this failure, the ERC had to submit visa applications to the PAC for the full bureaucratic process.

It succeeded in acquiring a good number of regular emergency visas. The statistics of the AFGF give an indication of the work of the ERC. By August 1940, the NB sponsor organization had provided one hundred twenty affidavits which Frank considered "a Herculean achievement".<sup>25</sup> Among others, these affidavits were for two or three friends

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<sup>23</sup>Hertz to Hagen, 23 August 1940, Nachlass Hertz, reel 15.

<sup>24</sup>Katz to Stampfer, 21 September 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 105, p. 472. The Smith Act of 1940, catered largely to the fifth columnist hysteria. It required all aliens over the age of fourteen to register and to be fingerprinted. It also expanded grounds for deportation by adding membership or former membership in a subversive organization such as a communist party.

<sup>25</sup>Hagen to Hertz, 23 August 1940, Nachlass Hertz, reel 15.

of Gurland, a former leftist Social Democrat who was then working in the ERC, for "the major members of the SAP", for some members of the Gruppe Neuer Weg, for some Brandlerites and for about twelve additional members "of our own group". These affidavits had by August resulted in visas for only forty refugees with prospects for twenty more visas. Six of the visas were for SAP refugees and one for an ISK refugee.<sup>26</sup> By October 9, the AFGF was engaged in the collection of affidavits for "about forty or fifty organization members left for our consideration".<sup>27</sup>

Not all of these cases were brought to a good conclusion. By October 1940, the AFGF had succeeded in evacuating only "about twenty of our people".<sup>28</sup> By that time, the emergency visa program was in trouble. But the financial situation of the AFGF seemed also hopeless. It had only \$25 left after the expenditure of "horrendous sums". Frank explained that the refugees in Southern France and in Lisbon were misinformed in assuming that the AFGF had any special influence in visa cases. Its initial success was due to the fact that it had been the first organization "to realize the danger of the situation". Frank added that "we mobilized all our connections in this country and managed to just get by with our funds". But the support of the rescue

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<sup>26</sup> Hagen to Hertz, 26 August 1940, Nachlass Hertz, reel 15. The Brandlerites were the followers of the co-founder of the German Communist Party Opposition.

<sup>27</sup> Hagen to Elfriede Eisler, 17 October 1940, Frank Papers, box 8, folder E; Hagen to Hertz, 17 July 1940, Nachlass Hertz, reel 15; and Ibid., Hagen to Hertz, 25 July 1940.

<sup>28</sup> Heine to Ernst Hirschberg, 29 August 1942, EK Mappe 51.

of the AFGF had "meanwhile been reduced to zero".<sup>29</sup>

Fry conducted the rescue work for the ERC in Marseille. For this purpose, he established the Centre Américain de Secours (CAS) which was sponsored by André Gide and Henri Matisse, among other celebrities. Two of Fry's assistants were Social Democratic refugees. The CAS and Fry employed all imaginable tricks in their rescue work. When necessary, they gave their clients Panamanian, Brazilian, Chinese, Siamese or Belgian Congo visas for a pretended destination, and Czechoslovakian, Polish, or counterfeit Danish and Dutch passports.<sup>30</sup> They also provided special problem clients with French demobilization orders for Algeria and Morocco which they bought from a French officer at \$5 apiece. For a better prospect of success, they sent their Lisbon bound clients to the Pyrenees in small convoys accompanied by an American staff member or an experienced refugee. Fry, himself, and his assistant convoyed Franz Werfel and his wife, Heinrich Mann and his wife, and Golo Mann, the son of Thomas Mann, into Spain. Fry was forced to leave France in October 1941. But the CAS continued to operate until 1942. It was suspended on 2 June 1942 and closed down on 15 September of the same year.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Hagen to Elfriede Eisler, 17 October 1940, Frank Papers, box 8, folder E.

<sup>30</sup> Fry, Surrender on demand, pp. 44, 82, 219. One of the main purveyors of passports was the Czechoslovak consul Vladimir Vochoč. He was engaged in evacuating the "Czechoslovak freedom fighters" who had fought on the French side. He was in contact with the Unitarian Service Committee through Donald Lowrie, who was also a representative of the YMCA and of the American Friends of Czechoslovakia. He put Fry into contact with Vochoč.

<sup>31</sup> Hirschberg to Heine, 6 September 1942, EK Mappe 51.

Under the impression of his initial success before September 1940, Fry lost sight of the possibilities of further rescue, in the opinion of Frank. The NB leader thought that Fry should "know better from the absence of an echo to his persistent calls for help. He is sincere and active ... but he fails to understand that aid cannot be given in proportion to need, but only in proportion to the support we are able to muster".<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, the statistics which Fry offers in his report are impressive if somewhat generous and imprecise.<sup>33</sup> Out of fifteen thousand applicants, the CAS decided to consider one thousand eight hundred cases which involved four thousand refugees as "genuine cases of intellectual or political refugees with a good chance of emigrating soon". It payed weekly allowances to five hundred sixty refugees and refugee families in order to keep them out of camp.<sup>34</sup> The Fry committee guided more than a hundred people into Spain on the clandestine "F-route" over the Mediterranean foothills of the Pyrenees. During 1940, it sent "nearly three hundred fifty human beings" out of France, mostly without exit visas. During the period of legal exit in 1941, "we ... sent people out of France legally in wholesale lots and illegally in retail". By May 1941, the number of CAS evacuees had risen to more than one thousand. Nearly three hundred more people were res-

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<sup>32</sup>Hagen to E. Eisler, 17 October 1940, Frank Papers, box 8, folder E.

<sup>33</sup>The records of the Emergency Rescue Committee in the Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt, West Germany, were pillaged of most important documents as souvenirs of Thomas Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger and others.

<sup>34</sup>Fry, Surrender on demand, pp. 189, 236.

cued between the departure of Fry in October 1941 and June 1942.<sup>35</sup>

The CAS gave special consideration to "the friends of Paul Hagen [Frank]". Fry wrote in his report that, "fortunately for me, the first of the refugees to come to [the CAS] in response to my summons were Paul Hagen's German socialist friends and some of the younger Austrian socialists".<sup>36</sup> He also offered more than the usual assistance to "four friends of Paul Hagen's in the camp at Vernet [whom] he had asked me particularly to help, and I didn't want to go until I had gotten them out of France".<sup>37</sup> This emphasized again the significance of the AFGF in the ERC. In general, the rescue effort of the AFGF was well coordinated. It had better organizers on both sides of the Atlantic than the Social Democrats. The communication between them was very good.

The Social Democratic effort was hampered in all three rescue periods by serious financial, organizational and personal problems. In the first period, which lasted until the fall of 1940, the Social Democratic committee in Marseille exhausted its own funds and did not get much help from Frank Bohn, the representative of the GLD, the Jewish Labor Committee and, indirectly, of the AFL. In the second period of the rest of 1940 and in the third period of the winter and spring of 1941, the GLD failed to raise any funds beyond the limited contributions

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 124, 170, 188, 206, 236.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 86, 87-92.

from the Jewish Labor Committee and to communicate properly with the Social Democratic refugees in Lisbon and with the Social Democratic committee in Marseille. The Social Democratic rescue effort failed except for the limited number of refugees whose evacuation was paid by the Jewish Labor Committee.

The Social Democratic committee was organized by the Sopade. The SPD executives came to Marseille in the summer of 1940, mostly from the camp of Castres. They stayed long enough to organize their own evacuation to Lisbon with the \$10,000 they had left after the seizure of their bank account at the Crédit Commerciale in Paris.<sup>38</sup> Vogel and Ollenhauer left with their families at the end of August. They eventually went to England. Stampfer and Rinner left with their families in early September and went on immediately to New York. This geographical split of the Sopade will be discussed later. The Sopade left Friedrich Heine behind in charge of the Social Democratic committee.<sup>39</sup> He remained until early 1941 when the chances for further evacuation became negligible. He had been coopted as a member of the Sopade in the early emigration and had the confidence of both the executives and the other refugees. To whatever the Social Democratic rescue effort amounted, besides the contribution from the Jewish Labor Committee, was mainly his work.

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<sup>38</sup>Katz, Die exilierte deutsche demokratische Linke in USA, p. 9, Nachlass Stampfer, section I, group 9, Nr. 444.

<sup>39</sup>Vogel to William Gillies, 8 March 1941, EK Mappe 139. From 1930-1933, Heine had run the SPD propaganda center in Berlin. He had been with the Sopade since 1933, throughout the Prague and Paris exiles, and was coopted into the executive. In Prague and Paris, he was managing editor of the Neuer Vorwärts, the successor of the Weimar Vorwärts.



He had to cope mainly with lack of funds and visas. Of the initial \$10,000, "significant sums" went for "travel expenses beginning with [the Sopade executives] to the last friends". The Sopade leaders left him "theoretically ... 60 Mille", that is 60,000 ffrs or about \$1,500, but "practically only about 45" Mille or \$1,125. Of these, the Sopade leaders agreed with Heine before their departure to spend \$625 on the remaining Sopade associates in the camp of Castres, among them Curt Geyer and Gustav Ferl. The remaining \$475, Heine spent on assistance to Social Democratic refugees in Marseille and the Southern provinces. By September, the Sopade funds were gone.<sup>40</sup> In the absence of any other financial assistance, Heine persuaded Toni Wels, the widow of the former chairman of the Sopade, to give him a loan of 77,000 ffrs. or about \$1,925. It enabled him to evacuate ten more refugees, including the coopted Sopade member, Curt Geyer, Herbert Weichmann and Ernst Hamburger with their families. Eight of these refugees went to the United States. The Sopade leaders reprimanded Heine for using the money of Toni Wels. She never got it back and later lived a precarious life in New York until her death in March 1942. Heine was distressed to hear that his promises to Mrs. Wels were worthless. But he insisted that he had acted in the higher interests of the lives of ten refugees.<sup>41</sup>

From then on, Heine depended on the GLD and on Bohn. Since both of these received their money from the Jewish Labor Committee, it

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<sup>40</sup> Heine to Sopade, Lisbon, 15 October 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. See also: Heine to Ollenhauer, 27 September 1940, EK Mappe 51.

is not clear to which funds the GLD referred in its explanations to Heine. In September 1940, Katz complained that "our financial situation is deplorable considering the great task of the rescue". The GLD had paid the ten transatlantic tickets for the Sopade executives and their families. Five of these tickets it held only in reserve as a safety for the Vogels and Ollenhauers in case they should not get English visas. When the GLD nearly had to make good on this polite offer it let the two executives know that they were not welcome in New York. This political incident will be further discussed later. After these expenditures, the GLD had only \$2,000 left, earmarked for the next transatlantic tickets.<sup>42</sup> It refused to use part of this money for subsistence payments to the Sopade leaders in Lisbon.

With Bohn, Heine argued about visas and subsidies. Bohn came to Marseille in July 1940 with the AFL list of emergency visa clients and the insufficient amount of \$10,000.<sup>43</sup> He was responsible for several national refugee groups: the Polish Bundists and Russian emigrants who had not taken the Siberian route to Japan and California, the Italian socialists, a group of German literary refugees and the Austrian socialists and German Social Democrats. About one-third of the four hundred thirteen emergency visas under the AFL list was naturally reserved for the direct clients of the Jewish Labor Committee

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<sup>42</sup>Katz to Stampfer, 21 September 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 105, p. 473.

<sup>43</sup>Frank Bohn was the brother of William Bohn, a socialist editor and writer.

and the Polish Jewish Bund in New York.<sup>44</sup> Heine complained that "the Russians [received] the lion's share of the visas". He claimed that "this jeopardized the whole [German] operation and had the effect that our really endangered friends fall under the table". Bohn was of the same opinion but he followed his instructions.<sup>45</sup>

Heine was also dissatisfied with the way Bohn spent and handled his limited funds. The latter had received "2-1/2 Mille [or \$1,000] for each of the participating groups for initial activities". The Germans and the Austrians were in the same group.<sup>46</sup> But this money and the rest of the \$10,000 was mostly tied up in difficult exchange arrangements and in a ludicrous rescue scheme. Heine could only get reimbursed by Bohn for some of his expenses. This was the best he could do after "the unproportionate expenditures in the first four weeks of [Bohn's] inexperience". Even for this, he had to make "extraordinary efforts".<sup>47</sup> According to the Bohn accounts, Heine received a direct contribution of \$1,000.<sup>48</sup> This amount is the only subsidy from Bohn that figures in the dollar accounts of Heine of early 1941.<sup>49</sup> The Sopade also received a reimbursement of \$1,000 from Bohn and kept it.

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<sup>44</sup> Hagen to E. Eisler, 17 October 1940, Frank Papers, box 8, folder E; and Heine to Ollenhauer, 27 September 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Heine to liebe Freunde (Sopade, Lisbon), 16 September 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>47</sup> Heine to Ollenhauer, 27 October 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>48</sup> Heine to Erich Rinner, 29 October 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>49</sup> Heine, Abrechnung, Dollarkonto, spring 1941, EK Mappe 51.

Actually, these \$2,000 were about the legitimate German share of the \$10,000 Bohn fund.

In addition, Heine managed to recover "a small amount" of the squandered boat money, which he shared with the Italian socialists.<sup>50</sup> Bohn disliked the land evacuation route over the Pyrenees which traversed three countries. He thought that his clients were either too old for this ordeal or too endangered in fascist Spain. He invested \$4,412, or nearly half of his fund, in renting and provisioning a seaworthy fishing boat for direct evacuation from the harbor of Marseille.<sup>51</sup> Among its prospective passengers were a number of prestigious German writers and Social Democrats like Franz Werfel, Franz Mehring, Lion Feuchtwanger, Rudolf Breitscheid and Rudolf Hilferding. Heine objected to this scheme. It was an open secret for the French police. The boat was seized by officials of the Italian armistice commission the day before it was due to sail. Heine referred to it later as the Flying Dutchman, the legendary ghostship of the Atlantic Ocean.

The boat money also revealed the incorrect accounting of Katz for the Bohn fund. His compilation dates from June 1941 when the rescue operation was over. According to his defensive explanation, \$8,700 of the Bohn fund were spent by June 1941. Of these, the boat money absorbed 306,000 ffrs, or about \$7,650. An additional 50,000 ffrs, or about \$1,250 went for contributions to Stampfer, Breitscheid, Hilferding and Erika Biermann, a Sopade secretary. Even with the incorrect figure

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<sup>50</sup>Heine to liebe Freunde (GLD), 25 December 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>51</sup>Heine to liebe Freunde (Sopade, Lisbon), 16 September 1940, EK Mappe 51.

of the boat money, Katz did not account for about \$1,300 of the Bohn fund. He also claimed that 105,000 ffrs, or about \$2,625, of the boat money were recovered, a surprisingly large amount even if it was shared with some Italian socialists. The incorrectness in the Katz account was a coverup which shows that something was wrong with the rescue work of the GLD.<sup>52</sup>

Another example was the way the GLD dealt with the German literary refugees. A certain number of them was on the AFL list so that Bohn was responsible for them. He made subsistence payments to some of them including Leopold Schwarzschild, the former editor of the Weltbühne. "More than once", the CAS wanted to take over a client from Bohn who followed, however, his instructions.<sup>53</sup> Katz disliked this use of the Bohn fund, but it took him until September before he cabled to Heine: "positively no payment to others but strictly labor people".<sup>54</sup> Heine defended himself later against the criticism by Katz by arguing that even this late telegram was "not clear enough to give us firm guidelines".<sup>55</sup> Most of the writers were leftist and therefore potentially labor people. Katz tried to regulate the payment of transatlantic tickets more explicitly. He demanded that "for the members of the literary, journalistic and artistic group who are not members of the

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., and Heine to Erich Rinner, 29 October 1940, EK Mappe 51; Katz, account of the funds of Frank Bohn, 29 June 1941, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>53</sup> Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, I, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>54</sup> Telegram from Katz, 27 August 1940, quoted in Heine to Sopade, 16 September 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>55</sup> Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, I, EK Mappe 51.

party we pay under no circumstances, even though they were on our list".<sup>56</sup> Eventually, the Jewish Labor Committee paid the transatlantic fare for nineteen German and Austrian writers, including Hermann Budzislawski, Alfred Döblin, Georg Bernhard, Konrad Heiden, Leopold Schwarzschild. Of these, Heiden and Bernhard were reinstated on the AFL list after the protest by Frank. Katz explained the evacuation of the non-Social Democratic writers with the excuse that "unfortunately, the [ERC] was founded four weeks after the start of our own rescue operation. Had ... we anticipated this we would possibly have limited our visa list ... to exponents of the labor movement".<sup>57</sup>

Despite his attitude towards the literary refugees, Katz objected to the publicity of the ERC which used the names of "two dozen writers ... whom we [the GLD] rescued with our list and not they". But in his negotiations, he offered to let the ERC organizers have "this credit and its financial exploitation" if they agreed to his idea of "ticket sharing". It stipulated that the ERC pay 50% of the transatlantic fare for "our party members", the Social Democratic refugees. Katz conceded to Heine that this method might seem "quite American but it is practical politics". This attitude was typical of Katz.<sup>58</sup>

This dependence of Katz on the Emergency Rescue Committee, with which he was on bad terms, showed the precariousness of the Social Democratic rescue effort. Its first period ended with the exhaustion

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<sup>56</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 21 September 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 105, p. 471.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 472.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 471

of the Sopade funds, the departure of the unfortunate Bohn from France, and the curtailment of the emergency visa program. As a result of these negative developments, all of the regular German Social Democratic and unionist refugees were still in Southern France. According to Heine, there were "about two hundred forty party and union members in the unoccupied zone of France with whom we had contact; with their families, they numbered about six hundred".<sup>59</sup> The GLD, the JLC and Heine initiated the evacuation of a number of refugees. But they had to wait until 1941 before they could leave France. By the fall of 1940, the Sopade executives were out of France with the exception of Heine. Of these, only Stampfer and Rinner went to New York. With their families, they numbered five refugees. The JLC had paid for their tickets. Heine and the Sopade had each received \$1,000 from the Bohn fund. This was the amount of the American contribution. It is not even clear whether the first \$1,000 were separate from the German share of the boat money. Heine claimed that "I would not have had a penny from you [the GLD] if it had not been for the small amount" of the recovered money.<sup>60</sup> Ten more Social Democratic refugees had left Vichy France, eight of them for New York, with the help of the loan from Toni Wels.

In the second period, no German Social Democratic refugee made it to the United States with the help of the GLD. The Sopade leaders waited in vain for some money from New York that would at least keep the refugees alive while they were waiting for evacuation. Ollenhauer

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<sup>59</sup>Heine to Thorsten Nielsson, 30 May 1941; and Heine to London, 30 May 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>60</sup>Heine to German Labor Delegation, 25 December 1940, EK Mappe 51.

and Vogel could not go on to England before December 1940. The correspondence between the GLD and the Sopade executives in Marseille and Lisbon was one-sided and unpleasant. The contradictory statements of Katz about how much money they had already received from New York and how little was available in the last months of 1940, insulted them. Katz was the only Social Democrat whom they addressed with the formal "Sie". He was alien to them since he was unknown in the Weimar Republic and had not shared the first and second emigration in Prague and Marseille with them. The "Ems Dispatch" of December of 1940 symptomized this relationship. It told Vogel and Ollenhauer that they were unwelcome in New York.

The efforts of Heine, Vogel, and Ollenhauer during the second period were completely wasted. In October 1940, Heine had already complained that "I really don't know how things are supposed to go on if everybody is going to keep sitting on my tail". He did not know, either, how to come up "with something like 70,000 ffms [\$1,750] for the transportation of twenty people".<sup>61</sup> He remained helpless. In one of his rare letters, Katz answered in December 1940 that he could provide "new visas, if at all, only very slowly and with great difficulty. ... money we can't send him [Heine] at all. ... we want you to realize the limits of our influence and of our possibilities."<sup>62</sup> The financial situation was thus, according to Katz, "absolutely terrible".<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Heine to liebe Freunde (Sopade, Lisbon), 15 October 1940,  
EK Mappe 51.

<sup>62</sup>Katz to Curt Geyer, 8 December 1940, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>63</sup>German Labor Delegation to Ollenhauer, 25 December 1940,  
EK Mappe 61.



The secretary of the GLD excused himself with the unresponsiveness of the Jewish Labor Committee, for which he was largely responsible, himself. He could not secure the transatlantic ticket for Robert Groetzsch, an associate of the Sopade, who then received it from the HICEM. Nor could he get any assurance from the JLC on the six tickets for Friedrich Wilhelm Wagner, Rudolf Leeb and Georg Fuchs with their families.<sup>64</sup> He warned against optimism about their later acquisition since the JLC, "our financial mainstay", was "without any means".<sup>65</sup> This prediction was too pessimistic. All of these refugees came to New York in early 1941. On December 20, Katz reiterated that the JLC, which he condescendingly called "our men in the background" seemed to be "totally fundless". The Labor Committee itself had termed "any expectations for further appropriations as hopeless".<sup>66</sup> It did not even disburse the \$5,000 it had promised the GLD earlier. Thus, the JLC left the GLD "completely in the lurch", according to Katz. This was a perfect alibi for the GLD. Its secretary concluded that "the German Social Democrats and democrats" in the United States, that is, the GLD, could "not do more than they already have".<sup>67</sup> Another alibi was the AFL with "its curious structure and its insufficient education in political solidarity for foreign movements". Katz was pessimistic about a prospective meeting with Green in Washington at the end of January 1941. Another appeal by the latter to the state, district and

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Katz to Curt Geyer, 9 December 1940, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>66</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 20 December 1940, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>67</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 5 January 1941, EK Mappe 61.

local union organizations would accomplish little. The GLD secretary also pointed to the American "lethargy towards the great refugee drama". It was in his words "a typically American phenomenon that such waves [of sympathy for the refugees] rise and fall like a new fashion".

Yet, the JLC was not as devoid of funds as Katz portrayed it to be. It had large funds at its disposal during the 1930's and 1940's. It had contributed \$224,021 to the European underground movement up to 1941.<sup>68</sup> In 1939, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, one of the main members of the JLC, raised \$250,000 for a special refugee fund. With the contributions of the employers, its total rose to \$425,000. During the war years, the ILGWU collected over \$7 million for relief funds, community chests and social service agencies, mostly from voluntary half-day and full-day pay contributions of its members. In 1942, it donated \$75,000 to the purchase and the furnishing of the British Merchant Navy Club in London.<sup>69</sup> The JLC would have been capable of doing more for the GLD during the second rescue period.

It was mainly the fault of the GLD if the JLC remained aloof during this period. The GLD attacks against Frank nearly deadlocked the Labor Committee on the issue of appropriations for German socialist refugees. Sometimes, it allocated a specific amount but put off its payment. Under these circumstances, the GLD insistence of relying exclusively on the JLC made no sense. Besides, the latter resented the

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<sup>68</sup> Jewish Labor Committee, Memorandum to the British Labor Party and to the Trade Union Congress, July 1941, EK Mappe 196.

<sup>69</sup> Max Danish, The world of David Dubinsky (New York: 1957), pp. 104, 103.

laziness of the GLD. Estrin, who administered the JLC rescue effort, "did not take well to K. [Katz]". He explained that "yes, if the GLD would come to us and say we need a total of thirty tickets, we will come up with ten of them; please, give us the money for the rest, this would then stand as a word". He felt that with the proper approach, it was possible to raise large amounts of money in the United States for a good cause. But the GLD had "never made any contribution" to the rescue effort.<sup>70</sup> In the first rescue period, it had made an unsuccessful attempt at exploiting the Quaker connections of Sollmann. Seger and Grzesinsky negotiated for a sum of \$10,000 with the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia.<sup>71</sup> But thereafter, the GLD failed to cultivate relations with the major American relief organizations. In the case of the Emergency Rescue Committee, it expected to win funds by being antagonistic. It limited itself to the JLC which it alienated by its political behavior. This approach demonstrated both ineptitude and disinterest in the rescue work.

The Sopade executives in Lisbon and Marseille could only guess about what was going on in New York. Vogel and Ollenhauer were upset that they did not even receive some money for their sustenance.<sup>72</sup> Vogel protested that "we could have starved to death" if it had not been for some financial aid from William Gillies, the head of the international department of the British Labor Party. He sent the airfare

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<sup>70</sup> Maria Rinner to Heine, EK Mappe 102.

<sup>71</sup> Sollmann to Stampfer, 4 September 1940, Nachlass Stampfer, section I, group 13, Nr. 642.

<sup>72</sup> Vogel to Lenk, International Federation of White Collar Workers, 11 January 1941, EK Mappe 139.

for nine tickets to London of which three were not used so that there was a reserve for food.<sup>73</sup> Ollenhauer protested to Katz that "your attitude of not doing a thing for Lisbon in two months is absolutely untenable".<sup>74</sup> Vogel was "seized by horror" when he thought of the Social Democratic refugees who might follow him to Lisbon. He still thought in terms of "the rescue effort for a larger group of people" in the future. The two Sopade leaders could not see the point of evacuating the refugees to Lisbon "if they don't even have the minimum for livelihood here".<sup>75</sup> They did not realize yet, that they would not have all that many successors in Lisbon. Heine also let the GLD know that "I am sick and tired. Today is the first day of Christmas and I fervently wish that you may all go to hell." He told them that the American consulate in Marseille received "half a dozen and more visas every day -- for others". Almost the entire ISK group had received visas. Heine stated that "so far you have not contributed one centime in direct money. I would not have had a penny from you if it had not been for the small amount" that was recovered "from the lightly squandered [boat] money". He found this absence of funds "all the more deplorable" since the Austrian refugees received substantial sums in November and December, 70,000 ffrs, or about \$1,750, on December 23. He told the GLD that "you are responsible when things are not working out here the way they should. ... you are partly to blame when our friends ... don't

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<sup>73</sup>Vogel to Stampfer, 5 December 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 107, p. 476.

<sup>74</sup>Ollenhauer to Katz, 10 December 1940, Nachlass Stampfer, section I, group 9, Nr. 433.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

know on what to live ... when our friends in the provincial towns and camps starve to death." He contrasted their indifference with the prospect that "the political situation could turn into a disaster any day and ruin our entire work".<sup>76</sup> This was what nearly happened in 1941.

The response of Katz to these complaints was unbelievable. He stated somewhat cynically that "we don't expect any thanks nor are we sensitive about serious reproaches for what you call a bad job".<sup>77</sup> Yet, he claimed that "so far, none of our group failed because of lack of the necessary tickets".<sup>78</sup> This implied that all of the refugees failed because of lack of visas. He boasted of \$10,000 which "we invested in the rescue of the friends in Southern France, including you". In a letter of January 7, 1941, he claimed that the total investment of the GLD in 1940 was \$15,000.<sup>79</sup> He elaborated later that "it is a miracle that we were able to collect the large amounts for the rescue work that have been spent". But he complained that "the expectations of all the comrades in Europe seem to have been raised by irresponsible generators of hope to such a degree that they find it difficult now to grasp completely the sad seriousness of the lack of any financial means".<sup>80</sup> Katz usually spoke in the name of the JLC rather than the GLD. His statistics served his purposes.

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<sup>76</sup> Heine to German Labor Delegation, 25 December 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>77</sup> Katz to Geyer, 8 December 1940, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>78</sup> German Labor Delegation to Ollenhauer, 25 December 1940, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., and Katz to Vogel, Ollenhauer, 7 January 1941, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>80</sup> Katz to Geyer, 22 January 1941, EK Mappe 61.

What poisoned the relationship with the Sopade leaders most was the lack of any sympathy of the GLD for the situation of the refugees. Katz termed their necessary evacuation condescendingly "this philanthropic rescue operation". He answered the letters of Vogel, Ollenhauer and Heine only rarely, and then in a symptomatically arrogant tone. Vogel objected to "the general behavior of comrade Katz towards us". The Sopade leaders in Lisbon "directed a stream of letters and reports at him and SOS calls about our own situation". The response of Katz was "one single letter and, to our SOS calls, the advice that we should exhaust the Portuguese resources", that is, the American relief organizations in Lisbon.<sup>81</sup> The background to this bitter relationship was the GLD policy of keeping Vogel and Ollenhauer out of the United States. Before its letter of unwelcome of November 1940, the GLD did not want to encourage the two Sopade leaders. After their remonstrances about this kind of treatment, Katz let them feel his anger. Heine complained to the GLD that "you play silence in all major and minor musical keys. ... You treat me, your representative for more than four hundred friends, in a quite shameful manner." He had sent them "probably more than a dozen telegrams and certainly more than a hundred letters". He received one letter in October and another one on November 20. This prompted him to ask the GLD: "Do you think I am here for fun?" He thought that advice and information was the least that he could expect of them and wondered whether they realized "at all how our friends feel when I have to tell them again and again that there has been no mail

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<sup>81</sup>Vogel to Stampfer, 5 December 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 107, p. 476.

from America for the last four weeks".<sup>82</sup>

This relationship did not improve during the third rescue period of the winter and spring of 1941. Heine complained in February 1941 that Katz did not answer 1% of his questions. To a total of a hundred-fifty letters, he had received five answers, and to thirty telegrams, three responses. He told Stampfer that "this makes cooperation impossible".<sup>83</sup> He ended his "extremely one-sided correspondence with Katz" with letter NR. 155 when he left Lisbon in March 1941.<sup>84</sup> His successor Ernst Hirschberg did not fare any better. He received one "absolutely insignificant" letter from Katz in his first month. The tone of these Katz letters remained also the same. Sometimes it was "patriarchal and pedagogic",<sup>85</sup> sometimes "so terribly haughty and overbearing that it is horrifying".<sup>86</sup> Katz related to Heine like to an ignorant "aborigine" in American union matters. Yet, the latter had first hand knowledge of that field from conversations with Cahan and Stampfer.<sup>87</sup> Heine concluded that "our American friends [the GLD] are

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<sup>82</sup>Heine to German Labor Delegation, 25 December 1940, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>83</sup>Heine to Stampfer, 23 February 1941, Nachlass Stampfer, section II, group 17, Nr. 45; and Heine to Lisbon, 17 January 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>84</sup>Heine to Freunde (Sopade, London), 19 March 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>85</sup>Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, II, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>86</sup>Heine to Stampfer, 23 February 1941, Nachlass Stampfer, section II, group 17, Nr. 45.

<sup>87</sup>Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, II, EK Mappe 51.

really a crux".<sup>88</sup> He felt "helpless and hopeless". While in Lisbon, he did not dare to go out into the countryside for a day because he was "apprehensive of reflection". He was afraid to think about "what may become of the movement" and wondered whether "we - the divided and demoralized emigration that we are - can really do anything decisive".<sup>89</sup>

Nevertheless, the third rescue period was the only successful one. But the credit for its achievement belongs to Heine and the JLC rather than to the GLD. They prepared most cases of this period in 1940 already on the basis of the emergency visa list of the JLC. The opportunity for their evacuation came in January 1941 when the Vichy government began issuing exit visas for obscure reasons. Refugees with visas could then either go to Lisbon or embark directly in Marseille for the French Caribbean island of Martinique, for Cuba or Mexico. From these countries, they could try to get to the United States. The French government stopped the Martinique voyages after British naval vessels seized a refugee ship in May 1941. Thereafter, it was very difficult to leave France.

The JLC evacuated a sizable group of German refugees in early 1941, starting in February. Its evacuation list, which includes the five evacuees of 1940, mentions fifty-three single or married German socialist refugees of whom thirty-seven were Social Democrats, eight NB members, six SAP members and two ISK members. With their families,

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<sup>88</sup> Heine to Freunde (Sopade, London), 28 April 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>89</sup> Heine to Stampfer, 30 May 1941, Nachlass Stampfer, section II, group 17, Nr. 47.



they numbered ninety-five German refugees.<sup>90</sup> The cost of transportation between Marseille and New York consisted of possibly \$75 for the train ride to Lisbon and of \$175 for a transatlantic ticket, together \$250. For ninety-five refugees, these expenses came to \$23,750. The HICEM usually granted a discount of \$37.50 per transatlantic ticket, which may or may not have been included in the amount of \$175. Some of the refugees on the JLC evacuation list received their fare from other sources or had their own means. According to a laudatory memorandum of July 1941 to the British Labor Party and to the Trade Union Congress, the JLC rescued eight hundred European labor leaders at a cost of \$300,000.<sup>91</sup> Of these, the proportional share of the fifty-three German labor leaders would be about \$20,000. The JLC also sent two amounts of \$500 to Lisbon, the first one in mid-March 1941. But of these, Marseille received only \$313 while the Sopade retained \$587 and the SAP and ISK refugees received \$50 each.<sup>92</sup> Disregarding the expenses for the sixteen splinter group socialists on the JLC list, the evacuation of the GLD refugees cost about \$20,000. That was much less than the amount claimed by Katz.

In his German postwar memoir, he gave the total JLC figures a

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<sup>90</sup> Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Sammlung Karl Frank, Varia, 1933-1951, Jewish Labor Committee, list of the German and Austrian evacuees, compiled by Estrin.

<sup>91</sup> Jewish Labor Committee, Memorandum to the British Labor Party and to the Trade Union Congress, July 1941, EK Mappe 196.

<sup>92</sup> Heine, Abrechnung, Dollarkonto Einnahmen, spring 1941, EK Mappe 51; Curt Geyer to Stampfer, 20 March 1941, Nachlass Stampfer, section II, group 17, Nr. 38; and Heine to London, 23 March 1941, EK Mappe 51.

German context and created the impression that his number of a hundred sixty families or about eight hundred refugees evacuated in 1940 and 1941 were all German. Besides, they are described as the families of "well known democratic personalities" rather than of mostly socialist refugees.<sup>93</sup> In another instance, Katz claimed that the GLD and the JLC rescued about a hundred German families at a cost of \$100,000, that is about five times the actual amount.<sup>94</sup> His attempt of presenting the rescue as a family operation is curious. It allowed for more tolerance in the number of refugees. \$1,000 for the transportation cost of one family is a high amount considering that many married refugees had no children with them in exile and that many refugees were single. So far, the misleading figures of Katz determined the contemporary view of the GLD rescue work. Stampfer gave them credence when he claimed that most German socialist refugees escaped Southern France before the German occupation in 1942.

As shown above, most of the two hundred forty Social Democrats and unionists who were listed with the Heine committee were left behind in France. The actual number of the refugees was higher than two hundred forty because Heine was "not in direct contact with all of them".<sup>95</sup> He resisted the pressure of the Sopade for his departure until mid-March. He had to remind the Sopade of "our many friends in the provinces and in the camps" and argued that "your appointment of me as your representa-

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<sup>93</sup>Katz, Die exilierte deutsche demokratische Linke in den USA, p. 26, Nachlass Stampfer, section I, group 9, Nr. 444.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., pp. 29, 30.

<sup>95</sup>Heine to Thorsten Nielsson, 30 May 1941; and Heine to London, 30 May 1941, EK Mappe 51.

tive prohibits the brusque termination of the previous activity". He found it "difficult to agree with you that 'all the others can really help themselves more or less'".<sup>96</sup> To his knowledge, there were still two hundred six single or married Social Democratic and unionist refugees in Vichy France in early 1941.<sup>97</sup> But he restricted himself to preparing the visa cases of "fifty or sixty of our most important friends".<sup>98</sup> By the time of his departure in mid-March, there were still a "hundred fifty-eight union members and Social Democrats with their families in the unoccupied zone".<sup>99</sup> Significantly, by this time, the order was reversed to union members and Social Democrats.

Heine's successor, Hirschberg, was even more pessimistic about further evacuations. He planned to leave Marseille in early June 1941 since he was convinced that "by then, not the least bit could be any longer accomplished". He considered eleven or twelve cases as mandatory and could not "seriously believe that it would be impossible to find a solution for [them]". Actually, seven more single or married Sopade clients left in April and May 1941. There were then still a hundred fifty married or single Sopade refugees in France, or about four hundred persons including the children.<sup>100</sup> About himself, Hirschberg

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<sup>96</sup> Heine to Lisbon, 17 January 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>97</sup> Heine to Stampfer, 18 March 1941, Nachlass Stampfer, section II, group 17, Nr. 46.

<sup>98</sup> Heine to Lisbon, 17 January 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>99</sup> Heine to Thorsten Nielsson, 30 May 1941; and Heine to London, 30 May 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

remarked sarcastically that he received an American visa "despite all the efforts of our friends".<sup>101</sup> But he did not manage to escape, possibly because his wife was pregnant at that time.

Those refugees who could not leave Southern France did not fare as badly as Hirschberg predicted. When the French started to surrender hundreds of refugees in the summer of 1942, he was afraid that "very few of us will manage to survive the war".<sup>102</sup> After the German occupation, he lost contact with the refugees. A number of them were deported to Germany. But the majority of them went into hiding and joined the French resistance. They re-emerged after the war, among them fifty-two Social Democrats and unionists in Southern and Central France and fifty in the region of Paris.<sup>103</sup>

The size of the Social Democratic evacuation and the preference given to one group over another reveal the politics that influenced the Social Democratic rescue work. The basic motive behind these politics was the ambition of the GLD which expressed itself in competition with the Sopade and in antagonism towards NB. The GLD was formed as a financial subsidiary of the Sopade which conferred on it a recognition of some value in its dealings with the American labor movement and government. But politically, the GLD wanted to continue the conservative policy of the previous period. The refugee crisis of 1940 and 1941

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<sup>101</sup> Heine to Freunde (Sopade, London), 18 May 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>102</sup> Hirschberg to Heine, 28 August 1942, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>103</sup> Liste der Mitglieder in der Provinz; Liste der Mitglieder in der Pariser Region [German socialist emigrants in France after the liberation], EK Mappe 124.

offered good opportunities for asserting this political independence. It nearly caused the demise of the Sopade. Its leaders lost their financial accounts in Paris and ended up in the internment camps of the Vichy government. After that, they depended on the GLD for their evacuation. The GLD took advantage of this situation. It welcomed, and contributed to, the geographical split of the Sopade which completed the decline of the SPD executive to a group of three members of whom only two were elected by the Weimar party.

In this context, the GLD was not keen on evacuating the small group of Sopade associates about whom the SPD executive was most concerned. They could only go to the United States since they were not admitted to England. The GLD was satisfied that these emigrants would be isolated in America where it ignored them. The GLD had no preferred clientele among the German labor groups. It was not interested in the unionist refugees either even though as the German Labor Delegation it claimed to represent the German unions. This conflict of rescue interests was intensified by a new difference in ideological outlook between the GLD and the Sopade. The GLD planned to continue the policy of the great coalition with liberal American and emigrant groups. The Sopade of Vogel and Ollenhauer no longer attributed much significance to the so-called liberal emigration. They could not understand why the GLD rescued Center Party emigrants like Werner Thormann while most Social Democratic refugees were still in Southern France. In a further step, the GLD wanted to involve Brüning into its coalition activities by promising to help the Social Democratic friends of the former chancellor: Braun, Hilferding and Breitscheid. A marginal Social Democrat like

ties to groups which it antagonized politically. It expected them to rise above the political intransigence of the GLD which subordinated its rescue work to its politics.

In the preference for their associates, the concern of the Sopade for the average Social Democratic or unionist refugee left much to be desired. There was talk of "active" and "passive" party members. Most of the evacuees on the JLC list belonged to the small circle of refugees who had been close to the Sopade during the first and second emigration. Those beyond this narrow group, Ollenhauer thought, could help themselves. Another characteristic of the Social Democratic rescue work was the neglect of the unionist refugees unless they were primarily party officials. Nearly all of them were left behind. There was no unionist emigration in the United States to speak of besides a few individuals. Until nearly the end of the war, the GLD did not have to contest its self-assured role of union spokesman.

The unionist refugees were aware of their situation. In January 1941, they protested against their "classification as inferior party members because we are unionists". They thought that this had happened "in the visa affair ... when SAP-ists, NB and ISK people were preferred to us". They vowed that "we will not tolerate it any more".<sup>104</sup> They were not aware of the fact that the NB, SAP and ISK refugees in question were clients of the American Friends of German Freedom rather than of the GLD. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the unionist refugees were foremost in opposing a premature departure

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<sup>104</sup> Bruno Süß to Heine, 13 January 1941, EK Mappe 51.

of Heine. The union leader Bruno Süß wrote Heine that "you cannot disappear like that". Süß was corresponding with seventy-six "ADG people", that is officials of the former General German Trade Union Federation. They insisted that Heine appoint a successor before leaving and suggested the formation of a committee of three with one member for the refugee correspondence in France, a second for the correspondence with the Sopade and the GLD and a third for contacts with the Marseille refugee committees and with the American consulate. But these efforts were in vain.<sup>105</sup>

The geographical split of the Sopade was a mysterious affair. The SPD executive came to no conclusion in its debate on whether to emigrate to the United States or to England. Its members then did as they pleased. To Vogel, the United States was a remote and strange country. He thought that England would play the decisive role in a defeat of Germany. Rinner held the opposite opinion. But in the crisis of November 1940, Vogel and Ollenhauer thought that they would have to join Stampfer and Rinner in New York. In that situation, the GLD unnecessarily told them that they would be of no use in the United States. Fortunately, they still received visas for England. The split of the Sopade came about naturally. But the GLD superfluously stated it as its policy. The Sopade complained bitterly about this treatment. Thereafter, the Sopade leader Geyer smelled "a light odor of boycott in the air" to which he attributed the ensuing neglect of the Lisbon refugees by the GLD.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Geyer to Ollenhauer, 6 February 1941, Mapped 44.

This confrontation continued with the Thormann affair. This Center Party emigrant was "totally unknown" to Geyer.<sup>107</sup> Heine remembered that "Mr. Thormann and his clique attacked us for years in the Zukunft" during the Weimar Republic and fought the Social Democrats in the emigration. He asked the GLD: "Why the hell do you bother with Mr. Thormann? Why do you even bend a finger for such people?" The Labor Delegation knew that there were "still a hundred families of people who are close to us" on Southern France. There were friends "who have devoted thirty to forty years to the movement ... two dozen and more underground workers who will be shot if they fall into the hands of the Nazis".<sup>108</sup>

In further pursuit of its policy of "the Great Coalition", the GLD tried to involve Brüning in its activities by exploiting his interest in the evacuation of Hilferding and Braun. The GLD was slow in giving Brüning information about Hilferding and Breitscheid, the two inseparable Rudolf's. But Katz "abused the two conversations which I had with him", according to Brüning.<sup>109</sup> Sollmann told Brüning more bluntly that "I can't imagine what all these people want to do here". He thought that Hilferding and Breitscheid would adjust badly to the United States and assumed that Hilferding did not speak English, some-

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, II, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>109</sup> Jane Addams Peace Collection, Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, William Sollmann Papers, Heinrich Brüning to Wilhelm Sollmann, 4 February 1941.



thing that Sollmann had learned only during the emigration.<sup>110</sup>

The case of Otto Braun, the former prime minister of Prussia, held more promise for the politics of the GLD. Brüning "wished nothing more" than to have Braun in the United States "even if it was only for his safety". But he intended to go further. He hoped that together with Sollmann, Braun would become "a representative figure for the former Social Democrats in this country". In that case, Brüning was "quite willing to discuss the possibility of a collaboration between the two groups", that is, between the GLD and the Center Party emigration.<sup>111</sup> Katz was eager to go along with Brüning. But Sollmann, a principal figure in this plan, had other ideas. He could not imagine that Braun could "help a lot here". He objected that Braun was too old, that his health had always been unstable, and that he did not speak a word of English.<sup>112</sup>

Sollmann had more conservative plans. He did not want to share his access to Brüning with other Social Democrats. He thought that Otto Strasser was a better candidate for an exile triumvirate. He had visions of a Volkssozialismus (ethnic socialism) as a blend of christian socialism, catholicism and nationalism. Strasser might fit into this scheme as one of the founders of the National Socialist Party who had

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<sup>110</sup> Nachlass Heinrich Brüning, in care of Claire Nix, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Sollmann to Brüning, 5 October 1940. This paper uses copies of the documents from this collection which Dr. Thomas A. Knapp was allowed to make on the basis of a private arrangement with Claire Nix.

<sup>111</sup> Brüning to Sollmann, 4 February 1941, Sollmann Papers.

<sup>112</sup> Sollmann to Brüning, 3 August 1941, Nachlass Brüning.

broken away from Hitler and founded the Schwarze Front (Black Front) as a fascist opposition to Hitler. Sollmann was interested in the activities and projects of Strasser in the emigration: the Freie Deutschland Bewegung (Free Germany Movement) and an exile government in the form of a Nationalrat (National Council) in which Brüning and Sollmann were expected to participate. Sollmann presented Strasser as an advocate "for democracy with wide social implications".<sup>113</sup> He emphasized the Catholic views of Strasser "whose social ideas are closely related to those of the pope". He also minimized the antisemitism of Strasser who proposed full citizenship for German Jews under certain conditions at a time when they were persecuted by the German government. Sollmann conceded that he disagreed with Strasser "on the Jewish question" but he thought that "from every Jewish standpoint ... it could only be useful to rescue Strasser". He advised Strasser's agent in the United States to convince influential Jewish circles such as the Jewish Labor Committee that Strasser was not antisemitic.<sup>115</sup> Personally, he thought that Strasser "may still go far in his political development and we are unable today to predict which alliances the future will force on us".<sup>116</sup> In this state of mind, Sollmann used all his persuasion to enlist the full aid of Brüning for Strasser. Brüning was not optimistic but he complied with the wishes of Sollmann. Eventually, Strasser was admit-

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<sup>113</sup> Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Otto Strasser Papers, vol. 5, Sollmann to Kurt Singer, 5 October 1940.

<sup>114</sup> Sollmann to Singer, 5 October 1940, Strasser Papers, vol. 16.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Sollmann to Wels, 31 December 1935, EK Mappe 122.

ted to Canada but not to the United States.<sup>117</sup>

In a further step, Sollmann tried to get Brüning to sponsor five members of the Black Front in Marseille. He said "I rack my brain about how I could help them" and resented the fact that "the emigration of the Left refuses to have anything to do with them".<sup>118</sup> He was disconsolate about Brüning's refusal. He asked for confirmation of Brüning's explanation that one of the five refugees was "an evil character" who had been a double agent for the Czech military police and for the Gestapo and had tried to hand Strasser over to the Gestapo. Members of the Black Front were so hard to come by in the emigration that Sollmann could not easily let go of these prospects.<sup>119</sup>

The relationship of the GLD with the Emergency Rescue Committee exemplifies its politics of rescue towards the German socialist splinter groups. The ERC and the CAS wished nothing more than cooperation with the Social Democratic committees. In Marseille and Lisbon, such a positive relationship materialized. In the fall of 1940, Heine asked Fry to take over the affairs of the four groups for whom Bohn had been responsible including the German Social Democrats. He joined the CAS

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<sup>117</sup> Brüning to Sollmann, 29 August 1940; and Brüning to Sollmann, 20 September 1940, Sollmann Papers. See also: Sollmann to Brüning 5 October 1940; and Sollmann to Brüning, 10 October 1940, Nachlass Brüning; and George N. Shuster, recommendation, 23 January 1941, Strasser Papers, vol. 5.

<sup>118</sup> Sollmann to Brüning, 11 September 1940, Nachlass Brüning.

<sup>119</sup> Brüning to Sollmann, 12 September 1940; and Brüning to Sollmann, 16 October 1940, Sollmann Papers. See also: Sollmann to Brüning, 12 October 1940, Nachlass Brüning.

as honorary political consultant and participated in its twice daily meetings.<sup>120</sup> The CAS had case files of many Heine clients and intervened for them with the French authorities and the consulates. It corresponded with them and paid support to some of them. An ISK emigrant, who represented the ERC in Lisbon, included all Social Democratic refugees there in the assistance program of the ERC. The latter went especially out of its way for Hilferding and Breitscheid whom it offered various escape arrangements.<sup>121</sup> Hirschberg also could not have conducted his affairs without the CAS. He expected to terminate his operations with the closure of the CAS. Heine and Hirschberg expected an equally close cooperation at the other side of the Atlantic Ocean between the GLD and the ERC.

This put Katz into a dilemma which he tried to solve in his usual uncanny way. First, he had to justify the demands which he made on the ERC without giving away too much of the political background. For this purpose, he described the ERC as a politically neutral bourgeois organization as though bourgeois organizations were politically neutral, especially when it came to socialists. Then, he had to explain to Heine why the ERC did not deliver, without taking the blame himself. Instead, he put it on Frank. But in this process, he contradicted himself. If Frank played such a dominant role in the ERC the

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<sup>120</sup> Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, I; and Heine to New York, [n.d.], EK Mappe 51.

<sup>121</sup> Fry, Surrender on demand, pp. 18, 93, 167, 189. See also: Heine, Denkschrift, EK Mappe 51; and Reichssicherheitshauptamt, Bericht über die Sitzung des Parteivorstandes der Sopade, 21 May 1935, Bundesarchiv, Koblenz, Federal Republic of Germany.

latter could not have been an unpolitical committee. In his dealings with the ERC, Katz did not bother with such subtleties. He was a member of the ERC as the representative of the GLD. But instead of contributing his share of funds and efforts to a cooperative venture he tried to extort from the ERC the deal of the abovementioned Fahrkartenteilungsabkommen (ticket sharing agreement). This kind of boldness was out of tune with the fact that the GLD would have had "serious financial problems" without substantial help from the ERC.<sup>122</sup>

To Heine, Katz did not admit the political background of his relationship with the ERC. He told him that "over there you have apparently not quite grasped the context. The ERC ... is a private non-partisan foundation."<sup>123</sup> He claimed that the GLD cooperated "friendly" with the ERC since the latter had "far-reaching connections and extensive means".<sup>124</sup> In so doing, Katz played skillfully on a typically socialist misconception of Heine. The latter agreed with Katz that the rescue of refugees was the responsibility of "the big American relief organizations". He did not want to see "the financial means of the labor movement applied to relief tasks which ... ought to be met by bourgeois or other private welfare organizations".<sup>125</sup> Without realizing it too well, Katz contradicted himself in his above description of the ERC by adding in parentheses that Mrs. Paul Hagen, that is Anna

<sup>122</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 21 September 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 105, p. 471.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 472.

<sup>125</sup> Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, II, EK Mappe 51.

Frank-Caples of the AFGF, was the second secretary of the ERC and Frank, himself, "one of the most active associates there".<sup>126</sup> Later, he admitted that the GLD was "on very bad terms with the ERC whose office is dominated by Hagen and his people". He rationalized for Geyer that the ERC was "supposed to be a non-partisan, American office. [But] we realize that this committee grossly disfavors our people".<sup>127</sup>

Heine reacted equivocally to the problem of the relationship between the GLD and the ERC. He was confused but he was not completely ignorant since Katz had found it necessary to set the views of the Sopade leader about the American context straight. Also, Heine was on confidential terms with Fry. Without being fully aware of the political implications of the problem, he thought that both the ERC and the GLD should improve their ways. In the fall of 1940, he made an ill-advised attempt at settling the issue directly with the ERC. He complained that the ERC had given to the members of the SAP, NB and the Richter [Buttinger] group assistance of three to five times their contributions as though he knew what these contributions were. He urged the CAS to ask the ERC to "reclaim the money ... from these three organizations". The CAS sent "at least four or five telegrams of this tendency to the central office" in New York, suggesting that the ERC stop further payments to these groups until reimbursement. It seemed to him that Frank and the NB emigrant Heinrich Ehrmann tried to seize control of the ERC. The latter responded with a cable which stated

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<sup>126</sup> Katz to Stampfer, 21 September 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 105.

<sup>127</sup> Geyer to Sopade, 16 April 1941, quoting Katz, EK Mappe 44.

that "the SAP, NB and Richter help us more than any other group". Heine noted with resignation that "it will hardly be possible to effect a stop of aid from here".<sup>128</sup>

Even though he came to know something about the nature of the ERC and about "its practice and guidelines" his feelings about the ERC remained ambivalent. He knew that Fry was "instructed to take care of the members of those groups who gave him their mandate in America: primarily the SAP, the Richter group, NB, Neuer Weg, and the ISK, as well as all the people in whom the International Refugee Association takes an interest". But he could not properly understand this situation and was frustrated about its results. It meant that "our friends had a priori no chance" of being accepted onto the visa list of the CAS.<sup>129</sup> He resented the fact that "in the ERC, there are only Miles people" and that Frank "reigned exclusively".<sup>130</sup>

This did not keep Heine from charging Katz with ineffectiveness in the dealings with the ERC. He knew that sometimes the latter had to contact the CAS for information about Social Democratic refugees which Katz had fully at his disposal.<sup>131</sup> He urged Katz to emphasize that "we are not only the beneficiaries but also the benefactors [of the CAS] and that I contribute more than a number of employees [of the CAS]".<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Heine to New York, [fall of 1940], EK Mappe 51.

<sup>129</sup> Heine to New York, 6 February 1941, I, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>130</sup> Heine to London, 15 May 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>131</sup> Hirschberg to Katz, 8 April 1941, EK Mappe 51.

<sup>132</sup> Heine to New York, [n.d.], EK Mappe 51.

Hirschberg asked Katz to point out that the SPD committee had not been "ungenerous" and that it had cared for members of the smaller socialist groups and especially for refugees who stood in between those groups. He thought that "these efforts could increase the confidence [of the ERC] in us which could only be beneficial". In that case, there might "arise an atmosphere there [in New York] which uproots the worst abuses of group egoism". He also suggested that Katz submit to the ERC a list of GLD clients with the necessary data.

The charge of ineffectiveness was substantiated by more neutral observers. According to the SAP emigrant who represented the ERC in Lisbon, the latter did not take up a refugee case on its own initiative. It waited until a sponsor group provided the affidavits before it approached the question of the passage money.<sup>133</sup> An ISK emigrant in the ERC in New York complained to Heine that "unfortunately, Katz does nothing in the provision of affidavits. He claims they could not do anything in this respect. It seems to me, though, that they could do a lot if they tried harder." Also, if not all the Social Democratic refugees in Lisbon were included in the ERC assistance program, "the fault lay with Katz who was not effective in New York".<sup>134</sup> With regard to the position of Frank in the ERC, the same ISK emigrant explained to Heine that the NB leader was "inseparable from the work of the committee. Besides, he has really performed extraordinarily and not only for

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<sup>133</sup> Theodora Bénédité to Max Diamant, 10 November 1941, Max Diamant Correspondence, vol. 2.

<sup>134</sup> Heine to Freunde (Sopade, London), 18 May 1941, quoting Lewinsky, EK Mapped 51.



his own people."<sup>135</sup> This information should have further clarified the conception of Heine of the problems in New York.

At the end of the last rescue period, he heard more about the contradictory approach of Katz. The latter more openly conceded his knowledge of the connection between the ERC and the NB organization. He explained that "we have assumed a negative inheritance here with the Hagen complex. We are convinced that we will have to conduct many uncompromising fights against this adventurer". But the GLD wanted to postpone "the great confrontation which is inevitable". It did so "mainly because of the consideration for those who are still in France and Portugal". It still hoped "to get a few tickets and some assistance out of [the ERC]". Katz still had the same illusions about his illogical approach.<sup>136</sup> But Heine should have understood a little better why the ERC did not comply with the wishes of the GLD.

In general, the rescue period was a frustrating episode in the history of the German socialist emigration in the United States. In Europe, the refugee crisis became a time of rapprochement between the various socialist emigrant groups. In the United States, this opportunity was lost mainly because of the attitude of the GLD. Its basic political approach required a continuation of the old intra-socialist antagonisms. Under this condition, it tried to square the circle by conducting its rescue work separate from, and parallel to, its political

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Geyer to Sopade, 16 April 1941, quoting Katz, EK Mappe 44.

aspirations. This senseless strategy was bound to fail. The GLD cannot claim credit for the rescue work of the JLC. The latter made its contribution despite of the GLD rather than because of it. In the end, the rescue period intensified the antagonisms between the German socialist emigrant groups in the United States.

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<sup>137</sup> About the Emergency Rescue Committee, see also John M. Spalek and Joseph Strelka, eds. Deutsche Exilliteratur seit 1933, Band I: Kalifornien, Teil 1 (München: Francke Verlag, 1976), pp. 214-219: Wolfgang Elfe, "Das Emergency Rescue Committee". This article reluctantly mentions the possibility that the ERC was mainly sponsored by NB and its ideological friends. This ambiguity is curious since all the evidence of this dissertation on the German socialist emigration in the United States was made available to the editors of Deutsche Exilliteratur and to Elfe upon request after conversations with them in the spring of 1972 in Chicago. The article by Elfe also fails to politically identify the International Relief Association (IRA). The latter was also a socialist committee of an ideological orientation to the left of the ERC.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE GLD AS AN AMERICAN COMMITTEE: ITS AMERICAN POLITICS IN INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SOPADE

The decline of the Sopade inspired the search for GLD independence. With the internment of most of its executives, the Sopade ceased to exist for a while after the German attack on France. After the French defeat, it had to leave the continent. For this operation and for the rescue of the Social Democratic and unionist emigrants, it had to depend on the GLD. Thus, the latter gained the upper hand in its dealings with the exile executive and maintained an independent position from then on. This importance which the GLD assumed after the Fall of France energized some of its members in the way that "the signal for the attack affects an old battle horse".<sup>1</sup> The Gld held a meeting on 12 December 1940 about its future activities. It made plans for radio propaganda from England to the continent, for an emigrant coalition in the line of the Great Coalition and for the Social Democratic equivalent of an ethnic Popular Front. The emigrant coalition was called the Association of Free Germans (AFG), the ethnic coalition the German American Congress for Democracy (GACD) which tried to replace the DAKV.

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<sup>1</sup>Anna Geyer to Sopade, 17 February 1941, EK Mappe 44.

With the AFG, the GLD tried to occupy the international emigrant limelight. With the GACD, it hoped to intervene in American politics. Seger, especially, expected the rise of a majority labor party in the United States as the revival of a crossbreed between socialism and progressivism. In this context, he hoped for a progressive union movement which would result from a unification of the AFL and the CIO. He also saw signs of a cooperative movement in America comparable to the Social Democratic equivalent of Weimar Germany. In this scheme of things, a German American progressive front could play a role. The plan for radio propaganda from England ignored the Sopade in its own country of exile. It symptomized the new attitude of the GLD towards a nearly insignificant Sopade.

The GLD had tried to contribute to this state of affairs with its rescue policy. It had unnecessarily shown its eagerness to keep the Sopade away from New York and to split it geographically. These developments resulted naturally from disunity within the Sopade. In trying to force them, the GLD had betrayed its political intentions. Two of the active Sopade members, Stampfer and Rinner,<sup>2</sup> went to the

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<sup>2</sup>Empfehlung für Erich Rinner, 9 March 1941, EK Mappe 102. With a doctorate in economics, Rinner had been scientific consultant to the office of the Social Democratic Reichstagsfraktion from 1927 to 1933. He was also personal secretary to Hilferding while the latter was finance minister. He specialized in national and communal budgetary and tax policies. In 1933, he became a member of the SPD executive and then of the exile executive. After his detachment from the GLD, he worked on a government research project about German economic development after 1933. Then, he was employed by the Office of War Information. In 1945, he became financial consultant of a Wall Street firm and stayed in the United States.

United States where four dissident Sopade members already resided. The other four active executives eventually went to England. One of them soon dropped out because of ideological differences. Heine had been co-opted during the early emigration so that Vogel and Ollenhauer were the only two elected members of the rump Sopade in London. In the debate over its next destination, Rinner had insisted that the Sopade could do better in the United States. He believed that America would, before long, join the anti-Hitler coalition and would become the predominant ally because of its inexhaustible economic and technological resources. He also anticipated the future world role of the United States and expected Americans to look upon European affairs in an objective way. American nationalism would play a small role in an eventual peace settlement since Americans had ethnic ties with all European countries including Germany. American participation would guarantee an equitable and constructive postwar settlement unlike the Versailles treaty which England did not have the strength to resist.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these good arguments in favor of a move to America, Vogel and Ollenhauer decided to go to London. Unlike the United States, England had a strong socialist labor movement whose leaders they knew. Vogel's conception of the Second World War was European. He considered Britain as the major ally of any anti-Hitler coalition even if the United States should eventually join it. He remembered the belated American entry into the First World War which was followed by a relapse into isolationism. He did not understand very well the complexities of

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<sup>3</sup>Rinner to Sopade, 22 March 1942, EK Mappe 102.

American political attitudes and confessed that America was strange to him. He preferred the English closeness to the continent and counted on the historical tradition of English European interests which would also be influenced by the familiar internationalism of the British Labor Party.<sup>4</sup> Actually, the British labor movement proved more nationalistic than Vogel had expected. Nevertheless, Rinner later conceded that the decision of going to England had been correct. He became disillusioned with an increasing American susceptibility to demands for a Carthaginian solution to the German problem.<sup>5</sup>

In the late fall of 1940, it seemed that Vogel and Ollenhauer would not be admitted to England. Geyer had preceded them to Lisbon. A delay in his immigration procedures gave rise to fears that later proved unfounded. In this uncertainty, they telegraphed Stampfer and Rinner in care of Katz. They were ready to reconsider their earlier decision even if the visa situation improved because of possible political discrimination in England. Without referring the telegram to its addressees, the GLD decided to tell the Sopade leaders that they had no possibilities for political work in the United States, at a time when it developed its grand political design. It took the position that the party executives should be as close to Europe as possible. It also told the executives that, in all fairness to other needy refugees, it should no longer hold on to the blanco visas which it had reserved for

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<sup>4</sup>Ollenhauer to Reinhold, 30 March 1941, EK Mappe 80; also: Ollenhauer to Heine, 29 March 1941, EK Mappe 80; Vogel to Stampfer, 5 December 1940; Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, pp. 475-477.

<sup>5</sup>Rinner to Sopade, 8 December 1945, EK Mappe 102.

them as a matter of politeness. Privately, the GLD members prided themselves about having forced the hand of the Sopade leaders. Especially Grzesinsky seemed to be convinced that "he had decisively shaped the history of the next hundred years with this telegram". The executives assumed that this response expressed the opinion of Stampfer and Rinner so that the decision for England would have been unanimous. When informed of the actual circumstances, they considered the telegram from Katz "as a direct message of unwelcome" which was added to his failure of communicating with them during their uncertain stay in Lisbon. With one exception, he had left their numerous letters, reports and telegrams from Lisbon unanswered. By the beginning of December, there was still "a fifty to fifty probability that we have to go to America after all". The executives decided to take "the next best ship to the USA" if they were not admitted into England by the end of December.<sup>6</sup> The British Labor Party finally relieved them of their predicament. But the tone was set for the future relations between the executive and the GLD. Vogel reprimanded the latter severely for what he called, in a reference to Bismarck, another "Ems Dispatch".

The next half year of GLD - Sopade relations confirmed the previous trend. The exile executive in London could not supervise or influence the GLD by its two active executives in New York. Stampfer soon repudiated the Sopade in favor of the GLD of which he could not, otherwise, have become a member. In the case of the "Ems Dispatch", he

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<sup>6</sup>Vogel to Katz, 25 November 1940, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 106, p. 474; also: Vogel to Wilhelm Högner, 29 March 1941, EK Mappe 139.

resented what he called the awkward, bureaucratic tone of the Sopade letter which he considered "absolutely nonsensical".<sup>7</sup> He told Rinner that it was "completely out of the question that we operate within the GLD as representatives of the party executive. He [Stampfer] refused to be ridiculed for such a Don Quixotery". To Rinner's question "whether he would silently stand by while the party executive was being pushed against the wall by the GLD", he answered that there was nothing left of the Sopade that could be pushed against any wall. He told the Sopade that "to cooperate permanently with Rinner as an organized part of our committee is technically impossible".<sup>8</sup>

Rinner faced an impossible task. He tried to impress upon the GLD its duties towards the Sopade. He rebuked the American committee for pretending to represent the Weimar labor movement directly rather than the exile party executive.<sup>9</sup> He attempted repeatedly to clarify "the basic question of the relationship between the Sopade and the GLD". He insisted that the issues of a coalition committee and of radio propaganda from England could only be approached in cooperation with the Sopade. The latter had discussed the feasibility of radio propaganda with the International Secretary of the Labor Party after the German invasion of France. But both projects were impractical while the English government hesitated to define its war aims and was reluctant to

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<sup>7</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 16 December 1940, EK Mappe 102.

<sup>8</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, January 1941, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 108, p. 478.

<sup>9</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 16 December 1940, EK Mappe 102.



deal with any emigrants.<sup>10</sup> Rinner conceded to the GLD only auxiliary functions. It should, for the present, take advantage of the unlimited availability of information in the most important news center of the world and keep the Social Democratic emigrants elsewhere up to date. For the future, it should deliberate about a program for Germany and Europe after the war, in close contact with the Sopade. The GLD should contribute materially and ideally, that is with financial support and political loyalty, to "a purpose oriented cooperation and a useful division of labor within the party executive".

The GLD members unanimously rejected Rinner's appeals. Aufhäuser proposed even that the remaining three executives in London stop calling themselves a party executive and act, instead, as a Social Democratic Auslandszentrale (exile center). The GLD felt relieved of a further obligation to communicate with the Sopade. That was, in its opinion, the function of Rinner, who was, nevertheless, excluded from the main deliberations of the GLD. He was only a guest to be invited at their discretion. Katz at first reimbursed Rinner for small Sopade expenses if they were conscientiously listed, down to the last postage item. Special permission was necessary for telegrams. Then Rinner was to conduct his correspondence through the office of Katz who finally told him that "in principle", the GLD was not liable to assume any Sopade expenses.<sup>11</sup> The GLD rejected unanimously its original purpose as

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<sup>10</sup> Vogel to Rinner, 10 March 1941, EK Mappe 139; also: Vogel to Stampfer, 10 March 1941, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 111, p. 488; Ollenhauer to Emil Stahl, 1 August 1941, EK Mappe 80.

<sup>11</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 16 December 1940, EK Mappe 102.

a fund raising subsidiary of the Sopade. It gradually neutralized Rinner who gave up his attempts at mediating between the Sopade and the GLD in July 1941.<sup>12</sup> Vogel and Ollenhauer had encouraged him to stay on. They accepted the behavior of the GLD with equanimity and patience rather than with useless protests. They were not afraid that the American committee would outperform them since they had settled down to a more realistic and somewhat pessimistic appraisal of their political possibilities and those of the Social Democratic emigration in general. But they considered "the maintenance of a close contact between you [Rinner] and us as the only practical possibility of the moment" as far as their American relations were concerned. They were interested in that "not all connections are severed between you as our confidant and the GLD" and wanted "to maintain close contact with our comrades in the United States", including the numerous Social Democratic emigrants outside the GLD. In the meantime, they hoped that the aspirations of the GLD would "eventually return to a sensible level".<sup>13</sup> Without fully understanding the attitude of the GLD, they believed that the difficulties between Rinner and the American committee were of a personal nature. Rinner was the special persona non grata of the GLD. But he realized correctly that the latter was "now by all means bent on establishing a political position for itself in this country. It considers itself the true representative of the party and uses Stampfer to assist

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<sup>12</sup>Rinner to Sopade, 12 July 1941, EK Mappe 102.

<sup>13</sup>Ollenhauer to Rinner, 26 January 1941, EK Mappe 79.

it in this role with his name."<sup>14</sup>

In this scheme, the Social Democratic emigrants had no place. The GLD dealt with them accordingly.<sup>15</sup> It coopted only a few late emigrants for reasons of prestige like Stampfer and Aufhäuser. It was a committee of only about ten permanent members that pretended to represent the German labor movement of the Weimar Republic. The GLD was subdivided twice more. Important matters were prepared in an unofficial subcommittee of less than five members. Financial matters were nearly monopolized by Katz. If the Social Democratic emigrants had any policy making voice they could have forced the GLD into a different direction. If ignored completely, they could have started an organization of their own. Already in July 1939, the GLD decided that the formation of a special group of Social Democratic emigrants was "not recommendable". It designated the German branch of the SDF of which Katz was the secretary as the proper organization for accommodating Social Democratic emigrants. They could come to its meetings and discuss its lectures. But their opinions did not count. They soon lost interest.

For the personal and legal needs of the refugees, the NVZ held a weekly Sprechstunde (office hours) which treated them as clients. On the recommendation of the GLD, the NVZ also registered the emigrants.<sup>16</sup> They were potential subscribers to the NVZ. Stampfer and a few others were welcomed at the pier for publicity reasons. For the rest, Mrs.

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<sup>14</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 25 February 1941, EK Mappe 102.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Gröttsch to Vogel, 27 January 1942, EK Mappe 46.

<sup>16</sup> Sitzung der GLD, 14 July 1939, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 67, p. 408.

Rinner often waited alone for hours in the cold of mid-winter for a boat that might be several hours late.<sup>17</sup> The Sopade received almost unanimously negative reports about the GLD. But Katz disappointed the hopes of the executives that he would not be completely indifferent to the reputation of the GLD abroad.<sup>18</sup> A self-help organization could have used all the available talent for handling and referring special emigrant needs. The JLC and other American relief committees took care of the material needs of the emigrants of whom many received room and board in the fraternal Kongresshaus of the JLC. Others received the going welfare rate of \$7 a week.

The Sopade tried to do its best for the neglected American comrades. Several of them had belonged to "the inner circle", that is, the former Sopade bureau, for whom the GLD had especially little use. They had been reluctant to go to New York, especially after hearing of the bad ways of the GLD. The Sopade executives asked the Rinnners to concern themselves with the refugees. They asked Mrs. Rinner to "report about each of them individually, how they are making out", specifically also about the whereabouts "of our other friends".<sup>19</sup> The Rinnners held weekly get-togethers in their house and kept in contact with as many emigrants as possible.<sup>20</sup> The Sopade also left Rinner with \$300 to

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<sup>17</sup> Maria Rinner to Sopade, 26 February 1941, EK Mappe 102.

<sup>18</sup> Vogel to Wilhelm Högner, 29 March 1941, EK Mappe 139; also: Gröttsch to Vogel, 27 January 1942, EK Mappe 46; Ollenhauer to Katz, 1 August 1941, EK Mappe 80; Ollenhauer to Reinbold, 30 March 1941, EK Mappe 80.

<sup>19</sup> Ollenhauer to Rinner, 26 January 1941, EK Mappe 79.

<sup>20</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 12 July 1941, EK Mappe 102.

administer in small sums to needy emigrants while doubting whether it was "in principle right" to support the friends in America with party funds. Vogel and Ollenhauer wrote as many personal letters as possible in order to give the Social Democratic emigrants in America the feeling of belonging to the party and its emigration.

But the Sopade failed in its attempt of forming a Social Democratic organization in the United States. At first, it asked Rinner "whether it is not possible and advisable to organize our comrades in USA in some way ... so that they may feel to continue belonging to the party". They left the idea up to Rinner's judgement but they thought that "we could not leave these people completely to themselves". They proposed that their former associates, Gustav Ferl and Rudolf Leeb, assist Rinner administratively.<sup>21</sup> But the latter balked at this project. He was tired of emigrant affairs and did not want to confront the GLD with it. A few months later, the Sopade approached Leeb, whom Friedrich Wilhelm Wagner and Hans Caspari were to assist. The three emigrants planned a fraternal organization of all German Social Democrats but they could not come to terms with each other.<sup>22</sup> They rejected the Sopade idea of registering the Social Democratic emigrants and collecting a membership fee. Rinner made the substitute proposal of creating "a better, informal bond" by improving and distributing the Sozialistische Mitteilungen of the Sopade for a subscription fee. His main objection to the membership fee was that "more than anywhere else,

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<sup>21</sup>Ollenhauer to Rinner, 1 August 1941, EK Mappe 80.

<sup>22</sup>Rinner to Sopade, 11 October 1941, EK Mappe 102.

the emigration in this country consists almost exclusively of officers of the movement if not of leaders". It lacked almost completely "the simple party soldiers", and the officers have "very little understanding for membership fees". In the absence of a general Social Democratic organization, the GLD remained in total control.

The England project was to be the launching event for the political plans of the GLD. As an emigrant organization, it needed a significant activity relating to Germany to its credit in order to gain recognition in the United States, especially from the government. It could no longer claim to have any contacts with a German underground movement whose extent was unknown. Shortwave radio propaganda was the only alternative. But the United States still had its neutrality legislation so that England, the exile territory of the Sopade, was to be the base of these GLD operations. The problem of the latter was that they depended on outside help for facilities and funds. But the relevant agencies could and wanted to conduct this propaganda better themselves in their own ideological terms rather than those of a suspect emigrant organization. For these reasons, the GLD did not succeed in its first objective.

At first, it intended to send two representatives to Canada or England. In a less ambitious scheme, Staudinger proposed to send propaganda records to England for broadcasts from there. Stampfer and Katz discussed these plans with Citrine and Schevenels, the two top officials of the International Federation of Trade Unions, who attended the annual convention of the AFL in New Orleans in November 1940. As an English labor leader, Citrine was to recommend the GLD proposals to

the proper English authorities, that is, the Labor Party, the Trade Union Congress, the government and the British Broadcasting Corporation. Instead of a second meeting, there was only a telephone conversation with Citrine who was not enthusiastic about the plan in view of an increasing nationalism of the English labor movement, which he probably shared.<sup>23</sup> The State Department and the English ambassador also refused to promote the plan. Vogel and Ollenhauer dissuaded the GLD by reiterating the probable uselessness of the venture. In the face of GLD persistence, they welcomed the visit by GLD representatives for internal reasons, that is for promoting better relations between the two committees through personal discussions. There was so little coordination that Ollenhauer stated in August 1941 that "we have no longer any idea about what is going on there and with what purposes in mind".<sup>24</sup>

In February 1941, the project revived in a luncheon meeting of Katz and Stampfer with Held and Minkof of the JLC. According to the report of the two GLD leaders, Held spontaneously proposed to Stampfer a trip to London together with other American and emigrant representatives. The JLC executives offered to pay the expenses and to get AFL sponsorship from Green. Held argued that the repeated attempts of the GLD for some recognition from the American government had only elicited a non-committal response. He explained that "the road from New York to Washington leads through London". The GLD representatives should try to win in London "some kind of recognition of your activity and

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<sup>23</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 16 December 1940, EK Mappe 102.

<sup>24</sup> Ollenhauer to Ferl, 19 August 1941, EK Mappe 80.

position here". Held was sure that out of 10% of it "we would make 100% here in America".<sup>25</sup> He apparently meant that the JLC could then successfully intervene for the GLD with Washington. Somewhat inconsistently with his own feelings, Stampfer called the proposal by Held "a romantic idea". It was, however, generally approved by the ensuing GLD meeting. Aufhäuser welcomed impatiently this "attempt of the GLD at becoming politically active" and proposed to benefit from its impetus by issuing a Social Democratic Correspondence equal to the Germany Reports of the American Friends of German Freedom and superior to the Sopade Informations from London. This idea was postponed until after the England journey. Grzesinsky offered "the stupendous plan" of making the England mission the launching event for "an executive committee", that is, for an emigrant coalition in the form of a government in exile of which he was the most impatient advocate. Stampfer objected to sharing the benefits of his England trip with Grzesinsky so that the latter had to wait until the summer of 1941.<sup>26</sup> In June 1941, the England project of the GLD took the form of a potential visit by two AFL representatives, possibly Green and treasurer George Meany, and Stampfer. This visit would have returned the courtesy of Citrine and Schevenels who had attended the last AFL convention. But the secretary of the International Department of the Labor Party anticipated "serious difficulties" and telegraphically suggested that Green

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<sup>25</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 25 February 1941, EK Mappe 102.

<sup>26</sup> Rinner to Sopade, 11 March 1941, EK Mappe 102.



indicate to Citrine directly "the precise purpose" of the journey.<sup>27</sup> The English labor leaders wanted to see representatives of both American union federations which did not appeal to the AFL. They were also concerned about the direct sponsorship by the AFL of the GLD plans for their country. As a result, the AFL leaders stayed at home. But Stampfer left for London on 12 September 1941. The JLC financed his trip with \$1,800.

Stampfer was not as pessimistic about his mission as he had sometimes pretended. While waiting in Baltimore for the departure of the plane, he was "very happy that I am not sitting around as a superfluous man ... that I am not a forgotten man. ... The worst thing in these times is to be left out".<sup>28</sup> In a memorandum to Clement R. Attlee, the leader of the Labor Party and the deputy prime minister, he laid out a grandiose program that lacked credibility. He thought that radio propaganda could "organize the spiritual forces of anti-Hitler Germany in a common effort" and prepare "revolutionary events" there. According to Stampfer, this propaganda task was the common responsibility of British, American and German emigrant labor. He proceeded to speak in the name of the "American Labor Movement" and of other American organizations. He pretended that all "the anti-Nazi organizations of America are planning a vast and well directed propaganda offensive to be carried into Germany". This "new movement" was

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<sup>27</sup> Stampfer to Vogel, 10 June 1941, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 115, p. 507.

<sup>28</sup> Stampfer an seine Frau and Tochter, 12 September 1941, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 119, p. 516.

supposedly sanctioned by the American government which was still partially neutral. Also, for a common appeal to German labor, the AFL and the CIO would have had to cooperate. Green contented himself with participating in an appeal by the English labor movement to the German people. Part of the American movement was the growing German American movement against Nazism. Stampfer defined it as a combination of the Social Democratic organizations of the GLD leaving out other emigrant organizations of which Attlee was, nevertheless, aware.<sup>29</sup> As predicted by the Sopade, Stampfer accomplished nothing during his four months stay in England and returned to New York in frustration. Many of the British socialists and unionists favored the attitude towards Germany which was symbolized by Lord Vansittart and came to be called Vansittartism. As one of the main foreign policy makers in the Foreign Office before rising to the House of Lords in 1941, Vansittart believed that National Socialism thrived on the old traditions of German nationalism and militarism so that it was difficult to distinguish between the Nazis and a victimized German people. A minority of German socialist and Social Democratic emigrants in England also favored the Vansittart theory and inevitably engaged in ideological disputes with the other emigrants. The visit of Stampfer intensified these antagonisms. He was a right wing Social Democrat who believed in a liberal Germany which could be revolutionized against Hitler. The German Vansittartists discredited the former editor of the Vorwärts with public references to

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<sup>29</sup> Memorandum Stampfer to Attlee, 20 October 1941, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 120, pp. 517-519.

his patriotic and conservative attitudes during the First World War and the Weimar Republic. An article in the London Times also took up his past record and branded him as a nationalist. Under these circumstances, Stampfer could not even get to the first base of a labor recommendation to the English government.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, the GLD kept emphasizing the need for psychological warfare. Participation in the latter was the only way it could get accepted by the American government. Shortly after the return of Stampfer from England, the NVZ proposed the establishment of a longwave radio station in England which would be exclusively reserved for anti-German propaganda twenty-four hours a day in order "to attain Hitler significantly in his own country". It wanted "a capable American, German speaking team" sent to England under American supervision.<sup>31</sup> But the American government was not interested in GLD schemes. Soon after the American entry into the war, it created the Office of War Information (OWI) which envisioned emigrant cooperation but more on the ethnic homefront than in Europe. The Overseas Branch of the OWI employed only individual socialist emigrants. Their selection caused bitter recriminations between the two main emigrant groups. The GLD suspected the OWI of preference for NB people. It did not lend itself

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<sup>30</sup> Ollenhauer to Leeb, 3 February 1942, EK Mappe 81; also: Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 17 February 1942, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 124, pp. 531-535; Ibid., Erklärung der Union der deutschen sozialistischen Organisationen in Gross-Brittanien, February 1942, Nr. 125, p. 535; Ibid., Erklärung der Fight for Freedom Gruppe, 2 March 1942, Nr. 126, p. 538.

<sup>31</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 31 January 1942.

to much cooperation with the OWI because the latter intended to involve other groups which the GLD opposed. But it could not get the separate governmental recognition it wanted. Partly, also, the GLD members were afraid of becoming identified with American postwar plans that would compromise them in Germany. This predicament will be further discussed later.

Thus, the timing for the formation of an emigrant coalition was influenced by many factors. At first, a German exile coalition conflicted with American neutrality. Later, the American government had plans of its own for emigrant organization. Also, because of the jealousy among the GLD members, their plans were not integrated and did not start simultaneously. Stampfer pursued the England project and did not want to share its credit with Grzesinsky who pressed for an exile coalition. Seger pushed for an ethnic coalition in accordance with his ideas about an American political career after the war. Then, the period of rescue from the summer of 1940 to the summer of 1941 had a retarding effect. Also, several coalition antecedents influenced the project of the Association for Free Germans.

In July and August 1939, there had been an "information conference" of the German American Popular Front, New Beginning, the SAP, and the GLD. The GLD delegate was not Katz because he had several years before been a candidate for the chairmanship of the German American Popular Front organization and had sharply attacked its members after his defeat. The conference was to nominate an emigrant representation which was especially important in the event of war. The GLD proposed to form a triumvirate as a nucleus for this representation. It was to

include Grzesinsky, Seger, and, as a third emigrant acceptable to the left wing, Aufhäuser, Tillich or Hertz. This rump committee should complement itself by coopting "with priority, the political Right, Democrats, Center Party people and Volkspartei (People's Party) members". But the GLD opposed Rosenfeld as emigrant representative because of his collaboration with communists. The other groups rejected this proposal so that the GLD felt then "free to act independently".<sup>32</sup> The GLD had already decided to intensify its talks with bourgeois emigrants like Brüning. But the latter did not respond. Apparently, he wanted to maintain his reserve until the outcome of the war was decided. The GLD then wanted to proceed without Brüning but did not make much progress.<sup>33</sup>

It participated for a while in the Council for European Peace, which consisted of two components, an organizing effort by the Social Democratic Kurt Grossmann and an initiative by some catholic emigrants under Erwin Kraft.<sup>34</sup> Grossmann discussed his project with his friends in New York including Seger. He planned to involve everybody including such socialists as Rosenfeld, Hertz, Toni Sender, Arthur Rosenberg and

<sup>32</sup> Sitzung der GLD, 14 July 1939, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 67, p. 410; also: Ibid., Staudinger to Stampfer, 1 August 1939, Nr. 68, p. 411; Ibid., Sitzung der Gld, 18 August 1939, Nr. 69, p. 414.

<sup>33</sup> Sitzung der GLD, 28 September 1939, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 73, p. 421.

<sup>34</sup> Sammlung Hubertus Prinz zu Löwenstein, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Band 6, Council for European Peace, Minutes of the meeting of the Federation Sub-committee, 20 February 1940; also Ibid. Council for European Peace, Grossmann to Karl Spieker, 20 February 1940.

and Tillich.<sup>35</sup> He wanted a representation of "the entire German opposition or of its largest part" which included not only the party political but also "the Kultur-political groups" as "an attraction even for the United States".<sup>36</sup> At the end of December 1939, the Grossmann circle and the Kraft circle agreed to join their efforts.<sup>37</sup> Their program called for a federated Europe to which the individual countries would delegate most of their sovereignty.<sup>38</sup> It should include England but not necessarily Russia. The catholic Kraft was for an inclusion of the latter, the Social Democrat Grossmann against it. There was more unanimity on the benefits for Germany. The Council wanted to save the Reichseinheit (national unity) and opposed territorial dismemberment.<sup>39</sup> It also opposed "a super-Versailles" in the form of "an educational government" imposed on Germany.<sup>40</sup> The GLD participated in the commit-

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<sup>35</sup> Sammlung Kurt Grossmann, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Komitee für einen gerechten Frieden, ein demokratisches Deutschland und ein föderatives Europa, New York, 1939-1942, Rundbrief, 3 November 1939.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Grossmann: Über praktische Arbeit.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., Grossmann to Erwin Kraft, 29 December 1939.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., Grossmann: Thesen zur Kriegszieldiskussion, 5 January 1940; also Ibid., Erwin Kraft: Some thoughts on a scheme for a federated Europe, January 1940.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Father Gregory Feige, A one page program submitted to the Council for European Peace, 5 March 1940.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Grossmann: Thesen zur Kriegszieldiskussion, 3 January 1940.

tees of the Council with Brauer and Katz but soon dropped out.<sup>41</sup> The Council lasted until 1942.

Other Social Democratic efforts were those by Sollmann and Katz. Sollmann had refused to join the Council of European Peace because of its composition.<sup>42</sup> He considered the idea of the United States of Europe his own and formed the German Council for Liberty and Federation in December 1940 together with bourgeois emigrants<sup>43</sup> like Ernst Meyer, a former German diplomat in America, and Götz Briefs, an economist who had favored the Center Party and was then a professor at the Catholic University of America. Sollmann could not interest Brüning in the project despite his close relations with the former chancellor. In February 1941, during the refugee crisis, Katz tried again to involve Brüning in his schemes. The latter corresponded with the GLD on behalf of Hilferding. He complained that Katz "misused the two conversations I had with him". But Brüning was not always as unequivocally opposed to participating in emigrant activity as he often claimed.<sup>44</sup> He had several times expressed his wish of bringing together the various groups of the German opposition without, however, acting upon it. Katz asked him specifically whether he would welcome Otto

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<sup>41</sup> Sitzung der GLD, 10 November 1939, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 78, p. 427; also: Ibid., Katz to Stampfer, 14 November 1939, Nr. 79, p. 428.

<sup>42</sup> Sollmann to Grossmann, 10 November 1938, Sammlung Grossmann.

<sup>43</sup> Ermarth to Hubertus Prinz zu Löwenstein, 17 December 1940, Sammlung Löwenstein, Band 8.

<sup>44</sup> Otto Strasser to Bernhard Strasser, 5 February 1941, Sammlung Otto Strasser, Band 7.

Braun, the former prime minister of Prussia, in America who was relatively safe in Switzerland. Brüning thought that Braun might, together with Sollmann, become "a representative figure for the former Social Democrats in this country". In that case, he was "quite willing to discuss the possibility of a collaboration between the two groups", that is, between the Social Democratic and the Center Party emigration.<sup>45</sup> Apparently, he would have liked to engage in emigrant politics with his choice of associates. His strenuous efforts for Hilferding are significant in this context. In the case of Braun, he met with the resistance of Sollmann who questioned "the advisability" of bringing the former prime minister of Prussia to New York.<sup>46</sup> Under these circumstances, the GLD had to do without the prestige of Brüning. In July 1941, it formed the German American Council for the Liberation of Germany from Nazism. In the fall of 1941, this council was registered with the State Department as the Association of Free Germans.<sup>47</sup>

The AFG stated defensively that it was not a government in exile. Such a claim would have been impossible without the participation of a prominent non-socialist former Weimar politician. It would also have brought charges against the former office holders that they wanted their positions back after the war.<sup>48</sup> As little more than a

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<sup>45</sup> Brüning to Sollmann, 4 February 1941, Sollmann Papers.

<sup>46</sup> Sollmann to Brüning, 3 August 1941, Nachlass Brüning.

<sup>47</sup> Sammlung Kurt Glaser, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Association of Free Germans, Band I, p. 9.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Band I, p. 37, an article about the AFG in the New York Herald Tribune, 11 January 1942.



Social Democratic committee, the AFG was a pretentious coalition.

There was only one Center Party emigrant in its self-appointed administrative board, first the GLD client Thormann and then Karl Misch, a former political editor of the Vossische Zeitung in Berlin.<sup>49</sup> The AFG did not even have the full support of the GLD, some of whose members referred to it as "the new club of Grzesinsky". Stampfer noted critically in his postwar memoirs that the AFG did not develop a sustained activity.

In conflict with this background, the Association made claims and plans that approximated those of an executive group. In its search for status, it spoke for the democratic forces of the Weimar Republic in order to justify a similar claim for the postwar period. This paralleled the idea of trusteeship with which the Sopade justified its caretaker role for the SPD. As a government-like body, the AFG did not confine its role to the United States. It intended to "organize free Germans in the United States and in other parts of the world". Ollenhauer considered this ambition as "propaganda". Otherwise, it would engender "tensions since we do not think that such an activity will further our cause".<sup>50</sup> Another executive idea was the project of Grzesinsky to organize a volunteer emigrant army. Somewhat embarrassingly, the AFG also made a promise as from one government to another to "cherish, maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom".

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<sup>49</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 1 September 1941, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 118, p. 513, 514; also Sammlung Glaser, Band I, pp. 9, 30, 31.

<sup>50</sup> Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 17 February 1942, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 124, p. 534.

In preparations for postwar negotiations, it planned to "study and to draft plans in collaboration with representatives of other nations for the purpose of reconstructing a free democratic Germany and a peaceful Europe".

In the absence of government recognition, the AFG hoped to lift up its status by cooperation with the newly established United Nations, also, as another detour to American support. In the opinion of the NVZ, the Declaration of the United Nations of January 1942 offered a basic program for "a promising moral campaign into Germany".<sup>51</sup> For this, the United States would hopefully take the initiative so that the AFG and the GLD could participate in the psychological warfare of the Allies. A step in the direction of official recognition was to be an AFG cosignature of the Declaration, something that the State Department had suggested for free movements even if they did not constitute governments in exile.<sup>52</sup> After the signatures by a Danish and an Estonian committee, the AFG telegraphed Secretary of State Cordell Hull that the Washington Declaration would not be complete without a German signature. But in its opinion, it could only be rendered by emigrants who were legitimized by their Weimar past. Emigrant competitors of the AFG who had not "a priori opposed any totalitarian dictatorship" as well as socialist dissenters would not be qualified. The AFG would not claim to represent the leadership of the second German republic, but it would be "the voice of the free, non-National Socialist Germany in America". Its foundation and its signature of the UN Declaration were,

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<sup>51</sup>Neue Volkszeitung, 10 January 1942.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

therefore, "a political necessity". Otherwise, those who claimed the identity between Germany and National Socialism would be correct.<sup>53</sup>

But, as an enemy alien committee, the AFG did not have the confidence of the State Department.

In October 1942, the AFG attempted to strengthen its role by publishing "a sketch of a second German republic which ... will eliminate the weaknesses that permitted the rise of Hitler". This was presented "to the statesmen of the United Nations and to the people of the Allied countries". In its context, the AFG felt it could play "an effective part both during the war and in the period immediately following it". Its members were ready "to cooperate with all of the agencies of the United States government". This statement was signed by the twenty-eight members of the AFG, of whom about two thirds were Social Democrats and the rest Weimar coalition party members of local importance who were patronized by the Social Democrats.<sup>54</sup>

In this sketch "for the free Germany of tomorrow", the AFG spoke in the name of the second German republic as the representative of the first. It vowed that "the German people will build a free Republic" after "the complete victory" of the United Nations. Grzesinsky was confident that the German people would back the forces of the Weimar Republic. Without having to take into account their defeat, the latter would root out National Socialism, disarm and demilitarize

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 17 January 1942.

<sup>54</sup> Programmatische Richtlinien der AFG, October 1942, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 135, pp. 567-570; also Sammlung Glaser, Band I, pp. 42, 43.

the country and establish an economic democracy that would permanently deprive "pan-German militarism and imperialism" of their economic basis.<sup>55</sup>

The critical social element of postwar Germany would be the young people whom the old generation would have to reeducate. Grzesinsky was sometimes pessimistic about this prospect. He thought that they could "not be converted to democracy" after their training in National Socialist ideology. This put the fortunes of the second republic back into the hands of "their fathers and their mothers who have known a better Germany [and] will build the new Reich". This rehabilitation of the Weimar generation was selfserving. Yet, Grzesinsky's own democratic attitudes were tinged by enlightened authoritarianism which reflected his former position of police chief of Berlin and Prussia. He promised that the new "state shall serve the interests of the people". It would "provide for the people ... freedom of speech and worship and freedom from want and fear". Grzesinsky complemented the program with the assurance that future attempts of overthrowing the democratic form of government would be checked "by adequate agencies to be established by the government", presumably police agencies.<sup>56</sup> This was to be another improvement on the performance of Weimar. But this program could not validate the claim of the AFG for representing the democratic forces of the German past and future.

This Social Democratic vision of a second republic would be

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

possible if the Allies learned the lesson of the wrong treatment of Germany after the First World War. After their prospective victory and a total German defeat, they were to apply enlightened benevolence rather than interference in postwar German affairs. This would be a safe policy because National Socialism which had brought down the first republic would be over. This time, the Social Democrats would be correct in considering communism the real danger to a German republic. The latter circumstance would tie the hands of the Western Allies. Any dismemberment of Germany would cause "a Bolshevist Revolution" that would spread irresistibly to France, England and the United States.<sup>57</sup> The Social Democratic emigrants of the GLD anticipated a confrontation between East and West in which Germany would play a crucial role on the Western side. They considered East Prussia as an Eastern cultural front of Western civilization. Its cession would constitute the opening appeasement of a Soviet Union bent on world conquest.<sup>58</sup>

The Social Democrats of the GLD thought that the communist threat should determine the policy and the strategy of the Western Allies during the war. They would have preferred a continuation of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, and deplored the East-West alliance of the United Nations. Under the latter circumstances, Stampfer claimed that "the consequence of a Hitler defeat [would be] the victory of world bolshevism". It was immaterial "whether Soviet Russia does or does not fight or whether it fights on this or on that side". It remained al-

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 28 June 1941.

ways the same and its present democratic stand was only "camouflage".<sup>59</sup> Seger vowed that "we will continue to consider this war as a war of democracy against dictatorship regardless of the circumstance that Russia ... is today on the side of democracy. Russia has not the least in common with the democracies". Katz recommended to the American government to pursue the second of three possible outcomes of the war between Germany and Russia. A total defeat of Russia was probable but undesirable; the possibility of a Russian victory over Hitler was "imperceptibly small" so that the United States should opt for "a half defeat [of Russia] with a stable Eastern front".<sup>60</sup> Seger specified that the Allies should keep military help to Russia to a minimum so that this war could end "with the triumph of the democracies and with the defeat of the principle of totalitarian dictatorship". Otherwise, "the devil Hitler would be replaced with the Beelzebub Stalin". The end of the Hitler-Stalin Pact was the occasion to let National Socialist Germany exhaust itself in a defeat of Soviet Russia. The Social Democrats could then rebuild the republic without the handicap of another Versailles. This was the only working solution to the German problem so that the GLD and the AFG deserved the exclusive attention of "the British and American labor movements".

The GLD attitude towards the Soviet Union also influenced its ethnic politics. After the conclusion of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, it hoped to monopolize the ethnic field and take over from the defunct

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 5 July 1941 and 23 August 1941.

Popular Front. In June 1940, it formed the German American Congress for Democracy (GACD) in order to benefit from the activation of public opinion during that presidential election year. The GACD was to be an ethnic Great Coalition. But its first interest was that of replacing the Popular Front in access to the secondary labor organizations. Its method was that of denouncing the left-wing leaders of the latter. In this context, Stampfer was satisfied over "the anamorphosis of pseudo-Social Democrats into communists who take their place next to their intellectual kin, the Nazis". Once properly identified, they stood out as people as dangerous as their predecessors in the Weimar Republic "which perished because of communist crimes".<sup>61</sup> They were Fifth Columnists<sup>62</sup> for whose containment the GACD was a "dire necessity". It could "help our German American people to successfully withstand and repel the onslaught of totalitarian propaganda in this country".<sup>63</sup> What these "communists, fascists, pacifists, defeatists and other queers" achieved in Europe they could repeat in the United States.<sup>64</sup> The NVZ thought that "the AKStK and the German speaking unions are naturally deeply interested in all these things" like the fight against Fifth Columnists, that in that respect "they would not leave the least

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 27 January 1940 and 3 February 1940.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 20 July 1940.

<sup>63</sup>The German American Congress for Democracy, press conference in New York, 26 February 1941, National Archives, Washington, State Department Central Files, Socialism.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., Rudolf von Hahn, Erwin H. Klaus to Stephen Early, Secretary to the President, 25 February 1941.

doubt about their loyalty to American democracy".<sup>65</sup>

Sometimes, the NVZ tried to apply pressure on the left-wing leaders and members by hinting at potential governmental reprisals for disloyalty. In an appeal of October 1940 to the secondary labor organizations, it emphasized that most of them faced "a very uncertain fate" and advised "political purity: out with the Nazis and communists of our ranks. An end to the Fifth Column". The NVZ established that "only he who is ready to defend the bourgeois, the political democracy of a capitalist country has the right of occupying a function in a labor organization since it is the capitalist, the bourgeois, the political democracy which makes our existence possible".<sup>66</sup> Another criterion was according to the NVZ the attitude towards the ongoing "war for freedom or for servitude". In a reference to the Hitler-Stalin Pact, the NVZ identified the opponents of the war with the opponents of democracy. It implored the German American labor organizations to defend their property, their camps and the funds of the AKStK by showing their true color and by forcing all their false friends to cast off the mask: "All men on board. ... Group yourselves around the NVZ. ... That is the best way of fighting for the defense and the expansion of democracy." In 1941, the NVZ defined the convention of the Federation of Workmen's Choirs in May and June of that year as "a conference of a political character", and expressed happiness about a meeting of "the friends of the NVZ among the Workmen's Choirs in the

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<sup>65</sup>Neue Volkszeitung, 8 February 1941.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 19 October 1940.



whole country". Beyond that, the former left-wing Social Democrat, Toni Sender, addressed the ASB convention in the name of the GACD. The NVZ invited the conventioners to a Frühschoppen (Sunday morning beer), and distributed leaflets telling them that they belonged "into the ranks of the GACD".<sup>67</sup>

The latter, however, did not gain much ground in the secondary labor organizations. The former followers of the Popular Front did not go over to the GACD. They rejected the policy of the Great Coalition with liberals and conservatives. Many members of these organizations preferred a neutralist discretion on the war issue that derived often from a tradition of socialist pacifism and also saved them from turning against their country of birth. The DAKV faction of the AKStK resented the fact that the Fifth Column issue was used against them. In September 1940, the New York group of the Nature Friends dropped further support of the NVZ because of the incitement of "worker against worker", that is, for fomenting "the Fifth Column hysteria" and for supporting the war. The NVZ disqualified this criticism by countering that "the Nature Friends belonged to those German American labor organizations which are abused by a small clique of communist party functionaries". It censured the national convention of the Nature Friends for "whipping through a resolution against Nazism and fascism [and] leaving out communism as an enemy of freedom". It skillfully pointed out that the Nature Friends were in danger of losing their New York camp because of their communist activities and expected to score points with Nature

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 31 May 1941 and 7 June 1941.

Friends members for denouncing this deliberate jeopardy of valuable labor property. The NVZ hoped that "the doubtlessly non-communist majority of the Nature Friends ... would make their stand [about the NVZ] clear to the clique [of their] leaders".<sup>68</sup>

With the end of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, the GACD faced a new situation with the resurgence of the Popular Front, which will be discussed in a separate chapter. But it did not like the end of the golden times during which the communists and the Popular Front had been in limbo. It kept refusing to differentiate between National Socialists and communists and held on to the convenience of putting them both into the same category of Fifth Columnists. Even moderates like Siegfried Marck in Chicago, who had favored the first Popular Front, described an anticipated second front as an alliance of communist convenience. With his predilection for abstract formulations that were not always original, he claimed "the identity of Hitlerism and Stalinism under the common denominator of ... nihilism".<sup>69</sup> The fears of the GACD about a second Popular Front were justified. The latter was an uncomfortable period for the liberal ethnic coalition. At the annual convention of the Workmen's Choirs of New York state, the delegates considered themselves "as enlightened people [who] could not remain indifferent towards this fight" between Russia and Germany. A resolution expressed satisfaction with "the heroic resistance of the Russian people and its Red Armies, also with the honest will to fight of the English people",

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 7 September 1940.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 28 June 1941.

in this order. It considered "their fight our fight" and asked for unrestricted aid to England and to the Soviet Union.<sup>70</sup>

Besides the membership of local branches of the secondary labor organizations, the composition of the GACD is unclear. Most of its organizers were GLD-Social Democrats like Brauer, Katz and Seger.<sup>71</sup>

It was founded "by about one dozen groups of all circles" which the NVZ described generally as conservative, liberal and Social Democratic, in that order.<sup>72</sup>

In early 1941, the delegates to the first national convention of the GACD represented seventy-eight German American organizations with a combined membership of two hundred thousand.<sup>73</sup> These were probably various locals of a limited number of mostly secondary labor organizations. No conservative society was mentioned by name and only two liberal organizations to justify the claim of a Great Coalition, the German American Democratic Society or Rolandbund and the Central European Society. The latter was founded in July 1939 by the Austrian Rudolf von Hahn, a former publisher in Berlin who had come to the United States several years before. Among other things, it called the attention of the public to disloyal German Americans. The former was founded in 1930 as an antifascist and, according to Seger, as an anti-communist organization. Its president was Erwin H. Klaus, an immigrant. In May 1940, it decided to expand, and made Frank Bohn the chairman of

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 15 November 1941.

<sup>71</sup> Anna Geyer to Sopade, 17 February 1941, EK Mappe 44.

<sup>72</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 22 June 1940.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 8 March 1941.

its national organization committee. This provided a link with the GLD. Seger negotiated with the Rolandbund in the spring of 1940, before the formation of the GACD. He had to save both Klaus and Bohn from the communists, which was not an unusual undertaking for a Social Democrat. These two participated in protest organizations against the new alien legislation which Seger described as front organizations. The latter included the DAKV and the Workmen's Choirs. As members of the GACD, Bohn and Klaus had to be prominently displayed. Bohn became the chairman of the GACD and Klaus the vice chairman and national organizer. The office of the Democratic Society served also the GACD. Hahn became the chairman of the arrangements committee for the first national convention of the GACD.<sup>74</sup> Ironically, Klaus and Hahn, as the leaders of an organization that combated Fifth Columnism, were, themselves, suspected of such activities in connection with the abovementioned protest organizations. Klaus appeared on a list which the Secretary to the President referred to the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.<sup>75</sup> Hahn was arrested and detained with his wife at Ellis Island for possible deportation. They had apparently overstayed their term in the United States.<sup>76</sup>

The GACD tried hard to win over conservative societies and conservative German Americans. Its first membership meeting criticized

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 9 March 1940; 16 March 1940 and 4 May 1940.

<sup>75</sup> Watson, Secretary to the President - Federal Bureau of Investigation, State Department, 7 June 1940, National Archives, Washington, State Department Central Files, Socialism.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., Division of Press Intelligence, an article about Hahn in the Sunday New York Times, 21 March 1942.

the Steuben Society for allocating funds to fight British propaganda. But it could not save that conservative organization from its cooperation with the DAKV. The GACD addressed itself especially to "the freedom loving and democratically oriented German Americans". In this endeavor, it indulged in some contradictions. It thought that those German Americans constituted a majority. It was, in the opinion of the GACD "an often made and often repeated error, but very definitely an error" to believe that "our entire German American population is infested with an un-American Nazi doctrine". The number of the disloyal did "not amount to more than a handful of Americans of German stock" while "the huge masses ... despise and abhor Hitlerism as well as Stalinism".<sup>77</sup> Yet, the GACD admitted that German America was neutral. It vowed to fight for its soul. It talked about "that considerable part of the ideologically wavering German Americans", those 90% of the nearly seven million German Americans who still hesitated in the middle between fascism and antifascism.<sup>78</sup> In an attempt at their conversion, the GACD conducted a national "educational campaign for enlightenment" which concentrated on exposing the living and working conditions in the Third Reich. It made records for radio stations and for "liberal and progressive" local groups about such topics as the daily life of an average family under the Nazi regime. It tried to pressure the German Americans into patriotism by fomenting fears of undemocratic reprisals. An indifferent German American would be considered a half Nazi. Anti-

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., press conference of the GACD in New York, 26 February 1941.

<sup>78</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 4 June 1941.

loyalty in radio and in the press. He would have liked to carry out his supervising and loyalty testing of German American newspapers as an OWI official. But his employment was limited to an appearance with a Midwestern newspaper chain. The OWI imposed him as editor on a reluctant owner who sabotaged him as best he could. In almost daily communication with Alan Cranston, the head of the Foreign Language Division, Seger brought the newspaper chain into line with the government view of the war. But he did not want to repeat this exhausting experience and returned to New York. In December 1941, after the United States entered the war, the Social Democratic weekly had to issue "an urgent appeal to our readers to remain loyal to the NVZ". It was concerned with "overtimid readers" who did not want to "burden themselves now with a German newspaper".<sup>83</sup> The bourgeois German Americans were intractable to Social Democratic berating.

Under these circumstances, the GACD did not become a Great Coalition. The wife of the former Sopade member, Geyer, predicted already in the summer of 1940 that this ethnic coalition did "not have a chance for becoming a big organization".<sup>84</sup> It had a slow start and gradually gathered a limited momentum. The first public meeting took place in mid-July 1940; the first membership meeting in mid-September 1940 and the first national conference in early March 1941.<sup>85</sup> The latter could not celebrate an expansion either in the secondary labor

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 24 June 1939 and 1 July 1939.

<sup>84</sup> Anna Geyer to Sopade, 17 February 1941, EK Mappe 44.

<sup>85</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 20 July 1940 and 21 September 1940.

or the conservative fields even though it took a long time to prepare. But the conference decided to establish local chapters throughout the United States. The GACD would concentrate on the six states that comprised 60% of the seven million German Americans: New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Ohio and New Jersey. Then, it would deal with the 13% of German Americans in thirteen other states of secondary concentration before a full expansion into all other states of the Union.<sup>86</sup> This plan was realized halfway with some locals in second stage cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco. But except for New York and Chicago, the GACD locals carried on a limited number of activities. In many places, the late coming GACD could not dislodge the entrenched DAKV even during the good times of the Hitler-Stalin Pact. In Cleveland specifically, the DAKV local, which comprised the strong leftist factions of the German American labor organizations, hampered the establishment of a GACD local.<sup>87</sup> The Congress for Democracy also issued the Air News which was sent to German radio commentators and to two hundred daily and weekly newspapers.<sup>88</sup> Thomas Mann became a member of the GACD but "the half-witted Germans in America who are even less respectable than the Bundists (the American Nazis)" did not join.<sup>89</sup>

The American government was critical of such mixed organiza-

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<sup>86</sup> German American Congress for Democracy, press conference, 26 February 1941, National Archives, Washington State Department Central Files, Socialism.

<sup>87</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 12 July 1941.

<sup>88</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 23 May 1942 and 6 June 1942.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 14 June 1941.

tions as the GACD. Hahn and Klaus asked for a message from the president to the first national conference. But a memorandum of the State Department advised against this request in terms of the general prewar attitude towards antifascist organizations. The Department believed that encouragement should be limited strictly to American organizations "which represent themselves to be acting as Americans in the furtherance of our national aspirations in contrast to organizations which either in their title, membership or otherwise imply a combination of Americanism with some other national affiliation". It objected thus to the designation German American Congress which "at once suggests a division in loyalty whereas the goal to be sought is unqualified unity as Americans, and Americans only". The State Department recommended "a certain reserve in the degree of support extended to such groups".<sup>90</sup> For this reason, it felt that a message from the president to the GACD, "presumably to be read at the Conference, would be inappropriate". Hahn received only a letter from the Secretary to the President who assured him that the president desired to encourage "any group of American citizens organized with the objective to promote national unity in this country as well as the freedom of peoples throughout the world". But "the heavy pressure of official duties" prevented the president from preparing a message to the conference.<sup>91</sup> Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins, was supposed to address the convention. The

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<sup>90</sup>State Department memorandum, 1 March 1941, National Archives, Washington State Department Central Files, Socialism.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., White House, Secretary to the President to Hahn.



Assistant Attorney General substituted for Attorney General Robert H. Jackson. The general attitude of the American government towards emigrant and ethnic organizations will be discussed in the chapter on the second German American Popular Front. It changed considerably after the American entrance into the war.

Outside the field of German American politics, the concept of a Great Coalition did not apply. In American politics, the GLD-Social Democrats and especially Seger had visions of an independent labor party that could rival the Republican and Democratic Parties and equal the role which the SPD had played in the Weimar Republic. Seger contributed to this theme in his regular Leitartikel, "The American Scene", in the NVZ. A significant GACD could have given him more stature. But the organizational tool with which he had to work in the field of Third Party politics was the German Branch of the Social Democratic Federation. As the watchdog of independent labor politics, the SDF tried to keep the American Labor Party in line, which was to be the nucleus of the movement. The SDF had been a member of the ALP since 1936 and had agreed to support all ALP candidates in local, state and national elections under the condition that the ALP remain politically independent of the two major parties. Seger rejoiced in June 1939 that the ALP executive committee had decided against election deals and proposed a campaign "against the reactionary Republican Party and against a Democratic Party devoid of all political principles".<sup>92</sup> The main common deviation from this independent line was the support of the Roosevelt administration and the vote for the reelections of the president.

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<sup>92</sup>Neue Volkszeitung, 24 June 1939 and 1 July 1939.

A meeting of the national executive of the SDF declared in January 1940 that "the progressive, humane and democratic principles of the Roosevelt administration in domestic and foreign policy must be maintained and expanded". But in non-presidential elections, the SDF was willing "to collaborate on the formation of a third party with non-communist progressive labor and farmer groups". A plan was developed for setting up local progressive groups in industrial centers which would send delegates to the national convention of the SDF.<sup>93</sup> This strategy would also keep the ALP in the line of independent labor party politics. The SDF was deeply concerned about the defense of the ALP against its communist faction. It supported the Liberal Labor Committee to safeguard the ALP against the efforts of the communist Committee to Rebuild the ALP. Seger was disappointed when the ALP disintegrated and the SDF made little progress.<sup>94</sup>

In the design of Seger, the role of the American unions was to be that of supporting an independent labor party in the way the General German Trade Union Federation used to support the Weimar SPD. He admitted that "the American unions have absolutely nothing in common with even a mildly socialist or Social Democratic economic concept".<sup>95</sup> But he hoped that they would eventually go for a de-ideologized progressive party. In their polarized state with the two national federations of the AFL and the CIO, they would not meet on this middle ground. Seger

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 20 January 1940.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 2 March 1940 and 30 March 1940.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 10 February 1940.

was therefore very interested in the unification of the CIO and the AFL and deplored the fact that the latter denounced the former as communist. His attitude was not always evenhanded. He would have liked a CIO without its president John L. Lewis. In the discussions for unification in early 1939, he criticized the plan of Lewis for a united American Congress of Labor by comparing it to the German communist tactics of the Revolutionäre Gewerkschafts-Organisation (Revolutionary Trade Union Organization). He thought, however, that the principle of industrial organization which was still anathema to the AFL should be conceded.<sup>96</sup> With the split of the auto workers from the CIO, he felt that the latter had not fulfilled the hopes of 1936. But he remained mildly critical of the AFL and objected to "ultra reactionary and sometimes corrupt leaders of the AFL". He criticized especially the opposition by ten members of the AFL executive committee to the economic policies of the New Deal.<sup>97</sup> After 1939, Seger was dissatisfied with both AFL isolationism and CIO ambivalence towards the Hitler-Stalin Pact.<sup>98</sup> Even after the formation of the GLD which had opted for AFL sponsorship, he castigated mainly Lewis rather than the CIO. He branded Lewis as the Judas Iscariot of the American labor movement for supporting Wendell Willkie in the presidential election campaign of 1940.<sup>99</sup> He also held Lewis responsible for undemocratic methods in

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 11 March 1939 and 18 March 1939.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 10 February 1940.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 4 May 1940.

<sup>99</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 2 November 1940.

the CIO. But the changes in the American union movement for which Seger hoped did not take place. The CIO remained too radical and the AFL too conservative for the GLD. The two federations did not unite until long after the war.

The American cooperative movement had also a place in Seger's design. He wrote more than ten articles about it in 1940. No incident was too small to nourish his hopes. The cooperatives acquired nearly the importance of a panacea and constituted something like extenuating circumstances for American capitalism. They became "the basis of a new world", constituted "practical democracy" and were the answer to the necessary preservation of democracy by promoting economic equality. Seger celebrated incidents like the opening of the first cooperative gas station of the United States in Washington D.C. and of the first cooperative oil refinery in the world in Kansas. He was impressed with the Cooperative League of America and with the number of over one million of cooperatively organized Americans. For him, the United States was not only the most capitalistic country in the world, but also the leader in the cooperative field so that it was already well advanced on the road to economic democracy. Seger would have liked to see the cooperative movement grow to the importance of the Gewerkschaftliche Einkaufsgenossenschaften (GEG, Trade Union Wholesale and Retail Cooperatives) and its Konsum chain stores in Weimar Germany.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 6 April 1940, 13 April 1940, 4 May 1940, 15 June 1940, 13 July 1940, 27 July 1940, 10 August 1940, 7 September 1940, 21 September 1940, 9 November 1940, 30 November 1940, 7 December 1940, 28 December 1940, 18 January 1941.

This was another unrealistic expectation that failed to materialize.

None of the political initiatives of the GLD during the first war years carried very far. They were typical emigrant undertakings. Based on Weimar precedents, they lacked realism and a sense of American categories and proportions. These great designs also fostered another Social Democratic legacy of the Weimar years, the intolerance towards other socialist groups, especially towards NB. The frustration of these great ideas intensified the antagonism towards the NB organization. A certain jealousy was justified since the American Friends of German Freedom did creditable political work which will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF GERMAN FREEDOM AND ITS GERMAN SECTION AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The AFGF was a unique organization because of the fusion of its American and emigrant elements. This structure was aptly designed to facilitate its political tasks and avoid the handicap of the enemy alien stigma. The American members were a leadership group with many personal ties. The German members considered Frank their indispensable leader. The American ex-socialists and the German democratic socialists were also compatible ideologically. The former held a rationalism for which democracy was the manifest destiny of the postwar world of which Germany was the pivotal case. The NB emigrants with their scientific socialism liked this sober functional approach. Defeated Germany would escape a second Versailles. A new united democratic socialist movement could take over the work of reconstruction. The NB emigrants considered themselves as the exile part of the avant-garde of this movement. Its home section was the underground movement with which NB claimed to have special ties. Thus, in all respects, the AFGF was a homogeneous organization that functioned smoothly throughout the war.

The methods of the AFGF changed with the outbreak of the war and the American entrance into it. Before 1939, American public opinion

had been antifascist rather than anti-German. The AFGF had only to rally American support for the German underground which might succeed in overthrowing the National Socialist regime. After 1939, and especially after December 1941, military defeat became the alternative to a German revolution, and nationalism the corresponding American attitude. Against the latter, the AFGF wanted to assert its rational approach to the German problem. For this purpose it planned to expand the organization nationally and emphasize propaganda in the United States. Since a second republic within a European federation was also in the interests of the victim nations of National Socialism and fascism, the AFGF tried to promote its program by international cooperation. In 1941, it started the International Coordination Council (ICC) which was to convey on the German emigrants the status of the exile groups of the victim nations. This rehabilitative effect was to keep alive the idea of "the other Germany", that is, the democratic Germany, in American public opinion so that the AFGF could continue its work.

In 1942, when the military tide of the war started to turn, the AFGF made plans for recontacting underground groups in Germany. Frank submitted his ambitious formula to the Office of Strategic Services and to the War Department. This plan wanted to organize the underground groups into an underground government ready to take over the reconstruction of the country after the demise of National Socialism. The Frank initiative derived from the avant-garde theory of NB. The latter did not share the liberal illusions of the Social Democrats about potential mass resistance in Germany. Radio propaganda from abroad was not a feasible approach.

All these plans hinged to a large extent on some token of unity within the German socialist emigration. The latter was a pre-condition of them but, under the circumstances, it became one of their goals. In the process of executing its plans, the AFGF hoped to rally or to neutralize the GLD. The Free World Association supplanted the ICC as another international committee but one that had a chance of including the GLD. The Frank formula for an underground government also tried to enlist the GLD. When the OSS failed to support that plan, the AFGF relied on the War Relief Board of the CIO and the AFL for financial support of its contact work. This Board wanted to form a council of European emigrants with a German section that included NB and the GLD as well as the Popular Front group. But the identity of the GLD was incompatible with the position of a rearguard of a defunct Weimar Social Democracy. The Labor Delegation lent itself to no concentration with the NB emigrants. It continued a confrontation without compromise which contributed to the failure of the AFGF plans. The attitude of various government departments and agencies was especially influenced by a GLD campaign against an alleged domination of the German section of the Office of War Information by Frank and his presumed friends. Thus, the AFGF initiatives of the first half of the war were unique and well conceived, but failed. For the second half, the AFGF concentrated on plans for reconstruction which the second part of this paper will discuss.

As its name implied, the AFGF was more a committee of political friends than a coalition of political groups. AFGF personalities were generally co-leaders of several American groups. Norman Thomas was



also chairman of the League for Industrial Democracy of which Niebuhr was vice president and Vladek had been a member of the board of directors. The executive secretary of the LID, Mary Fox, was also the secretary of the AFGF while her husband, the former socialist John Herling, was a member of the executive committee of the AFGF. Anna Caples was also connected with both organizations; in the AFGF, she was the executive secretary. The former president of the LID, Harry W. Laidler, was a member of the national committee of the AFGF. Tillich was doubly involved with NB. Some circles of German Christian Socialists in Berlin cooperated with NB underground groups there while he was a close theological and political associate of Niebuhr, one of the leaders of American Christian Socialism. Niebuhr, one of the founders of the Union for Democratic Action, was the chairman of the AFGF. Other UDA progressives like James Loeb and Roger Baldwin were also closely associated with the AFGF. The latter benefitted from the numerous political acquaintances of its direct members. With this degree of establishment, it was beyond the reach of the GLD which had to center its attacks on Frank.

But the AFGF was not the organization of Frank. It had an elaborate structure. It was directed by an executive committee of twenty-five members to which belonged Held, Fry, Alfred Baker Lewis, Paul Kellogg, James Loeb, and Zaritsky. The committee elected the officers of the organization, among them Frank as research director. The latter had few constitutional rights even though he was one of the driving forces of the AFGF. The executive committee met monthly and supervised, also, the disbursement of funds. It appointed a finance

committee which had to authorize expenditures over \$100. All checks had to be double-signed and the financial books were audited annually by a certified public accountant. The AFGF also had a national committee of liberal personalities like Christian Gauss of Princeton University, Frank Kingdon, Laidler of the LID, Max Lerner of The Nation, David F. Seiferheld, Tillich, Franz Höllering and others. The German section of the AFGF was small. Frank gave its numbers at twenty emigrants. They included, probably, some sympathizers like Marie Juchacz and Emil Kirschmann, also, both of whom had cooperated with NB before the war from their border station in Mulhouse, Alsace Lorraine.

Frank and Niebuhr had commensurate political ambitions. The neo-liberals around Niebuhr hoped to establish a third, progressive party, possibly towards the end or shortly after the war. In this way, they expected to influence postwar reconstruction in a rational way. In defining the destiny of Germany, the AFGF emphasized the liberal tradition of Germany from the controversial revolution of 1848 to the equally controversial revolution of 1918 and the ensuing Weimar Republic. The Third Reich was an interruption of German democratic development. Its end must serve the continuation of this development. This doctrine was necessarily out of tune with the nationalist attitudes of the Allied countries in their effort of total warfare against the National Socialist challenge. But the AFGF wanted to win at least a few thousand Americans over to its idealist concept. While Germany fit into the world plan of the American liberals, the antifascist and eventually victorious Soviet Union did not. This presaged their later Cold War attitude towards Russia.

The AFGF emphasis of the German liberal tradition abetted the emigrant concept of "the other Germany" and was to some extent a substitute for it. The "other Germany" consisted of various elements like the emigration, the underground movement, the martyrs in the concentration camps, and the unorganized antifascist element of the population. Frank admitted that even in this combination it was as small as the National Socialist Germany, so that the majority of the German people placed themselves somewhere in between. But it had to do. Hertz, who generally considered the judgement of Frank as sober, had "the impression that he overestimates somewhat the degree of opposition and discontent in Germany".<sup>1</sup> Thus, the AFGF had two complementary driving forces, the ambitions and ideologies of its American and German members.

Before the outbreak of the war, the concept of "the other Germany" was not challenged: "Anti-Nazi sentiment at that time was in the main progressive, democratic and anti-totalitarian", not anti-German. The AFGF intended to be the "transformer to exploit the anti-Nazi energy ... and drive the greatest international force to the mill of a democratic revolution in Germany". It had, therefore, "a very clear task" in encouraging and supporting the underground movement in Germany. It would have liked to implement "far-reaching plans to expand the work" if both, underground and AFGF, had been stronger.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Hertz to Georg Frey, 14 June 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 31.

<sup>2</sup>Plan for action of the American Friends of German Freedom, summer 1940, Frank Papers, Hoover Institute; also *ibid.*: Paul Hagen, Frage I: Warum kein Verhandlungsfriede ausser mit einer demokratischen Vertretung in Deutschland. Frage II: Was unterscheidet die beiden Deutschland? 17 October 1941, 21 pages.

After 1939 and especially after December 1941, the American attitude towards Germany changed and, with it, the approach of the AFGF. The war broke almost all contacts with the underground movement. In this situation, the AFGF set itself three tasks: national expansion, propaganda, and international cooperation. It wanted to find new strength among Americans, German Americans, and exiled Germans. It wanted to upgrade its contacts outside New York into systematically working groups of American Friends and eventually into a national organization. The active support of a few thousand progressive Americans was considered as "an extraordinarily important factor against European fascism today". It would not be the big transformer of American anti-Nazism but it would amount to "a protection for democratic and progressive movements in Europe tomorrow". It would be "the only bridge ... for a coming democratic revolution". The AFGF intended also to "reach important German labor and democratic elements in this country and in the Western hemisphere, professors, other intellectuals, scientists". But its plans for cooperation with German exiles and German Americans only circumscribed the difficulties with the GLD and with the German American organizations. The AFGF had no access to groups like the Workmen's Benefit Fund. It considered, nevertheless, "a certain activity among German Americans".<sup>3</sup> Frank envisioned a potential merger of the AFGF with the German American Council for Democracy and with the Loyal Americans of German Descent under George N. Shuster. These plans were not feasible. But the AFGF established some locals as, for example,

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<sup>3</sup> Private statement of policy, 11 June 1941, I: Winning the war; II: Winning the peace; Frank Papers, Hoover Institute.

in Pittsburg.

The war made it necessary to "interpret the struggle of the democratic elements of Germany to the people of this country" so that anti-German feelings would not interfere with the proper solution of the German problem. The AFGF had to publicize its "conviction that only a German democratic revolution will finally solve the international crisis of our time".<sup>4</sup> It made remarkable efforts in the fields of publication and documentation. Since May 1940, it issued the monthly Inside Germany Reports. They intended to inform the American public of the conditions inside Germany and stressed the difficulties and the declining popular appeal of the National Socialist government. Frank's book, "Will Germany crack?", summarized the speculation about "the other Germany". In order to substitute for the loss of original reports, the AFGF established an archive for the systematic collection of secondary information. In conjunction with this effort, the Research and Information Service of the AFGF issued the monthly "In Re: Germany" under the editorship of the emigrant Henry Ehrmann. It was a critical bibliography of books and articles on Germany with some ten subheadings. The AFGF also arranged seminars, political discussion groups and public forums.

The critical question was the content of antifascist propaganda. The discrepancy between AFGF philosophy and American foreign policy presented a problem. According to Frank, propaganda had to deal with "progressive war aims" that described the new world whose construction

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

was to follow the war. For this purpose, he termed the Eight Points of the Atlantic Charter as insufficient. They fell below the standards of the Ten Points of Wilson and represented a compromise that offered neither a democratic solution of the national question nor contained even a discussion of the social question. They reminded Frank of ideas about a dictated peace and contributed little to the reinforcement of the democratic revolutionary elements in Germany. In order to improve these war aims propagandistically, he proposed a "method of positive interpretation of the Eight Points" together with demands for Allied promises of postwar assistance and the use of representatives of the defeated nations. The absence of positive war aims beyond the Eight Points was a permanent threat to the emigrant ideology of "the other Germany".

The AFGF conceded the weakness of the German democratic forces but did not accept it as an excuse for any other German solution than its own. It realized that "the conscious nucleus" of the potential democratic forces was a minority almost exclusively found in "the producing layers" of German society. The explanations for this state of affairs were somewhat weak. One of them was the alleged dilemma in which the opponents of the National Socialist regime were trapped. They felt called upon to defend the national interests of Germany, especially in their support of the war. The AFGF plans also detected "a passive mass resistance on the homefront", which was to be encouraged by radio propaganda so that millions of slow working Germans would become important allies behind the military front. Finally, there was "the so-called layer of the recalcitrant malcontents" who represented

the older generation "in varying degrees of a negation of the Nazi system".<sup>5</sup> In this situation, the AFGF could not deny that an Allied military victory was necessary. But in order to reconcile the latter with the need for a German revolution, Frank invented the formula of "the dependent revolution". Only the Allied armies could defeat the military might of the Third Reich. With this outside help, the minority of democratic forces in Germany could organize for a political change. In this scheme, the underground movement could become "an ally inside Germany".

The formula of Frank hinged a lot on a recurrence of the situation of 1918 when the Allied Armies did not enter Germany. The military developments of the last war years necessitated readjustments of the AFGF solution for the German problem. But for the time being, the principle of "a dependent revolution" avoided the potential pitfalls of the NVZ prophets of a German revolution. The NVZ propagandists were eventually caught in their own rhetoric and could be dismissed on their own terms. According to the logic of their propaganda, a German people that did not revolt against Hitler deserved little postwar consideration.

In the field of international cooperation, the AFGF tried to make "the closest contacts with ... European democratic elements", especially with those in the American exile. It intended to cooperate

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Hagen, Was unterscheidet die beiden Deutschland? 17 October 1941, Frank Papers; also ibid. Radio broadcast, 21 May 1942, a discussion between Alfred Baker Lewis and Paul Hagen about the American Friends of German Freedom.

with the national committees of Belgian, Czechoslovakian, Danish, Dutch, French, Italian, Norwegian and Polish exiles, especially with those of the respective labor movements. The idea was to build an American European Forum and an organization of American Friends of European Freedom. In the summer of 1941, the AFGF sponsored the formation of the International Coordination Council (ICC). In an interview with Eleanor Roosevelt about the refugee crisis of June 1940, Frank added that "I also want to talk to you about the setting up of a representative delegation of exiled organizations and movements from the part of Europe occupied by the Nazis, a kind of European Congress in exile".<sup>6</sup>

The AFGF never emphasized directly the benefits it hoped to derive from the ICC. It described the latter always as an organization that existed for its own sake. Siegfried Jeremias, a young NB immigrant, knew that the European exile committees "naturally need us less than we do them". But his definition of the ICC covered up this circumstance. He explained that "the ICC was really conceived by Willy [Müller, i.e., Frank] as an organization which would offer to the European refugees ... a framework for common political activity under the benevolent sponsorship of Americans, similarly to the arrangement of the AFGF".<sup>7</sup> According to its monthly Voice of Freedom, the ICC was "a common enterprise with a common goal". It was "an organization of those who must help one

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<sup>6</sup> Karl Frank to Eleanor Roosevelt, 15 June 1940, Frank Papers, box 6, Immigration.

<sup>7</sup> Siegfried Jeremias to Paul Hertz, 23 July 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.



another". It represented a coalition of various national groups with "a particular technique" for aiding and coordinating the various underground wars in Europe. The Allies should recognize these enemies of Hitler, "however humble, as friends in a common aim". The ICC and the corresponding national underground movements had established a Victory Front against Hitler and anticipated the United Nations as the proper approach to the Second World War. Accordingly, the ICC should also be recognized as a kind of general staff of the European underground war.<sup>8</sup> According to Frank, it was "an early forerunner of the idea of an anti-fascist United Nations group".<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the International Coordination Council had to offer European and American benefits to the government in Washington. In the exposition of "the motivating forces behind such a Council", an ICC memorandum attractively emphasized the "gigantic ... as yet untapped reservoirs of national resentment" against German occupation. It offered the organization of these forces as one "of the most important weapons for the ultimate victory". With the additional influence over the American foreign language groups, the ICC would have "power in Europe and influence in the United States". With this double recommendation, the ICC was to be worthy of governmental consideration. With its ethnic extension, it acquired "a healthy character of true Americanism". The memorandum invited "at least the tacit approval of the

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<sup>8</sup>Voice of Freedom, published by the International Coordination Council, Volume I, Nr. 3, December 1941, Frank Papers.

<sup>9</sup>Answers to accusations by Günther Reinhardt against Paul Hagen, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2; also Ibid., Autobiographical material, box 6.

United States government". It also explained that New York was preferable to London as a center for the international cooperation of exiles. London was the capital of a belligerent nation. The Interallied Center there harbored a number of official exile governments. But they depended for their status on the British government and shared in the British wartime animosity towards all Germans, including Social Democrats and socialists. Moreover, like the Polish group, they were not all democratically inclined.<sup>10</sup>

The ultimate purpose of the ICC was a liberal solution of the European problem. The Council was interested in "the discussion and clarification of mutual war and peace aims". Very simply, "the basic fact of this war ... in kindergarten terms" was the realization that a lasting peace could only be found "through the active cooperation of the submerged and conquered peoples of Europe". The war years were "the strategic time for an aggressive effort to revitalize faith in democracy in all countries". The ICC anticipated "a world order based on liberty" from which defeated Germany could not be left out.<sup>11</sup> The mutual contacts of the ICC members served as "the preparation for the great cooperative effort of building the new united and democratic Europe that must emerge from this war".<sup>12</sup> This solution of the European problem was somewhat futuristic. The consequences of the war postponed

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<sup>10</sup> Memorandum on an International Coordination Council in the United States, Frank Papers.

<sup>11</sup> Voice of Freedom, Vol. I, Nr. 3, December 1941, Frank Papers.

<sup>12</sup> Memorandum on an ICC, Frank Papers.

its viability. Also, a victorious Russia would not agree to a European federation from the Atlantic to the borders of the Soviet Union. The attempt of graduating "the other Germany" to Allied status by way of cooperation with the victims of National Socialism was problematical. Also, the chances for a united postwar German socialist movement were not very good. The ICC wanted to "reach the creative forces of the future; it should organize itself from among Americans and Europeans chosen less according to title and standing than according to capacity and promise." It should initially at least be "limited ... to qualified and progressive people".<sup>13</sup> This attitude of the ICC was less one of free choice than of lacking alternative. The official Social Democrats of the GLD were not going to cooperate with the unofficial Social Democrats of NB. After 1945, the Western Allies relied on the conservative forces of German post-Nazi society.

The composition of the ICC reflected the influence of the AFGF. One of the ICC antecedents was the Emergency Rescue Committee which had also been sponsored mainly by the AFGF. Frank Kingdon, who headed the ERC, was also the chairman of the ICC. The treasurer of the ICC was David T. Seiferheld who held the same position in the successor of the AFGF and in the later Council for a Democratic Germany. Nearly half of the American Friends of European Freedom were American Friends of German Freedom. The European members of the executive committee of the ICC were often close associates of AFGF leaders. The ICC included "one person from England, France, Italy and Germany, and a certain number of

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

representatives of smaller nations". The German group was the largest with four emigrants: Frank, Carl Zuckmayer, Hans Simons and Ingrid Warburg, who was actually an American citizen. The Austrians Buttinger and Franz Höllering, who had been a leftist editor in Berlin, favored the German cause in the form of a Grossdeutschland (Greater Germany) that included Austria. Of the two British supporters, Isiah Berlin and John Wheeler-Bennett, the latter was an acquaintance of Frank and NB. He was in the service of the British Ministry of Information which also employed some NB members.<sup>14</sup> In 1939, David Astor of the British Ministry of Information was to visit the British Ambassador in Washington, Lord Lothian, in order to discuss the proficiency of British leaflet propaganda in Germany with a group of American and German antifascists. Astor sent, however, "a friend of his whom he thought ideally fitted for the purpose", that is, Frank. Edward C. Carter, the later vice president of the ICC, was one of this group of antifascists.<sup>15</sup>

The remaining nationality groups were listed with only one or two representatives. Some of them belonged to labor parties who had supported NB before the war in Europe as, for example, the Norwegian Labor Party, whose parliamentary secretary was a member of the ICC. In general, these were the labor parties whose delegations to the Paris Congress of August 1933 constituted the militant minority in the debate over the response of the Socialist International to the rise of

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<sup>14</sup>Autobiographical material, Frank Papers, box 6.

<sup>15</sup>Edward C. Carter to Lauchlin Currie, Administrative Assistant to the President, 25 April 1942, Frank Papers, box 6, Immigration.

National Socialism. They criticized the German Social Democratic failure of making a stand against the Nazis. They were more sensitive about this because their countries were smaller and more vulnerable to fascist aggression. Among the ICC nationality groups were the American Friends of Czechoslovakia, the American Friends of Polish Democracy and the Mazzini Society. The Czechoslovakian group and its Czechoslovakian American Relief Committee had assisted the Emergency Rescue Committee in its task of evacuation.

The work of the ICC remained limited. It did not get far in reorganizing European underground contacts. It did some domestic propaganda as for example with its Voice of Freedom, which lasted for less than a year. That monthly was to give "an authentic record of the struggle for freedom as it unfolds behind Hitler's lines".<sup>16</sup> The ICC formed committees for such tasks as overseas radio propaganda and post-war planning. The radio committee was its best going, and, eventually, most controversial concern. It analyzed German and Axis radio propaganda and devised antifascist responses. Eventually, it survived the ICC and became an independent committee, the Shortwave Research Inc. When the American government entered the war and the business of war information, it relied on emigrant antecedents like Shortwave Research. It entered into work contracts with the latter and hired a part of its staff after its dissolution.

Shortwave Research, as a post-ICC committee, was organized by the legal assistant of Colonel Donovan, the later director of the Office

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<sup>16</sup>Voice of Freedom, Vol. I, Nr. 1, September 1941, Frank Papers.

of Strategic Services, who approved of this non-profit organization. This was done at the suggestion of James P. Warburg, the head of the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information. According to Warburg, Shortwave Research "enabled the government to try out writers, translators and announcers". If they were suitable for permanent employment they were investigated by the Civil Service Commission before hiring.<sup>17</sup> Within the general attacks on the government information agencies, especially in Congress, Shortwave Research was singled out as a committee of Frank that wasted government funds for leftist purposes. The GLD was also instrumental in this, and tried to gain political capital from distortions of simple facts. But Frank had no influence in the shortwave committee after the end of the ICC. He stated that "I was not 'the spirit of Shortwave Research'". It was run by AFGF people: Marya Blow as president, Bertram F. Willcox as one of two vice presidents, Carter as secretary, and Seiferheld as treasurer. The committee was apparently well endowed for the standards of antifascist work. After its dissolution, it had a surplus of "possibly \$35,000" which probably came from private contributors like the Warburgs. This fund was distributed by the board of Shortwave Research among antifascist organizations like the liberal Italian Justitia e Liberta group in New York. The AFGF received, according to Frank's recollection, \$1,000 or \$1,500.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> James P. Warburg to David Seiferheld, 7 June 1944, Frank Papers.

<sup>18</sup> Answers to accusations against Paul Hagen by Günther Reinhardt, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2; also ibid., Memorandum on the statements about Paul Hagen in the Günther Reinhardt report.

The cooperation of the European nationality groups in the ICC was somewhat reluctant. In the summer of 1942, Jeremias received the task of unifying them for a common effort.<sup>19</sup> He worked for the CIO Committee for American and Allied War Relief in New York as its short-wave radio director for broadcasts to Europe in cooperation with the Office of the Coordinator of Information, one of the predecessors of the Office of War Information. By 7 July 1942, the CIO was accorded fifteen minutes daily by the Coordinator, for labor propaganda to Germany, France and Italy. Jeremias was also supposed to direct the short-wave program of the AFL. The government would have liked to promote a rapprochement between the two union federations but Philip Murray, the chairman of the CIO, told Jeremias that a cooperation between the CIO and the AFL was not even possible in the field of antifascist work. The latter had also to familiarize the CIO member unions with this antifascist work. He spoke to such union bodies as the executive board of the United Auto Workers and a plenary staff meeting of the steelworkers union.<sup>20</sup>

Frank thought that these CIO connections should benefit the ICC. Kingdon, the chairman of the ICC was also convinced that cooperation with the CIO could go much further than previously expected. He hoped to develop these relations on his own but the deliberate reserve of Jeremias taught him the indispensability of the CIO shortwave director.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Paul Hagen to Paul Hertz, 5 June 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 31.

<sup>20</sup> Siegfried Jeremias to Paul Hertz, 13 August 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.

<sup>21</sup> Siegfried Jeremias to Paul Hertz, 23 July 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.

The latter, at first reluctantly and then more enthusiastically, agreed to the project of Frank. He wanted to expand his connections and "establish good and solid relations ... with all union leaders of America, CIO or AFL" for the benefit of the ICC. Leading CIO officials suggested to him, Frank and the ICC to arrange a promotive banquet in which the most important union leaders from across the country would participate. Murray was willing to make "a fundamental declaration" about the CIO concepts of solving postwar problems and about CIO sponsorship of ICC programs. Eventually, the ICC formed a special labor group of which Jeremias became the secretary. Besides Frank, it consisted of two Norwegian, two Polish, and one Czechoslovakian exile, among them the representatives of the Polish and the Czechoslovakian unions in the United States. Other exiles abstained for fear of creating the impression that this labor group was meant as a rival of the unionist international.<sup>22</sup>

In the opinion of Jeremias, the ICC had to be solidified and its new labor group more firmly established before a drive for CIO sponsorship. He realized that the European labor exiles neglected their ties with the ICC because they "naturally need us less than we do them". Nevertheless, he considered a better coordination of these European laborites as "one of our essential tasks". The job of coordinator was difficult. Jeremias felt that he was too young and not diplomatic or flexible enough for it. He had already differences of opinion with Frank who wanted to load the labor group with German socialist ex-

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<sup>22</sup>Jeremias to Hertz, (July 1942), Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.



ponents like Walcher and Lewinsky.<sup>23</sup> He also was pessimistic and thought that it would be "useless to continue offering our cooperation to the other groups if they do not really want to cooperate". On the other hand, he believed that the prestigious Hertz was capable of educating them into cooperative allies. Their reluctance was supposedly based on lack of political understanding which Hertz would have the stature to clear up in hours of talks with each individual exile. They would have to adhere to the liberal ICC philosophy according to which the only alternative to involving the German labor movement in the reconstruction of Europe was "the fascist suppression of Germany".<sup>24</sup> Without a preliminary solidification of the ICC, Jeremias considered his task of winning CIO sponsorship impossible. Hertz was invited to return to New York from Los Angeles in order to "pull together more actively and responsively the various national groups and committees that have been cooperating with us".<sup>25</sup> Jeremias thought that the reform work of Hertz would take six months after which he would be "personally optimistic about the possibilities of the ICC". He hoped for "great political influence within the American labor scene" together with financial agreements that would keep the ICC afloat for the duration of the war.<sup>26</sup> These hopes did not materialize. Frank discouraged

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<sup>23</sup> Frank Kingdon to Paul Hertz, 12 August 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.

<sup>24</sup> Kingdon to Hertz, 23 July 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.

<sup>25</sup> Kingdon to Hertz, 12 August 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.

<sup>26</sup> Jeremias to Hertz, 27 July 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 32.

Hertz from coming to New York on the basis of a salary guaranty of only three months which Jeremias considered sufficient. The ICC was terminated the same year under unclear circumstances.

Frank claimed that the end of the ICC coincided with the appearance of government agencies after December 1941 that absorbed some of the functions of the ICC. This would, however, have been the time for an intensified activity in order to assist these agencies and win some government recognition. A better reason for an end to the ICC was the formation of the United Nations in early 1942. The European antifascist groups joined their respective UN delegations. But, more credibly, the ICC was "liquidated ... partly because another International Committee... running more on a pro-Russian line at the time, attracted more interest and got more official support".<sup>27</sup> This was the Free World Association, an emigrant coalition of various national and political participation in which some militant socialists like Julius Deutsch were instrumental. The latter was a hero of the fight against the Austrian Heimwehren (national guard) and of the Spanish Civil War in which he had been a general of the International Brigades. He was well acquainted with Spaniards like Del Vayo who was one of the main organizers of the Association.

But it was not the usual style of Frank to cede to competition. There was a chance that the Free World Association would realize a concentration of German socialist groups. It planned the formation of an International Labor Propaganda Committee under the direction of Deutsch.

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<sup>27</sup> Answers to accusations against Paul Hagen by Günther Reinhardt, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

Del Vayo had repeatedly approached Frank in this context before Deutsch wanted to discuss directly with the latter "the ... political questions" of such a group in November 1942. Some German groups had promised their cooperation. Deutsch wanted to engage "the three main groups (Grzesinsky, Rosenfeld, Hagen)", that is the GLD, the Popular Front and NB. He considered it "more practical" to discuss the implications of this plan with Frank alone before a joint meeting.<sup>28</sup>

Jeremias called the Association an organization engaged in "Luftgeschäfte" (ghost activities). He was upset over Frank's preference of the Association to the ICC.

Another reason for the end of the ICC was its failure to promote the AFGF plan for "contact work" in Germany. Frank did not think much of "mere propaganda from a distance".<sup>29</sup> He had definite plans for reactivizing contacts "with the real underground movement over there". For this purpose, he got in touch with the NB groups in England and Sweden and with NB friends in Lisbon.<sup>30</sup> The American government was expected to "give us facilities" for this project while respecting the political independence of the emigrants.<sup>31</sup> It seemed reasonable to expect some friendly consideration from the intelligence and propaganda agencies of the government. They consisted of the Office of the Coordi-

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<sup>28</sup> Julius Deutsch to Paul Hagen, 30 November 1942, Frank Papers, box 5, Neubeginnen.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Löwenthal to Paul Hagen, 28 October 1942, Frank Papers, box 5, Neubeginnen.

<sup>30</sup> Karl Frank to Max Hoffmann, 25 June 1943, Frank Papers, box 5, Neubeginnen.

<sup>31</sup> Paul Hagen to Paul Hertz, 4 May 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 31, also ibid., Hagen to Hertz, 5 June 1942.

nator of Information and of the Office of Facts and Figures. These were reorganized into the Office of War Information and the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the CIA. The AFGF had good relations with the first Coordinator, Arthur J. Goldberg, who had a similar background as the liberals or ex-socialists of the UDA. A Chicago friend of Goldberg and Frank arranged a meeting between these two in New York in May 1942. He believed that "you [Frank] will see in it an opportunity to further some of the ends which you and the AFGF have been seeking". He recommended "your being completely frank with Mr. Goldberg ... a good and trusted friend of mine".<sup>32</sup> Two NB emigrants, Georg Eliasberg and Bernhard Taurer, were already employed in the Office of the Coordinator. In the War Department was an isolated NB emigrant, Henry Ehrmann. Later, the AFGF had a friend there in Lieutenant Colonel Julius Klein, a graduate of the first class of the School for Military Government in Charlottesville, Virginia. His nephew and former assistant, Joseph Roos, was close to Hertz and Frank. He was the director of the News Research Service in Los Angeles which analyzed the foreign language press.

For these agencies, Frank prepared first an outline and then a full fifty page "Plan to make contact with the German underground", in the summer of 1942. The outline was presented to the Coordinator in April and then to the OSS where Goldberg ended up after the termination of his former office, in June 1942. Frank had the opportunity of explaining the plan personally to Colonel Donovan, the chief of the OSS. He also negotiated with Donald Downes of the OSS and, through him, with

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<sup>32</sup>Richard A. Meyer to Paul Hagen, 24 April 1942, Frank Papers, box 9, letter M.

John Foster Dulles "whose agent in this matter I understand you to be". Several conversations took place with Allan Dulles about the details of the plan. In one of them, Anna Frank-Caples participated as a prospective member of a liaison team in Switzerland. But "a difference of opinion among members of the staff" of the OSS held up the proposals of Frank.<sup>33</sup> It referred to a number of discriminating reports about Frank by Grzesinsky of the GLD who was then employed by the OSS. After this initial failure, Lt. Colonel Klein endorsed the full "Hagen formula" and recommended it to section G-2 of the General Staff with the offer of serving as the commanding officer of the project. The Office of the Chief of Staff believed, however, that the project fell under the jurisdiction of the OSS to which it was returned in September 1942. It was submitted there to the Planning Committee of Psychological Warfare and was given "the fullest consideration", without any positive results.<sup>34</sup> In October, Elmer Davis, the head of the OWI, also checked over the project of Frank. He thought it looked good but was "outside the field of my activity" so that his opinion would be of little value. Under the auspices of a united German emigration or even without the interference by the GLD, the plan might have met with a more positive fate.

The Hagen formula was an ambitious project that aimed at the two major objectives of the NB emigration: the preparation of a German revolution and the concentration of the various socialist exile groups.

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<sup>33</sup> James P. Murphy, OSS to Lt. Colonel Julius Klein, War Department, School of Military Government, 25 September 1942, Frank Papers, box 6, Immigration.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

The initial outline of April 1942 was more limited but, with the endorsement of Klein, a full elaboration seemed in order.<sup>35</sup> The Lt. Colonel would have liked to continue his intelligence career with the execution of this plan. He had started out with an investigation of the German American Bund in 1933 and 1934. In his explanation preceding the underground plan, he championed Frank and the German section of the AFGF beyond their own good. His evaluation reflected one-sided information which was useful to his purpose. According to Klein, the German emigrants represented "either only themselves individually or only remnants of former parties whose historical mistakes mean that they will never return to a place of prominence or even a position of trust in Germany". After this disqualification of the GLD, he described NB as an underground group "made up mostly of younger members of the former Social Democratic Party". It had developed "adequate techniques, a system of intelligence and information ... and a personnel of staff members" at the ready disposal of the War Department. Frank would be "one of the most suitable persons to be used for such activities" as contact work with underground groups.<sup>36</sup>

The plan of Frank was so elaborate that its general objective "may never be reached before the end of the war". It promoted the objective of a dependent revolution which would follow a National Socialist collapse.<sup>37</sup> Part IV, "The Decision" dealt with "an offensive on the

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<sup>35</sup> Paul Hagen, How to prepare collaboration with the anti-Nazi underground movement, 10 April 1942, Frank Papers, box 7.

<sup>36</sup> Explanation by Lt. Colonel Klein of the Hagen Plan, Frank Papers, box 7.

<sup>37</sup> Paul Hagen, A plan to make contact with the German underground, Frank Papers, box 7.

German home front". It would be "the chief task of the United States Army to make liaison with the nucleus of opposition, to strengthen, help and encourage its development, to attempt a possible coordination in an underground national organization with the aim of a democratic revolt against the Nazis". A special section responsible to the General Staff would direct these activities. But the implications of the "Hagen formula" went beyond the domain of the War Department or any other department. It concerned the general American postwar policy towards Germany and Europe, a policy that had to be negotiated with the other Allies.

The Special Section in charge of executing the plan of Frank would have consisted of a chief of the rank of a higher intelligence officer like Klein, and of a staff of the commanding officers of eight subsections for political intelligence, liaison, field operation, propaganda, research, special activities like sabotage and terror, and defense, that is, self-defense or counterintelligence. This apparatus resembled the structure of a government and could eventually have assumed many governmental functions in postwar Germany. In fact, the ultimate goal of the plan was the establishment of a government-like underground representation in Germany and abroad. First, the Liaison Section had to develop "special staffs for liaison with existing nuclei of opposition" in Germany. They would consist of "labor contact staffs" for the trade unions, the Social Democratic Party, the socialist youth groups, the Communist Party, and the labor emigration in all exile countries. They would further include separate staffs to contact the religious opposition, the army opposition, war prisoners and foreign

labor in Germany, underground groups of exile governments, youth, soldiers and women. These liaison staffs would have been employed by the Field Operative Section. The initial task of that section was to establish and coordinate borderland sections in Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal, Turkey, Vichy France, Spain and Persia. The borderland sections had to set up "contact points" on the respective borders including those "in occupied Eastern Territories and in the Balkan area"; then "in the five most important German centers" of Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, Munich and Vienna; later in twenty more important centers. The borderland sections and contact points would be directed by Field Operators who would supervise and protect the various liaison staffs in communicating with the various German oppositional forces.

The German forces should then be coordinated according to political or social origin and encouraged to build up representative committees abroad so that there would be foreign delegations of the trade union movement, the Social Democratic and all other groups. Eventually, a concentration of inside and outside representative committees would result in a national underground organization and in "a united delegation abroad (Vereinigtes Auslandsbüro)". This ambitious scheme would practically comprise a secret inland government in addition to an exile government. According to the theory of a dependent revolution, it could still not have deprived the National Socialist regime of its power but it could have contributed to the defeat of this regime and assumed control thereafter.

The plan of Frank would have overtaxed the human resources of the German emigration. As recruits, the Special Section needed



"reliable emigrants, volunteers among war prisoners, and specially qualified American and Allied citizens". The liaison staff members and field operators should be "perfectly qualified ... by knowledge of language, knowledge of territory and population, and by political experience". Among other duties, the Research Section had to assume the task of establishing "a careful card index" of personnel. It was to set up "an official research institute for German affairs which will register and mobilize the available intelligentsia in the German emigration in the United States and England ... and which should have a subsection for political research in German American societies and clubs and among other foreign German settlements in South America". In awareness of the problem of human resources, the plan considered the whole German emigration inside and outside the United States as the proper recruiting ground for its needs. In the United States, it considered as "the largest and most important ... the Jewish emigration" with the American Jewish Committee, the German Jewish Aufbau and the JLC. Then followed "the academic emigration, professors, some elements of the former Republican administration [of Germany] and a large group of writers, artists, etc." with the special mention of the New School for Social Research in New York. This somewhat uncohesive collection of antifascist forces was complemented with the recommendation of emigrant groups in London, the center of the Communist emigration in Mexico, "leftist connections" in the United States around Rosenfeld and the German American Emergency Conference of the second Popular Front, and cultural groups around Thomas Mann. This enumeration omitted the GLD.<sup>38</sup>

But the plan did approach the problem of emigrant cooperation in general rather than of a socialist concentration in particular. Only a united emigration could claim the necessary mandate for the plan of Frank which would otherwise represent a partisan approach. Frank proposed that "an attempt should be made to arrive at a political coordination of the now split emigrant forces so that they might become a sort of a representation abroad". This regrouped German emigration could "prepare special statements of policy and produce worthwhile anti-Nazi literature in the German language". Thereby, it could also coordinate highly qualified individuals who were isolated "because of the lack of an emigration center". This all-party coalition would have a subsidiary function. It would be neutralized within the proposed system of "the other Germany". The plan specified that this emigration center should be kept separate from the Special Section as well as from the underground representation abroad. The proposal of Frank could not deal with the problematic GLD.<sup>39</sup>

Parallel to the Hagen formula, John Foster Dulles promoted an OSS scheme. It tried to enlist German emigrants in a Commission that would advise the American government on "political strategy directed at German questions".<sup>40</sup> Frank did not want to alienate the OSS planners by unresponsiveness. By qualifying his interest, he demonstrated his preference for his own plan. The Commission was to comprise all activist

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Paul Hagen to D. Downes, 16 May 1942, Frank Papers, box 10, folder 5.

groups including that of Otto Strasser while omitting most socialists. For the future chief Cold Warrior of the United States, that was not an unusual arrangement. But Frank might be compromised in such company so that he objected especially to the composition of the projected emigrant center. Without Strasser, there was in it "already a bunch of right wing connections", including the former Center politician Karl Spiecker. Frank was afraid that "among them, I look like a lonely birch on the other hill". About the future Germany, he had "of course hardly any doubt". He believed that the impending change or revolt would be "a turn to the left by a hundred eighty degrees" which would call for "a streamlined modern bomber" like the Special Section rather than for "the old post chaise" of the OSS Commission. Frank recommended a more proportionate representation of emigrant groups and advised Downes, the representative of Dulles, with some awkwardness, that the "old Social Democrats ... would be of some value ... in an all-round center. More so, German Communists or the Thomas Mann crowd".<sup>41</sup> The agents of Dulles might have been aware of the danger of a left turn in postwar Germany. Possibly, their Commission was designed to obstruct such a potential development.

In his tactical response, Frank accepted the offer of the OSS "wholeheartedly" but insisted on retaining full independence of the other members of the Commission. He wanted to be responsible to nobody but the officials of the United States Government and claimed the privilege of withdrawing from the emigrant center whenever it seemed neces-

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<sup>41</sup>Hagen to Downes, 21 October 1942, Frank Papers, box 10, folder 7.

sary to him. He did not concede to Downes that his objections were only political. The independence of each group required the retention of all authority by the OSS, in his opinion. In inconsistency with his own formula, he also raised the additional obstacle that authority could not be delegated "from one nation to another". Reliance on "borrowed authority" would make "puppets" out of the emigrants who would lose the confidence of German underground groups. Within the OSS formula, Frank would have been an isolated participant with little control over decisions. His criticisms promoted his own scheme. He emphasized that the latter avoided all the drawbacks of the OSS plan. It "always only asked for facilities for the time of our [the German] interregnum".<sup>42</sup> The Hagen formula would also have depended on borrowed authority. But its ultimate objectives would have repaired that initial handicap with a national German underground organization and its united delegation abroad. The response of Frank amounted to a refusal. The OSS formula was not implemented but neither was the Hagen formula. For the nascent OSS, the latter was a good case study in counterintelligence.

Simultaneously with the plan of Dulles, Goldberg requested in August 1943 a list of thirty to forty people willing to go to North Africa for his office. He told Ehrmann that they should be "all of German origin, whether American citizens or not". Ehrmann received no clear information about their prospective task. They would serve the same purpose as "the Italians we sent over" in the course of the North African campaign and the Allied landing in Sicily. The group of German

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

emigrants would be under the authority of the OSS and would probably wear uniforms. In time, they would be "shifted to suitable places nearer to the fortress", that is, Germany. After a visit to North Africa, Goldberg would make more definite decisions.<sup>43</sup> Apparently, nothing became of this project.

After the failure of the ICC and of the Special Section, the AFGF relied on union help for rebuilding its European connections.<sup>44</sup> In a letter to NB emigrants in England, Frank mentioned a council of European emigrants that was formed in connection with the War Relief Board of the CIO and the AFL. The members of the council were asked to present their budgets for their work in occupied and fascist countries. The AFGF intended to "strengthen liaison work from Sweden, Switzerland, and Lisbon" and to reorganize the former NB contacts in Turkey, Africa and Palestine. It also hoped to get \$300 a month for the London bureau of NB.<sup>45</sup> In June 1943, Frank wrote to Max Hoffmann in Lisbon that "we have made preparations here for an extensive support which would reactivate some of our former activities in which you and Emil [Kirschmann] were participating from Mülhausen [Alsace]". Frank wanted to know whether Hoffmann could get "direct contacts into occupied territory in France" and send a courier to a designated address in Switzerland, probably Illner. The latter was recontacted and "has started to work".

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<sup>43</sup>Henry Ehrmann to Paul Hagen, 2 August 1943, Frank Papers.

<sup>44</sup>Paul Hagen to Paul Hacke, Hans Martens and friends, (1945) Frank Papers, box 8, letter H.

<sup>45</sup>Frank to Schöttle, Löwenthal, 29 June 1943, Frank Papers, box 5, Neubeginnen.

He reported that "word from comrades apparently scattered all over Germany is hopeful". The NB leaders Schöttle and Knöringen in London, who had operated border stations in Switzerland before the war, were asked to "help us with Swiss contacts for Illner".<sup>46</sup> Frank also made an effort to recontact NB members in Sweden. He wrote them that "we are against pointless activity but we believe that the time has come ... to take up old contacts and build new ones". Frank made "persistent efforts to get to Sweden or Switzerland" in person. In case of rapid developments on the military front and in Germany, the AFGF wanted to be able to deal with "the problems we have been preparing for all these years".<sup>47</sup> It testifies to the frustration of exile work that these attempts by the AFGF at reactivating its underground contacts were unsuccessful, partly because of emigrant disunity and partly because of Allied unresponsiveness.

The attitude of the GLD towards the AFGF remained consistently negative throughout the war years. The Social Democratic committee avoided the cooperation for which the AFGF was hoping, first in the International Labor Propaganda Committee of the Free World Association and then in the European Council of the AFL-CIO War Relief Board. The idea for this Council had come from the Jewish Labor Committee. Of the German groups, it included the GLD, the AFGF, the ISK, and the SAP. For Frank, "the great progress in this council is that the GLD, the SAP and we are considered on parity. For the first time, the fictitious mandate

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<sup>46</sup>Karl Frank to Max Hoffmann, 25 June 1943, Frank Papers, box 5, Neubeginnen.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

of the GLD has been restricted to a representation of itself and not of the whole movement."<sup>48</sup> But the GLD considered the Council not as a political arrangement, only as a conglomerate of "subsidy recipients". It was "an expedient" for getting money for "the so-called underground movements". The GLD refused to sit on the same table with Frank so that Hertz had to substitute for him.<sup>49</sup> It was bent on neutralizing the AFGF. For this purpose, it accepted the journalistic assistance of Cahan in the Jewish Daily Forward, of the emigrant Hans Gaidies in Gegen den Strom, of the German immigrant Günther Reinhardt in his reports to various government agencies and of the emigrant Ruth Fischer whose Network pointed out Red conspiracies.<sup>50</sup> At the beginning of the war, Frank hoped that a bipartisan investigative committee would put an end to the rumours about him. But the GLD manipulated the committee to his disadvantage. It also raised a public controversy over the alleged influence of Frank in the Office of War Information which had a negative effect on the general reputation of the German socialist emigration in the United States.

With the return of Frank to the United States in January 1940, the JDF and the NVZ had continued the editorial campaign against NB which they had started in 1939. An article of 9 February 1940 by Cahan

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<sup>48</sup> Frank to Schöttle, Löwenthal, 29 June 1943, Frank Papers, box 5, Neubeginnen.

<sup>49</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 29 May 1943, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 145, pp. 595, 596.

<sup>50</sup> Chronologische Tafel des Auftauchens von Verleumdungen, Gerüchten etc. über Paul Hagen, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2; Karl Frank, Memorandum über die Anti-Hagen Kampagne, 1 February 1945, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

was reprinted in the NVZ of February 24. It emphasized the importance of German Social Democracy in the fight against Hitler and described the NB Group as an obstacle in the antifascist work of the Sopade and of the GLD. It reprimanded the Social Democrats for being too indulgent with their NB detractors for the sake of socialist harmony, and insisted that the interests of the antifascist cause required an end to this moderation. Cahan justified his attitude with the argument that Frank had allied himself during the split of the SPA with the enemies of Cahan who "inclined like [Frank] more towards the communists".<sup>51</sup>

A month later, the socialist emigrant Hans Gaidies repeated the NVZ and JDF arguments with an article in the journal Gegen den Strom. In the Czechoslovakian emigration, he had aroused the suspicion of Frank with militant proposals. He offered large sums from supposedly Czechoslovakian sources for such terrorist acts as the planting of a bomb in the Berlin public library. Frank warned the Sopade against Gaidies, who later joined the GLD campaign against NB in the United States. Gaidies claimed that Frank forfeited the Sopade readiness for cooperation with NB in 1934 with conspiratorial activities against the exile executive. According to him, Frank had arrogated the name of New Beginning for his group from the original movement which he had succeeded in splitting in 1935. Besides this charge of political imposition, the article discredited Frank by repeating the previous imputations of embezzlement, kidnapping, bribery and sexual improprieties and warned the American labor

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<sup>51</sup>Neue Volkszeitung, 24 February 1940.



organizations against throwing their "money into the ocean" with contributions to NB.<sup>52</sup> These polemics were reprinted in the JDF of May 1940. Simultaneously, rumours spread in New York labor circles that Frank was a spy, presumably either a communist or a National Socialist spy according to preference. Even Staudinger repeated this potentially harmful accusation.<sup>53</sup> Katz and Stampfer visited Pittsburgh where both the GLD and the AFGF had local supporters and repeated the list of accusations against Frank there.

Under these circumstances, Frank applied for a bipartisan socialist committee to investigate the charges against him and to issue a binding statement. But this attempt at clearing his political and personal record coincided almost with the German invasion of France, with the French defeat and the resulting refugee crisis. The GLD dragged out the negotiations for constituting the committee until the beginning of October 1940. Then, five meetings took place between October 2 and November 6 at the faculty club of Columbia University. Besides the chairman, the committee was equally divided between the adherents of the two sides. Katz, Brauer, and the Jewish labor lawyer, Karlin, appeared for the GLD; Buttinger, the German emigrant lawyer Max Hirschberg, and the socialist John Herling, the husband of Mary Fox, for the AFGF. As witnesses appeared Frank, Mary Fox, Hertz and Ehrmann for the AFGF, and Gaidies and David Shub, a JDF writer, for the GLD. Seger and Stampfer

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<sup>52</sup>Gegen den Strom, March 1940, pp. 8-13.

<sup>53</sup>Notes, Staudinger Komplex, 10 September 1943, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

refused to testify. While Brauer was relatively moderate, the task of prosecution fell mainly to Katz.<sup>54</sup>

The general attitude of the latter was somewhat curious for a lawyer. He pretended that the AFGF had to disprove the charges against Frank. The membership of Frank in the SPD was positively established.<sup>55</sup> Katz maintained that Frank could still have retained his membership in the KPD so that he would be a double agent. In order to escape the political complications of the investigation, the first chairman, who was a GLD sponsor, resigned from the committee. The second chairman requested an expansion of the committee in order to be relieved of his embarrassing position of sole arbitrator. That would have dragged out the investigation even further beginning with the negotiations about additional members and continuing with a repetition of the previously introduced evidence. The length of the investigation alone would have reflected negatively on Frank while even an expanded committee could not guarantee a fair outcome. Eventually, the representatives of Frank proposed that the investigation be terminated with an indirectly exonerating statement, especially since the chairman intimated plans for a trip abroad. After further procrastination during the rescue period, the NVZ responded with an article of 26 May 1941 entitled "A leader un-masks himself". It implied that the investigation was terminated because Frank feared it would substantiate the GLD charges. The NVZ re-

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<sup>54</sup>Report of the Commission investigating the charges against Paul Hagen, November 1940, 316 pages, Sammlung Karl Frank, Vol. F 220/1, Institut für Zeitgeschichte.

<sup>55</sup>Paul Hagen to the chairman of the Investigation Committee, 13 pages, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

ceived a series of counter-declarations from Buttinger, Hertz, Adler and others, but refused to print any of them, including the reply by the former secretary of the Socialist International.<sup>56</sup> The NVZ article appeared when the rescue period was over for the GLD so that the latter no longer needed to exercise any reluctant restraint. It is interesting to note that after the war Katz became eventually the president of the second chamber of the German constitutional court, the equivalent of the United States Supreme Court.

The attack on an individual rather than a rival group was an effective tactic in the emigration where a political leader could not be replaced. Katz practiced it to perfection. He wrote to Ollenhauer that Frank "is nothing else than an adventurer without conviction or conscience. In old communist fashion, he is intent on building a personal organization and apparatus for himself". In America, it was "not too difficult" to raise money for somebody who was "skillful and unscrupulous" enough to "fabricate the stories that Americans like to hear". Katz believed that Frank "pursued with undaunted determination the disruption of the old exiled movement in order to build his own apparatus all the larger from the pieces". The GLD was "more than ever determined to make an end to the fraudulent enterprise that centers around his person". If the GLD followed the wishes of the Sopade for moderation, Katz reasoned, it would only help the latter in "digging your own grave".<sup>57</sup> But the AFGF only wanted the same kind of cooperation with the official

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<sup>56</sup> Declaration on the case of Paul Hagen by Dr. Paul Hertz, 9 pages, received from Mrs. Anna Frank, March 1973.

<sup>57</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 1 September 1941, EK Mappe 44.

Social Democrats that existed in England. It did not engage in recrimination against the GLD even after the abandonment of minimal restraint by the Labor Delegation in the summer of 1941. For this attitude, Katz had his own interpretation: "[Frank's] new tactic consists in not attacking us but rather in pleading for good weather. He implores us through middle men of all kinds to desist from our 'fratricidal' attacks. This is naturally only a new trick of his."<sup>58</sup>

During the time of the rescue already, Katz had vowed that "we have to break Hagen before it will be too late".<sup>59</sup> By the summer of 1941, he was afraid that it was already too late. He had "the feeling that we all made a big mistake in the past in dealing with this case. ... We should have moved against him much earlier and much more energetically. He would then probably not have become as influential and financially as strong as it is now, unfortunately, the case."<sup>60</sup> Contrary to the imagination of Katz, the AFGF was then already very limited in its resources and relied mainly on the liberal constituency of its own organization. In taking on the AFGF, the GLD confronted a part of the neo-progressive American establishment which it was incapable of discrediting or of dissociating from the NB emigrants. The anti-NB campaign reflected also on the GLD and limited its chances of cooperating with government agencies as much as it did those of the AFGF. The

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Memorandum über die Anti-Hagen Kampagne, 1 February 1945, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

<sup>60</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 1 September 1941, EK Mappe 44.

result was a general neutralization of the German socialist emigration in the United States.

When the period of rescue was over, the GLD intervened with the ICC and the OSS. Katz, Grzesinsky and Brauer complained to the Norwegian ambassador in Washington about his sponsorship of the AFGF pamphlet "Norway does not yield". They described the AFGF as a semi-communist organization led by the notorious communist, Frank. The ambassador informed the Norwegian members of the ICC about this GLD intervention. Held similarly attacked the AFGF at the farewell dinner for Stampfer before the trip to England. Hedwig Wachenheim, a member of the GLD, considered this as one of the latest attempts to eliminate the NB Group.<sup>61</sup> The GLD also sent a number of anti-NB reports to the Office of the Coordinator of Information. Goldberg inquired back to Frank about the charges of kidnapping and of disputed illegal trips into National Socialist Germany, of which the latest had taken place in December 1938. Frank sent him a list of available witnesses but Goldberg took his distance from the ICC for fear of getting involved in interemigrant rivalries.

Simultaneously, the GLD provided newspapers and journals that published Frank articles with derogatory information. Stampfer attacked Kingdon for defending the record of Frank during the Weimar Republic. He ridiculed him for discovering "the KPD as an academy for democracy".<sup>62</sup> Adler thought that he had never read a "more repulsive" article by

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<sup>61</sup>Memorandum uber die Anti-Hagen Kampagne, 1 February 1945, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

<sup>62</sup>Neue Volkszeitung, 15 August 1942.

Stampfer. He deplored that the latter "partook personally in the despicable personal campaign of denunciation which the NVZ has unwittingly made one of its chief tasks". Considering Stampfer's renegade attitude towards socialism, he objected to his exclusive thinking in bourgeois democratic categories and to reevaluating the time of socialist promise in the 1920's in these belated terms.<sup>63</sup> In connection with the same incident, Adler told Seger that he considered it "hopeless to discuss with you the behaviour of the NVZ in the case of Paul Hagen". He had "always hoped that you redeemed enough of your better past to dissociate yourself from the methods of your editorial colleague [Katz]".<sup>64</sup> In frustration over his setbacks, Frank discussed with Hertz the possibility of going to Canada, possibly on a lecture tour, before returning to New York for a new start in emigrant politics.

The GLD continued its anti-NB efforts with the American war information and intelligence agencies in 1942 and 1943. The initiative by Grzesinsky while he was an expert on the German emigration on the Foreign Nationalities Board of the OSS has already been discussed. One of his reports on Frank was given to the Jewish Labor Committee as a government report.<sup>65</sup> Staudinger also warned the OSS official Dorn against the AFGF.<sup>66</sup> The OSS eventually ordered an investigation of

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<sup>63</sup> Friedrich Adler to Friedrich Stampfer, 31 August 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 40.

<sup>64</sup> Friedrich Adler to Gerhard Seger, 26 September 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 40.

<sup>65</sup> Memorandum uber die Anti-Hagen Kampagne, 1 February 1945, Frank Papers.

<sup>66</sup> Notes on Staudinger Komplex, 10 September 1943, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

Frank and several of his associates. The inquiries to which they were subjected dealt with the standard GLD accusations about the use of pseudonyms by Frank, his supposed double membership in the SPD and the KPD and the conspiratorial nature of the NB Group.

The most irrational diatribe of the GLD was directed against the alleged influence of Frank in the Office of War Information. The Social Democratic committee derived its fears from a few harmless circumstances. Elmer Davis had written the preface to Frank's book "Germany after Hitler" before becoming director of the OWI. This association made Frank actually ineligible for an OWI job. Eliasberg and Taurer had been transferred from the prewar COI to the OWI. James Warburg, the cousin of Ingrid Warburg, became the head of the Overseas Branch of the OWI in New York. His association with Shortwave Research Inc. was interpreted as a partiality for NB. Actually, the extreme antagonism between the GLD and NB and the bad political behaviour of the Social Democratic committee were reasons enough to exclude their members from the intelligence agencies. Eliasberg and Taurer were special cases. They were needed as specialists in intelligence work because they had spent several years in German underground work and in German prisons before their emigration. The OWI commissioned a study of the underground movement from them which appeared in 1943 as "The silent War" with a foreword by Reinhold Niebuhr. Several Social Democratic refugees who had been associated with the Sopade but not with the GLD got low paying clerical OWI jobs. Seger failed to get an important job with the OWI. He was disappointed when he was sidetracked to Minnesota in a curious mission against a chain of unpatriotic German American newspapers. He inter-

vened repeatedly with Davis and prided himself in March 1943 in Pittsburgh with his latest intervention with the OWI director. He had energetically demanded a stop to any collaboration with the friends of Frank.

In order to counteract this alleged relationship, the GLD enlisted especially the services of Günther Reinhardt. By then, the latter was already an experienced informer. He was from Heidelberg where he spent his youth and college years. He left Germany before the takeover by Hitler and eventually came to the United States to rejoin his Jewish mother. From 1934 to 1935, he was an investigator for the Dickstein-McCormick Committee, that is, for the House Un-American Affairs Committee. Then, he was employed for a while by the American Jewish Committee which fired him for sending reports about AJC officials to government agencies. According to himself, Reinhardt worked for the FBI from 1935 to 1936. During his two years with the New York Daily News from 1939 to 1940, he prided himself about having a dossier about every German emigrant in New York. The Daily News fired him for passing on information to Walter Winchell of the Daily Mirror. During the war years, Reinhardt worked occasionally for the Alien Department of the New York police and became an investigator for the Dies Committee, the successor of the Dickstein-McCormick Committee. He specialized in reports about the German emigration in Mexico which was predominantly communist, about "communist" Jewish organizations in the United States, and especially about emigrant organizations like the AFGF. Among his one hundred sixty-seven reports were several about the OWI and Frank. Apparently, Reinhardt telephoned almost daily with Katz in New York.<sup>67</sup>



In March 1943, Reinhardt finished his long report about the number of leftist European emigrants and the alleged influence of Frank in the OWI. He forwarded it to seven government agencies like the FBI, the OSS, and the Civil Service Commission. The report to the OSS was accompanied by a letter from Grzesinsky which termed Reinhardt as a "neutral" source. In the tabulation of the latter, ten out of sixteen radio script writers of the OWI had past communist or radical affiliations. The same percentage of "key people ... owe their job and allegiance to an alien ex-communist and exconvict", that is, Frank. Supposedly, the head of the German Department, Franz Höllering, rejected all applications by "politically reliable and professionally competent German Americans" and depended on the approval of Frank and his OWI friends. Reinhardt also claimed that seven of the nineteen stenographers and typists in the German Department were placed there through the influence of Frank. According to him, fifty-six out of sixty-four persons employed in the German Department were aliens. He concluded that Frank "practically controls the personnel and the writing policies of the German Department".<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Vorläufige Feststellungen über Günther Reinhardt, 29 September 1943, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2; also: ibid., Nachtrag zum Material über Günther Reinhardt; 30 September 1943; Joseph Roos, Memorandum über Günther Reinhardt, Nachlass Hertz, reel 33; Merkblatt über einige Deutsche und andere Mitarbeiter von Rex Stout, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2; Günther Reinhardt, Dies Investigator und Freund von Katz, Seger, Grzesinsky, 30 pages, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

<sup>68</sup>Günther Reinhardt, Dies Investigator, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2; also: Günther Reinhardt, Memorandum on the influence of Paul Hagen in the Office of War Information, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 1; Henry Ehrmann to Paul Hagen, 2 August 1943, Frank Papers; Paul Hagen, Die OWI Denkschrift, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 1.

Reinhardt claimed that Warburg, the head of the Overseas Branch of the OWI, colluded with Frank in hiring European refugees through Shortwave, Inc. He received help from the Department of Patriotic Intelligence of the Constitutional Educational League in New York which claimed in its Factogram of September 1943 that Shortwave Research "approved and recommended hundreds of European refugees for appointment to the government payroll" and that three hundred sixty of them were given jobs with the OWI.<sup>69</sup> Roos thought that "Reinhardt and his SP [SPD] friends want to get a criminal angle on him [Frank] to convict him".<sup>70</sup> According to Rosenfeld, Seger was also determined to get Frank into prison. Economizing Southern Democrats and right wing Republicans in Congress used the available reports on the OWI and on Frank as arguments in the discussion over the OWI budget.<sup>71</sup> A number of newspapers like the Hearst chain printed excerpts from the Congressional Record about Frank, Davis, Warburg, and others. As a result of his work, Reinhardt claimed that Frank topped the secret deportation list of Senator Dies.

The accusations by Reinhardt had little factual basis. The Civil Service Commission called the main report slanderous and refused to reinvestigate the OWI employees in question, even though the FBI re-

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<sup>69</sup> Department of Patriotic Intelligence of the Constitutional Educational League in New York, Factogram, 10 September 1943, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

<sup>70</sup> Joseph Roos to Paul Hertz, Paul Hagen, 19 October 1943, Nachlass Hertz, reel 33.

<sup>71</sup> Memorandum über die Anti-Hagen Kampagne, 1 February 1945, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

opened its investigation. The implicated OWI employees credibly refuted the charges against them. Höllering assumed that the government took the accusations not very seriously since all the officials in question were still employed. He obviously was not interested in hiring any GLD people. But he did not need Frank for his establishment in the United States. He had been able to emigrate early to America because of his work as a foreign correspondent in New York for the Ullstein Publishing House of Berlin. He was not hired by Warburg but by another official of the COI for his distinguished record as a journalist and editor of antifascist papers. These had not been communist papers. Höllering stated that he had never been a member of the KPD. He had resigned his editorship of the Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung, which he described as a working class Life Magazine, in 1928 when the KPD acquired an interest in the paper that threatened his editorial independence. He defined the Berliner Zeitung am Mittag, of which he had been the editor in chief, as a popular democratic paper. He founded the Prager Mittag as the first antifascist daily of the German emigration. He served as its editor in chief until June 1934 when he left for the United States. This daily was owned by politically independent businessmen and subsidized by the President of Czechoslovakia, Thomas G. Mazaryk. Höllering rejected categorically the idea that Frank had anything to do with his selection of OWI employees. His participation in the ICC had not been based on personal relations with Frank. He hired people who did not know Frank or were hostile to him. He discussed the professional qualifications of all the OWI employees he had hired. None of them was an NB emigrant. Eliasberg and Taurer preceded

him at the Office of the Coordinator and at the OWI. He had never met them before.<sup>72</sup>

Warburg maintained that he had personally nothing to do with selecting the staff of the German section of the OWI. He had not been directly involved in Shortwave Research, Inc. from where some OWI employees were recruited. He had met Frank only once before entering government service and once during his work with the COI in early 1942. At that time, Frank had suggested that the Office of the COI allow his organization to broadcast to Germany. Warburg had declined this request as contrary to COI policy which did not accord radio time "to any of the various groups of expatriates".<sup>73</sup>

A fair number of refugees were employed in the German section of the OWI. The latter could not help employing them since a full command of German was indispensable for radio propaganda into Germany. Eleven identifiable German socialist emigrants appear on the OWI list. Most of them were women, some of them wives of socialist emigrants. They held mostly clerical jobs for \$1,440 to \$2,000 a year. Most of them had been affiliated with the Sopade, one with the ISK, one with the KPO and one of them was the daughter of a NB sympathizer. The NB members Eliasberg, Taurer, and Friedrich Schmidt were script writers at \$3,800 a year. The notion of socialist emigrant influence in the OWI is incorrect. It can not be used to dispell the notion of a generally insignificant social-

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<sup>72</sup> Franz Höllering to David F. Seiferheld, 12 June 1944, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

<sup>73</sup> James P. Warburg to David F. Seiferheld, 7 June 1944, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

ist emigration in the United States.<sup>74</sup>

The idea that a single emigrant leader like Frank could have controlled the propaganda of the German section of the OWI from the outside was crazy. The various sections of the OWI were subject to a strict system of broadcast control. As deputy director for propaganda policy, Warburg was responsible for drafting all policy directives. Then, they had to be approved by the director of the OWI and by representatives of the State Department and of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. All scripts were checked by the Broadcast Control Division before being issued to the radio announcers. Also, the latter were monitored so that they could not depart from the prepared scripts.<sup>75</sup>

The legend of vast NB influence in the OWI was in ludicrous contrast to the difficulties, frustrations and failures of the AFGF. The latter made well organized antifascist efforts which fell victim to emigrant obstruction and government insensitivity. The same circumstances prevailed during the second half of the war. In this period, from 1943 to 1945, the three major German socialist emigrant groups, the second German American Popular Front, the GLD, and the AFGF made intensive plans for German postwar reconstruction.

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<sup>74</sup>Memorandum on the statement about Paul Hagen in the Günther Reinhardt report, 26 June 1944, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

<sup>75</sup>Warburg to Seiferheld, 7 June 1944, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 2.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SECOND GERMAN AMERICAN POPULAR FRONT, 1942 TO 1945

The German attack on Russia gave rise to the second Popular Front with its German American component. Since this attack was unexpected it took some time to revive the Popular Front and to overcome the disillusionment over the Russian diplomacy of 1939. The military emergency of Russia made her defense a legitimate concern even for non-socialists. As a member of the United Nations, the Soviet Union was in alliance with the West. The propaganda of the second Popular Front fit even into the context of American foreign policy. German American support of the war became a serious concern of the American government which did not mind the efforts of the Popular Front to achieve it. For the German American front, the cultural approach was outdated but that did not make it easier to achieve the desired ethnic and emigrant unity. This second movement was of an even more composite nature than the first. The German American Emergency Conference (GAEC) was centered in New York, the German American Anti-Axis League (GAAAL) in Chicago. The German American trade unionists in New York, and some of their leaders, had ambitions of their own. They formed the independent Victory Committee of the German American Trade Unions (VC-GATU). The paper of the GAEC was the German American which granted separate space to the other two organizations. The DAKV still existed and was asso-

ciated with the GAEC but it remained in the background.

The second Popular Front cooperated eagerly with the government. The Office of War Information wanted to unite all German American organizations, including the Popular Front, in the United Americans of German Descent (UAGD). After the government lost interest and the GLD dropped out, the Popular Front and the conservatives remained the uneasy partners of the UAGD that could not even agree on staging a national convention. One of the reasons for this failure was the change in purpose of the Popular Front. With Russian victory all but certain, the latter became concerned with winning the peace. It could not gain conservative support for its plans of postwar reconstruction so that the UAGD became a liability. In this situation, Gustav Faber, the main leader of the trade unionists, tried to circumvent the UAGD with a new organization. The Independent National Committee of German Americans for the Re-election of FDR (INC) appeared to have only a temporary function. But after the elections, it continued as the German American National Committee. As with the other socialist groups, reorganization served the purpose of planning for reconstruction.

This planning was difficult even among various Popular Front elements. Their national and international concerns had to be often adjusted. The Popular Front tried hard to harmonize its German and Russian loyalties, especially towards the end of the war. Its main hope was that the Soviet Union as a member of a peacetime United Nations would follow its international socialist conscience and work for a positive treatment of Germany. In this frame of mind, the Popular Front supported the decisions of the conferences of Teheran, Yalta and

Potsdam. When German interests suffered, it had recourse to the argument that the German people had forfeited Allied consideration. It had always maintained that a revolution against Hitler was crucial for the postwar fate of Germany. If it occurred, German and Russian postwar interests could harmonize within an internationalist approach. Otherwise, German interests would have to concede precedence to Russian interests. The GAAAL nearly fell victim to these conflicting nationalist and internationalist tendencies. But its pro-German wing prevailed.

The Popular Front could not solve the problem of emigrant unity. The UAGD nearly brought all emigrants together. But anti-communism was the main reason for the GLD eventually to drop out of the government sponsored coalition. After that, some GLD members considered momentarily a socialist concentration. But the Labor Delegation pursued its own isolationist re-organization which determined and limited its plans for reconstruction as the next chapter will discuss.

The GAEC was formed on March 1st, 1942.<sup>1</sup> Its monthly paper was inaugurated two months later. For membership, the Emergency Conference turned to the constituent organizations of the DAKV, the secondary labor organizations, which were then doubly represented in the Popular Front. The GAEC eventually built up a semblance of a national organization with branches in San Francisco since April 1943, in Cleveland since June 1943, in New Jersey since July 1943 and in Philadelphia since December 1943.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>New York Public Library, The German American, New York, 1 May 1942 to date, sponsored by the German American Emergency Conference, edited by Rudolf Kohler and Kurt Rosenfeld, July 1942, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>The German American, April 1943, p. 12; June 1943, p. 3; July 1943, p. 12; December 1943, p. 12.



The GLD was naturally hostile to the purpose of the GAEC. Katz considered Russia at first as a secondary theater of war and hoped that American assistance to the Soviet Union would be kept at a minimum. Competition for the fraternal organizations between the Popular Front and the Social Democrats continued as before during the first Popular Front. They both usually sent speakers to the national conventions of the fraternal organizations, especially the Workmen's Benefit Fund. The leader of the GAEC was the centrist emigrant, Rosenfeld. Heym had enlisted in the American army and Hall had vanished from the scene. The latter probably was too compromised from his first Popular Front activities. After the death of Rosenfeld in October 1943, the native centrist Sattler became more prominent again. The communist emigrants did not seek the limelight as in the first Popular Front.

The GAAAL grew out of the Workmen's Benefit Fund. This circumscribed the initiative of Kruse who was a functionary of the AKStK in Chicago. He and his group used the editorials in the AKStK journal Solidarity for ideological discussions in the Chicago branches in order to confront the "social pacifist and other prejudices" in the secondary labor organizations. According to Kruse, "the organizational forms followed soon after".<sup>3</sup> On February 1st, the AKStK called a loyalty rally in the Social Turner Hall on Belmont Avenue, to which it invited representatives of the fraternal organizations. A continuation committee organized similar gatherings in other parts of the city which

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., May 1943, p. 2.

eventually led to a comprehensive delegate conference on June 28.<sup>4</sup> In between, the League organizers tried to benefit from a conference for ethnic unity to which Mayor Kelly invited representatives of all German American organizations on February 13.<sup>5</sup> But the non-labor societies were not interested in the Popular Front so that the GAAAL was formed without them. Rosenfeld attended the constitutional conference of June 28. Its main organizers were Kruse, Jaeger and Schrötter, the organizer of the first Chicago Popular Front. It consisted of thirty-three delegates from "labor, fraternal, cultural, sports, musical and other organizations" representing in Popular Front perspective approximately one hundred thirty thousand German Americans. Besides the AKStK, the Native Friends and the Workmen's Choirs, a number of CIO locals were represented by their German American members. They included the Automobile, Aircraft, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America and the United Electrical, Radio Workers' and Machinists' Union. This rather leftist membership was complete with German American members of the International Workers Order and of the German American Workers' Club (Arbeiterklub) of Milwaukee. Kruse was elected secretary and Jaeger chairman of the GAAAL. Schrötter remained more in the background with maintaining contacts with community groups like the Office of Civilian Defense and the YMCA.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Chicago Historical Society, "Where do you stand?", pamphlet published by the German American Anti-Axis League, (summer 1942); also German American, June 1942, p. 2; July 1942, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup>German American, January 1943, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>German American Anti-Axis League, "Where do you stand?".

Unlike the first Chicago Popular Front, the GAAAL remained of local importance. Its activities were reported in the German American under the regular section of "News and Views from Chicago". It tried to win local acceptance by participating in war related community and ethnic programs. Thereby, it hoped to win the support of non-labor German Americans. At the United Nations Parade for the demonstration of ethnic unity, the GAAAL was the only German American group to participate with a float, despite the sponsorship of the event by City Hall.<sup>7</sup> The League was also the only German organization to commemorate publicly the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor. This was done in a Catholic high school where a group from the Veterans of Foreign Wars presented the colours.<sup>8</sup> The GAAAL also participated in the North Side Win the War Committee which was co-sponsored by the OCD and the YMCA. Kruse functioned as program chairman.<sup>9</sup>

But these activities did not impress the conservative German Americans. An issue that involved the latter more directly was the yearly German Day celebration. By 1943, the GAAAL claimed to have made some progress in the way the latter was organized. At its insistence, government speakers were invited and the League was also allowed to help stage a patriotic rally.<sup>10</sup> In December, the GAAAL participated in the German American Committee for an Allied Nations victory. The latter

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<sup>7</sup> German American, January 1943, p. 3; 1 May 1943, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., December 1942, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., November 1942, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 1 June 1943, p. 2.

consisted of a group of progressive German American intellectuals, professors and supposedly businessmen. It included the author Hans Leo Reich. Schrötter represented the GAAAL in the Committee.<sup>11</sup>

The GLD and its ethnic arm, the GACD, soon challenged the GAAAL, despite the circumspection of the latter. AKStK representatives substituted for the League in sponsoring a mass meeting for pro-administration candidates in the mid-term state elections of 1942 which the Republican Party won. The other sponsors were the GACD and the Independent Voters' League. In the view of Kruse, this joint sponsorship successfully demonstrated German American unity. But guest speaker Seger, from the GLD, gave an interview to the Chicago Daily Sun in which he called Kruse a communist and the GAAAL a communist affair.<sup>12</sup> In this way, the GLD reaffirmed Social Democratic interest in the AKStK, and the other secondary labor organizations.

The Victory Committee of the German American trade unionists was organized by immigrants like Faber and Emil Romberg. As a sixteen year old, Faber had joined the youth group of the Deutsche Metallarbeiter Verband (German Metalworkers' Union). Later, he became a functionary of that union. As a mechanic in shipbuilding, he worked in the dockyards of Wilhemshaven, Kiel and Hamburg where the uprisings of 1918 started. In 1924, he immigrated to the United States where he co-founded the transport workers union. He became the treasurer of this union

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., January 1944, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., December 1942, p. 12.

which had one hundred fifty thousand members in the 1940's.<sup>13</sup> Romberg was born in 1901 in the Ruhr area. As a labor functionary, he was president of the Jungsozialisten (Young Socialists) in Northern and Western Germany and the secretary of the free metalworkers' union of the Rhineland. In 1927, he went to the United States where he joined the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Besides the VC-GATU, he also represented the Victory Committees of the German American Divisions of the Red Cross and of the National War Fund.<sup>14</sup>

The VC-GATU was a very active Popular Front element. A section of each issue of the German American was reserved for it under the heading "Union Spotlight". Its labor conferences were synchronized with those of the GAAAL. Together, they advocated a greater war effort in productivity, exposing fascist agents and saboteurs and the protection of "loyal German Americans" against discrimination from often German American employers. The first Labor Conference of Greater New York took place in January 1943.<sup>15</sup> The simultaneous GAAAL conference of trade union delegates in Chicago hoped "to secure the maximum mobilization of tens of thousands of German American workers". The support of the German underground movement also served as a psychological rallying point as did the emphasis on the anti-labor policies of the Third Reich. In appeals to the German workers, the conference felt a "great responsibility to assure a people's victory ... the world over". The trade

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., July 1944, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., December 1944.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., December 1942, p. 12; January 1943, p. 1.

unionists also wanted to promote socialism at home. R. J. Thomas, the president of the United Autoworkers, which was then part of the CIO, sent a letter of support to the New York Labor Conference. The secretary of the Greater New York Industrial Council of the CIO addressed the conference. The latter was attended by union delegates so that it is difficult to assess the numerical strength of the VC-GATU.

The first New York Labor Conference adopted a new structure for the VC-GATU and a plan for expansion. Faber became the secretary of the Committee. Specific victory committees were to be established in each union local, branch, shop or office that employed a sufficient number of German Americans. Each VC member was to receive a contribution card and pay monthly dues of 25¢. Of the six thousand members of Local 1 of the Bakers' Union, for example, two thousand were German American. But only fifty of these joined the VC of this local which was established with the consent of its officials. The VC of Local 1 did not let a meeting of the local pass without an appeal for the Popular Front.<sup>16</sup> In the German American neighborhood of Yorkville on the East side of Central Park, the trade unionists established the United Yorkville for Victory Committee, together with some merchants of 86th Street. Its activities in that basically conservative area were reported in the German American under the heading "It happened in Yorkville".<sup>17</sup>

The second New York Labor Conference followed in March 1943. According to the German American, representatives from eighteen CIO

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., May 1943, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., November 1942, p. 12.

and sixteen AFL affiliated union locals were present. The third conference took place in December 1943. It was welcomed by letters from Wendell Willkie, Mayor LaGuardia and Victor F. Ridder, the conservative publisher of the New York Staatszeitung who was also involved in forming a national organization of German Americans. It restated the goal of establishing victory committees in all locals with a large German American membership and considered it important to circulate the German American "as a means of mobilizing" all German American workers. Faber recommended the formation of an interethnic council of victory committees. In this context, the Greek American Labor Conference and a National Council of Hungarian Trade Unionists were mentioned.<sup>18</sup>

These conferences and the activities of the GAEC were timed to influence the preparation of a national convention of the United Americans of German Descent. The latter was promoted by the Foreign Language Division of the OWI whose head was Alan Cranston, the later Democratic Senator from California. The job of the Foreign Language Division was to improve, maintain or establish unity among the various ethnic groups in order to insure their full support of the war. The Division had a Press Section and a Radio Section to supply war information to the ethnic media. It could also impose its information by pressure, for example, by threatening to recommend revocation of the second class postage status of a specific newspaper. In general, its methods were more discrete, if not always successful. In the field of the ethnic organizations, the Foreign Language Division liked the device of uniting

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., December 1943, p. 3; January 1944, p. 9.

all those within a certain ethnic group which, in the German American case, was almost impossible. The Popular Front rejoiced over such an idea but its single-minded enthusiasm eventually embarrassed the OWI which was already a favorite target of conservative and isolationist Congressmen. The Social Democrats would have liked to associate with conservative organizations but they had a hard time accommodating themselves to leftist groups which they considered communist. The most valuable groups were the conservative societies. They represented the majority of the German Americans and were not a potential hazard to the image of the OWI.

The attitude of the American government towards the emigrants had changed considerably after December 1941. The government knew that it could not clearly distinguish between emigrant and ethnic groups since several of the latter were led by socialist emigrants. Before Pearl Harbor, the State Department resented the opposition to its official policy of neutrality by socialist and Social Democratic emigrants. Its policy statement of 10 December 1941 regarding "free movements in the United States" was still ambiguous. It explained that "in general, the government of the United States does not favor 'free movements' ... which carry on activities contrary to the established policies, domestic or foreign". This referred to interventionism as well as socialism. The statement elaborated that the State Department "has taken cognizance of the existence of a number of committees ... but has not extended any form of recognition to them, formal or informal". It was mainly concerned with the potential division of "allegiance of any group of American residents between the United States and foreign governments, in



existence or in prospect", that is, exile governments. It preferred that "the governing committees of such [free] movements be composed of citizens of the foreign country". It disapproved of "any attempt to enlist the support of American citizens of like racial background". The State Department conceded, however, that "in harmony with the basic principles of liberty, the people of the United States do have a sympathetic interest in movements by aliens in this country who desire to liberate their countries from Axis domination". It would have preferred that most German emigrants were not socialists, but American sponsorship of their groups had always been tolerated.<sup>19</sup>

After Pearl Harbor, the government came to view antifascist, socialist emigrants as helpful in rallying ethnic support for the American war effort. A memorandum of June 1942 from the White House to the Foreign Language Division of the OWI contained an interesting initiative. It was written by Gabriel Lorenz of the Office of Emergency Management. An accompanying questionnaire was designed "to explore, for the first time -- and fully -- the significance of Free movements, their place in the prosecution of the war and the molding of the peace". The memorandum proposed that the government intervene in the organization of the Free movements and streamline them into efficient factors of the morale front. The questionnaire was to establish "rating for recognition".

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<sup>19</sup> Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, Deutschsprachige Presse in den USA, 1941-1945, collected by the author from the State Department Central Files in the National Archives in Washington, and from the files of the Office of War Information at the National Records Center in Suitland, Maryland, pp. 1, 2: Department of State, Policy regarding "Free Movements" in the United States, 10 December 1941.

Lorenz was aware of "the mushroom growth" of organizations for "nationalism, socialism or just propaganda purposes". There were "many duplications ... and organizations within organizations" which required understanding of inter-group antagonisms and intricate front arrangements. The questionnaire wanted to take stock and find out "who is who?" as a basis for government intervention.<sup>20</sup>

Lorenz thought that "taken collectively, these movements are as yet an untapped reservoir of energy and resources which should, and can, be harnessed to the war effort". It was important to achieve "UNITY ... in one common effort for victory". He believed that their "potentialities [are] enormous" for the homefront, the Victory-front, that is, the continental underground front, and for the front of corresponding language groups in other countries, mainly Latin America. The role of these Free movements in "building up the morale on the home front, its influence on the production line among the millions of workers which these organizations represent" seemed obvious. But Lorenz considered "the repercussions on the V-front in Europe and Asia ... even more important". The main reason for this attitude was that nobody conceived yet of an Allied invasion of the continent and of the total occupation of the Axis countries.

In this context, the emigration was to be used to activize the underground movement. By consolidating the free movements in the United States, the underground groups could be united abroad. Lorenz

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-5, Executive Office of the President, Office for Emergency Management, Gabriel Lorenz to Alan Cranston, 30 June 1942, Rating for Recognition, questionnaire form for Free Movements.

did not realize that this had already partially happened in the catharsis of underground existence. In a more negative view, the illegal groups had to be saved from the ideological differences in the Free movements in America. It was "obvious that unity here would beget a united front abroad and thus eliminate the hazard which may come to the underground movement from that disunity which has so effectively played into the Nazi divide-and-conquer tactics". For the sake of the underground movement, the government should bring harmony to the Free movements in the United States since "every united front we create here in the ranks of the Free movements is a victory scored on the morale front in Europe". The V-front was "a real second front and, unlike a military front which can be defeated and dispersed, it remains a permanent stronghold which grows stronger with every setback and every execution, and grows wiser with every mistake". It would "grow bigger in size and scope with every message of unity from the new world". If a similar strategy could be applied to the ethnic communities of Latin America it would result in "unlimited horizons of support for our war effort". A combination of all three fronts would have an enormous impact: "by good organization and a keen sense of international strategy, we have in our Free movements a potential for converting mass Fifth Columns into mass Columns for Democracy."

In this sense, the memorandum was "not only probative but creative". The government should enter this "strange magnetic field of freedom" and attract the Free movements to it so that they "emancipate themselves from their limited objectives to the limitless horizons with which we must look upon the present struggle". In an atomic way,

Lorenz viewed the Free movements and their underground and ethnic tandems as pieces of a global world structure. He believed that

sooner or later, we will have to separate once and for all time the New Free World from the Nazi New World Order in a political fission which is final and irrevocable. ... this division must be made so that when the broken world is pieced together again it will not be of different pieces but all of one piece, victory for Freedom.<sup>21</sup>

The abstract enthusiasm of this memorandum did not lead very far. The policy of unconditional surrender changed this assessment of the Free movements. From then on, the American government was only interested in ethnic unity at home.

A unification of the German American organizations in favor of the war was a priority of the Foreign Language Division of the OWI. The latter knew that the ethnic organizations under German emigrant leadership had already the proper attitude. The question was whether they would cooperate in bringing the conservative organizations into the same fold. The Division was not fully aware of the potential difficulties of an association between leftist and conservative German Americans. It believed that the patriotic issue of the war should override whatever alienations there could be. Under the circumstances, it considered it best to initiate the project with George N. Shuster, the president of Hunter College in New York City and the close friend of Brüning whose patriotism did not let him speak out against the Third Reich during wartime. Shortly after the establishment of the OWI in the summer of 1942, a representative of the Foreign Language Division discussed "the entire German American situation" with Shuster. The

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

latter agreed to draft a German American manifesto which could be used as an appeal to German American organizations for joining in a national federation and demonstrating their loyalty in a national conference in the fall of 1942.<sup>22</sup> The favorite name of German American Congress for Democracy was already preempted by the Social Democrats so that the prospective federation was named the United Americans of German Descent (UAGD). This was a derivation of the Loyal Americans of German Descent, a group organized by Shuster.

The initial recruitment went smoothly. Shuster was to contact a group of original signers of the manifesto which included the organization leaders with whom Rutz, the chief of the German Desk of the Foreign Language Division, corresponded, himself, in September 1942. There was first the trio of the Popular Front: Sattler as the national secretary of the AKStK, Böhnheim as the secretary of the GAEC, and Rosenfeld as the chairman of the DAKV. The Social Democrats had fewer organizations from which to send representatives. Seger participated as a leader of the GACD. Manfred George as the editor of the Aufbau represented the German Jewish immigration. All of these representatives agreed to a preliminary meeting which would also be joined by delegates of a few other groups: the VC-GATU and the Workmen's Choirs as Popular Front groups, the Neue Volkszeitung as a Social Democratic newspaper, the conservative Staatszeitung of Ridder, the conservative Vereinigte Deutsche Gesellschaften (United German Societies) of Greater New York, the Karl Schurz Turnerbund and "possibly" the Steuben Society if a top

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 31, David Karr to Alan Cranston, 12 August 1942, re: Dr. Shuster.

leader was available who had not been "too pro-Nazi in the past". This preliminary meeting would decide what other organizations should be invited to join the UAGD and to help prepare the national convention. According to Rutz, "all persons contacted expressed a desire to get going and promised to forget their past differences".<sup>23</sup>

The difficulties of the preliminary UAGD committee soon became apparent. The conservative groups held back so that the two left factions were over-represented. The proceedings were slow and the second meeting was only held on November 17 at Hunter College. It formed three committees: a convention committee was to set the place and date of the convention and formulate an agenda, an organization committee was to prepare "a list of a thousand or more organizations" which would be invited to send delegates, and a third committee was to take care of the financial aspects of the convention. Among the three members of the convention committee were Seger, as chairman, and Rosenfeld. To the four members of the organization committee belonged Katz and two representatives of the VC-GATU, one of whom was also an editor of the German American. In the three member financial committee, the Popular Front was represented by a DAKV leader. As a result, the Social Democrats were unhappy with "the Rosenfeld group" which had four delegates in the three committees and introduced another two members who had not been invited, one from the VC-GATU and one from the DAKV. But Rutz was more troubled by the general predominance of "the two left

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 34-35, Henry Rutz to Alan Cranston, 17 September 1942, re: New York situation.

factions", especially since "the six or seven groups representing the conservative societies" did not attend the second meeting. He was still optimistic about getting them to the third meeting and about the UAGD convention in general. With some contradiction, he described the meeting as "a very harmonious affair with the different factions patting each other on the back and all factions giving the government a big hand for the work it has done to date in getting the groups together". But the date of the convention was postponed to mid-January 1943.<sup>24</sup>

The strength of the Popular Front in the preliminary committees and the enthusiastic Popular Front campaign for the UAGD convention bothered the OWI and the GLD. The GAEC had prepared for a national all-German American conference of its own. Then it dropped its own in favor of the more promising OWI plan.<sup>25</sup> In September 1942 the German American had already spoken out in favor of the UAGD and exhorted all the factions to exercise mutual restraint. Certain labor groups were reprimanded for their reservations about sitting down at the same table with formerly pro-Hitler groups whose "loyal members" must be helped "to clean their house".<sup>26</sup> The Labor Conference of the VC-GATU and the Midwest Labor Conference of January 1943, sponsored by the GAAAL, discussed "the issues to be raised at the convention of the UAGD". Rutz became concerned with this identification of the UAGD with the GAAAL.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 39, 40, Henry Rutz to Alan Cranston, 25 November 1942, re: New York Conference.

<sup>25</sup> German American, July 1942, p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., September 1942, pp. 1, 12.

He had "hoped to rally some of the working class groups which have been 'taken in' by the Anti-Axis League" to a prospective Midwestern convention of the UAGD. But he felt that the GAAAL conference was "not going to make it easier for us to attract the large German American organizations in Chicago to our proposed conference". He was equally concerned about the pro-UAGD propaganda of the New York Labor Conference and the German American. "If this publicity goes out into the general German American press", Rutz feared "additional arguments" at the next meeting with conservative German American leaders on 20 January 1943.<sup>27</sup>

It was a quarrel between the conservatives and the Social Democrats which eventually caused the failure of the UAGD convention and the withdrawal of the OWI and the GLD. It led to a temporary resignation from the UAGD by Ridder in December 1942. According to Rutz, "things had been going smoothly" when this episode occurred. A representative of the OWI was assigned to attend all the committee and subcommittee meetings of the UAGD. Ridder provided the space in his office for her daily paperwork. He had also promised to raise \$3,000 for the convention. Its detailed program was to be approved at the next meeting of the preliminary committee. At this point, Ridder was attacked by the administrative chairman of the New York Anti-Nazi Labor League, of whose executive board Seger was a member. It was probably the AFL sponsored Anti-Nazi Labor League. The latter

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<sup>27</sup> Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Deutschsprachige Presse in den USA, 1941-1945, pp. 44-46, Rutz to Cranston, 9 January 1943, re: German organizations in Chicago; also, Rutz to Cranston, 9 January 1943, re: German American Trade Union Victory Conference in New York.



threatened to expose the alleged Nazi domination of an annual bazaar for the benefit of poor German American families in New York, of which Ridder was the chairman. Unless the latter asked for the resignation of the objectionable officials, the League would send an open letter to the press. Shuster and Rutz tried to mediate between the League and Ridder but they could not prevent the threatened publicity. After that, conservative leaders like Theobald Dengler, the head of the Treasury Bond Drive among German Americans and the chairman of the German American USO Committee in New York, agreed that Ridder should take no further risks by enlisting conservative leaders for the UAGD. Rutz met for six hours with Seger, Shuster, and Sattler before the scheduled UAGD meeting, without succeeding to patch up these differences. The UAGD meeting discussed the Ridder affair and wondered whether German American unity was still possible instead of considering and ratifying the convention program of the UAGD subcommittees. Everything was postponed until after another appeasement trial. Rutz was asked to stay in New York and either induce Ridder to reconsider or persuade the conservative leaders to cooperate without Ridder. Seger resigned from the executive board of the Anti-Nazi League. Despite this concession, Shuster and Dengler also threatened to drop out of the UAGD. Under these circumstances, the OWI lost interest in the UAGD convention.<sup>28</sup>

Rosenfeld still tried to salvage the convention. He emphasized that there were no differences of political opinion. There was only a

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 41-42, Rutz to Cranston, 15 December 1942, re: Ridder's resignation from German American Conference.

distrust of intentions, that is, a deeper seated issue of which the Ridder affair was only a symptom. He asserted that there would be an equitable distribution of delegates and speaker assignments at the convention and that only unanimous decisions would be valid.<sup>29</sup> But with the withdrawal of the OWI, the UAGD lost its attraction for a GLD that would not be caught associating freely with Popular Front groups. The latter and some of the conservatives, including Ridder, stayed on and tried to make the UAGD function.

The relationship between the Popular Front and the conservatives was complex. It is not clear what the latter expected to gain from their membership in the UAGD. For Ridder and his publishing enterprise, it meant welcome government protection instead of harassment. The absence of the GLD was also a plus because the latter was less tolerant towards German American media than the Popular Front. Shuster was genuinely antifascist, but the few conservative leaders were careful not to cooperate too closely with the Popular Front. They consented only to projects that centered around government programs. The Popular Front exploited the latter for its own purposes as best it could. It tried desperately to make the conservatives comfortable and commit them to a national convention which was the main cause of their discomfort. In one of the conservative initiatives, the Loyal Americans of German Descent tried to rally the German Americans in a protest meeting against the National Socialist persecution of the European Jews, without much response from either the German Americans or the

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<sup>29</sup>German American, March 1943.

German Jewish refugees. Ridder organized a dinner meeting of old UAGD officials and a number of new leaders from somewhat unpolitical singing, sports, and dialect groups. For the German American, this modest event laid the foundation for a wider ranging German American coalition.<sup>30</sup>

In July 1943, the Committee of the United German Organizations of New York became interested in more cohesion among its member organizations and in a more patriotic program. The GAEC urged the UAGD to use the opportunity for tying this conservative group closer to the United Americans.<sup>31</sup>

The third Labor Conference of the VC-GATU in December 1943 was again timed to generate momentum for a prospective national convention in January 1944. A timely front-page editorial of the German American appealed for overcoming mutual prejudices. It claimed that the wall of alienation between progressive and bourgeois German Americans had been skillfully erected by National Socialist propaganda. A national convention would therefore be a defeat for National Socialism. The progressive groups should not thoughtlessly suspect the conservatives of National Socialist sympathies and the bourgeois groups should shed their prejudices against the laborites "as dangerous radicals".<sup>32</sup> In order to facilitate better harmony, the German American portrayed the Popular Front as the work of the centrist Rosenfeld. Even after his death, the latter was still of symbolic memorial value in the convention

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., June 1943, p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., July 1943, p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., January 1944, pp. 1, 3.

publicity of the Popular Front. This approach was helpful. Even Ridder stated that "America could use many more Kurt Rosenfelds", which did not necessarily apply to the Popular Front.<sup>33</sup> None of the communist leaders of the Popular Front stepped into Rosenfeld's shoes. Instead, the centrist Sattler joined in a triumvirate of prominent togetherness with Ridder and Shuster.

But the conservatives in the UAGD were only ready for a War Bond rally in February 1944 in cooperation with the German American War Bond Committee of the Treasury Department whose chairman was also a UAGD leader. The German American defined the rally as "a stepping stone in the history of the German Americans". Purchases of \$6 million in War Bonds were made, which was only possible if some of the fraternal organizations invested part of their insurance funds. The UAGD had been "a loosely knit central body of organizations" whose unity was "hindered ... by politics, economic views or religious convictions". After the rally, the UAGD was to become "a permanent organization". The GAEC thanked the UAGD which had made it possible "for the first time in this war ... to unify the various German American groups by eliminating the overemphasis of divisive issues". The Popular Front paper was confident that "the movement of unification of the Americans of German Descent will irresistably march on". The VC-GATU planned another Labor Conference in preparation for a national convention.

The conservatives were more cautious and warned the Popular

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 1 October 1944, p. 5.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., February 1944, p. 1; March 1944, pp. 1, 3, 5.

Front against too far-reaching goals. The chairman of the German American War Bond Committee and UAGD leader, Dengler, described the rally as "an occasion where the various parties put aside their differences as to politics, their opinions as to economics and their beliefs as to religion". This was a tribute to the collection of \$6 million of War Bonds. In a subsequent GAEC meeting, Dengler suggested getting together on "similar patriotic and community endeavors" like a Red Cross drive or a USO campaign. But he disagreed "with some of my friends that such unity as I speak of should be strongly pressed and hurriedly urged". He thought that "it should come by itself" and that it must "necessarily be slow". He did "most certainly ... not want any single individual dictating to us" but he hoped that agreement on the above community programs would "create that intimate connection and exchange of opinions which will foster greater harmony and a spirit of appreciating each other's viewpoint". He opposed attempts "to inject controversial subjects" into the work of unification.<sup>35</sup> The UAGD never held a national convention. Before the next target date of January 1945, the re-election of President Roosevelt intervened as a divisive issue between laborite and conservative German Americans. Then, the impending end of the war took the patriotic pressure off the conservatives while the Popular Front could no longer disregard the issues of postwar reconstruction.

To the Popular Front it became obvious that the UAGD would never settle down enough for a discussion of postwar policies which had

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., April 1944, p. 3.

been delayed by the organizational problems of the United Americans. Even the Aufbau had been optimistic. It had considered the War Bond rally as "a cultural and political activation ... which will exert its influence over the questions of the German future".<sup>36</sup> But if the conservatives could not be lured to a national convention they could even less be talked into support of Popular Front postwar policies. In this situation, Faber tried to circumvent the UAGD. He was by then the secretary of both the VC-GATU and the UAGD. Yet, he chose to form a new German American coalition around the issue of presidential re-election. As former isolationists, the conservatives did not like Roosevelt. It was patriotically possible for them to oppose a president who wanted an unprecedented fourth term. But the Popular Front had always staked all its American hopes on Roosevelt. Faber formed, therefore, the Independent National Committee of German Americans for the Reelection of FDR (INC). The American Turners participated in the new committee. Their national chairman, a German American judge and former congressman from Detroit, became the chairman of the INC. Faber served as secretary-treasurer. After the reelection of Roosevelt, the INC continued as a general German American National Committee and put its "energy into the further service of German American-dom".<sup>37</sup> The German American supported this strategy editorially so that the INC replaced the UAGD in Popular Front publicity. Faber entitled a front

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<sup>36</sup> Aufbau, 1934 to date, published by the German Jewish Club in New York, 18 February 1944.

<sup>37</sup> German American, 1 October 1944, p. 1; 15 December 1944, p. 3; 15 February 1945, p. 1.

page editorial: "What we German Americans need". His answer to this rhetorical question was "a national leadership and a national representation". Besides discussions with UAGD officials like Ridder in New York, talks began in December 1944 in New York, Chicago, Detroit and Milwaukee with other German American public figures like Judge Joseph Gutknecht of Chicago, the chairman of the German American War Bond Committee there. Faber conceded that there was "little need for a new individual organization". But he professed his intention of winning thousands of existing German American organizations for the program of the INC.<sup>38</sup>

During its association with the UAGD, the Popular Front made numerous appeals for German American and German emigrant unity. These were meant as propaganda for the UAGD or any other possible coalition. They also played a role in the ongoing arguments about the necessary war and postwar treatment of Germany which will be discussed in the last part of this chapter. One of these appeals was made in January 1943 at the occasion of the Rhineland Conference in Germany. The latter was a Popular Front coalition of the German underground movement to which the German American devoted its entire issue of February 1943. The information about it came from the New York daily press rather than through any direct channels. This conference was attended by a Catholic priest, a Reichswehr captain rather than a Wehrmacht captain, a member of the former Deutschnationale Volkspartei (German National People's Party), representatives of the SPD and of the KPD, railroad and metal

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 1 February 1945, p. 1.

industry unionists, rural representatives and even a member of a National Socialist opposition group. Its composition fulfilled all Popular Front requirements. The conference had issued a manifesto with a ten-point program that was broadcast over the illegal station of the Deutsche Volkssender (German People's Station). It demanded an immediate end to German military operations, advocated the overthrow of the Hitler regime and the formation of "a national democratic government for peace". It appealed to Germans of all social classes, religions, and parties, but gave little advice beyond the advocacy of sabotage. In keeping with a proper Popular Front program, it was economically vague promising nothing more than work, just pay and an eight hour day. Applying the principle of the tip of the iceberg, Rosenfeld saw in the conference the makings of "a great national German peace movement" and considered its manifesto as "a historic document". The Rhineland Conference called in his opinion especially for the unification of the German Americans and for a national conference that would pledge its support to "justice for the German people". Finally, it should be the occasion for a conference of the German emigration "from the bourgeoisie to the communists", in the United States and abroad. The manifesto represented in his view "a vivid platform for the unification of the political German emigration".<sup>39</sup> In the opinion of the novelist Carl Zuckmayer, the conference called for "the common front of freedom" of all emigrants and Germans in other countries

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., February 1943, pp. 5, 6.



especially as a pressure group for positive Allied war aims.<sup>40</sup>

Another potential catalyst for the unification of German Americans and German emigrants was the formation of the National-Komitee Freies Deutschland (NKFD, National Committee for a Free Germany) in Moscow in the summer of 1943. The latter was a Popular Front committee of literary and political emigrants and of German war prisoners, especially officers. Their ideologically generous manifesto could appeal even to disaffected National Socialists. It aimed at the disintegration and possibly the overthrow of the Hitler regime as an alternative to Allied occupation, especially from the West, and to unconditional surrender. The German American considered the National Committee as "a visible center" of the German anti-Hitler movement and its formation as "a step that benefits all peoples". It hoped that this committee would have a revolutionary effect on the German anti-fascist opposition.<sup>41</sup> Alfred Norden, one of the writers of the German American, wished that "the German emigration in the United States [and] the German Americans put aside the old party barriers".<sup>42</sup> Zuckmayer thought that the Moscow manifesto presented an opportunity and offered the basis on which to unite "here, too, the divided German emigration for common statements and common initiatives".<sup>43</sup> When Committees of Free Germans were formed in England, Mexico, and France, only the

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 1 April 1943, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., August 1943, p. 1, 5, 12.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., November 1943, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., September 1943, p. 1.

German Americans and the German emigrants in the United States fell behind this international movement, in the opinion of the German American. The Free German movement was "gaining ground everywhere" and ought to be extended into the United States. Sattler devoted a special issue of the Solidarity to the NKFD. Another AKStK official, who was also the assistant secretary of the GAEC, considered the decisions of the Benefit Fund convention of October 1943 as "a minimum program that can be submitted to all German American groups, a program that will lead to unity".<sup>44</sup>

In this mood, the German American Popular Front tried to keep all doors open, even those which were already closed. It assumed a conciliatory attitude towards the Social Democratic Landeskonferenz (National Convention) of June 1943 in New York City. The latter was a reorganization effort that disdained even a socialist concentration without communists. Nevertheless, the German American approved the program of the National Convention as barely distinctive from "the program of various left oriented Social Democratic or communist emigrant groups".<sup>45</sup> One of the Popular Front motives for this moderation was the desire to tone down the reaction of the GLD to the NKFD and the Free Germany movement. But the GLD lost no time in rejecting the latter. In an article of the New York Tribune, Katz ridiculed the intimation "between the lines" of the manifesto that the German people "have nothing to fear from Russia" and considered it as an invitation

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., October 1943, p. 6; November 1943, pp. 12, 14.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., August 1943, p. 4.

to go "over to [the Russian] side".<sup>46</sup> He insisted that the Soviet Union wanted to make a deal with the Reichswehr. In a letter to the editor, Rosenfeld objected to this "speculative and dangerous interpretation of the manifesto".<sup>47</sup> Sattler was unhappy because the GLD called the manifesto a communist document only because it had been elaborated in Moscow. But the rejection by Hedwig Wachenheim at the October convention of the AKStK was even more polemical. She thought that "the NKFD promises everything to everybody". In this context, she objected especially to a second front. It would facilitate the plans which the Soviet Union promoted by their sponsorship of the NKFD. The armies of the Reichswehr were to be maintained and relieved on the Eastern front by a separate peace so that they could fight with better concentration "against the Anglo-Saxon Allies". The latter should not give them this opportunity. The German American called Wachenheim's speech "an abuse of the AKStK". As health insurance, the latter ought to have spared its members the stench of "the living corpses" of outdated anti-Russian propaganda.<sup>48</sup>

While the UAGD was dragging its feet, the abovementioned Free World Association offered an opportunity for unification. The German American supported its preparation of "a big rally of the German emigration and of the German Americans" in October 1943. But no more was heard of it and no Free Germany Committee was formed in the United

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., October 1943, p. 5.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

States. In the spring of 1944, the Popular Front emigrants were able to participate in an emigrant coalition organized by the American Friends of German Freedom. This was the Council for a Democratic Germany which will be discussed in the last chapter. Besides this CDG and the precarious INC, there were eventually only the original Popular Front constituents, that is, the GAEC, the VC-GATU, the GAAAL, and the German American, to promote leftist plans for postwar reconstruction.<sup>49</sup>

The Popular Front had an internationalist approach to reconstruction. It wanted peace at home and abroad and did not separate domestic from foreign issues. A peaceful postwar world depended on the coexistence between socialism and capitalism with the necessary compromises in disputed areas like central Europe. A peacetime United Nations was its diplomatic cornerstone. In this design, the positions of Russia and Germany were ambivalent which benefitted the former and hurt the latter. In the socialist context, Russia was the only hope for the future and deserved support. During the war, the Popular Front advocated, therefore, Allied aid to Russia and a second front in the West. In this same context, Germany, which had once been a socialist stronghold, was a fallen member. It was in need of rehabilitation optimally by an antifascist revolution and in need of reeducation, but also deserved the protection of the Soviet Union. In this unequal relationship, Germany could lose when it deserved punishment for insufficient regeneration and when the concerns of the Russian protector took

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 6; November 1943, p. 14.

precedence over those of her protégé. In the pragmatic context, all diplomatic deals were acceptable for what they were worth to Russia. Thus, the new Eastern border could be rationalized in several ways. In general, the Popular Front was pro-German as far as possible. In case of conflict, its pro-Russianism usually won out. But some German American Popular Front members had a harder time dealing with their German nationalism.

The second front was first necessary to relieve the Soviet Union of military pressure and then to make her victory as good as possible. The German American started campaigning for a second front in June 1942. Schreiner was its specialist in military and political warfare. He resented the explanation of the German disaster in Stalingrad by a miracle rather than by the high morale of the Russian armies and the Russian people. But the second front was still necessary to keep the German armies from regrouping. The war could still be lost. Its outcome should not be jeopardized by the postponement of a Western front. At times, he was so optimistic that he thought with such a front Hitler could be defeated in 1943. He was emphatic about an Allied landing in Western France. North Africa, Sicily and Italy were "not the real second front". They were, at best, good preliminaries for an attack across the Channel. He took the same attitude towards the "air warfare extremists". Bombing campaigns would not lead to fast results. In the meantime, the Soviet Union would have to keep sacrificing its soldiers and carry the main burden of the war. To Schreiner, the second front was the test of sincerity of the alliance. When it finally materialized in June 1944, it did so for the

wrong reasons of which the major one was the advance of the Russian armies.<sup>50</sup> But the GAEC, the GAAAL and the VC-GATU welcomed it with a joint D-Day declaration. It was still expected to serve the cause of German American unity.<sup>51</sup>

With the progress of the war, the emigrant question "What is to become of Germany?" became central. With a victorious Russia and a superior West, nothing could save Germany from an unprecedented annihilation except drastic changes at home. The communist emigrants of the Popular Front understood the realities of rehabilitation which only a German revolution could achieve. They were more uninhibited in their views because they were not afraid of a strong Russian influence in Germany. The centrists were more realistic about the probability of a German revolution. With somewhat more nationalistic concern than their partners, they hoped that "the other Germany" would find Allied consideration even if it did not pass the ultimate test. Because of these divergencies in their views, the political line of the German American, the GAEC and the other Popular Front groups was often ambivalent. The GAEC had its first forum on "the future of Germany," in late November 1942. Bönheim established the junctim between the right of the Germans to "decide their own destiny" and the overthrow of Hitler. Johann R. Becher, the later composer of the East German national anthem, emphasized the urgency of the German situation in a poem

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., June 1942, p. 4; September 1942, p. 4; January 1943, p. 3; February 1943, p. 11; May 1943, p. 7; October 1943, p. 4; July 1943, p. 6; January 1944, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 15 June 1944, p. 1.

entitled "Noch eine Stunde". That was all the German people had to make up their minds. But Rosenfeld still expected changes from the Allies. He belabored a theme that was designed to impress them when he stated that "we cannot win the war, and it will be more difficult to win the peace without our ally inside Germany". He recommended Stalin who had said that "the Hitlers are coming and going but the German people will remain". Rosenfeld argued that "if Joseph Stalin ... can make such a statement then it must be certain that there exists a Germany which will help to defeat Hitler and bring about a revolution". But it needed Allied encouragement. Alfred Kantorowicz established "the other Germany" by a different deduction. He based it on the number of National Socialist executions and encampments implying that they reached only a percentage of the German opposition. He did not consider the alternative that especially a National Socialist dictatorship would indulge in overkill.<sup>52</sup>

Rosenfeld felt encouraged at the occasion of the Rhineland Conference. The communists used the latter more as a stimulus for Popular Front unity in America. But Rosenfeld felt also on more solid ground "from the standpoint of shaping the postwar world and of answering the much discussed question: What is to become of Germany?" He expected the Allies to express their solidarity with the Rhineland peace manifesto by guaranteeing "the national existence and independence of Germany".<sup>53</sup> Feuchtwanger and Tillich also believed in the

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., December 1942, p. 3.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., February 1943, pp. 5, 6.

importance of the German underground movement. To Zuckmayer, the Rhineland Conference proved the existence of "a determined opposition in Germany. ... All hopes for a future, free and really democratic Germany rest on this opposition". He did not mention the unconditional need for a stronger manifestation of this opposition. According to a German American fraternal leader, the conference was a good opportunity for reminding German Americans of their duty to oppose "the Reaction" whose plans for postwar Germany had just surfaced in an article of April 1943 by Kingsbury Smith in the American Mercury. It alleged State Department plans for the decentralization of Germany. Even Walter Winchell discussed the manifesto of the conference extensively in a radio commentary of March 21. The German American mass-distributed a special leaflet about the conference entitled "The signs of awakening".<sup>54</sup>

When the National Committee for a Free Germany was formed in Moscow, Bönheim was especially interested in its revolutionary effect on the German underground. In his speech at the American Soviet Friendship Congress in November 1943 in New York, he insisted that "only by participating in the final struggle against the Nazis, will [the German people] win the right to decide upon their own fate. This is the only way of saving the very existence ... of the German nation ... to avoid the dismemberment of Germany [and the] destruction of her industries".<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 1 April 1943, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., December 1943, p. 5.



At a later stage in the war, the same differences between the communist and centrist Popular Front members surfaced in the debate over the issue of unconditional surrender. Rosenfeld thought that the latter should not preclude an Allied interest in the German underground, the German emigration and political warfare. Unconditional surrender should be expected only of the National Socialist establishment in which his "five points" included those groups who served as the economic and social basis of National Socialism in traditional socialist theory. The German masses, however, should be convinced "that the United Nations are their friends" who do not plan the dismemberment of Germany. This commitment to political warfare would speed up the war considerably, in his opinion. To Rosenfeld, UN cooperation "with the enormous democratic forces within Germany" would prove that the Allies were engaged in "a war against National Socialism and not against the democratic development of the German people" which alone could guarantee German pacifism. In the unqualified sense, he opposed unconditional surrender as well as "the continuous bombing of the Reich", which Katz kept applauding in the NVZ.<sup>56</sup>

Especially towards the end of the war, the German American tended to support the policy of unconditional surrender. In January 1945, it severely reprimanded Dorothy Thompson, the pro-German commentator, for claiming that the cause of Allied military problems was the policy of unconditional surrender. Her series of articles in the New York Post under the heading "Why Germany can not surrender" was counter-

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., July 1943, p. 13.

productive in the view of her critics. It "strengthened all Nazis and pro-Nazis in this and in other countries. ... The demise of the formula ... would be a moral victory of the first order for the Hitler regime. According to the German American, it was erroneous to believe that her polemics against the policy of Casablanca could shorten the war.<sup>57</sup> Kruse, the leader of the GAAAL, came, however, to the defense of Dorothy Thompson in the next issue of the German American. In his opinion, she had only urged an explanation of the policy of unconditional surrender by the Allies who should "particularize their policy toward the various categories of Germans". The Popular Front did not concede that this Allied policy implied a punitive treatment of Germany. It only meant that "nobody will negotiate with the Nazi regime".<sup>58</sup> The Popular Front relied on the United Nations. Whatever that alliance in which a victorious Russia would have a strong voice would present as a policy towards Germany would be acceptable to it.

But Popular Front propaganda experienced more and more problems with United Nations policy. It knew, however, how to handle them. There were still safe issues on which any Popular Front member could speak out without prejudicing actual developments. One of them was reeducation of Germans and German war prisoners. This was also a procrastinating issue. It centered on the proper German state of mind which could still be judged insufficient if necessary. The INC had ambitiously proclaimed its interest in "What is to be done with

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 1 January 1945, p. 2; 15 February 1943, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 1 March 1945, p. 11.

Germany?". Yet, it did little more than center on reeducation. Its chairman advocated the dispatch of "a special commission to Germany to educate the people into the practical workings of a free democracy [sic] ". Faber headed an INC delegation to Washington for discussions with several government departments. He proposed to Secretary of State Stettinius a German American delegation "to inspect Germany". He also applied to the War Department and to General Eisenhower. In order to substantiate his request, he made the exorbitant claim that the nearly six million German Americans in this country were "in one way or another attached to organizations affiliated with our council".<sup>59</sup>

The GAAAL and the VC-GATU paid special attention to the reeducation of German war prisoners. The GAAAL arranged forums for the discussion and the publicity of the POW question. Kruse proposed an "American way of handling German war prisoners". He objected to allowing National Socialist prisoners to terrorize antifascist POW's. Some cases of torture and even of executions were reported. Kruse recommended to keep the common soldiers separate and to organize them according to municipal and regional origins in the form of discussion groups in order to develop nuclei of democratic regeneration. One of the GAAAL forums was held at the International Relations Center on East Randolph Street. It attracted representatives from the army, the OCD, and the Chicago Civil Liberties Union. Besides Kruse, Schrötter was one of the main GAAAL participants. He was also a consultant of

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 15 May 1945, p. 3; 1 July 1945, p. 3.

the OCD in its Psychological Warfare Commission.<sup>60</sup> William L. Shirer concurred with all these attempts of "stamping out Nazism among prisoners of war".<sup>61</sup>

The VC-GATU, which was also headed by Faber, concerned itself with the reeducation of POW's rather than with an inspection of Germany, which was more safely requested by the INC. Faber was especially incensed over the policy of releasing the officers before the other men. The Office of the Provost Marshal General and its POW Division adhered strictly to the stipulations of the Geneva convention. The officers also did not have to work. The preferential return of some fifty thousand officers to Germany "as useless Nazis" seemed unjust to Faber. He had also problems with distributing the German American in the camps. The censorship office of the POW Division objected to "the extreme anti-Nazi views" of the Popular Front paper. They might be "misunderstood" by the POW's and "encourage political dissension" among them in violation of the Geneva convention. Eventually, the German American was admitted to the camps. Faber considered two hundred twelve subscriptions in one camp alone as a success. The NVZ had to overcome similar objections to its distribution in the camps.<sup>62</sup>

Another safe issue for the Popular Front was the economic system of postwar Germany. Russia did not expect to gain anything from a

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., February 1944, p. 12; 1 May 1944, p. 2; 15 May 1944, p. 9; 1 June 1944, p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 1 June 1944, p. 12.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 15 May 1945; 1 June 1945, p. 5; 1 July 1945, p. 5; February 1944; March 1944.

German deindustrialization. Schreiner editorialized that Morgenthau-like plans competed with National Socialism in using racism as a theory of political domination. Their brand was Vansittartism which claimed that the German people had innate aggressive instincts.<sup>63</sup> In one of the forums of the German American which was entitled "What about Germany?", Schreiner shared the speaking assignments with William Dodd, Jr., the later ambassador to West Germany. Their joint topic was "Germany's economy -- destruction or nationalization?". Schreiner considered the second alternative as the only promising approach to the problem of the German question. He advocated nationalization, without compensation, of the large estates, the big banks, the key industries, and foreign trade, in order to destroy "the economic war criminals". This nationalized sector could be left under Allied control as long as international security required. This degree of nationalization would not amount to socialism which was for Schreiner objectively the most appropriate system for Germany, but it was politically undesirable. Socialism had to leave precedence to the maintenance of peace, that is, of the East-West coalition of the United Nations. The system of Schreiner would be a good compromise between the interests of Western capitalism and Eastern socialism. Deindustrialization would bring destitution to nearly thirty-five million workers. They would willingly accept arms from abroad and fight in the interests of a great power which Schreiner did not specify. A Vansittartist solution would accomplish the opposite of its desired objective. It would de-

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., February 1944, p. 6.

prive Germany of "the basis for becoming a peaceful, democratic state".<sup>64</sup> The Popular Front generally appreciated the anti-Vansittar-tist attitude of the GLD on the economic issue. A GAAAL meeting of January 1944 passed a resolution that deprecated "blanket slurs against representatives of the Social Democratic Party of Germany". In this case, it defended Seger and Marck whose book "Germany, to be or not to be" had been criticized by the Vansittartist Society for the Prevention of World War III.<sup>65</sup>

The territorial issue became the main ideological dividing line between the Popular Front and the other German and German American socialists. The former tried desperately to find positive interpretations for the decisions of Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam. It dealt with territorial issues only in toto as the dismemberment of Germany which it was safe to reject. But when equivocation became impossible, as on the question of the new Eastern frontier of Germany, it sided with the Soviet Union. After the Conference of Teheran, the German American impressed on the German Americans, the German emigrants and their organizations "the responsibility of supporting the decisions of the Moscow Conference of Allied foreign ministers". The latter agreed mainly on closer Allied military cooperation a few months before the opening of a Western front. But the Popular Front paper centered its attention

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 1 December 1944, pp. 5, 9.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 1 February 1944, p. 12; the Society for the Prevention of World War III was founded in December 1943. It was headed by Rex Stout, a writer of detective stories, and included such emigrants as Friedrich Wilhelm Förster and Emil Ludwig.

on side issues. The statement about the severe punishment of war criminals encouraged the German American to believe in an Allied "distinction between them and the rest of the Germans, clearly and unmistakably". The Popular Front paper claimed that the Moscow decisions disappointed those who advocated the condemnation of the German people as a unit and the dismemberment, deindustrialization and unlimited military occupation of Germany. These were the strongest terms possible and the easiest to refute.<sup>66</sup>

Later, the Popular Front unreservedly hailed the decisions of Yalta and Potsdam.<sup>67</sup> The annual Eastern Conference of the VC-GATU in April 1945 proposed to organize support for the decisions of the Yalta Conference.<sup>68</sup> The German American was mainly interested in the maintenance of the UN alliance which meant collective security for Russia. Without the United Nations, the Soviet Union would be confronted with "a new cordon sanitaire".<sup>69</sup> The German American criticized the NVZ and the New Leader for publicity in that sense which anticipated the Cold War. It also deplored the anticommunist reaction of Shuster to the Yalta Conference. The UAGD official dwelt on "the Elbe line" as the future divider between the Western and "the Russian part of Germany".<sup>70</sup> The Popular Front socialists were uncomfortable with this

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<sup>66</sup> German American, December 1943, pp. 5, 6.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 February 1945, p. 1; 1 March 1945, p. 1; 15 April 1945, p. 3.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 April 1945, p. 10.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 June 1945, p. 1.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 March 1945, p. 11.

anticipation of the Cold War. They protested against this discussion of "a dismemberment of the German unity and a destruction of the German national future". But the new Eastern frontier and the transfer of German populations were accepted as consequences of German aggression. The German American observed that the Allied powers could not "find any extenuating circumstances for the misdeeds of the Germans against other countries". It emphasized "the responsibility of the German people" which had not redeemed itself by an antifascist uprising.<sup>71</sup>

In the GAAAL, there was dissension over these issues. Jaeger thought that the whole German people was responsible for the National Socialist atrocities and rejected the idea of extenuating circumstances. He motioned to dissolve the GAAAL rather than getting involved in a discussion of postwar and especially territorial issues. But the pro-German majority did not put the motion to a vote. Instead, the name of the League was "temporarily, at least" changed to German American Anti-Fascist League. Kruse pressed for the discussion of the sensitive issues. He opposed "a purely punitive dismemberment of Germany" but considered the transfer of East Prussian Estates to Polish farmers as equitable.<sup>72</sup>

Its lack of territorial nationalism excluded the Popular Front from association with the other German and German American socialists. The Popular Front emigrants participated in the Council for a Democratic Germany which split, however, over the Eastern territorial

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 15 August 1945, pp. 1, 9.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 1 June 1945, p. 3; 15 June 1945, p. 3.



question. The German Labor Delegation was equally exclusive in following the opposite ideology of the Popular Front, an uncompromising anti-communism and nationalism. It pinned all its hopes on the Western Allies, especially the United States, at a time when the latter was still tied to Russia in the UN alliance. In this sense, the GLD anticipated the times of postwar Western inflexibility which contributed to the results against which it polemicized.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE GERMAN LABOR DELEGATION: REORGANIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Reorganization was necessary to give credibility to the plans for reconstruction. But the GLD was handicapped in its quest for reorganization because of the position which it had assumed in the German socialist emigration and which it was unwilling to abandon. To make matters worse, the GLD experienced serious internal difficulties. They were precariously resolved with the resignation of its chairman and his replacement by two co-equal chairmen. Each of them represented a faction within an already small GLD, a state of affairs which contributed to the problems of reorganization and reconstruction. The GLD reorganization took the form of a Landeskonferenz (National Convention) in July 1943. It arrived at this format by fighting off pressures from within itself and from the Sopade for a genuine reorganization, that is, of a democratic expansion and an intersocialist cooperation. Thus, the National Convention did not reach new members. It did not even consolidate the old GLD. Individual members at the conference spoke sometimes in their own name only. The conference generated little momentum. The ensuing initiatives of the GLD lacked persistence.

Under these circumstances, the GLD plans for reconstruction were inconsistent. The majority of the GLD tried to deal with its fears of a victorious Soviet Union by bespeaking the panacea of a

German revolution, that is, of a political revolution without much socialist content. The more socialist minority was not interested in a rather bourgeois revolution. It accepted early an Allied occupation of Germany as the outcome of military defeat. The controversy between these two groups marked the National Convention and the later initiatives of the GLD until, towards the end of 1944, some of the optimists despaired of their revolutionary hopes. In this emergency situation, the GLD and the NVZ centered on the territorial issues of postwar reconstruction. They ignored American proposals for a dismemberment of Germany and focused on the Russian threats to German territorial integrity. They sought refuge in the advocacy of an Atlantic community and warned the Western Allies against appeasing the Soviet Union. Their Easter Declaration of 1945 expressed these concerns. In this anticipation of the Cold War, the GLD and the NVZ were a few years ahead of the times. When the American government continued to compromise with Russia at the expense of Germany, they finally became anti-American. They turned against Washington which was the pillar of all their plans for postwar reconstruction. In this impulse of self-destruction, the GLD nearly hanged itself with its own ideological rope.

At the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, the GLD was nearly paralyzed by intrigues. Stampfer thought that the Delegation was "in a critical state". He regarded it no longer as "a corporative representation of the party".<sup>1</sup> It consisted then only of ten members, including

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<sup>1</sup>Stampfer to Sopade, 25 August 1942, Matthias and Link, Mit dem Gesicht nach Deutschland, Nr. 133, p. 561.

Rinner who had rejoined it. The main problems within this small body concerned "purely personal things like the qualification in intellect and character" of certain members, mainly of its chairman Grzesinsky and of its secretary, Katz. Everybody objected to the continued chairmanship of the former because of his "indomitable supervisor temperament". More than half of the GLD members, including Rinner, but not Stampfer, also wished to discard Katz. If this majority would not change its mind, there would be, in Stampfer's assessment, "no cooperation and no activity at all". He did not know "how we will get out of this situation". As a temporary solution, he tried to collaborate with Katz and Brauer without the chairman. He deplored the paralysis of the GLD at a time of necessary reconstructive planning for which "we need a reputable representation in the USA".<sup>2</sup>

Then, Stampfer devised an ambitious proposal for a radical solution of the GLD crisis which would only have compounded the complexity of the situation. In his correspondence with the Sopade, he sounded out their reaction to the revival of an old plan that he had previously rejected when it was proposed by Rinner in 1941. By 1942, he thought that the foundation of a Sopade branch in the United States might solve the personnel problems and the deadlock within the GLD. For this purpose, he wanted to recruit four of the SPD executives in the United States. He talked to Rinner and Aufhäuser, the former Sopade rebel. Aufhäuser had in his estimation changed favorably and was on

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<sup>2</sup>Stampfer to Sopade, 23 November 1942, Matthias and Link, Nr. 136, p. 570; also Stampfer to Sopade, 10 January 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 137, p. 574.

good terms with him and Rinner. Stampfer also defended Juchacz. She had, in his opinion, been badly hurt by the Sopade and had never received any apologies. She was by 1942 "quite amicable with us".<sup>3</sup> But the Sopade could not support this scheme. In order to spare the sensibilities of Stampfer, it did not reject his proposal outright but countered with conditions he could not meet. Ollenhauer brought up the problem of the other elected party representatives in the United States, Hertz, Dietrich, and Sollmann, who could not be included in an American Sopade branch and would question its arbitrary composition. He also considered an understanding with Katz indispensable. He hoped that Stampfer would find a way of establishing "an undisputed Social Democratic representation without alienating the GLD" which was impossible. Stampfer then reluctantly conceded that the idea of a Sopade branch was "at this time not opportune".<sup>5</sup>

The leadership problem of the GLD was resolved in early 1943. At first, Grzesinsky rejected the suggestion by Aufhäuser that he resign. He argued that he had not been elected to his position so that he could not be removed from it. Then he resigned without an explanation. For the two factions within the GLD, there were two candidates for the succession. Brauer was the candidate for the faction around

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<sup>3</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 25 August 1942, Matthias and Link, Nr. 133, p. 561.

<sup>4</sup> Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 28 September 1942, Matthias and Link, Nr. 134, p. 564.

<sup>5</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 23 November 1942, Matthias and Link, Nr. 13y, p. 571.

Katz which objected to Aufhäuser as the new chairman.<sup>6</sup> In a compromise solution which was "a phantasy of Katz", Brauer became the first and Aufhäuser the second chairman.<sup>7</sup> Eventually the two chairmen were considered to have "equal rights".<sup>8</sup> Stampfer disliked this solution and wondered how long it would last. But he thought that with it "a better functioning of the organization was possible".<sup>9</sup> In 1944, Aufhäuser joined the Council for a Democratic Germany and became involved in a severe confrontation with the GLD about unionist representation. Brauer remained, then, as the only chairman of the GLD until the end of the war.

After these preliminaries, the GLD was ready for some reorganization. Because of outside pressure it arrived at its own choice by eliminating in inverse order first the most far-reaching option, that of intersocialist cooperation. Twice already, it had associated with the other socialist emigrant groups but only for financial benefits and only after clarifying that the International Labor Propaganda Committee of the Free World Association<sup>10</sup> and the inter-group council of the American Labor Conference on International Affairs did not imply any

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<sup>6</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 10 February 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 140, p. 581.

<sup>7</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 1 March 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 141, p. 585.

<sup>8</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 12 April 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 142, p. 587.

<sup>9</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 10 February 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 140, p. 581.

<sup>10</sup> Julius Deutsch to Vogel, 30 November 1942, EK Mappe 42.

political recognition of the partner groups.<sup>11</sup> Ollenhauer could not see the difference between the AFL and CIO sponsored American Labor Conference and the Union of German Socialist Organizations in London.<sup>12</sup> In March 1942, he suggested that the GLD establish some political cohesiveness by following the anti-Vansittartist stand of the Londoners with a public statement by the socialist emigrant groups in America. The Union had issued a joint policy statement in order to counter an anti-nationalistic declaration by the Fight for Freedom Group in London.<sup>13</sup> But the GLD preferred to ignore the controversy over pacifist socialism. Stampfer pointed out that there were only a few pacifist socialists in the United States like Emil Ludwig and Friedrich Wilhelm Förster whom the NVZ had always eagerly castigated. He claimed that emigrant Vansittartism was hardly a problem in the United States and resented the hints at a parallelism in the situations of the two countries of exile. Less subtly he stated that "the declaration of the Union is not viable here precisely because we are against the Union".<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 10 January 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 137, p. 573; also: Stampfer to Sopade 10 February 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 140, pp. 481, 582; Stampfer to Sopade 12 April 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 142, p. 587; Varian Fry to Frank, 17 August 1944, Frank Papers, box 8, folder F; Katz to Ollenhauer, 29 May 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 145, pp. 595, 596.

<sup>12</sup> Ollenhauer to Heine, 27 June 1943, EK Mappe 82.

<sup>13</sup> Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 22 March 1942, Matthias and Link, Nr. 127, p. 544.

<sup>14</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 22 April 1942, Matthias and Link, Nr. 129, p. 548.

The GLD also responded allergically to a membership meeting of the London Union in late November 1942 which discussed plans for post-war reconstruction.<sup>15</sup> Stampfer militated especially against a speech by Ollenhauer on this occasion about the possibility and the tasks of a united postwar socialist party in Germany. He saw the Social Democratic mission in the emigration in the preservation of the old party. It was difficult to even acknowledge the other German socialist groups, "first, because Karl Frank and Paul Hertz are here, and secondly, because in the American labor movement a Social Democrat is already considered as a dubious minority representative who is suspected of communism or of pro-communism and is a nearly impossible figure".<sup>16</sup> The GLD was all too happy to oblige the AFL in this respect. The November meeting of the Union caused a counterinitiative by the GLD chairman Brauer in a meeting of the German branch of the SDF in January 1943. He proposed to convene a general conference of Social Democratic emigrants in the United States and suggested to invite the Sopade chairman Vogel to this occasion. This would identify Vogel with GLD policy. The meeting appointed a commission for pursuing the idea of Brauer which led to the National Convention of July 1943.<sup>17</sup>

Sollmann and Staudinger also suggested more tolerance towards the other socialist emigrant groups. The former wondered, in the summer

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<sup>15</sup>Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 26 January 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 138, p. 576.

<sup>16</sup>Stampfer to Sopade, 1 March 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 141, pp. 583-585.

<sup>17</sup>Stampfer to Sopade, 10 February 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 140, p. 580.



of 1943 whether the time had not come "to establish contact with the Hagen Group". He acknowledged the success and the general good reputation of Frank.<sup>18</sup> At the end of May 1943, Staudinger made "confidential recommendations on the question of reorganization". He considered "the clarification of our relationship to the other democratic socialist emigrant groups" as very important. Only then would the American labor movement, the public, and the government view the socialist plans for reconstruction favorably. Staudinger considered it "wrong and deceptive to still consider today the party executive as the representation per se of the German workers". He did not propose an outright union, only "a modus vivendi" which could best be found in joint discussions with the other groups about postwar reconstruction. These talks could lead to joint declarations especially against "reactionary and conservative", that is, Vansittartist and monarchist, solutions. He also considered "a common attitude towards German communism" possible. He thought that the NB organization had in the past adopted a much clearer attitude against cooperation with German communists than the GLD members. He had discussed this question with Ehrmann of the AFGF and with others. Also, the NB organization consisted of younger socialists whom the GLD should not repudiate in his opinion. He had found out that many of the charges against the NB Group and Frank were not true. In general, he thought that personal attitudes towards Frank should not

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<sup>18</sup> Sollmann to Stampfer, 20 August 1943, Nachlass Stampfer, part I B, Nr. 682.

matter. The latter should be treated as the leader of a significant emigrant group.<sup>19</sup>

The uneasiness of Staudinger, however, could not sway the GLD into a more positive attitude towards the other socialist emigrant groups. Stampfer claimed that he had "worked in silence to synchronize our attitude with yours [that of the Sopade in the Union] and to improve the relationship to the groups".<sup>20</sup> But he conceded that the London Union "causes us stomach aches enough" and insisted that the GLD in conjunction with the Sopade was "the only legitimate representative of the old German labor movement". The rest were "insignificant group-lets".<sup>21</sup> The GLD resented their encouragement by the attitude of the Sopade. Stampfer asserted that "now is the time for us to be inflexible".<sup>22</sup> Katz requested a new letter of legitimation for the GLD from the International Federation of Trade Unions. In the absence of Schevenels, his deputy Stolz deplored the conflict between the GLD and Frank and made the reservation that his telegram to the National Convention might not be used "as a weapon in this conflict".<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Vertrauliche Vorschläge zur Reorganisationsfrage von Hans Staudinger, May/June 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 146, pp. 596-601.

<sup>20</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 1 March 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 141, p. 584.

<sup>21</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 12 April 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 142, p. 587.

<sup>22</sup> Stampfer to Vogel, 13 May 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 144, p. 594.

<sup>23</sup> Vertrauliche Vorschläge von Hans Staudinger, May, June 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 146, p. 596; also: Ollenhauer to Katz, 6 July 1943, EK Mappe 82.

The GLD was only interested in drawing individual socialists over to its side. An Arbeitsgemeinschaft (Study Commission) of the German branch of the SDF partly served this purpose. It was formed in October 1942 and was supervised by Leeb, Glaser, and Alexander Stein, who was on friendly terms with the NB organization. Its reports and discussions dealt, among other things, with the defeat of fascism and the role of the national and social fight for liberation and with the physiognomy of the postwar world. Members of other groups were admitted "if invited by us". But this commission could only make recommendations and did not survive the National Convention. According to Leeb, disunity contributed partly to its failure.<sup>24</sup> As another gesture, a small political subcommission of the GLD headed by Wachenheim, Aufhäuser, and Braunthal, published a correspondence on the future German labor movement and elaborated memoranda on postwar reconstruction. The correspondence was open for contributions to all former members of the SPD. In this way, the GLD hoped "to win NB members over to our side".<sup>25</sup>

The Sopade and Staudinger also recommended the second option for reorganization to the GLD. Ollenhauer remonstrated with Stampfer about "the complete isolation of the GLD from the friends who have come there from France".<sup>26</sup> Staudinger thought that the GLD was at the crossroads. It had not developed much of a political activity. Yet,

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<sup>24</sup> Rudolf Leeb to Ollenhauer, 19 October 1942, EK Mappe 71; also: Leeb to Ollenhauer, 6 July 1943, EK Mappe 71.

<sup>25</sup> Hedwig Wachenheim to Vogel, 9 June 1943, EK Mappe 143.

<sup>26</sup> Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 22 March 1942, Matthias and Link, Nr. 127, p. 545.

some of its members intended to fully politicize a committee for reconstructive planning that had only been a group of select emigrants. But the GLD made only a feeble attempt at expansion by forming a commission for studying the question of new admissions. The majority was for "a gradual process in this direction" which Staudinger deplored. He hoped that this decision would later be revised. In order to legitimize a new political activity, the GLD had, in his opinion, to "open the door to all those who ... feel that they belong to the old Social Democratic movement".<sup>27</sup> But the GLD bucked the issue of a democratic expansion. It only toyed with the idea of enlarging the Social Democratic committee by cooptation. It showed some flexibility in the prospective number of these cooptations but never implemented even this insufficient degree of reorganization before the summer of 1944.

The pretensions of the National Convention caused its major complications. The conference was called by the GLD, the NVZ, and the German branch of the SDF. This array of organizations looked impressive but it amounted only to the few members of the GLD. The editors of the NVZ were GLD members, as were the leaders of the SDF. Yet, this exclusive group wanted to express "the viewpoint of German Social Democracy and of the free German labor movement".<sup>28</sup> In practice, it neglected what members of this movement were available. The Social Democratic emigrants in the SDF had no democratic voice in policy making. For this reason, many Social Democratic refugees were not

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<sup>27</sup> Vertrauliche Vorschläge von Hans Staudinger, May/June 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 146, pp. 596-601.

<sup>28</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 20 March 1943, EK Mappe 61.

interested in the SDF or the GLD. The National Convention did not change their status, a circumstance that kept a lid on their enthusiasm. They were only expected to lend their presence to a scenario devised to impress the American government, labor movement, and public. The Sopade was put in the same position. The GLD remained emphatically independent of the exile executive and claimed to represent the German labor movement as much as the latter. It did not mind the Sopade pleas for a more democratic treatment of the Social Democratic emigrants and rejected the Sopade policy of more inter-group communication. Yet, it expected Vogel to lend his dignitary presence to its conference. The latter was not interested in this kind of humiliation. He replied that he was "very depressed" about his disappointments with the socialist emigration and "mentally not flexible enough" to justify the expense of a transatlantic trip.<sup>29</sup> In any case, the JLC was unwilling to provide the necessary means.

The GLD also wanted to attract the independent Social Democrats like the executive Juchacz. It invited "all Social Democrats who belonged to the Social Democratic Party before the takeover by Hitler".<sup>30</sup> This definition was ill chosen because it excluded the members of the SAP and the ISK but not those of the NB Group, including Frank. In response to this invitation and to several personal inquiries, Hertz, Hirschfeld and Juchacz discussed the condition of their attendance

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<sup>29</sup>Vogel to Stampfer, 6 April 1943, Nachlass Stampfer, part II, section 17, Nr. 22.

<sup>30</sup>Erklärung von Dietrich, Hertz and Juchacz, end of June 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 147, p. 602.

with Aufhäuser. They demanded some influence over the organization of the convention in the form of official speaking assignments. They also hoped that the convention would be the first step towards a concentration of the various socialist groups. Juchacz thought that the GLD should have been put on "a democratic basis" several years ago in order to justify its claim of a general German labor representation. The National Convention was, in her opinion, the last opportunity for reorganizing the GLD. Only this intention would qualify the GLD to call such a general conference.<sup>31</sup> But the GLD would have none of this.

Leeb claimed that the demands of Juchacz and her friends were too high. They wanted equal rights in the preparation and in the discussions of the convention, an elected Social Democratic committee, and the admission of Frank to the convention.<sup>32</sup> But Juchacz stated that minor concessions from the GLD would have induced her and her friends to attend the convention. Aufhäuser refused to even interpret their demands to the other GLD leaders. He replied that it had been very difficult to make the invitation as comprehensive as it was. After that, Juchacz, Hertz, and Dietrich declined "in the name of another seventy-two former members of the SPD" to participate in the conference. They waited until the end of June for this declaration in order to escape the charge that they intended to interfere with the convention.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Juchacz to Vogel, 20 August 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 155, pp. 622-626.

<sup>32</sup> Leeb to Ollenhauer, 6 July 1943, EK Mappe 71.

<sup>33</sup> Erklärung von Dietrich, Hertz and Juchacz, end of June 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 147, p. 602.

Probably for publicity reasons, the National Convention floated another proposal for cooptation, this time by fifty members. Juchacz replied that she would not be coopted. Somewhat unrealistically, she and her friends hoped that with some help from the Sopade the GLD would expand more democratically. She remonstrated with Vogel that the Sopade had "never urged an imitation of the London example" on the New York Social Democrats. This was the ultimate time for it.<sup>34</sup> Vogel answered ambivalently that "the old organizational distinctions of the time before Hitler or of the first period of the emigration ... have lost much of their old significance". Yet, he did not want to uphold the London example to the GLD because "our friends in the USA consider the same policy of cooperation as impossible for personal and objective reasons". He hoped that the cooptation plan would make it possible to "bury the old differences".<sup>35</sup> This was wishful thinking. The GLD did not even implement its limited plan.

The course of the National Convention and the GLD reports about it did not harmonize. Stampfer remarked that "on the surface", things went very well. There was "a strong sympathetic publicity". Ollenhauer was told that "several hundred comrades" attended the conference. This meant that, to his surprise, there were more Social Democratic emigrants in the United States than in England. Yet, there was still "no Landesgruppe (comprehensive group) of emigrant Social Democrats" as in England, possibly because many of the emigrants were in the process of

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<sup>34</sup> Juchacz to Sopade, 28 May 1943, EK Mappe 82.

<sup>35</sup> Vogel to Juchacz, 19 October 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 157, pp. 632, 633.

becoming American citizens. Ollenhauer wondered what they could do for the future SPD.<sup>36</sup> According to Leeb, there were one hundred thirty delegates and guests at the convention. Juchacz stated that there were sixty participants the first day and one hundred the second day. They came mainly from New York to a national convention in that city.<sup>37</sup> Some of them were older German Americans so that the organizers properly spoke of "German speaking" rather than German Social Democrats. There was also a limited number of American guests. The AFL was represented by a functionary from New York, the CIO not at all. Most of the European labor groups did not attend. Adler replied that he could not accept an invitation of only one German emigrant group. Most seriously, the National Convention revealed the disunity of the GLD.<sup>38</sup> There were two or three subgroups represented by Aufhäuser, Stampfer and Wachenheim. Aufhäuser, the one GLD chairman, left the conference before its conclusion because he disagreed with the summarization by Brauer, the other GLD chairman. These differences also expressed themselves in the conference stand on German reconstruction, which will be discussed later.

The National Convention was followed by a brief period of initiatives in the summer and fall of 1943. A delegation to Washington and two unsuccessful plans for further conferences constituted the extent of the GLD efforts after July 1943. Under these circumstances,

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<sup>36</sup> Ollenhauer to Kurt Heinig, 22 September 1943, EK Mappe 82; also: Ollenhauer to Katz, 18 October 1943, EK Mappe 82.

<sup>37</sup> Juchacz to Vogel, 20 August 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 155, pp. 625, 626.

<sup>38</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 14 July 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 151, p. 613.



GLD plans for reconstruction lacked a proper basis. The delegation consisted of the two GLD chairmen Brauer and Aufhäuser and of the executive secretary, Katz. On August 17, they discussed the results of the National Convention with Assistant Secretary of State Adolph Berle. They confused the latter with both the revolutionist and the gradualist approaches to German reconstruction. But they made it clear that the Social Democrats should play the major role in postwar Germany. They called themselves the representatives of the major German democratic forces of the past, present and future. They emphasized their role in the Weimar Republic and their "consistent war against Nazism" before 1933, a time when they actually had failed to perceive the seriousness of the National Socialist threat and were preoccupied with the enemy to the left. They expected the American government to ignore the other socialist emigrant groups as unreliable, even though the latter had been alert to the danger of National Socialism from the beginning.<sup>39</sup> But the Assistant Secretary did not commit himself. He told Aufhäuser later that "this government does not make a practice of sponsoring or otherwise giving official recognition to movements of the kind you propose, but rather permits them to lay their case before American public opinion". He referred the GLD chairman to his statement about American policy towards exiled leaders in general which had appeared in the press of August 30, that is, shortly after the visit of the GLD leaders in Washington. It based the American attitude on the precarious status

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<sup>39</sup> Aufhäuser, Brauer, Katz to Assistant Secretary of State Adolph A. Berle, 30 August 1943, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, p. 60.

of exile groups. Their degree of support at home could only be conjectured. Berle emphasized that "the decision upon their claims rests not in the hands of this government but in the hands of their own people".<sup>40</sup> He meant that the emigrants were of little value to the American government because they were supposed to have no constituency in their home countries.

The plan for the two conferences were designed to further establish the role of the GLD in postwar reconstruction even in competition with the Sopade. The GLD planned an international Social Democratic conference to follow up its National Convention. In early August it already tried to contact the Social Democratic group in Sweden without the mediation of the Sopade which had kept in close contact with the latter.<sup>41</sup> From Sweden it wanted to invite Fritz Tarnow, the chairman of the Exile Committee of the German Trade Unions and former vice president of the General German Trade Union Federation; Kurt Heinig, a former member of the Reichstag; and Emil Stahl, an SPD executive; from England, Vogel, Ollenhauer and Hans Gottfurcht, the leader of the German Trade Union Group; from Switzerland, Otto Braun, the former minister president of Prussia, and Wilhelm Högner, a former Bavarian minister of justice.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Assistant Secretary Berle to Aufhäuser, 2 October 1943, National Archives, Washington, State Department central files.

<sup>41</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 7 August 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 153, p. 617.

<sup>42</sup> Aufhäuser, Brauer, Katz to Assistant Secretary Berle, 30 August 1943, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, pp. 60-63.

The other conference was to consist of "representatives of all Democratic Germans", that is, representatives of the Democratic Party, the Center Party, and other "liberal groups". Among others, the GLD envisioned inviting from the United States Brüning, Oscar Meyer, the former president of the Democratic Party, Erich Koch-Weser, a Democratic Party member and former Reich Minister, and Paul Schwarz, the former German Consul in New York; from Canada, Spiecker and Treviranus, and, "possibly", from Switzerland, Joseph Wirth. These were all political figures of the past who played no more role in postwar Germany. The conference was to organize "a permanent Council of Free Democratic Germans".<sup>43</sup> It was to be a new Great Coalition similar to the Association of Free Germans which was only a national organization that had, however, not yet been dissolved. The plan for this Council was urgent because of the formation of the National Committee for a Free Germany in Moscow. According to Stampfer, the proclamation of the latter had had the effect in America of "a rock avalanche crashing into a pond".<sup>44</sup> The GLD hoped to benefit from this reaction. It even praised the Russian approach to German politics and expected the United States to give similar recognition to its emigrants. The prospective Council would not be a government in exile but it would "act as a trustee of German Democracy". It would have to maintain its independence from the American government but it could not function without "a certain

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 7 August 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 153, p. 618.

moral assistance from the United Nations, especially the United States".<sup>45</sup> The GLD also expected visas for the foreign delegates from the American government.

The latter responded cautiously to this plan of a Great Coalition, but still more positively than to the exclusively Social Democratic demands of August. The Division of European Affairs of the State Department welcomed the prospective Council. In a memorandum of September 4, it noted that "it had seemed that the German Social Democratic exiles would never pull themselves together sufficiently even to propose such an amalgamation and organization of their forces". The European Division viewed the proposal with favor "because any move which strengthens and consolidates any of the democratic and moderately left German elements will tend to aid us as we attack the problem of postwar Germany". The Social Democratic emigrants were "essentially friendly to us and ... represent the best of the Weimar elements". The memorandum noted favorably that "no anti-Prussians of the Förster type", nor any Bavarian separatists were included and that Sollmann, too, was omitted. It objected to Treviranus and Spiecker because of their past friendliness with Otto Strasser. It advised to influence the organizers not to include these two.<sup>46</sup>

But the State Department did not react to the NKFD as expected by the GLD. The European Division proposed to limit official support

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<sup>45</sup> Aufhäuser, Brauer, Katz to Berle, 30 August 1943, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, pp. 60-63.

<sup>46</sup> H. Freeman Matthews to Assistant Secretary Berle, 4 September 1943, memorandum, Division of European Affairs, State Department, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, p. 65.

of the prospective Council to a minimum "for one consideration". The latter might be "construed as an imitation of, and rival to, the 'National Committee' in Moscow". Even tacit American consent could lead to "irritating complaints vis-a-vis the Russians". The European Division believed that "careful handling on our part can probably obviate such an interpretation". But the State Department should only make "a rather routine acknowledgement" of the GLD memorandum. It should repeat the official policy which it had adopted in December 1941. The latter expressed only "a sympathetic interest in movements by aliens in this country". For this purpose, the government need "not go beyond watching the activities of this group [the GLD] with a sympathetic air". The State Department was glad "to have them keep in touch with us from time to time concerning their proposed activities".<sup>47</sup>

Because of the sensitivity of the issue for the alliance, the State Department wanted to obtain the views of the British government. A telegram to the American Embassy in London stated that the initiatives of the GLD could be "of advantage to us if handled in such a manner as to avoid disturbing our relations with the Soviet Union". The American ambassador Winant was instructed to tell the Foreign Office that "normally, we would be disposed to lend considerable encouragement to this group but ... we feel that at this time it is most important to avoid giving the impression that we are encouraging a possible rival to the Free German Committee in Moscow". The State Department believed that

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<sup>47</sup> H. Freeman Matthews to Berle, memorandum, Division of European Affairs, State Department, 7 September 1943, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, p. 67.

the United States and the United Kingdom should "follow the same line in regard to this matter".<sup>48</sup> It wanted to share the risk with the British government. It recommended, therefore, that "the German labor people in Great Britain" should be brought into this organization, which was not in the interest of the ambitious GLD. The Department thought that "it might even be possible to bring about cooperation between this group and the German Free Movement in Moscow".<sup>49</sup> Thus, the goals of the State Department ran exactly counter to those of the GLD. The latter was better off giving up its conference plans. Stampfer had told the Sopade from the beginning that he did not believe in the realization of these "very ambitious congress projects". In relation to the financial situation of the GLD, they appeared "nearly grotesque" to him.<sup>50</sup> But the failure of these plans could not easily be foreseen. Stampfer usually tried to sit on both chairs.

Without official recognition and without the necessary harmony and sense of purpose within itself, the GLD sombered through the last two years of the war which were important for reconstructive planning. A year later, Seger tried again to win government approval of an immigrant rather than an emigrant project. In September 1944, he proposed to Secretary of State Cordell Hull an Advisory Committee of former Germans. It would recommend administrative measures to the American occupation authorities. He believed that the latter needed such assist-

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<sup>48</sup> Department of State to American Embassy in London, 9 September 1943, National Archives, State Department central files.

<sup>49</sup> H. Freeman Matthews to Berle, 7 September 1943, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, p. 67.

<sup>50</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 21 October 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr.158, p. 635.

ance and would best get it from naturalized Americans like himself. His advice would be free from self-interest. He would no longer run the risk of being considered a Quisling by the German people, a worry which dominated most emigrant plans usually as a way of dealing with the American government. Seger and other naturalized emigrants would be mediators between the German people and the American government by explaining the measures of the military government to the German people and reporting back its reaction. They would also assist in de-Nazification, that is, they would recommend the proper personnel for the initial local administrations.<sup>51</sup> This proposal was very modest compared to former GLD ambitions. Seger was more interested in his own postwar political career in this country than in the GLD. He eventually became an adviser in the Nuremberg trials but his project as a whole was not accepted by the State Department.

With the failure of the plan for an international Social Democratic conference, the relationship between the GLD and the Sopade became dormant again. In May 1944, Ollenhauer remonstrated with Katz for not having received a letter since the beginning of the year, nor any information about the new Council for a Democratic Germany, which will be discussed in the last chapter.<sup>52</sup> The financial hopes of the Sopade were also disappointed. The GLD was unable and unwilling to mediate assistance for the Sopade. The latter had received its last

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<sup>51</sup>Seeger to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, 11 September 1944, memorandum, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, pp. 84-87.

<sup>52</sup>Ollenhauer to Katz, 18 May 1944, EK Mappe 83.

contribution from the JLC in May 1943. It had consisted of \$500 as the second part of an allocation of \$1,000 for 1942. This state of affairs was also due to JLC disinterest in the GLD. In addition, the JLC did not want to interfere in the affairs of the English Labor Party which had limited itself to supporting only one Sopade executive under pressure from its strong Vansittartist wing. During the first war years, the GLD had remained aloof from the Sopade and from the socialist emigrant groups in America in the hope of attaining a dominant position with the help of the American labor movement and the American government. During the last two war years it was no longer possible to rationalize the complete isolation of the GLD.

The GLD could not resolve its ideological differences which bedeviled its plans for reconstruction. This state of affairs had already become apparent in the speeches and resolutions of the National Convention which held both the revolutionist and the gradualist approach. The former was intended to cut the Gordian knot with a political revolution on whose liberal content there was an alleged popular consensus. The latter conceded that a socialist republic needed much time for preparation so that there would first have to be a military defeat and a total occupation of Germany. The former approach was conceived in terms of the revolutionary situation after the First World War which had not been due to the planning of the SPD. It had 'come' as the result of a popular state of mind. Supposedly, a repetition of this situation was nearly inevitable so that it was not so difficult to prove the existence of "the other Germany" and its readiness for a second republic. The general resolution of the National Convention



expressed emigrant solidarity with the European underground movement and hope for its early success before dealing with the United Nations and their victory which was also desirable.<sup>53</sup> The conference resolution on the future governmental structure of Germany stated that "the conference would welcome the outbreak of the revolution". This would demonstrate the German will of liberation "which the world could not refuse to respect".<sup>54</sup>

Especially Stampfer and Aufhäuser maintained the illusion of the revolutionary potential of the German workers. It could lead to a popular outburst as in 1918. Stampfer believed that "only a Social Democratic revolution can save the German people". He considered it "dangerously wrong to say today already that [the revolution] will not come". That would be arrogant. Stampfer returned the charge of illusion by calling "the belief that things could go back to normal after such a war without a revolution, an illusion, the saddest of them all". He maintained that the revolutionary soul of the German labor movement still existed despite the destruction of its organizational forms by Hitler. But the German workers needed Allied help. In its way stood the growing Vansittartism which had even taken hold of the British Labor Party. The latter's conference of June 1943, one month before the National Convention, had adopted an anti-German resolution

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<sup>53</sup> Resolution der Landeskonferenz deutschsprachiger Sozialdemokraten und Gewerkschaftler in den USA "zur politischen Lage", 4 July 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 149, p. 608.

<sup>54</sup> Resolution zum künftigen Staatsaufbau Deutschlands, Sozialdemokratische Landeskonferenz in New York, July 1943, Sammlung Kurt Glaser, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. I, pp. 83, 84.

which Stampfer had denounced furiously. He claimed that international socialist solidarity with the German workers had always had positive, if not definitive, results. The Second International helped build the League of Nations and secured German admission to the latter, as well as German reconciliation with France at Locarno. It had "dissolved, one after the other, the strong fetters of Versailles". A reorganized international would do even better after the Second World War. It was the only hope for world peace. It would be disastrous if "the blind nationalism which has succeeded in entering certain sections of the International" would interfere in a second German revolution in the way the communists interfered in the first one.<sup>55</sup>

The viewpoints of Katz and Grzesinsky also fit into the picture of a liberal German people with a revolutionary consciousness that would not need any specific leadership, not even that of the underground movement. In his correspondence, Katz liked to use the phrase of "the so-called German underground movement". If the latter did not amount to anything, its socialist and possibly pro-communist cadres could do no harm. Grzesinsky implied that the German workers would be more revolutionary if the Allies would commission the emigrants to enlighten them. He believed that the German people knew nothing about the National Socialist atrocities or about the attitude of the world towards Germany. It thought it was fighting a defensive war. Yet, Grzesinsky was convinced that "the great mass of the German people, especially the formerly organized workers, oppose the war and

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<sup>55</sup> Rede Stampfer's: "Der Wiederaufbau der Arbeiter - Internationale", 4 July 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 148, pp. 603-607.

the Nazi regime". But the National Socialist terror contained any opposition, down into the production cells of the armament industry. Nevertheless, he still hoped that "a revolutionary wave would arise from the people and sweep away the Nazi regime".<sup>56</sup> In its resolution addressed to the German people, the National Convention insisted that a military defeat was inevitable and called on the amorphous masses to "shake [Hitler] off! Liberate yourselves! ... You only need to have the will and you can shake off the Gestapo".<sup>57</sup> Many Social Democratic emigrants hoped that the German situation would turn into a revolution "before a soldier of the Allied powers stepped on German soil". They expected a combination of circumstances like military defeats, war weariness, psychological warfare and positive war aims such as the territorial integrity of Germany, to facilitate such a development. Then, the emigrants hoped that the Allies would stop their military advance and await the outcome of the German revolution. After that, they could offer "formal peace treaties" to a new German government.<sup>58</sup> This would have duplicated the events of 1918.

In the conflict between high expectations and actual developments, the Social Democratic attitude towards the Western Allies became uncertain. The GLD emigrants were generally happy with Allied military

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<sup>56</sup> Albert Grzesinsky: Die staatliche Neugestaltung Deutschlands, 3 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. I, pp. 105, 107, 112.

<sup>57</sup> Resolution XII: An das Deutsche Volk, Landeskonferenz, July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, p. 102.

<sup>58</sup> Resolution zum künftigen Staatsaufbau Deutschlands, 4 July 1943, Landeskonferenz, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, p. 83.

progress. They hoped that it would demoralize the National Socialist regime and disinhibit German discontent. In January 1943, the NVZ "wholeheartedly" welcomed the decision of unconditional surrender of the Casablanca Conference. The latter ruled out a deal with National Socialist Germany and contained "a definitive Allied plan of offensive", that is, a second front in the West.<sup>59</sup> Katz also approved air warfare. He welcomed the efficiency of Allied bombing which would destroy one industrial German town per mission, out of about fifty major towns. He realized that the bombs would not only hit factories but "innumerable houses with all their belongings [sic]". He approved of "this unavoidable side effect" which would bring about "a greater demoralization of the German social body" than mere industrial bombing.<sup>60</sup> Stampfer thought that psychological warfare would be more than a substitute for bombing.<sup>61</sup> The NVZ criticized the decisions of Casablanca for their silence on political and psychological warfare. In February 1943, Katz deplored the Allied tendency toward a national war instead of a war of liberation which would also benefit "the enslaved part of the German people". He considered "the collective hate against the enemy nations" as "a partial victory for Hitler". He had hoped for "something different" but he still had not given up on Washington and London.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 30 January 1943, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 29 May 1943, p. 4, and 12 June 1943, p. 4.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 11 March 1944, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 20 February 1943, p. 4.

Similar fears had surfaced during the National Convention. In its general resolution, the latter raised its "voice against any potential attempt to contain this movement", that is, the revolutionary movement in Germany.<sup>63</sup> Grzesinsky hoped that "the strong plutocratic circles of the democracies of the world will not tie the arms of the German people". The Social Democrats had been moderate in the revolution of 1918. They could have instituted "the dictatorship of the proletariat" but had preferred a democratic republic. With Allied help instead of obstruction, the first republic could have endured. The Western Allies had another chance. They should prepare for entering into contact with the "democratic opposition" in Germany and offer clear war aims. The United Nations should apply the Atlantic Charter to Germany without equivocation.<sup>64</sup> The Social Democratic emigrants did anything but admit their own historical mistakes.

The National Convention also planned for reconstruction in case of a total occupation of Germany. The resolutions considered this possibility only reluctantly in second place. But many of the plans were made for that eventuality. In the case of the latter, they proposed that "the German people be again given the opportunity for a democratic development", more precisely, the German labor movement

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<sup>63</sup>Resolution der Landeskonferenz "zur politischen Lage", 4 July 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 149, p. 609.

<sup>64</sup>Grzesinsky, Die staatliche Neugestaltung Deutschlands, die neue Reichsverfassung, 4 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, p. 127; also: ibid., Die staatliche Neugestaltung Deutschlands, pp. 104, 108-111.

beside a small democratic bourgeoisie, that exceptional part which had not compromised itself during the Third Reich.<sup>65</sup> Even without a revolution, the German labor movement had, in the opinion of the GLD planners, the resources for building a second republic. The Social Democratic Party and the unions would rebuild themselves fast from the local to the national level. In the past, the German labor movement had been "the only popular movement" that had supported democracy and the republic. They would again be "the pioneers of democracy in the state and in the economy". Aufhäuser asserted that "the collectivism of the German workers" had survived, despite Hitler and Himmler, in the productive units of the factories. There, the workers maintained their "community of destiny". On this basis, the postwar unions could be reconstructed without delay. With their practice in self-government and self-help, the workers would "prepare the foundation of the future democracy".<sup>66</sup> The Allies should not interfere in this development. Their occupation authorities should only be accorded secondary functions.

After the SPD and the unions, the civil administration could be rebuilt on all levels so that a central administration could be formed in a short time. It would perform the task of disestablishing the National Socialist administration without Allied help. Grzesinsky was especially explicit in his demands for purging the civil service on all

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<sup>65</sup> Resolution der Landeskonferenz "zur politischen Lage", 4 July 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 149, p. 608.

<sup>66</sup> Resolution zur Gewerkschaftsfrage, 4 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, pp. 90, 91.

levels. He also proposed special local courts for the trial of National Socialist criminals. In the face of the National Socialist extermination policy, his idea of the death penalty for crimes like severe physical mistreatment "with a hard object" sounded naive.<sup>67</sup> The central administration would cover all of Germany. The Social Democratic plans expected the same concessions from the Russians as from the Western Allies.

The other major task of the central administration would be the economic reconstruction of Germany. This administration would assume control of heavy industry, the chemical and electro-technical industry, the large banks and the large estates. This would be the special economic contribution of the second republic to a safer system. It would preclude the recurrence of a rise of reactionary forces with the help of monopoly capitalism. It would emphasize the production of consumer goods. Together with a policy of international economic cooperation, this would lay the economic basis for a peaceful Germany. A policy of "public works of a gigantic order" would help to bring about permanent full employment which would leave no appeal to potential reactionary groups.<sup>68</sup>

The National Convention had an interesting approach to emergency provisions. Resolution VIII expressed the fear of "civil war-like circumstances" and of "anarchy" in Germany if a revolution did not mater-

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<sup>67</sup> Grzesinsky, Die staatliche Neugestaltung Deutschlands, Einheitliche Besatzungsmethoden unter den Alliierten, 4 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, p. 120.

<sup>68</sup> Resolution zum Wiederaufbau der Wirtschaft, 4 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, pp. 88, 89.

ialize. The term of "anarchy" circumscribed the old Social Democratic fear of communism in case of severe economic distress. The resolution recommended "social security" as the best antidote.<sup>69</sup> For this purpose, the United States was expected to provide "the necessary food and clothing". For the implementation of this aid program, resolution XI offered the reorganization of the Konsum-Cooperatives. They could be an effective vehicle for the proper distribution of food and clothing.<sup>70</sup> Not even in this area of material dependency, were the Social Democratic emigrants willing to cede much control to the occupation forces.

They were especially sensitive on the question of educational reconstruction. Resolution III denied that the doctrine of National Socialism had had a devastating influence on the German people. It had only conquered "the mass of the party and of certain age groups". Grzesinsky hinted that the young adults would be one of these groups when he proposed to raise the voting age to twenty-five years. Yet, the convinced National Socialists of the 1920's and 1930's were, by then, between thirty-five and fifty years old. According to the resolution, not even the groups of the civil servants, the estate owners, the officers, and the capitalists were National Socialist-minded. They had only followed their own social interests. Under these circumstances, the task of reeducation did not require foreign intervention. It could only be "the job of the democratic Germans themselves, that is, essen-

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<sup>69</sup> Resolution betreffend Massnahmen zur Bekämpfung von Anarchie und Hunger, 4 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, pp. 94, 95.

<sup>70</sup> Resolution zur Wiedererrichtung freier Gewerkschaften, 4 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, p. 100.



tially of the workers". The Allies should impose neither a high commissioner of education nor foreign teachers on the German schools. The emigrants also rejected "the importation of finished textbooks of democratic indoctrination". In a reference to the moral failure of the academic class, the resolution proposed "a severe restriction of the higher schools and of the universities ... but the full maintenance of the Volksschulen (Public Grade Schools)". The universities would only be expanded after the children of the working class received equal access to them.<sup>71</sup>

To the Social Democratic solution of the German problem corresponded the internationalist solution of the European problem. The Social Democratic emigrants expected the rise of Social Democratic systems in other European countries. A European federation would safeguard the democratic participation of Germany in the new order. A new labor international would also be helpful. Any other solution than their own would lead to a third world war.<sup>72</sup> The emigrants used this argument frequently in order to impress their program on the American government. But the National Convention was unrealistic in its expectation that the Allies would content themselves with a secondary role after their victory and that either the American or the Russian government would favor a Social Democratic solution of the German or the European problem. The later Social Democratic plans for reconstruction

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<sup>71</sup>Resolution zur Erziehungsfrage, 4 July 1943, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, pp. 85-87.

<sup>72</sup>Resolution zum Wiederaufbau der Arbeiter-Internationale, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, pp. 92, 93.

were less rather than more flexible.

The memorandum which the GLD delegation handed to the Assistant Secretary of State after the National Convention offered both approaches to reconstruction without transition. The delegates told Berle that "the Nazis in Germany are today a minority". The anti-Hitler opposition included "all strata of the population" but "the industrial workers" constituted "the most active and powerful forces". They were engaged in "a single common effort against Nazism". Even without their organizations, "their spiritual fellowship" lived on. They were ready to take "direct action" against the Hitler regime in accordance with military developments. Information and encouragement from abroad could prepare them "for the day of the great decision". For this purpose, the American government and the United Nations should establish "democratic war and peace aims", mainly by reaffirming and clarifying the Atlantic Charter.<sup>73</sup>

Then followed the statement that ten years of Hitler dictatorship and terror destroyed the German democratic organizations. They had to rebuild "from the bottom up". The GLD delegates recommended to Berle the reestablishment of the former self-governing local authorities and of the local trade union organizations "immediately after the defeat of Hitlerism". They were tuned in enough to the sensitivities of the Assistant Secretary, not to mention the Social Democratic Party specifically. They claimed that the labor unions would not compete for

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<sup>73</sup> Aufhäuser, Brauer, Katz to Berle, 30 August 1943, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. Fb 225, pp. 60-63.

influence with other democratic groups like the Protestant or Catholic Churches. The implication was that the latter would be needed in a Great Coalition against communism. In this line, the GLD memorandum omitted the other German socialist emigrant groups in the United States. It also deplored that the German workers had to "endure day and night" the radio propaganda of Moscow in addition to that of Göbbels. It assured Berle, whose Department was sensitive to the alliance with Russia, that the NKFD in Moscow found "no response whatsoever" among the German workers who were interested in a democratic solution of the German problem.<sup>74</sup>

The GLD memorandum on the prospective conferences were less explicit about either approach. The conferences would be "an effective way of organizing the Democratic forces within Germany to cooperate successfully with the democratic forces of the United States". The Council of Free Democratic Germans would have the responsibility of "communicating with the German people, thereby expediting the downfall of the Nazi regime".<sup>75</sup>

The controversy over the two approaches continued for the remainder of 1943. It was carried on by both sides in the form of editorials in the NVZ in a rare exhibition of democratic debate. The advocates of the first approach consisted mainly of the editors of the NVZ: Stampfer, Katz, and Seger, including Aufhäuser, Fritz Karsen and others. To the proponents of the second approach belonged Fränkel,

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

Wickel, Hamburger, Marck, and Tejessy. Braunthal tried to conciliate between the two sides. According to Fränkel, the reconstruction of the German labor movement had to precede that of the second republic. But it would take a while until which time the republic should be postponed. German labor was too "disorganized" and "disillusioned" to attempt a revolution. He hoped that there would be no such attempt which could only fail and demoralize German labor more completely than it already was. The latter should be rebuilt "from below" under the settled circumstances of an Allied Military Government. The Social Democratic emigrants had the obligation of winning the American government over to such a pro-labor policy as "the only guarantee of a peaceful German development".<sup>76</sup> They should demonstrate to Washington the democratic development of Germany in historical perspective. American democracy had developed before the industrial age. The first German republic had depended largely on the support of labor. A memorandum of the AFL also pointed out these differences in an attempt to convince the American government of the importance of German labor for postwar democratic reconstruction.<sup>77</sup> Tejessy agreed with the strategy of rebuilding from below. He considered the German underground movement as too weak for a revolution.<sup>78</sup> Marck pointed out the difference between the First and the Second World War. In 1918, the German labor organizations had remained intact to replace the imperial system. After the

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<sup>76</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 18 September 1943, p. 7.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 25 September 1943, p. 1.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 16 October 1943, p. 5.

Second World War, there would be "an unprecedented anarchy" which would preclude a repetition of 1918.<sup>79</sup> This group was mainly interested in the social or socialist aspects of reconstruction which would require planning and preparation. It also conceded that the Western Allies could not unilaterally determine postwar policy in Germany.

Katz was not interested in a social revolution which was "improbable" and "unnecessary" for the limited socialization of Social Democratic reconstruction. The latter involved only a few thousand families in a population of seventy million. He thought that "a normal democratic regime" could effect this change. He rejected the fear that a victorious Soviet Union would have a controlling influence in postwar Germany. He believed that the only way to prevent that was a political revolution which would take place automatically. He regarded the approach of Fränkel as the product of "a defeated mind". Katz was indignant about the argument that 1918 could not be repeated because the German labor movement was destroyed by Hitler. He considered this state of affairs as negligible because it was easily repairable. He thought that Fränkel could not find "the proper proportion for the defeat of the German workers since 1933". His antagonist had a "complex of destructedness". In the view of Katz, "an interruption of ten years [was] , historically speaking, relatively short". He claimed that "the political conviction" of the German workers in their totality

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 30 October 1943, p. 3.

had remained "essentially the same". They could be reorganized "in a few months".<sup>80</sup>

In this spirit, Katz praised American journalists like Walter Lippmann and Dorothy Thompson. The former opposed a total occupation and an Allied Military Government for Germany. He recommended to control only strategic centers and leave Germany to itself.<sup>81</sup> Thompson warned that an Allied occupation would prevent a civil war between National Socialists and antifascists, and thereby hinder the natural development of "a historical process". Germany could be better supervised from her frontiers.<sup>82</sup> This strategy would also keep the Russians out of Germany, which was the main interest of the GLD. But the State Department did not want to affront the Russians. It also distrusted a Social Democratic kind of revolution.

The GLD Social Democrats could not indefinitely hold out for a German revolution. Eventually, Stampfer conceded his error in a curious overstatement, full of bitterness. In October 1944 he told a meeting of the SDF in Chicago that "there is in Germany no power of the workers at all. ... The German workers are nothing but mute slaves". Most of them were in the army. The factories which Stampfer had previously considered as the cells that preserved the Social democratic tradition were "crowded with foreign slave workers". He pointed out that even

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 2 October 1943, p. 1; also: 25 September 1943, p. 3.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 9 October 1943, p. 4, reporting on an article by Walter Lippmann in the New York Herald Tribune of 5 October 1943.

<sup>82</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 16 October 1943, p. 1.

the revolution of 1918 took place only after military defeat.<sup>83</sup> In a NVZ article, he discussed these "destroyed illusions". He conceded that "the revolution which was necessary to save Germany and which is still necessary if Germany is ever to have another chance of recovery, did not take place". As a consequence of this failure, "the Allied camp [advocated] the recipes ... of the old nationalist and imperialist power politics".<sup>84</sup>

Katz could not admit his error directly. For a long time he was at no loss for apologies. He claimed that "popular movements against a modern despotic regime can only become visible at the moment of its demise". He compared this situation to the pressure of vapor that becomes apparent only when the boiler explodes. Accordingly, he still considered all criticism about the absence of signs for a German revolution as "superficial and, in nucleo, wrong".<sup>85</sup> He blamed the absence of Allied war aims and of psychological warfare for the delay of the predicted explosion and pointed out the dilemma of the anti-fascists in Germany. Every German was partially loyal to his government and vacillated between loyalty and rejection, opposition and rebellion. As a result, "this majority of the inner-German antifascists upholds by and large ... the line desired by Hitler. [It] plays automatically the game of the Nazis".<sup>86</sup> This kind of rationalization was

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<sup>83</sup> Rede Stampfers vor der Social Democratic Federation in Chicago, 29 October 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 170, p. 671.

<sup>84</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 2 September 1944, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 29 January 1944, p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 25 December 1943, p. 4.

not unusual for Katz. He raved about the revolutionary German masses and welcomed the bombing of the German cities where they lived. He blamed the Allies for the absence of a German revolution. They did not do enough to convert the undecided Germans so that they were justly punished by "an unbroken German fighting spirit". In February 1945, he predicted that the end of Hitler would come "in October 1945 rather than in July ... or in April". If the Allies wanted a quicker end, they would have to rely on "the rest of the German people. ... from that corner could start any day the collapse of the whole Hitler structure".<sup>87</sup> Yet, in his postwar memoirs, Katz claimed that the emigrants had "no illusions about how slim ... the chances were for an overthrow attempt".<sup>88</sup>

With the National Convention, the GLD finalized its attitude towards the other socialist emigrant groups. It maintained its comprehensive claim of representing the whole German labor movement, including the unions. This was crucial because its main American sponsorship was union based. The latter consisted of the JLC and the AFL. But this arrangement was challenged in the summer of 1944 by the attempt of Aufhäuser and Hertz of organizing a German Trade Union Delegation (GTUD) in collaboration with the International Federation of Trade Unions, of which the AFL was a member. The latter was not satisfied with the GLD which cared even less about unionist emigrants than it did about Social Democratic emigrants. Towards the end of the war, it made plans for

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 14 October 1944, p. 4.

<sup>88</sup> Katz, Memoiren, Nachlass Stampfer, part I, section 9, Nr. 442.



the reconstruction of the European trade union movement. It became interested in a separate German trade union representation in the United States and initiated its formation.

The general secretary of the IFTU, Schevenels, acted in collusion with Hans Gottfurcht, who had formed the Landesgruppe deutscher Gewerkschafter in Gross Britannien (exile group of German trade unionists in Great Britain). Its office was in the building of the IFTU in London. Gottfurcht was not on the best terms with the only other emigrant unionist group, the Landesgruppe deutscher Gewerkschafter (exile group of German trade unionists) in Sweden, under Fritz Tarnow who was also the president of the Exile Committee of the German Trade Unions and a former vice president of the General German Trade Union Federation. With a cooperative exile group in America, Gottfurcht could represent the German unionist emigration better with the IFTU which in turn would have a bigger voice in the reconstruction of the German unions. Gottfurcht approached Schevenels in March 1944 about the formation of a German Trade Union Delegation in the United States.<sup>89</sup> Later, Schevenels attended a conference of the International Labor Office, a League of Nations adjunct, in Philadelphia. There he met with Aufhäuser, Hertz, and a few other unionist emigrants. He commissioned them to organize a trade union committee as a liaison body between the IFTU and the American union federations, especially with the AFL.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Hans Gottfurcht to Katz, 30 October 1944, Nachlass Plettl, Archiv des Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes.

<sup>90</sup> Aufhäuser to Werter Kollege, 15 September 1944, Nachlass Plettl.

Despite his promise of also visiting the GLD in New York, he made the mistake of ignoring the Social Democratic committee. It was safe to work with Aufhäuser who figured as "the man of Gottfurcht"<sup>91</sup> and with whom the conservative Tarnow had refused to cooperate in the late 1930's. The latter was not well informed about the plans for a GTUD in the United States. He had to be updated by Ollenhauer.<sup>92</sup>

After their meeting with Schevenels, Aufhäuser and Hertz organized a preliminary meeting of prospective members on 25 June 1944.<sup>93</sup> Gottfurcht and Schevenels expressed their strong support of these efforts. The latter agreed with the composition of the GTUD and "strongly advised that your committee should be set up immediately as an advisory committee to the International Federation of Trade Unions and to the American trade union organizations in view of solving our mutual problem of the reconstruction of free trade unions in Germany". He also enjoined the prospective GTUD repeatedly "to collaborate closely and permanently" with the exile group of Gottfurcht.<sup>94</sup> After these preliminaries, Aufhäuser and Hertz invited a wider circle of unionists to join the GTUD and to voice their opinions in a second meeting on September 23 about this new "subsidiary of the IFTU".<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., Plett1 to Katz, 4 December 1944.

<sup>92</sup> Ollenhauer to Tarnow, 19 February 1945, EK Mappe 83.

<sup>93</sup> Aufhäuser, Hertz to Schevenels, 15 July 1944, Nachlass Plett1.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., International Federation of Trade Unions, Schevenels to Aufhäuser, 18 August 1944.

<sup>95</sup> Aufhäuser, Hertz to Schevenels, 15 July 1944.

The GLD took immediate steps to abort the formation of this new unionist committee. When it received from Hertz and Aufhäuser the list of the prospective GTUD members whom it had neglected until then, it asked the latter to join the Labor Delegation. Among them were Martin Plettl, Paul Levi, and Willi Snell. Plettl was amazed about the change in the GLD attitude towards "unionists and out of town people not wanted". But he made clear his strict anti-communism and his opposition to Aufhäuser, which made him accept the invitation of the GLD. He expected Schevenels to understand why "I and all my well known German unionist friends do not want to collaborate with Aufhäuser". The latter was "an ingrained opportunist" and separatist who had organized the Independent White Collar Workers' Federation in the Weimar Republic, and prevented the ADGB from becoming the comprehensive German union federation. In the Czechoslovakian emigration, he had opposed the Sopade with his group of the Revolutionary Socialists of Germany.<sup>96</sup> He had not been wanted in the GEADE. Plettl expected "the fellow traveler of today" to become "the communist of tomorrow" if "the present chances of Stalin" last, that is, a Morgenthau policy which would lead inevitably to the Bolshevization of Germany.<sup>97</sup> The attitude of Levi and Snell towards the GTUD was moderate.

The GLD also wanted Ollenhauer to oppose the GTUD and to put pressure on Gottfurcht and Schevenels. But the Sopade did not want a conflict with the IFTU and with the German unionist group in England.

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<sup>96</sup> Plettl to Schevenels, 4 December 1944, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., Plettl to Katz, 16 November 1944.

Ollenhauer considered "a purely negative attitude not as useful".<sup>98</sup>

The Sopade itself coexisted with a separate union representation. In the United States, also, such a group could do "useful work". It would be "appropriate that the members of our GLD ... join the [unionist] representation". Ollenhauer hoped that the GLD would establish "good friendly and neighbourly relations from the beginning" even though the GLD would have to readjust its identity. He considered this advice to be in the interests of postwar reconstruction and of the need for a consensus between unionists and Social Democrats.<sup>99</sup>

The GLD complained that the Sopade did not understand the emigrant situation in America. There was "no indication whatsoever why the German Labor Delegation should not be considered as the representative of the old free German Labor Movement in USA, either by the AFL or by the IFTU".<sup>100</sup> The GTUD was organized by Aufhäuser for aims that were "strictly personal". He had left the GLD for the Council for a Democratic Germany where he was a member of the executive committee and chairman of the labor subcommittee. The formation of the GTUD was his way of winning AFL recognition for the Council.<sup>101</sup> This had to be done surreptitiously because the AFL was anticommunist. But it was clear that Aufhäuser pursued a United Front policy and was "apparently

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<sup>98</sup> Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 17 August 1944, Nachlass Stampfer, part II, section 18, Nr. 89.

<sup>99</sup> Ollenhauer to Katz, 17 August 1944, EK Mappe 83.

<sup>100</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 16 September 1944, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>101</sup> Katz to Gottfurcht, Ollenhauer, 5 October 1944, EK Mappe 44; also: Stampfer to Sopade, 14 October 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 169, pp. 668, 669.

selected by the Moscowites to become the successor of Rosenfeld in the United States".<sup>102</sup> He made this "competitive maneuver" only "in order to shine in the Tillich Committee [CDG] as chairman of the unionist group".<sup>103</sup> In the end, "the whole thing ... seems to be invented by Tillich and Hagen".<sup>104</sup> The Council was the prime target of the GLD. According to Katz, the latter objected only to cooperation with communists. If Aufhäuser left the CDG the GLD would cooperate with his unionist group.<sup>105</sup>

Other arguments were equally contradictory. Katz argued that the GTUD was a political rather than a unionist committee. It brought together Social Democratic emigrants with members of the splinter groups. In this capacity, it was unnecessary because there was already the Council for the Underground Labor Movement in the Axis dominated countries of Europe. This was the already discussed AFL advisory group whose German contingent comprised emigrants like Brauer for the GLD, Hertz for NB, Hans Hacke for the SAP, and Eva Lewinski for the ISK.<sup>106</sup> Yet, Katz had denied previously that this group had any political significance and was anything more than a bureaucratic channel for the distribution of promised AFL funds. The GTUD supposedly also jeopard-

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<sup>102</sup> Katz to Plettl, 18 October 1944, Nachlass Plettl; also: Katz to Ollenhauer, 11 November 1944, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>103</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 14 October 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 169, pp. 668, 669.

<sup>104</sup> Katz to Schevenels, 9 October 1944, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>105</sup> Ollenhauer to Katz, 16 November 1944, EK Mappe 83.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

dized the German benefits from a one million dollar AFL fund for postwar reconstruction. But Ollenhauer still considered it "more appropriate" for the unionist members of the GLD to participate in the GTUD.<sup>107</sup>

Schevenels and Gottfurcht also maintained their support of the GTUD. The former insisted that the GTUD was "set up at my request and by no means on the initiative of the Council for a Democratic Germany or any labor subcommittee". He had demanded that the GTUD be "absolutely non-political" and open to all unionist emigrants. The IFTU had "never considered that the German Labor Delegation had any representative character whatsoever from the trade union point of view". The unionist emigration needed a separate American group in preparation for unionist reconstruction. The GLD had "never drawn a clear distinction between political and trade union representation".<sup>108</sup> This view of Schevenels was sound despite his inept handling of the issue. The GLD claimed trade union representation only for its own political purposes. Gottfurcht was upset about the attitude of Katz who could not be deterred by any explanation.<sup>109</sup>

The GTUD needed the recognition of the AFL which accepted, however, the interpretation of the GLD. Matthew Woll, a vice president of the AFL and chairman of the AFL committee on international labor relations and union reconstruction, settled the issue with Schevenels. His examination of the GLD material convinced him that the GTUD was

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<sup>107</sup> Ollenhauer to Stampfer, 5 December 1944, EK Mappe 83.

<sup>108</sup> Schevenels to GLD, 24 October 1944, Nachlass Plett1.

<sup>109</sup> Gottfurcht to Katz, GLD, 30 October 1944, EK Mappe 45.

planned as "a communist front subsidiary to the Council for a Democratic Germany, a Popular Front organization ... corresponding to the Committee for a Democratic Germany set up in Moscow [the National Committee for a Free Germany]". He believed that the GTUD was "set up solely for the purpose of facilitating [the] capture by the Communist Party" of the postwar trade union movement in Germany. He told Schevenels that the AFL endorsement of the GLD was still valid and urged him to withdraw his endorsement of "the proposed Aufhäuser delegation".<sup>110</sup> When the efforts of the GLD and the AFL deterred a certain number of prospective members from joining the GTUD, Schevenels defined this as "a serious setback". Yet, Sollmann, for example, was willing to join the GTUD under the condition that it had nothing to do with the CDG.<sup>111</sup> Snell had joined the GLD but urged the latter to cooperate with the GTUD. Schevenels attempted to change the minds of the reluctant unionists. They were to receive copies of his correspondence which separated the GTUD from the CDG. Aufhäuser and Hertz carried out this assignment,<sup>112</sup> which Katz considered only as a "face saving" device. In the face of AFL opposition, Schevenels admitted that he could do no more than "register that, for the time being, it is impossible to have such a German representation in the USA".<sup>113</sup> Katz felt reassured. According

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<sup>110</sup> Matthew Woll, AFL to Schevenels, 9 November 1944, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>111</sup> Sollmann to Ollenhauer, 11 October 1944, EK Mappe 122.

<sup>112</sup> Aufhäuser, Hertz to Werter Kollege, 12 January 1945, Nachlass Plettl.

<sup>113</sup> Schevenels to GLD, 11 December 1944, Nachlass Plettl.

to him, the support of the IFTU was "for us, relatively worthless". It was doubtful whether the latter would survive the war for long. He did not believe either that the CIO would later recognize the GTUD. The former might even prefer the GLD to the latter. The Labor Delegation, itself, still intended to gain CIO recognition. It had temporized only in order to protect its relations with the AFL.<sup>114</sup>

After the Conference of Teheran, the isolation of the GLD grew. In a reaction to the conference decisions, the Social Democratic committee turned its propaganda against the United Nations. Inter-Allied negotiations were signs of inter-Allied territorial deals at the expense of Germany. The GLD might as well have been suspicious of the British and the American government. But with all hope for a German revolution gone, the Social Democratic emigrants had to rely exclusively on the Western Allies. They chose to ignore rumors about Western plans for a decentralization of Germany which had surfaced in early 1943. They could not know that, at Teheran, the United States had actually submitted a plan for partition which was only shelved because the Allies could not agree on any method of partition. In particular, Russia disliked it because the industrial centers in whose exploitation she wanted to share lay in Western Germany. In its dilemma, the GLD preferred to see the territorial questions of Germany only in terms of the Russian appetite. At the time of the final battle for Germany, it proposed a change in the United Nations alliance. Its attitude towards Russia was a mixture of inferiority and superiority feelings.

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<sup>114</sup>Katz to Snell, 27 January 1945, Nachlass Plettl.



Katz claimed in his memoirs that the Social Democratic emigrants did "not consider it inevitable that Moscow had to be conceded such a strong influence in the reconstruction of Germany".<sup>115</sup> Stampfer asked the editorial question: "Must Germany become Russian?"<sup>116</sup> He answered it with the proposal for an Atlantic community. He claimed that there was "in Europe from Poland to Portugal, a strong feeling of belonging together with [America], because the awareness of an Atlantic civilization is alive, because the only thing which connects these mutually antagonistic and resentful nations is the common sympathy for America -- and the respect for America".<sup>117</sup> Thus, Western Europe could only derive cohesion from a common anticommunism under the aegis of the United States. The latter was to be the mediator of "a Europe west of the Russian border". In its role of a disinterested and objective referee, it could clear up all territorial questions in Europe to the satisfaction of everybody including Germany. The latter would be "democratic and peaceful ... in close relation with Western civilization".<sup>118</sup> In the opinion of Stampfer, the Soviet Union needed not be afraid of a Western Europe since Russia would remain for a long time the strongest military power on the two continents of Europe and Asia. Under these circumstances, there was also no need for "a violent confrontation

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., Nr. 444.

<sup>116</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 30 December 1944, p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> Artikel Stampfers in der NVZ vom 14. August 1943: "America muss bereit sein", Matthias and Link, Nr. 154, p. 622.

<sup>118</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 9 March 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 161, p. 643.

between communists and Social Democrats in Germany".<sup>119</sup> Germany and Western Europe would be neither Americanized nor Russified.<sup>120</sup> Yet, the postwar world would be global. Stampfer did expect America to neutralize Russia in Europe for the benefit of Germany which would eventually become, again, the strongest country there.

In order to be ready for its role of a detached protector of Europe, the United States would have to change its attitude towards Russia. Stampfer asserted that alliances are only meant to last for a certain time and that the end of a war was normally also the time for confrontations between the victors. He did not believe that the future peace could be founded on a big power alliance. It required "an international democratic order", that is, the end of the wartime alliance with Russia. The latter could be neither a member of a future "democratic federation of the world" nor of one of the subgroups of "a democratic federation of Europe".<sup>121</sup> This meant the isolation of Russia from these two anticommunist federations. Some articles of the NVZ discussed more moderate solutions of the German problem. They were written by outsiders or Americans. Hans von Hentig foresaw a postwar world of two superpowers in which Germany would play a minor role resembling neutralism of the Swiss type.<sup>122</sup> Dorothy Thompson thought

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<sup>119</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 2 June 1945, p. 1.

<sup>120</sup> Artikel Stampfers vom 14. August 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 154, p. 622.

<sup>121</sup> Rede Stampfers vor der SDF in Chicago, 29 October 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 170, pp. 680-683.

<sup>122</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 8 January 1944, p. 1.

that such neutralism could prevent a division of Germany.<sup>123</sup>

In their anticipation of a Cold War, some Social Democrats drew parallels with the early Western attitude towards Hitler. Stampfer claimed that the Western democracies were as soft towards Russia in 1944 as they had been towards Hitler in 1939. He was afraid that "the consequences will not only be the same but much worse". Eastern Europe would be lost to the Russians who would also "play the first violin in Berlin" in case of an occupation of Germany. The Anglo-Saxons would eventually only have the alternatives of retreating from the continent or confronting the Soviet Union. There was no sense in an appeasement of Russia. If the Western democracies kept shirking their anticommunist duties, there might be "no other road for Germany than the road to Moscow".<sup>124</sup> The warnings by Seger were more timely. He waited until June 1945 before emphasizing the growing spread of rumors about a war between Russia and the United States. He noted that the State Department considered them intense enough to respond with an official denial of any such plan. Seger did not fully believe the assurances of the liberal Assistant Secretary of State, Archibald McLeish, that a continued American Russian cooperation was not in doubt.<sup>125</sup>

By late 1944 and early 1945, the Social Democratic emigrants could no longer ignore the changes in the American attitude and in

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 2 September 1944, p. 1.

<sup>124</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 30 August 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 165, p. 657.

<sup>125</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 2 June 1945, p. 1.

American policy towards Germany.<sup>126</sup> They vented their frustration in bitter denunciations but they could not come to terms with these developments because they had no alternative to reliance on the United States in their plans for postwar reconstruction. According to Seger, the American public had reacted negatively to the Morgenthau Plan in the summer of 1943. By the summer of 1945, he acknowledged that a large proportion of public opinion approved of a severe treatment of Germany. He defined the agreements of Potsdam as "a compromise between the reconstruction of Germany and the policy of retribution which a large part of American public opinion demanded".<sup>127</sup> Stampfer was stunned by what he called "a mass conversion to Vansittartism". He noted with surprise that "the unexpected becomes reality".<sup>128</sup> He reacted very bitterly to this change. When President Hutchinson of the University of Chicago, in a graduation speech, termed the German and the Japanese people as fully responsible for the war crimes, he wrote about "the conquest of the United States by Hitler".<sup>129</sup> The German Americans were of no help either. They could be won over neither to the anti-fascist cause nor to the patriotic cause of German territorial integrity. In the view of Stampfer, "Germany has lost nothing and America has gained nothing in these people".<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 2 September 1944, p. 1.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 11 August 1945, p. 1.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 2 September 1944, p. 1.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 23 June 1945, p. 1.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 4 November 1944, p. 1.

In their state of impotence, some GLD members resorted to threats about the disastrous consequences of the wrong postwar policy. When Churchill declared in February 1944, that the Atlantic Charter did not apply to the enemies of the United Nations, Stampfer predicted that no German would accept any annexations. Differences of opinion would arise only over the methods of restoring lost territories. These methods could be peaceful or violent but the advocates of revenge would probably win out within "twenty, thirty, fifty years".<sup>131</sup> Stampfer thought that there would be only "an interim of exhaustion" which would not last very long.<sup>132</sup> A dismemberment of Germany would mean "a catastrophe for all mankind. For, if you divide Germany into ten pieces you will have, some years later, ten Hitlers instead of one."<sup>133</sup> This nationalist reaction would operate in alliance with the Russian Bolsheviks. Also, an unfair treatment of Germany might lead directly to world domination by Russia. Vogel termed the expression of a German nationalist desire for revenge as idiotic. He made concessions to emigrants who felt compelled to deal realistically with Russia. He hoped that Stampfer and the GLD emigrants would understand if the Sopade participated in a general emigrant representation which included catholics, protestants, and communists.<sup>134</sup> In his opinion, the NVZ did

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 26 February 1944.

<sup>132</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 30 August 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 165, p. 657.

<sup>133</sup> Rede Stampfers vor der SDF in Chicago, 29 October 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 170, pp. 672, 681.

<sup>134</sup> Vogel to Stampfer, 15 December 1943, Matthias and Link, Nr. 159, p. 638.

not contain everything that he thought about the wide field of Russia and communism.<sup>135</sup>

In response to the decisions at Yalta and Potsdam, some GLD emigrants became anti-American. Stampfer complained that Germany was not only victimized by the territorial imperialism of Russia, but also by "the commercial imperialism of America and England", which intended to eliminate German economic competition.<sup>136</sup> He termed the plans for the transfer of populations from German Eastern territories as insane and blamed the Western Allies for their cooperation.<sup>137</sup> To him, Potsdam was "a peace of dictatorship and of dictates", not a democratic, permanent peace.<sup>138</sup> For Seger, who was then an American citizen, Potsdam was "not the realization of the principles for whose vindication we carried on the war against fascism and National Socialism".<sup>139</sup> After the war, Stampfer proclaimed that Social Democracy would not capitulate to the victors of the Second World War.<sup>140</sup> Suddenly, he stopped limiting himself to American political terms and remembered his socialist vocabulary. In October 1944, Stampfer had already proposed "some decisive steps in the direction of planning and étatism" for the

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<sup>135</sup> Vogel to Stampfer, Nachlass Stampfer, part II, section 17, Nr. 28.

<sup>136</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 14 July 1945, p. 1.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 18 March 1944, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 11 August 1945, p. 1.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Artikel Stampfers in der NVZ vom 8. Mai 1948: "Nach drei Jahren: Wir kapitulieren nicht!", Matthias and Link, Nr. 187, pp. 729, 730.

European postwar economy. He thought that "it may be the historical task of Germany to prove that a system of state ownership and planning can be executed without hurting human rights and personal freedom".<sup>141</sup> After Potsdam, he claimed more resentfully that "the American stereotype of a private economy does not befit a people like the German people". The reconstruction of Germany and Europe could, in his opinion, "almost only be executed in the Social Democratic spirit". Germany had to go "her own way between the American and the Russian way".<sup>142</sup> Shortly before his return to Germany in 1948, he philosophized that Western civilization predated capitalism and would survive it. He saw the Social Democrats as the defenders of this civilization. They would "capitulate neither to 'Wall Street' nor to the Kremlin". Against Wall Street, they would defend "the rights of Europe to be as socialist as it desires to be in its own interests".<sup>143</sup> Seger and Katz were equally disappointed but they were more careful in their public statements.

The editorial attitudes of the NVZ could not escape official notice. At the German Desk of the OWI, Hans Hoffmann was upset about the nationalism of the NVZ. He scored the excitement about the possibility of losing "an inch of holy German soil", in the case of his memorandum, the city of Eupen on the German Belgian border. When the NVZ called its communist detractors the "Moscow Nazis", Hoffmann

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<sup>141</sup> Rede Stampfers vor der SDF in Chicago, 29 October 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 170, pp. 681, 682.

<sup>142</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 21 July 1945, p. 1.

<sup>143</sup> Artikel Stampfers in der NVZ vom 8. Mai 1948, Matthias and Link, Nr. 187, pp. 729, 730.

recommended the term of "New York Nazis" for the NVZ emigrants. He regretted the concentration on territorial issues by "men with an originally true socialist and anti-Nazi background". He suggested to revoke the NVZ license for the POW camps. The "vicious" propaganda of the NVZ would only strengthen the National Socialist mentality of the German prisoners.<sup>144</sup> Hoffmann regretted that the OWI had no legal means of stopping NVZ circulation among German Americans. He also scored the anti-Russianism of the NVZ which was, in his opinion, partially caused by the territorial losses in the East. He deplored this unpatriotic attitude at a time when the Russian armies were needed to defeat Germany.<sup>145</sup> Otherwise, the government continued to ignore the GLD.

Despite Social Democratic exasperation, the Easter Declaration of the GLD was more realistic. It was the only official follow-up program on reconstruction since 1943. The occupation of Germany was then already a fact. The Declaration proposed only moderation and certain arrangements which were designed to prevent a division of Germany. It warned against completely separate zones of occupation and recommended unlimited authority for the central Allied control commission with regional interallied control commissions in all parts of Germany, including the East. In this way, the Russians would have to share any occupational authority and would always be outnumbered.

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<sup>144</sup> Hans Hoffmann (OWI) to Achilles N. Sakell, 23 September 1944, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, vol. FB 225, p. 88.

<sup>145</sup> Hoffmann to Sakell, 12 September 1944, IfZ, vol. Fb 225, p. 90.



This state of affairs should end as soon as possible with the establishment of a new German democratic government.<sup>146</sup> The Easter Declaration opposed the cession of Eastern or Western territories that had belonged to the Weimar Republic without the consent of the populations involved. Beyond this primary concern, it dealt with industrial reconstruction which was closely related to territorial integrity. It wanted industrial restriction limited to the purpose of ensuring German disarmament without eliminating any branch of production like heavy industry. For a European recovery, German reparations alone would be insufficient. They should be gauged to German economic capacity which would be very low for some time to come. They should also be made "for a limited time only". The GLD advocated reparations in kind in order to ensure German and international financial stability. The GLD opposed explicitly the dismantling of factories and the removal of machinery.<sup>147</sup>

With its Easter Declaration, the GLD found even less response than in 1943. It was completely isolated. With the war nearly over, the State Department was even less interested in emigrant groups than before. It stated that it was "our policy now to play down these movements and not to get involved in them if we can help it". As a measure of GLD weakness, the State Department was only concerned about the survival of the Social Democratic committee within the socialist emigration. It noted that the Council for a Democratic Germany held "a considerably stronger position than the German Labor Delegation" which

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<sup>146</sup> Ostern 1945: Erklärung der German Labor Delegation, Matthias and Link, Nr. 173, pp. 691-693.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 692.

had refused to join in the emigrant coalition. It considered the GLD "at present ... too weak to offer much more than a target for attack". It hoped that with sufficient AFL support the GLD could recover and become a stronger element in the emigrant discussions on German reconstruction.<sup>148</sup>

The sponsor groups of the GLD also withdrew in an atmosphere of rising anti-Germanism. The latter could not fail to affect the Jewish Labor Committee because it was intensified by the revelations about the National Socialist extermination camps. The GLD expressed little regret over these facts. It resented only the harm which their revelation could do to its theory of "the other Germany". In early 1945, the NVZ, including Stampfer who was Jewish, believed that these revelations were mainly propaganda. Hans von Hentig explained that the heaps of corpses on the released pictures could be German Christians, victims of Allied bombardments or of a typhoid epidemic in occupied Germany.<sup>149</sup> Katz resented "the agitation of certain circles" after the discovery of the inhumanities in the camps. He reported about "a counter campaign" by the GLD, that is, a declaration by Americans like Varian Fry, Oscar Garrison Villard, and Alvin Johnson, against the identification of National Socialists and Germans.<sup>150</sup> Katz complained that the GLD had "enormous difficulties with the Morgenthau wing of the JLC". But

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<sup>148</sup> State Department, memorandum on the relations of the GLD to the AFL, 23 May 1944, National Archives, State Department central files.

<sup>149</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 9 June 1945, p. 4.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

he explained that the resentment of the latter was based on "'irrational feeling' that will disappear in a few months".<sup>151</sup> But under the circumstances, the JLC was not in a mood of making financial pledges to the GLD for the reconstruction of the German labor movement.

The AFL would rather deal with the postwar German labor movement directly. It was interested in conservative unions but not in a Social Democratic party. In the spring of 1944 already, Matthew Woll wanted to use the attitude of the State Department as an alibi for withholding support from the GLD. For this purpose, he wanted to discuss GLD aid with the European Affairs Division. The latter understood that the AFL had "a lessening inclination to contribute financially to the German Labor Delegation". It advised against an involvement in the affairs of the GLD, which suited the AFL.<sup>152</sup>

Under these circumstances, the Easter Declaration elicited no echo. It was a document for the historical record as Grzesinsky, the former GLD chairman, pointed out. He was then associated with the Council for a Democratic Germany together with Aufhäuser, one of his GLD successors. They no longer recognized the GLD as the full Social Democratic representation in the United States. The former thought that the Easter Declaration could have been a new start if it had been

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<sup>151</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 17 November 1945, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>152</sup> State Department, memorandum on the relations of the GLD to the AFL, 23 May 1944, National Archives, State Department central files.

signed "by everybody", that is, by the other socialist and non-socialist emigrant groups.<sup>153</sup> Despite its isolation, however, the GLD was not in a conciliatory mood. It wanted to say what it had to say whether anybody would listen or not.

The Easter Declaration was still based on the GLD interpretation of the theory of "the other Germany". Thus, it rejected the idea of collective responsibility as a justification for punishment in the form of unfavorable settlements.<sup>154</sup> F. W. Wagner polemicized in the NVZ against the suggestion of Marck that Germany serve the penalties imposed by the Allies slowly and fully.<sup>155</sup> The best way of defying collective notions would be the trial of the National Socialist criminals in special German courts. The GLD fought with all possible arguments the threats to its solution of the German problem. It still wanted a replay of the liberal approach of 1918. Stampfer saw "no signs of re-awakening mass movements except of the Social Democrats and the communists". He thought that the call of destiny would go again to the Social Democrats as in 1918. He hoped that "Social Democracy will remain the party of the educated elements of the working class [sic]. ... The nucleus of this new movement will consist of the old one who succeeded to survive." He called the Social Democratic program of 1818 "our Declaration of Independence, ... our New Deal".

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<sup>153</sup> Grzesinsky to Stampfer, 15 April 1945, Nachlass Stampfer, part I, section 6, Nr. 247.

<sup>154</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 30 October 1943, p. 4.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 19 March 1945, p. 2.

The end of the latter had not so much been due to Social Democratic negligence as to "the recurrent swings of a pendulum that went back and forth between revolution and reaction since 1789". According to this deterministic concept, the revolution of the common man had been interrupted with each swing back but had nevertheless come closer to final victory. In Germany, that would come after the Second World War. The latest reaction under Hitler had left the constitutional framework of the first republic intact for the formation of the second and final one.<sup>156</sup> The Weimar constitution would automatically be in effect after Hitler, unless the Allies wanted to continue the National Socialist work of destruction.<sup>157</sup> The Easter Declaration claimed that only a constituent national assembly could change the Weimar constitution.<sup>158</sup>

The GLD occupied a strange point in the ideological development of the Social Democratic Party. Its ancestors of the Wilhelminian era had been considered "vaterlandslose Gesellen" (unpatriotic fellows). Yet, the GLD changed from an antifascist committee into a nationalistic group which William Shirer, a former supporter, castigated severely.<sup>159</sup> It did not foresee that in a conservative Western Germany, the Social Democrats would again be regarded as a menace to the state.

The isolation of the GLD, which the Easter Declaration sympto-

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<sup>156</sup> Rede Stampfers vor der SDF in Chicago, 29 October 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 170, pp. 673, 675.

<sup>157</sup> Artikel Stampfers vom 5. August 1944 in der NVZ: "Vor 25 Jahren - Weimar", Matthias and Link, Nr. 164, p. 654.

<sup>158</sup> Neue Volkszeitung, 31 March 1945, p. 1.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 12 August 1944, p. 2.

mized, inhibited also the plan of the Sopade for a reconstruction of the party executive (PV) which would supersede the exile executive and also play a role in postwar Germany. Like the Declaration, this plan was designed for a return to Germany. The old PV would be back in Germany before the reconstruction of the SPD. It could be a bond between the nascent Social Democratic Party groups in the four zones of occupation. It could also address the German people which was subject to the same fragmentation. But the plan of Vogel depended on the circumstances of the emigration in the United States. Of the twelve exiled PV members seven lived in America, four in England, and one in Sweden. In England, only Vogel and Ollenhauer were original members of the Sopade. Heine was coopted and Geyer had resigned because of his Vansittartist attitude. Of the seven American members, only Stampfer was with the GLD. Rinner and Sollmann were isolated and had become American citizens. The remaining four members, Aufhäuser, Dietrich, Hertz, and Juchacz were united in their disapproval of the GLD which had shut them out from the National Convention in 1943 and had not consulted them in the formulation of the Easter Declaration. The GLD continued to oppose their policy of Socialist concentration to which the Sopade had made concessions. It did not want to see these left wing Social Democrats in a reconstructed PV which would have more authority than the anemic Sopade. Its members wanted to return to Germany on the merits of the GLD without other ties.

Vogel tried to circumvent the crucial problem of the relationship between the PV members in America and the GLD. After some deliberation in the Sopade about the plan, Vogel sounded out Stampfer first in

December 1944 on this "somewhat less pleasant subject".<sup>160</sup> The latter was non-committal as usual. Then, Vogel tested the reaction of the PV members outside of England with a circular letter. In his presentation, he insisted on the legitimacy of the PV mandate of the last Reichskonferenz of the SPD in April 1933. As a basis for PV reconstruction, he elaborated on the participation of the Sopade in the London Union without dealing with the attitude of the GLD. As a basic political consensus, he offered the anticommunism of the Sopade: no cooperation with communist emigrants and no recognition of the communist Free Germany Committees.<sup>161</sup> Vogel made his proposal to some extent for the historical record. After its return to Germany, the Sopade could report that "we made such an attempt and that it failed because of the attitude of the other side". He overcame his fear that some PV members might interpret his plan "as a weakness" and took on the "unpleasant" task of contacting them.<sup>162</sup> Stampfer finally considered the undertaking as "fairly hopeless" which was an inevitable assessment.<sup>163</sup> It sheds, however, some additional light on the problem of a Socialist concentration in the United States and elsewhere.

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<sup>160</sup> Vogel to Stampfer, 25 December 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 171, p. 684.

<sup>161</sup> Rundschreiben Vogels an die Mitglieder des PV: Juchacz, Aufhäuser, Dietrich, Hertz, Rinner, Sollmann, Stampfer, Stahl, 16 March 1945, Matthias and Link, Nr. 172, pp. 687-689.

<sup>162</sup> Vogel to Stampfer, 25 December 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 171, p. 684.

<sup>163</sup> Stampfer to Vogel, 16 January 1945, Nachlass Stampfer, part II, section 17, Nr. 28.

The independent PV members in America did find a joint approach to the proposal by Vogel in the form of a counterproposal which neutralized the tactical advantage of Vogel. For them, the reconstruction of the PV was a symbol of the politics of the old movement. They rejected the validity of the mandate of 1933 as a relic of this movement. The SPD Reichskonferenz of 1933 had not intended "to confer such a mandate for half a generation" during which the national and the international situation would change radically. The Second World War was not anticipated then. The postwar situation required the unity of the socialist movement which the PV could not bring about. According to this argument, "a mechanical reconstruction of the old party executive would create the impression that "we consider ourselves as the legitimate leadership of a new Social Democratic movement in Germany". According to the counter-proposal, the forces of the antifascist resistance would "create a new movement and give it form and content". Even if they survived in large numbers, "the forces of the old movement" could not by themselves create a new party. Also, the latter would originate locally and rise "from below" so that it could not possibly be led by a largely emigrant PV. All the emigrants could give was "advice and assistance".<sup>164</sup>

The alternative plan proposed to further develop the cooperation that was begun with the Union in England, that is, apply it to the American situation. The Union should convert itself into the Auslandszentrale (center abroad) of the new German socialist movement. In that

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<sup>164</sup> Gemeinsames Schreiben von Aufhäuser, Dietric, Hertz und Juchacz to Vogel, 25 May 1945, Matthias and Link, Nr. 175, pp. 698-700.



case, the PV members in America would approve an appeal to the German workers. The ideology for such a center would have to be "a renewed confession of socialism" based on the revolutionary Sopade manifesto of January 1934 and the manifesto of the Union of October 1943. The alternative plan advocated the unity of a new German labor movement, the concentration of the socialist emigrant groups and a joint approach to the German policy of the Allied governments. It demanded that the Sopade motivate the GLD to align with such a new center. The GLD should also drop its claim of representing the German unions.<sup>165</sup> Juchacz admitted that she did not think the Sopade capable of changing the mind of the GLD. She would also have considered it "disastrous if people like Stampfer would significantly influence the political course over there". He was one of those Social Democrats who were so absorbed in the defense of German national interests that they forgot their socialist mission.<sup>166</sup>

The Sopade rejected the counter-proposal. If the mandate of 1933 was invalid, Vogel could not find the authority for establishing a representation abroad.<sup>167</sup> This concern with formal authority was a drawback of the German socialist emigration. As long as the various socialist groups agreed on a joint policy, they needed no further authorization. This democratic way would have accomplished more than

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Juchacz to Vogel, 29 May 1945, EK Mappe 58.

<sup>167</sup> Vogel to Stahl, 17 July 1945, EK Mappe 142; also Vogel to Stampfer, 17 July 1945, Matthias and Link, Nr. 177, p. 703.

the interpretations of an old mandate. But the controversy over the latter recalled the ideological differences in the Weimar SPD which also figured in the later debate over the causes of the Social Democratic defeat at the hands of National Socialism. Neither side wanted to make any concessions shortly before a possible vindication by postwar developments. Aufhäuser thought that the response of Vogel was "quite insensible" and did not even merit an answer.<sup>168</sup> Hertz and Juchacz agreed.<sup>169</sup> Rinner had not even responded to the first proposal.

This conflict over a rehabilitation of the party executive exemplified again the negative influence of the GLD in the German socialist emigration. In its complete isolation, the German Labor Delegation achieved nothing in German postwar reconstruction. Some of its members returned to Germany and had significant political careers on the basis of their conservative ideology which fit well into the era of the Cold War.

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<sup>168</sup> Aufhäuser to Juchacz, 16 July 1945, EK Mappe 58.

<sup>169</sup> Hertz to Juchacz, 24 August 1945, EK Mappe 58.

## CHAPTER X

### LIBERAL REORGANIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION: THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR A DEMOCRATIC GERMANY AND THE COUNCIL FOR A DEMOCRATIC GERMANY

The American Friends of German Freedom devoted itself most vigorously to postwar reconstruction. This was due to its double character as an American liberal and an emigrant democratic socialist organization. These two elements reinforced and complemented each other ideologically. The American liberals in the AFGF had a worldwide approach to postwar reconstruction. They revived the old dream that a war can be fought to end all wars. Their rationalist plan advocated a democratic Western and Central Europe in unison with the United States. Its centerpiece was a democratic Germany. A peacetime United Nations was to take the sting out of this arrangement for the Soviet Union and allow for co-existence between the unequal worlds of liberalism and communism. The American liberals in the AFGF believed that this design would soon win mass support as the only peaceful system possible. In order to prepare for this rise in their fortunes, they reorganized the American Friends of German Freedom into the American Association for a Democratic Germany in May 1944. The former had served the purpose of helping the German underground movement to reestablish German freedom by overthrowing Hitler. The latter expressed the change in

approach when the Allies were winning the war and were going to shape the peace. The AADG was formed to lobby with the American government for a rational solution of all postwar problems of which a democratic Germany was the major element. The main flaw was the central importance which Germany played in this plan and the corresponding underestimation of the Russian postwar role and of the complications of East-West relations. When their rationality could not keep up with events the liberals became the most ideologically motivated Cold Warriors. They were going to vindicate liberalism by containing the Soviet Union. This change of strategy also determined their policy of reconstruction in postwar Germany.

The German arm of the AADG was an emigrant coalition that could later resume contacts with democratic forces in Germany. This was the Council for a Democratic Germany which lasted from the spring of 1944 until early 1946. It included all emigrant groups but its communist members were so few that it was not proper to call it a Popular Front organization, as all of its contemporary critics did. The pragmatic basis of this diverse coalition was the consensus on the need for continued East-West relations which alone would make a peaceful reconstruction of Germany possible. In this scheme, all emigrant groups had a place and a contribution to make. The formation was hastened by the appearance of the National Committee for a Free Germany in Moscow. If the Western Allies would not sponsor an equivalent emigrant coalition, the NKFD might gain an undue influence in German reconstruction.

Its origin and composition caused the main problems of the CDG. Its financial dependence on the AADG tended to limit it to the role of

an extension of the Association. This state of affairs fit the plans of the NB emigrants. But the other groups, especially the Social Democratic emigrants, resented it. Their unsuccessful attempts at making the CDG more independent caused serious friction which put into relief the misunderstanding on which the Council was based. The other groups were handicapped by the circumstance that they were not organized outside the CDG like the NB emigrants. They had joined as individuals a coalition dominated by the AADG. In the plans for reconstruction which the CDG elaborated, the various groups made few concessions. In a mood of exalted nationalism, each of them added some of its favorite goals to the CDG plans, including religious education in the case of the Catholic emigrants. On this basis, the Council was unable and unwilling to face the hard realities of the German defeat and work out a compromise of its divergent interests. The questions of German war guilt and of territorial cessions did not exist for the Council. This indicated that it expected the best of all possible worlds from the victorious Allies. It was shocked by the decisions of Yalta and Potsdam and fell into the dilemma of disliking the results of a diplomatic arrangement that was the basis of its hopes for postwar Germany. It took a few months before the CDG was able to work out a compromise reaction to the decisions of Yalta. For the decisions of Potsdam, this was no longer possible. The Social Democratic members reluctantly joined the communist members in an acceptance of the Allied decisions. But the NB members were unyielding in their opposition to the Russian encroachments on Eastern Germany to which the Western Allies had nevertheless agreed. Frank and his friends left the Council in October

1945 and the Association dissociated itself from its former creation. The other groups failed to keep the CDG alive beyond early 1946.

The departure of Frank from the Council was caused by a change of strategy. In the new situation of international relations, he wanted to return to Germany as a liberal envoy from America. For this purpose, the CDG which stood for East-West harmony was useless but the Association could serve as a liberal backer of Frank. He proposed, therefore, to reactivate the AADG in the fall of 1945. But the American government refused to let him return to Germany. After 1945, the Association tried to win new liberal support in Germany where it made many new contacts. Since the general NB Group had been absorbed by the new Social Democratic Party, it also wanted some recognition from the SPD executive and from the AFL. For this purpose, it was willing to accept some former GLD members into its national committee. In order to facilitate this adjustment, Frank withdrew largely from his positions in the Association. But the SPD executive under Kurt Schumacher ignored the initiatives of the AADG. In its postwar political work, the Association criticized the occupation policy until 1948 when the American attitude towards Germany changed with the new policy of containment of the Soviet Union. In that situation, the AADG could have found better times. But in 1951, it suspended its activities in the atmosphere of inquisition of the McCarthy era.

The preparations for the Council for a Democratic Germany began after the Free Germany Committee in Moscow issued its manifesto of July 1943. Frank was motivated by "the events in Europe" and thought that "a group of reputed Germans and German Americans should attempt

a sort of balance to the so-called German National Committee of Moscow". He expressed his concern that the Russians pursued more than "transitory tactical plans" with the Committee and proposed that something should be done about "a strategy of potential German Russian separate actions". In the absence of any counteractivity, the National Committee could acquire undue importance and prepare a future socialist party "of unilateral dependence".<sup>1</sup>

Frank thought that Thomas Mann was best qualified to bring and hold together an emigrant coalition in America. The latter had reacted favorably to Frank's book "Germany after Hitler" and called it in a letter of 13 July 1943, "the clearest, most reasonable and realistic preview of the things in store for Germany". He hoped that it would have "a favorable regulative effect" on American politicians.<sup>2</sup> Frank invited Mann to come to New York from California to discuss the formation of an emigrant council. He told Mann that he had not approached anybody before writing to him. He thought that Mann should be the president over a conference that was to work out an independent position on German reconstruction. The latter should "not foremost be a counter-declaration to the Moscow National Committee, but an independent declaration with a certain counterweight" against the Moscow committee. Frank considered the prospective members of a German emigrant council

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<sup>1</sup>Frank to Thomas Mann, 26 July 1943, Frank Papers, box 10, folder 8; also, AFGF statement to the press about National Committee Free Germany, 12 August 1943, Frank Papers, box 1, folder 1943.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Mann to Frank, 13 July 1943, Frank Papers, box 9, folder M.

as "a vanguard or at least as an outpost of German Democracy". The time for an independent opinion was especially propitious in 1943, according to him. The dialogue between the West and the East was near conclusion but a compromise at the expense of Germany could still be prevented, especially if the strong liberal potential of public opinion in the United States and in England would rally to the cause of the German emigrants.<sup>3</sup> But Mann was evasive and postponed a visit to New York until October.

The political views of Mann did not suit a prospective emigrant coalition. He was also afraid of losing his intellectual privacy if he got involved with political groups. Mann was especially depressed over the National Socialist crimes and was convinced that "only a genuine, sincere, purifying revolution ... could rehabilitate the German people in the eyes of the world, of history and of itself". He was pleased with the Moscow manifesto because it encouraged a German revolution without any talk about socialism. For this reason, he participated in a group of German exile writers in Hollywood who intended to express their public support of the National Committee in Moscow. But when he wanted to add his independent statement he was overruled and withheld his signature. Mann was not interested in preserving the German people from the consequences of its passivity. He was little inclined to become upset "over anything that might happen to Germany after the defeat". He granted the victors "the right to act according to their inclinations". He considered "the patriotic zeal" with which

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<sup>3</sup>Frank to Thomas Mann, 10 August 1943, Frank Papers, box 10, folder 8.



most socialist and other emigrants claimed that nothing detrimental must happen to Germany as "not quite natural". Their call for a strong German democracy was to him a call for "a strong Germany with a large, efficient red army". Despite his anticommunism and anti-socialism, Mann thought that the Russian ambassador in postwar Berlin could assume "the role of Lord Protector" so that the Allies would not commit "irreparable ... stupidities". Mann was concerned about American inexperience in foreign policy but he was sensitive to the wishes of the American government. The latter did in his opinion not want "unsolicited advice" from "enemy aliens" and "premature antifascists".<sup>4</sup>

Frank tried unsuccessfully to overcome the resistance of Mann. He told him that he would find out in Washington directly whether an emigrant union was desirable. On the other hand, he fought Mann's consideration of American wishes with the argument that an independent voice on German reconstruction was necessarily also independent of the American government. Since Mann was wary of the Moscow Committee he could not object to "an independent counter-voice". But he eventually declined the role which Frank offered him. The latter thought that "the intervention of Seger and Co." was instrumental in this refusal.<sup>5</sup> Stampfer stated that Mann had a conversation with Undersecretary of State Berle who thought that the German emigrants lacked contrition and were mainly interested in saving Germany from just punishment, an

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<sup>4</sup>Thomas Mann to Frank, 6 August 1943, Frank Papers, box 9, folder M.

<sup>5</sup>Frank to Willy Brandt, 19 March 1958, Frank Papers, box 8, folder B.

opinion which Mann shared.<sup>6</sup> The latter did not even sign the initial declaration of the CDG of March 1944. He implored Niebuhr to postpone its publication because the time had not yet come for emigrant intervention. He criticized the declaration for its exclusive desire to spare Germany and its concomitant insensitivity to the feelings of those European peoples who had suffered most under German aggression. In reference to a phrase of the declaration, Mann stated that "there is no such thing as an unjust peace for Germany" regardless of the eventual settlement.<sup>7</sup>

Tillich was a more appropriate chairman for the CDG. He was a friend of Niebuhr which emphasized the connection of the CDG with the NB sponsor organization. His Christian Socialist views which he shared with Niebuhr were in tune with the prospective CDG. He believed that Western society needed as much reform as Eastern society. Only a general transformation of the world could prevent another world war. For Tillich, democracy was "the fertile soil out of which the aggressing forces have grown". It has "created Communism" by defending social injustice and has "nourished Fascism" as a tool against Communism. Liberal democracy was a failure. Tillich considered "the status quo liberals ... as a great ... danger to the future of Europe and of the world". The first war aim was therefore the transformation of Western society. A safe social system should be based on "a planned economy in which enough liberal elements are included to prevent another form of

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<sup>6</sup> Stampfer to Sopade, 9 March 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 161, p. 643.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Mann to Reinhold Niebuhr, 23 April 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 33.

totalitarian tyranny". This was the internal aspect of the postwar order. It was designed to guarantee the freedom of the individual by protecting him against the exploitation of an unchecked liberal economy.<sup>8</sup>

The external aspect of Tillich's new order concerned the relationships between nations. It was designed to guarantee the freedom of each individual nation by protecting it against imperialist exploitation. For this purpose, laissez faire nationalism had to end. As the second war aim, Tillich proposed a supernational unity of all countries in the form of a federal union. It was to replace the balance of power system of the nationalist era. Tillich considered a league of governments like the former League of Nations as incapable of preserving peace. In a federal union, each nation had to give up its military, economic, and diplomatic sovereignty. It could only retain a cultural autonomy. As a preliminary step, Tillich demanded "the federal union of the European continent" which presumably included Russia. But he did not judge the prospects of a European union critically. He realized that the New European Order of National Socialist Germany had aroused "a tremendous nationalistic reaction". He warned that "if this reaction cannot be overcome together with the Nazi conquerors, no hope for Europe is left". But he believed that the rational forces of history will be strong enough to overcome its irrational forces.

The participation of Russia in a European federation was also a soluble problem. Tillich believed that the Russian alliance with

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<sup>8</sup>"Why war aims? What war aims? Whose war aims?"; Paul Tillich in The Protestant, pp. 8-22, n.d. , Frank Papers.

the West might "modify the totalitarian character of the Russian government". The reciprocal effect was expected for Western society. He realized that such a development was not in the interest of British imperialism or American capitalism. The former was interested in the continued division of the European continent, the latter in "a disintegrated and dependent Europe as a half-colonial hinterland for American business activities". For these reasons, Tillich distrusted an Anglo-American peace without the corrective of the Soviet Union. The continued existence of the United Nations was vital for a federal reconstruction of Europe around a peaceful Germany. For this transformation, Tillich counted on such diffuse elements as the British Labor Party, the German underground movement and President Roosevelt, who had called for freedom from fear and want. The idea of a rapprochement between Western and Eastern society was a somewhat mechanistic speculation. But this ideological confidence of Tillich was his source of energy in organizing and running the CDG for which he performed "the work of Sisyphus". His war aims were unrealistically dogmatic but they coincided with the main aspirations of the CDG: an undivided Germany within a new European order and a Social Democratic Germany with a planned economy.<sup>9</sup>

The composition of the CDG was problematic. Except for the NB emigrants, the other members joined the Council as individuals which left them at a disadvantage in claiming their share of control. There were SAP, ISK, Catholic Center Party emigrants, including the former

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

GLD protégé Thormann, and Social Democratic emigrants. Of the latter, Aufhäuser and Grzesinsky were former GLD chairmen. They were both disenchanted with the Labor Delegation. Aufhäuser complained that the "small group" of the GLD lacked "the necessary unanimity in nearly all politically important questions". He described the divergence of opinions in the GLD as "a gap that cannot be bridged". It was responsible for "the sterility of the GLD in its political work". Aufhäuser believed in "holding together the Social Democratic forces" by a centralist orientation towards the United Nations rather than a unilateral inclination towards either the East or the West. He had wanted the GLD to follow the example of the Sopade. At least, the advocates of a Western and of a centralist position should have had equal rights. Instead, the former abused the latter. For these reasons, he tended towards the Council which had, in his opinion, a political potential which the GLD should recognize. The CDG could have effected a socialist rapprochement which was for Aufhäuser a valid goal in the international situation of 1944. For the sake of GLD unity, he went along with a January decision about the abstention of the GLD from the Council. But he resigned from the Labor Delegation when its conservative members used the Social Democratic Federation and its German branch for the adoption of resolutions that denounced the Council as communist.<sup>10</sup> Stampfer played down the switch to the CDG of Aufhäuser who was always "anxiously concerned about being as radical" as necessary. Like all

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<sup>10</sup> Aufhäuser to GLD, 23 February 1944, Nachlass Stampfer, part I, section 1, Nr. 25.

disciples of Breitscheid, Aufhäuser had a leftist tendency which he followed in every critical situation. Grzesinsky was considered opportunist by nature.<sup>11</sup> But the loss of two chairmen to the CDG was a serious blow to the GLD.

It could have been avoided. At first, the GLD showed interest in the Council. Stampfer claimed that the Labor Delegation could have formed an emigrant union. It had been encouraged "by an influential agency" which he did not identify.<sup>12</sup> Since the GLD did not move, Tillich invited its representatives to preparatory discussions for the Council. The critical issue was "the admission of the Moscow faction", that is, of the three communists Bönheim, Norden, and Schreiner. The GLD emigrants expected the Council organizers to choose between them and the communists which was an unacceptable alternative. In GLD perspective, this meant that the Council organizers preferred the communists.<sup>13</sup>

After the first round, rejection, came the second round, denunciation. Katz claimed that the formation of the CDG was "a pre-arranged affair between the members of NB and the communists". In his description, the three communists and the three NB members were preponderant in the nineteen member CDG. Allied with them were five fellow travelers, including Tillich. Together they outnumbered three renegade Social Democrats and five bourgeois emigrants whom Katz classi-

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<sup>11</sup>Stampfer to Sopade, 30 August 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 185, pp. 656-658; also Nachlass Stampfer, part I, section 13, Nr. 692.

<sup>12</sup>Stampfer to Sopade, 9 March 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 161.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

fied as innocents. He believed that the CDG aimed at "breaking up the democratic groups of the German emigration".<sup>14</sup> Frank was "the motivating force of the Tillich committee". He had accepted the communist assignment of bringing as many Social Democratic and bourgeois emigrants as possible into the Popular Front-like Council. This was the condition for "full absolution" for Frank's departure from the KPD in 1928. It seemed to Katz that Moscow had given "the signal for a concerted attack on everything Social Democratic". Even William Shirer, who had become critical of the GLD, had allegedly received his information from "the two communists Alfred Kantorowicz and Henry Kassirer", two emigrants in the German shortwave service of the Columbia Broadcasting System. He was an innocent who was "not talented enough to grasp the full context" of what these two members of the CDG told him.<sup>15</sup> The NVZ reprinted an article of the Jewish Daily Forward whose title "Moscow - London - Mexico - New York" put the CDG in line with the communist inspired Popular Front groups.<sup>16</sup> In his own NVZ article, Katz interpreted the formation of the Council as "the Stalin coup in New York". The three communists in the nineteen member executive committee "guaranteed the conformity with the general line of the policies of Moscow". The mass of the committee were like ants without a chance against the Russian bear, that is, the small minority. Whoever was not against the

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<sup>14</sup>Katz to Ollenhauer, 15 June 1944, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>15</sup>Katz to Ollenhauer, 12 August 1944, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>16</sup>Neue Volkszeitung, 8 April 1944, p. 3.

CDG was for it. Distrust was not enough. It had not saved the Weimar Republic. For the sake of a second republic, the GLD had the duty of "active opposition" to the CDG.<sup>17</sup> After an opportunity for cooperation, the Labor Delegation ended up in extreme opposition to the Council, an attitude that was not without risks for the GLD.

Several observers were concerned about the GLD and its attitude towards the CDG. The Sopade deplored the divisive effect of the Council on the Labor Delegation. Ollenhauer advised moderation and cooperation. He did not fully accept the version of Katz. He could not detect any communists among the signers of the CDG declaration.<sup>18</sup> He made "only one remark" on the issue. He did not expect Katz "to draw any practical consequences from it" but he asked him "to take it into consideration". Ollenhauer did not believe that the NB members played the game of the communists. He considered it useful that "we base our good or bad relations to neighbor groups in the emigration on facts that can be ascertained at any time". He thought that the NB Group had changed and that it was more Social Democratic than in the 1930's. He advised Katz "to consider the situation for once in this perspective".<sup>19</sup> Even Sollmann thought that it was "a mistake that you [the GLD] did not establish contacts in time with Hagen". He was impressed by the liberal American support for the NB Group and had repeatedly advised Seger to seek a rapprochement with the latter without suc-

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 6 May 1944, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ollenhauer to Kurt Heinig, 23 May 1944, EK Mappe 83.

<sup>19</sup> Ollenhauer to Katz, 27 July 1944, EK Mappe 83.



cess.<sup>20</sup> The State Department concluded that the Labor Delegation had been outmaneuvered. It was interested in a recovery of the GLD with AFL assistance. On the other hand, it did not want "two strong German groups, at loggerheads with each other and backed by rival American organizations", that is, by the AFL and the CIO. This might serve only "to sharpen the conflict between American citizens over an issue which is primarily one of foreign and enemy origin".<sup>21</sup>

But Katz was optimistic. He thought that the Social Democratic signers of the CDG declaration were still on the side of the GLD, which had advised them against this step but took "for the time being" no action against them. The content of the declaration was acceptable even to Katz. But the Social Democratic signers would eventually wake up to the sinister designs of the CDG. Katz was also happy about the refusal of "the most important personalities of the German emigration ... to associate with the CDG: Brüning, Sollmann, ... Hubertus Löwenstein". Together with the GLD, these individual emigrants represented "95% of the weight of the German democratic anti-Nazi emigration".<sup>22</sup> As long as these symbols of the Great Coalition remained aloof, the GLD felt safe even though it could accomplish little in an isolation that Sollmann and Löwenstein did not favor.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Sollmann to Hertz, 28 January 1943, Nachlass Hertz, reel 35.

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum on the relations of the GLD to the AFL, 24 May 1944, Department of State central files, National Archives.

<sup>22</sup> Katz to Ollenhauer, 15 June 1944, EK Mappe 61.

<sup>23</sup> Hubertus Prinz von Löwenstein to Stampfer, 9 February 1944, Nachlass Stampfer, part I, section 10, Nr. 477; also: Ibid. Löwenstein to Stampfer, 24 March 1944, Nr. 478.

The Network only slightly outdid the GLD in denouncing the Council. It was published by Ruth Fischer with the help of Adolph Weingarten and others and specialized in the detection of international, that is, Moscow-led, communist conspiracies. Fischer was, herself, a victim of the Comintern. In the early 1920's, her dominant ultra leftist faction had lost its influence in the KPD in the wake of a power struggle in the Russian Communist Party. The Network treated all signers of the CDG declaration as active members and issued an elaborate classification of them. The first group consisted of ten "German communists under the discipline of the Communist Party of Germany, the American section of which is controlled by Hans Berger", the brother of Ruth Fischer. It included Schreiner, Bertold Brecht, Bönheim, Alfred Kantorowicz, Norden, and Karl Obermann. Then, there was a group of important contact men, a group of communist literati, artists, and theatrical people, a group of fellow travelers, and a group of Social Democrats converted to the Moscow cause. There were also the members of so-called independent groups organized by former communists like Frank, Walcher, Sternberg, and their friends, Hertz, Juchacz, Kirschmann, Erich Schmidt, and others. In this distorted presentation, all the emigrants associated with the CDG were either communist or communist related.<sup>24</sup> Aufhäuser was insensed about the propaganda front between Trozkists and Social Democrats, that is, the Network and the NVZ. He severely rebuked Stampfer who should have been the guardian of the

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<sup>24</sup>The Network, New York, [n.m.] 1944, published by Ruth Fischer, Frank Papers.

Social Democratic tradition of journalism.<sup>25</sup> The CDG had tried to forestall some of this negative publicity, especially that of the NVZ. This had been the purpose of its open approach to the GLD which Frank had never expected to join the Council.

Otherwise, Frank was satisfied with the early results. After the initial declaration of March 1944, he thought that the affairs of the CDG were "more positive" than could have been expected "from such a mixed society". He anticipated that the Council would "hold together for a while". In that case, it would "bring us a number of better contacts. That is the minimal goal".<sup>26</sup> More significantly, Frank thought that the CDG was "in its composition a mirror of the political, social and intellectual forces that must be the basis of a democratic Germany". In that case, it afforded the NB Group a new legitimacy and could serve as an Ersatz (substitute) government in exile.<sup>27</sup> This was an overstatement.

Without the GLD as the only other well organized emigrant group, there remained only the strong relationship of the Council with the NB sponsor organization. This unilateral orientation confused the purpose of the CDG. It was unclear which of the two groups served the other or whether they were to be equal partners. The NB sponsor organization started out playing the role of the parent in control of the

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<sup>25</sup> Aufhäuser to Stampfer, 12 April 1944, Nachlass Stampfer, part I, section 1, Nr. 24.

<sup>26</sup> Frank to Henry Ehrmann, 15 March 1944, Frank Papers, box 10, folder 8.

<sup>27</sup> Memorandum by Tillich, October 1943, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

purse-strings. As soon as the CDG had proven feasible the liberal American friends of the NB Group expanded their organization. On 18 May 1944, they established the American Association for a Democratic Germany during a conference at the house of Roger Baldwin.<sup>28</sup> Eventually, the AADG was to become a mass organization and play in America the role which the CDG was expected to play in postwar Germany. As a more substantial committee, it was ready to sponsor the Council without being absorbed by that task. Principally, the Association assumed the financial assets and liabilities of the American Friends who had raised from \$11,000 to \$19,000 annually between 1940 and 1943. In May 1944, their accounts were balanced, if low.<sup>29</sup>

The new Association would "support the Council financially without limitations". It established a joint budget with the Council which was fixed at the somewhat high amount of \$34,000 for the first year. This was indicative of the high ambitions of the AADG. But the financial realities were more modest. The joint fundraising program contained an emergency plan for the collection of \$2,800. Between May and September 1944, the Association raised \$2,349.46, of which more than \$1,000 came from old sources of the American Friends.<sup>30</sup> The Council collected only \$375 up to September 1944.<sup>31</sup> The proposed joint

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<sup>28</sup> Niebuhr to [n.n.], 23 December 1942, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>29</sup> David F. Seiferheld to Hertz, 11 August 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>30</sup> Agenda of meeting of executive committee of the AADG, 25 May 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>31</sup> CDG Finanzlage, 21 September 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

budget for the first quarter amounted to only \$4,228 and was later reduced to \$3,651. Between March and July 1944, the Council received only \$405.10 so that a substantial percentage of the budget was reserved for the AADG. The latter also paid for the telephone, paper and translation costs of the CDG which was left only with the expenses for stamps, the publication of its Bulletin, and the part-time work of the AADG secretary. Yet, by September 1944, it had a deficit of \$350 which meant that the Association did not as fully provide as planned.<sup>32</sup>

Soon, the competition between the various groups in the CDG came to a head. The Association held back with funds while a group around Grzesinsky claimed that the former needed no funds for other than CDG purposes. The AADG was only to be an auxiliary of the Council specializing in fundraising and leaving the political work to the Council.<sup>33</sup> The Grzesinsky group blamed the Association for insufficient financial support which was responsible for the political inactivity of the CDG at a crucial time. They thought that "the decisive hour is now and not in three or four months". The summer of 1944 was "the time for our Council to enter into a stage of utmost activity". The CDG should "gain publicity ... with a well prepared program for the construction of a peace-minded and trustworthy postwar Germany". The Grzesinsky group, therefore, sent "an urgent plea for immediate support of our Council" to the Association "as the sponsors of our Council". They

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Otto Pfeiffenberger to David Seiferheld, 27 July 1944, Frank Papers, box 7, folder 1.

needed \$500 to \$1,000 "most urgently within the next few days in order to begin increased activities".<sup>34</sup>

Despite this financial dependence, the Grzesinsky group wanted to establish the independence of the CDG. It wanted to conduct the work of the Council "hand in hand but not together with the AADG". It wanted an independent executive secretary for the CDG because the secretary of the AADG represented "a certain faction in the CDG". The Council report to the Department of Justice deliberately omitted the name of the AADG. The Grzesinsky group recommended that the latter be dropped also from the statutes of the Council. Yet, they expected the Association to pay for this independence. The separate office would cost about \$300 to \$400 a month. Another \$400 to \$500 were necessary for the publication of the weekly or semi-monthly bulletin. This amounted to about \$1,000 for each of the next three months. The Grzesinsky group was aware that "we have no right to demand anything". Their letter was meant as a plea to the Association "to whom we already owe so much". By the end of August, they complained again about insufficient financial support from the Association.<sup>35</sup>

Niebuhr was exasperated over the claims of the Grzesinsky group. He requested in the executive committee of the AADG that the financial relations between the Association and the Council be changed. The obligations of the former to the latter should be "limited rather than unlimited". The Council should raise its own funds. The Associa-

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Grzesinsky, Pfeiffenberger to AADG, end of August 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

tion should hand over to the Council only those funds that it raised explicitly for the work of the CDG. It should accept the proposal for a separate office of the Council and should offer the latter a special sum for implementing this change immediately. Niebuhr considered further discussions in the finance committee of the CDG, of which he was a member, as "useless" and asked the American committee of the CDG to conduct the further negotiations with the Association.<sup>36</sup>

He admitted that "the financial arrangement was only part of the problem." The rest concerned the question of whether the Association was an independent organization with other tasks beside the sponsorship of the Council. It concerned, also, the question of "giving the Association a broader basis which changes the impression that it represents only the former organization of the AFGF under a different name". Niebuhr advised to communicate and discuss his recommendations separately with Tillich, Bönheim, Aufhäuser, and a few others who were probably less antagonistic towards the Association than the Grzesinsky group. The next meeting of the Council should then decide about the new political and financial relations between the Association and the Council. Until then, "we must be completely passive". Members of the AADG should not participate in committee meetings of the Council. The Association should not assist in the publication of the Bulletin.<sup>37</sup>

The Grzesinsky group tried also to win more control by investing the authority of the Council in a system that would function like a

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<sup>36</sup> Niebuhr to executive committee of the AADG, 23 December 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

government in exile. The CDG should not be a large study commission "but a political group ... that is capable of fast initiatives towards the outside". In August 1944, the group submitted a statute to the procedural committee which proposed an executive committee of seven members representing all the factions in the Council. The general membership should be limited. Sympathizers could be accommodated as advisers with few rights. The statute opposed the foundation of local chapters with a say in the affairs of the Council.<sup>38</sup>

The Grzesinsky group disliked the response of Tillich to their plan. The latter wanted the CDG to attract "as many new forces as possible". He thought that the proposed system was "too club-like and inadequate for a very dynamic movement". He also opposed "the technical faction principle". He considered the membership of the Council in the summer of 1944 as "a small clique" and proposed to broaden the basis of the CDG. Besides full members, there should be members who would only partially participate in the affairs of the Council. They would, however, have full voting rights at the plenary sessions. Tillich would also have preferred three executive committees instead of one.<sup>39</sup> But the Grzesinsky group disliked this kind of a "mollusk-like" system. They thought a diffuse arrangement was perhaps expedient in the beginning. But it became later partly responsible for the indecision and

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<sup>38</sup> Grzesinsky, Pfeiffenberger, Erwiderung auf Kritik von Tillich in der Vorlage des Geschäftsordnungsausschusses für ein Statut des CDG, end of August 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.



inactivity of the Council.<sup>40</sup> By January 1945, Tillich conceded the need for a political committee of seven members with equal representation. Besides himself, this body should consist of Aufhäuser, Bärwald, Budzislawsky, Frank, Haussman and Schreiner.<sup>41</sup> An attempt at forming a committee of only four members that would exclude Frank, or only allow him to alternate attendance with Aufhäuser, was rejected.<sup>42</sup>

Under the circumstances of factional fights in New York, the foundation of a local CDG chapter in Chicago failed. It was undertaken by the Chicago businessman Walter W. Marseille, a friend of Frank. He was a member of the AADG and was close to the Chicago chapter of the Union for Democratic Action. In July 1944, Frank was to come to Chicago to speak at a luncheon meeting for prospective CDG sponsors in Chicago. The UDA wanted the meeting to be called in the name of the Chicago CDG chapter which Marseille considered premature. But for both, the purpose of the meeting was fundraising for the Council even though the invitations did not mention it. After this occasion, Marseille continued raising funds for the CDG in the summer of 1944 among his "American friends and business acquaintances". His story for the Field Foundation, for example, was that "the money is for the Council and that the Association is the Council's sponsor and financial trustee" so that checks were to be made out to the Association. Thus, a Chicago chapter

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<sup>40</sup> Friedrich Haussmann to Tillich, 29 August 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>41</sup> Protokoll der Verwaltungsausschusssitzung des CDG, 11 January 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder M.

<sup>42</sup> Walther Victor to Frau Hauptmann, 7 January 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder V.

would have contributed to the control of the AADG over the Council. The relations of Marseille with the CDG were therefore difficult. Marseille soon complained about "the poor handling of the correspondence at the New York end". According to him, "every Chicagoan" who dealt with the Council made the same experience. Eventually, the Marseille group decided to cease working for the CDG because of "matters of principle" which will be discussed in the following section on reconstruction.<sup>43</sup>

Under these circumstances, Marseille did not pursue his work for better relations between the German Labor Delegation and the Council. He had urged Snell, Marck, and F. A. Hermens, who belonged to his group, to reason with Seger and other GLD members and demand from them "a more positive attitude towards the Council". Snell was the Chicago chairman of the German American Congress for Democracy, which was a GLD foundation. He had "a kind of five years' plan to bring the Social Democrats of his group together with us [the Marseille group]". But Marseille realized that Snell was practically alone "with his relative friendly attitude towards the Council". He advised Frank, therefore, to win over some of the influential people of the GACD, which was by then impossible.<sup>44</sup>

The "matters of principle" of the Marseille group exemplified the shortcomings of the CDG plans for reconstruction. Because of its precarious composition, the Council had to postpone the clarification of

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<sup>43</sup> Walter Marseille to Frank, 19 July 1944, Frank Papers, box 9, folder M; also: Marseille to Tillich, 25 May 1944, Frank Papers, box 9, folder T.

<sup>44</sup> Marseille to Frank, 26 June 1944, Frank Papers, box 9, folder M.

basic issues until they were forced upon it by events. Then, it could not digest them. Marseille considered most important the topics of a collective German responsibility and of East Prussia. They comprised the realities of the postwar situation for Germany: What was the attitude of the Allied Victors and what would be their policies towards Germany? Because of their omissions, the CDG programs lacked a political basis. They were unrealistic maximum statements of what would be the best possible fate for postwar Germany without regard to Allied interference. The panacea of the CDG was a postwar United Nations. Frank urged "the incorporation of the vanquished nations including Germany under equal sovereignty into the world organization".<sup>45</sup> The Council members thought that a continued cooperation between East and West constituted the best international circumstances for their kind of reconstruction. They did not consider the alternative of Allied deals at the expense of Germany.

The initial CDG declaration of March 1944 stated that "any kind of unilateral settlement in Europe ... would lay the foundations of new world wide conflicts". But within a multilateral system, there would be no risk in giving Germany "political leeway from the beginning", and in leaving the German economy and German territorial integrity alone. There was a hint that "the German people will have to bear the consequences of the war into which Hitler has driven them".<sup>46</sup> But these

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<sup>45</sup> Frank, Proposal for a statement by the AFGF, 1943, Frank Papers, box 1, folder 1943.

<sup>46</sup> Program of the CDG, May 1944, Matthias and Link, Nr. 163, p. 649.

consequences were painted in moderate colors. There was no reference to the destruction caused by the German armies or to the crimes of National Socialist antisemitism.

The declaration did not deal with basic issues because there was no consensus on postwar realities within the Council. The bourgeois and the NB members maintained the fiction of "the other Germany". There was no justification for territorial cessions because there was no collective responsibility. The communist members temporized. In their Popular Front mood, they went along with the majority position. But sub rosa, they believed in a German war guilt and related it to a new settlement of the Eastern borders. The Marseille group opposed this position from the beginning and wanted a clarification even if it drove the communists out of the Council. It denied that the two issues were related. Marseille thought that the Council should insist on a distinction between the National Socialists and the German people "in the sense that National Socialism is not the genuine expression of the German national character". But it should admit that the German people had "failed tragically in the fight against fascism". Beyond the question of individual guilt, "there exists the collective responsibility of the German people". The CDG should concede that "the German people must in its totality accept responsibility for the crimes that were committed in the name of the German people". For Marseille, this admission was a matter of self-respect without which the German people could not return to a status of equal rights among the countries of Europe. He considered it a matter of pride to reject secondary explanations like the severity of the Versailles treaty or the appease-

ment policy of the West in the 1930's. If the German people was incapable of assuming responsibility for its recent past, "a more than temporary occupation" would be morally justified. Marseille also proposed that the CDG take a more positive attitude towards reparations. The German people should forego any improvement of its living standards beyond the state of reconstruction in the devastated European countries.<sup>47</sup>

This was more of a German American position. For the sake of moral decency, it demanded a German mea culpa and a change of mind that would help to clear the German name. Atonement should go as far as possible. But all this was necessary in order to forestall the loss of East Prussia and a communist expansion to the West. Under the proper circumstances, the CDG could request that the Atlantic Charter apply also to Germany.<sup>48</sup> It would have the right and the duty to oppose any cession of German territory. Marseille rejected the argument of Tillich and Frank that the issues in question needed more time for study. He concluded that Frank believed "in postponing and covering up of differences for organizational reasons". His motions were not even submitted to a Council meeting. Under these circumstances, he was no longer interested in a CDG chapter in Chicago. He was willing to raise more funds for the American Association "if it meant anything apart from the Council".<sup>49</sup> The latter could do without the

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<sup>47</sup> Marseille to Tillich 25 May 1944, Frank Papers, box 9, folder T.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Marseille to Frank, 2 August 1944, Frank Papers, box 9, folder M.

Marseille group. But an emigrant coalition without communist members could not expect to find any favors in the eyes of the Soviet Union.

On the question of German war guilt, the CDG still expected to be vindicated by a German revolution. It was not yet ready for a consensus on dismissing that eventuality. For this reason also, the initial declaration was so noncommittal. In July 1944, Bärwald, Aufhäuser, Frank, Schreiner, and Walcher submitted a report about the reconstruction of the German unions which still considered the short range perspective of a revolutionary overthrow of Hitler. They based their hopes on the natural indestructibility of the Betriebsgemeinschaft (factory community of the workers). Even without organized unions, the workers of a factory formed a collective group which was aware of its class interests. The main evidence for this collectivism was "the catastrophic decline of the Deutsche Arbeiterfront", the National Socialist workers' organization. This deprived the regime of a permanent mass basis so that the endurance of the factory community spelled almost in itself the doom of National Socialism. Despite the lack of any visible acts of resistance, "the collectivist mentality" of the factory communities was reliable. The latter constituted "quite automatically a communal organization in itself without requiring an outwardly visible form of organization". For a long time, the German workers had engaged only "in 'permissible' actions" that kept the collective spirit alive. They were interested in improving working conditions with "flowers in the factory windows" or with better light. They proposed perhaps "a modest Christmas bonus" or a weekly payment of wages rather than every ten days. They did all this in order to arrive

at "the solidarity of all workers in the factory". In this way, they achieved "the union of socialists, christian workers, communists and ... discontented National Socialists ... with a hundred percent completeness". They would eventually fight for the overthrow of the dictatorship "with the same solidarity". For this reason, they wasted no time and effort on isolated acts. They thought about "the real, decisive confrontation in as organized a way as possible".<sup>50</sup>

Frank still thought that the Western Allies should assist the underground movement and "take the lead ... in directing ... political warfare". But the NB sponsor organization was aware that the American and the British government did not favor the Russian approach of political warfare. The two governments wanted to "avoid any kind of a general revolution before or after the military defeat" and planned "a more or less permanent occupational regime".<sup>51</sup> But in this long range perspective, also, the German problem could not be solved "without the active cooperation of the democratic forces of the German people". The reorganization of the unions would be "a simple and safe way of democratic consolidation". The unions could represent "a democratic organization of the people" which would crowd out the National Socialist grass roots support and illegal underground organizations after the defeat. With their tradition of self-government, they could also fill

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<sup>50</sup> Unterausschuss des Studienkomitees für Gewerkschaftsfragen, Bericht über den Wiederaufbau einer Gewerkschaftsbewegung in Deutschland, July 1944, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I.

<sup>51</sup> Frank, proposal for a statement by the AFGF, 1943, Frank Papers, box 1, folder 1943.

the political vacuum before the establishment of a central administration. They could take on interim governmental functions like the distribution of food and the organization of health care, welfare and local administration.<sup>52</sup>

There was no controversy over the type of the new unions. There would be an Einheitsgewerkschaft, a single comprehensive union with a vertical and a horizontal federat structure. Each industrial branch would be organized in local, district and regional unions and finally, in an industrial federation or Industrieverband. Horizontally, the local unions of every industrial branch would form the Local Cartel or Ortskartell. The Local Cartels would compose the District Group or Bezirksverband; all of the latter, the central union federation or Gewerkschaftsbund. This structure would allow for more local autonomy than during the Weimar Republic. The new unions would be politically comprehensive and religiously neutral. They would be a significant improvement over their Weimar predecessors and could be better pillars of democracy than before.<sup>53</sup>

After the controversies over organizational matters, the CDG elaborated specific memoranda for most fields of administration in late 1944 and early 1945. It behaved like an executive that provides itself with a program. The subcommittees of the Council corresponded to the ministries of a government. Logically, the CDG did not discuss the constitutional question. But the implicit consensus was that

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<sup>52</sup> Bericht über den Wiederaufbau einer Gewerkschaftsbewegung in Deutschland, July 1944, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.



the Weimar constitution was still in effect and could be amended in the light of the National Socialist experience. The administrative program of the Council was based on a few principles acceptable to all members: nationalism, centralism with some authoritarianism, and socialism with varying emphases and balances in specific memoranda. Some socialism was even acceptable to the emigrants of the Center Party. The latter had never been a pro-business party, a function that was left to the former nationalist parties in the Empire and the Republic. The living standards of its constituency had not been above those of the Social Democratic voters. It had supported national programs in education and healthcare which required a strong central government. It had not been ideologically opposed to economic planning. Its special religious and ethnic interests were respected in the CDG program. They were abetted by the principle of local and provincial self-government to which the Council had to resort as a measure in its emergency planning.

In the field of the industrial economy, Aufhäuser applied the socialist principle in an interesting way. He envisioned an economic democracy which would avoid the bureaucratic domination of the economy by the state as in the National Socialist or in the communist systems. There would be constitutional economic organs consisting of elected representatives from the employers, workers and consumers. They would determine economic policy directly by establishing a one or multi-year plan to regulate production and consumption. The state bureaucracy would only execute the economic plans and directives of the economic organs. This execution would be "subject to the permanent supervision" of the bodies of economic self-determination. Aufhäuser explicitly

disqualified "the political parliamentary democracy" from economic planning. This "formal democracy" had failed in the past. The parties of the Weimar Reichstag made political concessions to each other at the expense of the economy. Aufhäuser advocated "a separation of the economic problems from the merely political, parliamentary discussion". The economic organs would be vertically structured. There would be factory councils, local, district, and regional councils, and a national economic council. Aufhäuser expected the occupation authorities to consent in their own interest to the formation of these councils even before the governmental organs of postwar Germany were reestablished.<sup>54</sup>

The balance between local, regional and national economic control was a unique feature of the plan of Aufhäuser. Also, he advocated only a socialization of the basic industries. Between the all public and the all private sector, there was to be a mixed economic sector of factories owned partly by the state or by municipalities. For industries with private monopolies, Aufhäuser proposed the traditionally progressive idea of antitrust legislation. He also recommended to protect the small and medium sized agricultural and commercial establishments which were the special concern of the bourgeois emigrants.<sup>55</sup>

The agricultural plans of the CDG which were prepared by the bourgeois emigrant, Joseph Kaskel, contained several socialist ideas but intended also to balance industrial democracy with agricultural

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<sup>54</sup> CDG Unterausschuss für Wirtschaftsfragen, Bericht, pp. 45-48, Vorbemerkungen Siegfried Aufhäusers zur Wirtschaftsordnung, 26 December 1944, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

democracy. Some proposals were inevitable. They had become general antifascist property like the dissolution and resettlement of the landed estates, one of the alleged pillars of National Socialism. The owners should be compensated "within narrow limits", that is, with a modest life pension or an average sized farm. The type of resettlement remained a matter for compromise. Kaskel claimed that "the question had no political character; socialists and non-socialists have argued for both forms" in the past, that is, for settlement by individual farmers and for a collective system. Actually, the CDG plan recommended to limit the latter to a minimum. It was unnecessary to transfer the "centralist and uniformist" tendencies from industry to agriculture. Production in the latter should constitute "a counterweight" to modes of industrial production. Agriculture should preserve "a more free and individualist form of life in the sense of the Jeffersonian democracy". Rural cooperatives were sufficient to afford the farmers with the advantages of collective methods. They should limit themselves to the provision of equipment, machinery and loans and to the sale of livestock and commodities. In special cases, collective settlement would be appropriate as, for example, for city youths who decided to live off the land. The Palestinian collectives were recommended. The Russian collective should also be "studied even though it operated under very different conditions." There could also be a mixed form of operation where the farmers would receive small parcels of land for their private use. In case of individual settlement, the farmers would have to buy the new land at regulated prices with the assistance of government loans. They would be obligated to cultivate

it and could not resell it.<sup>56</sup>

Grain prices could not be "left to the free play of forces" in the agricultural market. The new German agriculture needed some protection in the form of stable rather than high prices. This could be achieved by a government import monopoly. It would apply flexible tariffs in accordance with world market prices rather than the high tariffs of the past which had favored the Junkers. Cheap imported grain could be stockpiled for years of scarcity. More grain could be imported to benefit the workers and the export of industrial goods. Even the agricultural planning of the CDG contained much centralism.<sup>57</sup>

The latter principle applied especially to a new German government. The CDG plans recommended local self-government as a principle of "the political fights in Germany during the last century and at the beginning of the present". But they warned against particularist and separatist tendencies and envisioned local self-government mainly as an emergency measure of the first hour. In the long run, the latter would create an administrative chaos. Necessary was "a coordinated handling of administrative and economic affairs". It was "indispensable" to maintain the ten Reichs-Spitzenbehörden (central agencies) and other Reichs-Spitzenverwaltungen (central offices). These were "absolutely necessary because their tasks can under no circumstances be

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<sup>56</sup> CDG Unterausschuss für Landwirtschaft, Bericht, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

delegated to regional and even less to local agencies". Even communal self-government was impossible without "uniform administrative guidelines on the scale of the Reich". There was to be no federalism of the contemporary West German type. As precedents for this system were enumerated the constitutions of 1848 and 1918.<sup>58</sup>

The establishment of a new civil service could "satisfactorily only be solved by a central agency". For a new start, a committee for personnel questions was necessary which would effect the denazification of the old civil service with the help of provincial and local committees. The democratic attitudes of the civil service were more important than a perfect administrative system. For this reason, the German antifascists at home and abroad should have the necessary freedom of action. The republican reliability of the judges was considered especially vital. The judges should lose their former privileges so that they could be deposed or transferred like other civil servants. Until enough new judges could be trained the judiciary should use a larger number of lay people. A Popular Court or Volkstribunal should function as a court of republican review and supervision over the administration and the judiciary. This supreme court could interfere in any trial and alter or abolish a verdict based "on politically unreliable motives". It would consist of forty judges and would be assisted by regional tribunals. The police should have "far-reaching 'discretionary' powers" like arrest without a warrant and preventive custody.

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<sup>58</sup> CDG Unterausschuss für Rechts- und Verwaltungsfragen, Vorschläge für eine neue deutsche Verwaltung und ein neues deutsches Rechtswesen, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II.

In the fight against the National Socialist establishment and underground, its hands should not be tied "by misplaced generosity and inappropriate sentimentality". Against abuses, there was the right to a complaint in court which could not be deferred.<sup>59</sup>

The principles of centralism, socialism, and, sometimes, nationalism applied also to CDG planning for health care, education and information. The Council plans advocated "a basic change in the whole structure of the health care system". This was especially urgent because of the additional health problems of the postwar period with which a local system could not deal. The practice of the Weimar Republic had been "a good basis and a safe point of departure" for the reconstruction of the postwar system. But since 1933, the need for health insurance and social security had "deepened enormously". Denazification of the medical profession was important because the latter had identified closely with the tenets of National Socialism. All physicians who had been licensed by National Socialist insurances should be dismissed since they were "all ... suspect of being National Socialists". The new Reichsminister for Healthcare had to decide about reinstatements. The exclusive recruitment of doctors from the middle class which had been especially amenable to National Socialism should end. A comprehensive scholarship program would allow the children of blue and white collar workers to enter the medical profession.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> CDG Fürsorgeausschuss, Unterausschuss für ein deutsches Gesundheitsprogramm. Aufbau eines demokratischen Gesundheitswesens in Deutschland, May 1945, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II.

Education was to be administered by a central office. There was to be no state, that is, provincial autonomy in this field. The "class character" of secondary education "must be broken" by a social scholarship program.<sup>61</sup> The question of denazification was even more important in this field. All teachers should be dismissed and then readmitted according to their behaviour during the Third Reich. Any active member of the NSDAP or of the SS was to be permanently fired. The members of the antifascist opposition should be favored as candidates for teaching. All "democratic forces" should cooperate in elaborating new school books. The CDG objected to any Allied interference in the reconstruction of the German educational system. The latter was "the task of the German people itself, of which it cannot be relieved by anybody".<sup>62</sup>

On the question of the future relations between church and state, there was unanimity except on the issue of religious instruction. In general, the principle of separation between the two organisms would apply. The state would not support the churches financially and would not impose and collect a church tax. It would demand political neutrality from the churches. They could "not sanction a specific economic doctrine and a specific theory of property relations". Religious instruction in public schools was an issue for disunity which resulted in the presentation of two reports. The bourgeois emigrants

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<sup>61</sup> CDG Komitee für Erziehung und Wissenschaft, Massnahmen für den Wiederaufbau des Erziehungswesens, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

some of whom were clerics, insisted on religious education. They based this demand on the democratic principle of religious freedom and on the parental right to demand education. They proposed an agreement between the state and various denominations that would be incorporated in a Reichsschulgesetz (National School Law). It would resemble the former concordat with the Vatican and should respect "the historical situation". Religious groups should also have the right to establish schools of their own. The other report stated that the two positions could "not be reconciled objectively, only tactically". It referred to "the School Compromise" of the Weimar constitution but adopted a less compromising attitude for a postwar system. Education had to conform to the principle of separation of church and state. But this requirement need only be satisfied to the extent that the schools had no longer the obligation to provide religious instruction for which attendance had been free. They should offer this instruction only on the explicit demands of the parents. The churches should not have the authority to enforce attendance.<sup>63</sup>

Concerning a free information system, the emigrants of the former Center and Democratic Parties had no ideological objections to an anti-capitalist organization of the postwar German press and news service. Capitalism was considered as one of the breeding grounds of National Socialism. For this reason, the new press had to be "independent of the influence of uncontrollable financial interests". It

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<sup>63</sup>CDG Komitee für Erziehung und Wissenschaft, Referate über die Frage der weltlichen und kirchlichen Schulen, I: Müller und Forell, II: Stern; Sammlung Glaser, vol. II.



served exclusively the purpose of public information and should exclude profit-making private interests. News was not a commodity protected by property rights. Every newspaper was to submit to a public audit of its income and general finances. The use of secret funds was to be prohibited. No single investor could own more than a fraction of the capital of a paper publishing association. The use of strawmen for concentrating ownership was to be forbidden. Advertisers should have no influence over the editorial policy of a paper. The government should supervise the advertising activities of all papers. One idea was to "communalize" the advertising business which meant making a public service out of it.<sup>64</sup>

Another guarantee for a free information system was a high degree of central control by the democratic forces during a postwar interim period and by the new democratic German government thereafter. A Kontrollinstanz consisting of active antifascists would license the editors and the contributors of the newspapers and magazines. The "complete freedom [of the press] without control and without any protection against abuse" which had existed in the Weimar Republic was not recommendable. With its "general control", the new German government would suppress newspapers that rejected the principle of the freedom of the press. The news services should not be provided by one or two private agencies as in the Weimar Republic. There should be a central news agency with a monopoly over the collection of news. Initially, the

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<sup>64</sup>CDG, Vorschläge für einen Wiederaufbau des Pressewesens im demokratischen Deutschland; also: Entwurf eines Berichts des Presseausschusses über Presse- und Nachrichtenwesen, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II.

government should maintain this agency. Later, it should become a cooperative of all newspaper publishing associations. This centralization within a democratic system was the best safeguard against a political reaction. Also, the new republic should monopolize broadcasting as the Weimar Republic had done. This method had proven successful. The CDG went too far in planning to prevent a recurrence of fascism by administrative means. The Weimar Republic had largely failed because of the insufficient vigilance of its democratic parties.<sup>65</sup>

Since the time for an antifascist revolution in Germany had passed, even the partial implementation of the CDG plans hinged on support by the American government. But the latter was elusive. The reaction of the German Desk of the OWI was sceptical. Hoffmann noted the strange bedfellowship within the CDG of protestant theologians like Tillich, leftwing authors like Brecht and Zuckmayer, Social Democrats and communists. This "marriage" would not last. It would founder on "the typical German disunity" about practical matters. Also, to Hoffmann, the initial declaration of the CDG sounded as beautiful as the Weimar constitution which did not save the first German republic. With unacknowledged antisemitism and with some exaggeration, he objected to the large number of German Jewish emigrants among the signers of the declaration. In his opinion, they jeopardized the reconstruction of a country where antisemitism was rampant. He put his finger on the neuralgic point of lacking Allied support. At the same time, he sug-

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

gested that the American government give "no support or advice whatever" to the CDG or any rival group.<sup>66</sup> The OWI should follow the development of these groups "with watchful (though by no means unfriendly) eyes". More important for the government was the organization of German American support for the war and peace effort. The reeducation of Germany should also get its impulses from German American elements and from rehabilitated German war prisoners in the United States. Emigrant intellectuals like those organized in the CDG were too unrealistic and had been absent from Germany for too long to do any good in this area.<sup>67</sup> With Allied victory certain, the State Department was not interested in emigrant groups towards the end of the war.

In this situation, the CDG made a virtue out of a necessity. Since it could not get any official recognition it declared that it did not want to be a government in exile even though it acted like one. The Council tried to exploit the positive side of its circumstances. In a strategy meeting of August 1944, Bärwald declared in his keynote speech that the CDG should "avoid the impression that we wanted to form a government based on the bayonets of the Allies". The CDG kept insisting that it was "entirely independent and not sponsored by any official government or party agency". This was an appeal to German nationalism. Also, the CDG decided to reverse its former practice and abstain from

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<sup>66</sup> Hans M. Hoffmann to Constantin Poulos, German Desk, OWI, 5 April 1944, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Vol. Fb 224, OWI, Deutschland Propaganda, p. 68.

<sup>67</sup> Memorandum on the CDG by Hoffmann to Poulos, 4 May 1944, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Vol. Fb 224, OWI, Deutschland Propaganda 1942-1945, pp. 77, 78.

interference in American politics including the presidential elections. It should not count on rewards for political support.<sup>68</sup> A perfect patriotic record was more important. An Allied occupation regime could maintain order and tranquility but it could not prevent the rise of a National Socialist underground. As a first emergency measure, that required the immediate participation of the democratic sections of the German people in the government of the country. Only a democratic re-activization at the grass roots could control a National Socialist "Wehrwolf" (underground). The Allies could not circumvent the German democratic forces and their emigrants.<sup>69</sup> When Tillich was informed that there might not be a new German government for some time to come, he concluded that the CDG must "try to help the democratic movement in Germany to impose itself".<sup>70</sup>

The CDG wanted to rely on American public opinion. Bärwald had the illusion that it was "out of the question that the American people will support a Vansittartist peace". He proposed that the CDG prepare for the end of the war by establishing new contacts with American liberal groups and personalities. It should attempt to "win a much larger basis of support".<sup>71</sup> Frank cultivated new liberal circles like the New York State Citizens Council for a Durable Peace. Its members

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<sup>68</sup> CDG, Protokoll der Sitzung vom 4. August 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>69</sup> CDG, Geschäftsführender Ausschuss, Denkschrift über Sofortmassnahmen, Sammlung Glaser, vol. I, pp. 22-38.

<sup>70</sup> CDG, Protokoll der Sitzung vom 4. August 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

were educational and civic personalities. It intended to organize citizens' groups in every community within the state for the sake of carrying out "the immense 'grass roots' job of planning and building public opinion for the peace". Its second annual conference in July 1944 in which Frank participated was sponsored by various state government departments and by such private organizations as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Foreign Policy Association.<sup>72</sup> The CDG also contacted legislators like Congressman Charles M. LaFollette.<sup>73</sup>

The relations with the CIO seemed promising. Paul R. Porter corresponded with Frank about the resolution which he had drafted for the CIO convention in Chicago in November 1944. It proposed the re-establishment of German trade unions immediately after the war. Porter also wanted Hertz and Aufhäuser to attend the convention so that he could introduce them to a number of CIO leaders. But despite a strong plea by Walther Reuther, who also corresponded with Frank, the convention adopted an alternative resolution with an indefinite CIO policy on postwar German labor. Porter attributed this development to the opposition of communist CIO leaders.<sup>74</sup> An interesting contact was the

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<sup>72</sup> Dixon Ryan Fox, President of the New York State Citizens' Council for a Durable Peace to Frank, 24 August 1944, Frank Papers, box 8, folder F; also: Announcement of the second annual citizens' conference on peace issues, 26-31 July 1944, Frank Papers, box 3, folder 1944.

<sup>73</sup> Niebuhr to Charles LaFollette, 13 September 1944, Frank Papers, box 8, folder L.

<sup>74</sup> Paul R. Porter to Frank, 12 November 1944 and 28 November 1944, Frank Papers, box 9, folder P.

dinner meeting which Cornelia Bryce Pinchot, the wife of the Governor of Washington, and Mrs. Dulles organized for Frank in December 1944 when he was on a visit in Washington. It was attended by several officials of the State Department, including the chief of the Division of Central European Affairs, and by an official of the White House staff. They requested that there be no outsiders present, but conceded that "it would be all right to ask the Vice President" who had expressed the wish to come.<sup>75</sup>

Such examples were exceptional. There was more evidence for anti-German feelings. The Writers' War Board, which served the OWI as a clearing house for literary contributions to war information and national morale, opposed the CDG out of patriotism. The idea of German reconstruction resembled a soft peace. It was anathema to a propaganda organization that wanted to rid the country and the world of the German danger. The president of the WWB, Rex Stout, a writer of detective stories, believed that the German emigrant organizations paid "mere lip service to the democratic ideal". Before Hitler, all major German parties had been "colored by Pan-Germanism" and agreed with the master race theory including the Social Democrats and the communists. Germany must remain "on probation" at least for a generation.<sup>76</sup> To this argument, Dorothy Thompson reacted with biblical generosity towards the CDG

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<sup>75</sup>Cornelia Bryce Pinchot to Frank, 27 December 1944, Frank Papers, box 9, folder P.

<sup>76</sup>Rex Stout Group, The position of the Writers' War Board on the German question, [1944], Frank Papers, box 5; also: Ibid. Common Sense, May 1944, box 5, folder: Writers' War Board; Ibid. Annual Report, [1944], box 5, folder: Writers' War Board.

in the New York Post. She proposed that if ten Germans could be found who favored the CDG program, "then let us take the ten Germans".<sup>77</sup>

Max Lerner refused to opt between the group of Stout and the CDG. He thought that each side saw the truth from a different perspective.<sup>78</sup>

Stout was also president of the Society for the Prevention of World War III to whose advisory council belonged the historian Allan Nevins and William L. Shirer. In this capacity, he declared that the signing of the CDG declaration was "the most unforgivable performance of a group of American liberals in the history of our country". He was sure that the latter had not read the declaration and proposed that the Germans who wrote it "ought to be shot". He described the CDG as "a device for Germany's escape".<sup>79</sup> The Western countries had been fooled once by German democracy and should refuse to be fooled again by another one. It would be only "a front for the manipulations of the militarists". The Society of Stout was partly inspired by the German emigrants F. W. Förster and Emil Ludwig.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, American public opinion

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<sup>77</sup> Karl O. Paetel, Bericht über die Presseäusserungen zum CDG, July 1944: Dorothy Thompson in the New York Post, 22 May 1944, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20; also: Memorandum on the press reaction to the newly formed CDG by Hoffmann to Poulos, German Desk, OWI, 6 May 1944, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Deutsch-sprachige Presse in den USA, 1941-1945, vol. Fb 225, p. 75.

<sup>78</sup> Bericht über die Presseäusserungen zum CDG: Max Lerner in PM, 27 April 1944.

<sup>79</sup> Rex Stout quoted in a letter by the executive director of Youthbuilders Inc. to Frank, 31 May 1944, Frank Papers, box 5.

<sup>80</sup> Common Sense, May 1944, Frank Papers, box 5, folder: Writers' War Board; also: Speech by Louis Nizer at a dinner of the Society for the Prevention of World War III at the occasion of the seventy-fifth birthday of F. W. Förster, 9 June 1944, Frank Papers, box 5, folder: Rex Stout Group.

could in general only be anti-German after several years of an unnecessary world war. The revelations about the German extermination policy in the concentration camps cleaned up any remnants of American sympathy for postwar Germany. For too long, the German emigrants held illusions about American public opinion and about the strength of American liberalism. They should have realized earlier that their plans for reconstruction had no legs on which to stand.

With the decisions of Yalta and Potsdam in February and July 1945, it became obvious that Allied cooperation would not work out in favor of German reconstruction. This called the basis of the CDG into question. If Germany were to be divided, plans for the reconstruction of its Western half required an anticommunist liberal attitude which the Council with its communist members could not provide. The apparent uselessness of East-West cooperation for German reconstruction pulled the ideological rug out from under the CDG. The death of President Roosevelt which occurred between the two conferences added to the pessimism of the liberal members of the Council. After the conference of Yalta, the latter agonized for several months over a joint comment on its decisions. Under the circumstances, the bourgeois and the NB emigrants wanted to criticize the Allied decisions for their potential harm to German national interests. They tried to pin down the pro-communist members to this reaction as a matter of consistency with the initial CDG declaration which had objected to the ideas of collective German responsibility and of a German dismemberment. The issue was therefore whether a Yalta article of the CDG should refer to this declaration. A compromise reaction could consist of a balance of



criticism and praise of the Yalta decisions.

In the resulting tug of war, Tillich produced a compromise statement in the form of an article for the Bulletin. As a counter-action, the publication of this Bulletin issue was postponed. Hermens conceded that the CDG could do nothing about the plans of Stalin but he objected to giving the impression that it would "lick his [Stalin's] boots". He believed that the policy towards Germany would produce "major friction" between the Allies which could cause a breakdown of East-West cooperation. In that case, "public opinion in this country is liable to change" in favor of Germany. The CDG should stake its hopes on such a reversal of international relations. In the meantime, the CDG and the AADG could provide the American public with proper information. This would counteract excesses of anti-German feeling even if the government wanted "to inflame [these] sentiments".<sup>81</sup> While Tillich was ill, the meetings which discussed a new Yalta article "took a peaceful course". Frank, who was away teaching the spring semester at an Illinois college, insisted in his correspondence on a reference to the initial CDG memorandum. Aufhäuser and Haussmann, that is, a left and rightwing member of the CDG, drafted a corresponding Yalta article. When the latter was not mailed out either, "a serious situation" resulted. The CDG committee reached "an impasse".<sup>82</sup> Committee members like Aufhäuser, Schreiner, Norden, and Bönheim did not attend, but

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<sup>81</sup> F. A. Hermens to Frank, 22 March 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

<sup>82</sup> Hertz to Frank, 8 April 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

mailed suggestions for changes in the prospective Yalta article. Schreiner withdrew his consent to the article with the reference to the 1944 declaration. Bönheim thought that so many things had changed that the CDG could not stand by its position of 1944. Norden took a view of the guilt of the German people "which was contrary to the declaration of the Council [of 1944]". It implied that the German people should submit to the consequences of defeat because it had failed to overthrow Hitler.<sup>83</sup>

After this, Hertz was convinced that the communist members acted in unison and wanted to "throw out the basic principles of the Council", that is, German territorial integrity rather than East-West cooperation. He felt that a failure of the CDG was preferable to "a capitulation" to the communist members. Hertz had a discussion with Anna Caples-Frank, Taurer, Eliasberg, and Erich Schmidt. He also awaited the reaction of the absent Frank for the next Council meeting. An anticommunist majority seemed assured to which the communist members would hopefully submit. But Tillich, Budzislowski, and Walcher took a centrist position. Walcher objected to a reference to the manifesto of 1944. He considered it "wrong" to protest against the Yalta decisions which were an accomplished fact. The Council should not back away from the original Tillich article.<sup>84</sup> The eventual CDG memorandum on Yalta praised the Allied determination to root out National Socialism and militarism in Germany. The Yalta decisions offered the hope for "a decent life for

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<sup>83</sup> Hertz to Frank, 11 April 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

Germans and a place in the community of nations". On the other hand, the memorandum objected to "a vivisection" of Germany that would cause the death of the patient. German reconstruction should not be jeopardized by a new border that ignored "a historically developed economic organism". The loss of Eastern provinces would cause an imbalance in the relationship between industrial and agricultural German areas.<sup>85</sup>

To the decisions of Potsdam, the CDG could not find a joint reaction. Actually, the conference definitely dropped the idea of a general German dismemberment and decided on a central German administration. But the expulsion of the Germans from the Eastern provinces had begun by July 1945. The Western Allies acquiesced in the loss of these provinces for Germany. The CDG tried for months to work out a compromise statement on Potsdam. But in anticipation of a change in East-West relations, the NB emigrants wanted an unequivocal rejection of the Potsdam decisions. The Social Democratic members under Aufhäuser still believed that cooperation with the Soviet Union was inevitable and were willing to accept the decisions reluctantly. In the process of taking a stand on Potsdam, the existence of the Council was at stake.

By the end of September 1945, Tillich wanted to resolve the issue. He called for a plenary session of the CDG and for a meeting of its executive committee from 20 to 22 September. Certain members of the executive committee, that is, Aufhäuser, Bärwald, Frank, Haussmann, and Schreiner were to explain their views on Potsdam and on the future

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<sup>85</sup> CDG, Zusammenbruch Deutschlands und Hoffnungen auf einen brauchbaren Frieden, [spring 1945], Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

of the CDG in reports of ten to fifteen minutes. Each one of these members represented a specific group of the Council. On the basis of this discussion, Tillich wanted to draft a declaration which the CDG and its executive committee could deliberate, amend and pass on 22 September. He saw three alternative courses. The Council could continue to work as previously and redefine its tasks. It could dissolve and make a strong statement about the causes of its failure. Or, it could continue "on a larger scale" with new tasks which Tillich did not explain. For all three possibilities, the attitude of the CDG towards Potsdam should be "the point of departure".<sup>86</sup>

Aufhäuser and Budzislawski presented a centrist report which would have been acceptable to the communist members. It conceded that "the German people has now to pay the price" for failing to overthrow the National Socialist regime and to prevent "the bloodiest of all wars". According to the report, "the democratization of Germany must be viewed within the framework of the general political development as it has been established ... by the various conferences, ... the decisions made there and the execution of these decisions". But it admitted that these conditions were "uncommonly severe" and that "nobody can expect the German people to welcome [them]". In this way, Aufhäuser and Budzislawski sacrificed territorial integrity to the principle of East-West cooperation. The latter remained "the only guarantee for the reconstruction of Europe and for a durable world peace".

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<sup>86</sup> CDG, Tillich, Mitteilung an Mitglieder, 10 September 1945, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

The two CDG emigrants noted, however, that there was friction and tension among the Allies that could lead to a division of Europe. It would be "objectionable and mistaken" for the two emerging power blocs to precariously reconcile themselves at the expense of Germany. International harmony should be better motivated than by an Allied punishment of Germany. In its internationalist spirit, the report welcomed the formation of "antifascist Four Party Coalitions" in all parts of Germany because "this wide United Front has proven to be a historical necessity in the most difficult hour of Germany". These coalitions resembled the composition of the CDG which should cooperate with them in the reconstruction of Germany. After reaffirming the precedence of the internationalist principle, Aufhäuser and Budzislawski moderately criticized the post-Potsdam situation. They realized "with concern" that a population which had increased by ten million refugees was supposed to live on a land reduced by the loss of prime agricultural areas and on a limited industrial economy. These disadvantages might jeopardize the economic viability of Germany. Also, the economic and administrative unity of Germany promised by the Potsdam declaration had not yet materialized.<sup>87</sup>

The centrist report did not accomplish its purpose of saving the Council at the meetings of 20 to 22 September. After months of discussion, there was no majority for a rejection of Potsdam. This surprised even Frank. He had thought that fourteen of the twenty-five

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<sup>87</sup> Entwurf einer Erklärung des CDG von Aufhäuser und Budzislawski, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

members of the Council had "our point of view".<sup>88</sup> This meant, however, that a loss of two votes would change the majority into a minority which is exactly what happened. According to Frank, "the moral pressure of the communist minority was decisive in this uncertain situation".<sup>89</sup> Several Social Democratic CDG members were afraid of embarrassing "certain groups in Germany", that is, the Four Party Coalitions, especially that of Berlin which the CDG could no longer expect to contact if it lost its communist members. With the acquiescence of the CDG in the post-Potsdam situation, the bourgeois and the NB members left the Council, some of the former already in August, Frank in October.

The latter was very bitter in his denunciation of the Potsdam decisions and of the CDG majority. He believed that the treatment of Germany by the Allies intensified the catastrophe that the National Socialists had brought upon Germany. It amounted to an enslavement of Germany and a pauperization of its inhabitants. Frank rejected the argument of Bönheim, Norden, and Schreiner that the CDG manifesto of 1944 was outdated because a German revolution had not materialized. They had known in 1944 that the chances for such a revolution would decrease as the war went on. Finally, "the revolutionary potential suffocated in the wild terror of the National Socialist departure" without the slightest encouragement by the Allies. The latter did not want a German revolution so that "then already, the treatment of

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<sup>88</sup> Frank To Niebuhr, 11 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

<sup>89</sup> Frank to Hermens, 19 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

Germany as a collectively guilty national unit was imminent".<sup>90</sup> Regarding his attitude towards communists, he thought that "on the continent, at home, where they are definitely an important minority, it might be necessary to cooperate with them in practical questions". But he could no longer see the need "to be bound abroad by their controllers and retarders", that is, by Moscow.<sup>91</sup> Regarding the Allied behaviour, also, Frank centered on the sins of the communists, that is, the Russians. In his opinion, even a four party coalition like the CDG should have been able and willing to score "the barbaric Russian revenge policy of the first weeks and the general strategy of mutilation for which the Russians are more responsible than any one of the victorious powers". A CDG protest would have been a sign of courage in a situation where even the Western Allies felt impotent.<sup>92</sup>

Frank was already disinterested in the Council before it refused to reject the Potsdam decisions, a development which he had not expected. He admitted that Potsdam was "more a secondary problem". He had hoped for a new mandate for the CDG from the nascent democratic movement in Germany.<sup>93</sup> It did not materialize, partly because of Allied policy and partly because of the ineptitude of the Council.

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<sup>90</sup> Paul Hagen, Erklärung an Mitglieder [des CDG] und Freunde, 18 October 1945, Mappe 194.

<sup>91</sup> Frank to Niebuhr, 11 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

<sup>92</sup> Frank to Hermens, 11 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

<sup>93</sup> Frank to Niebuhr, 11 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

Because of Allied obstruction, there was "no general representation" of a movement "which could take the German antifascists abroad into its obligations". Frank rejected the Four Party Coalitions as a substitute. They were, in his view, limited to Berlin and to the Russian zone of occupation. Frank would have welcomed an appeal to the CDG by German democratic groups to condemn the policy of Potsdam. In that case, the CDG could have become a foreign lobby for German liberal groups. But the Council remained "an exiled group" which deserved no further encouragement. During the war, the mere existence of the CDG as a free tribune for German democratic opinion was significant. But its potential was not fully realized. It was limited by "the nature of the people who joined the Council".<sup>94</sup> There was "too much ... personal ambition among most of its representatives and too little devotion to the common cause". Frank thought that the CDG could have overcome the neglect of the American government: "If it would have been a creative group, the spark emanating from it would have ignited, nevertheless". Its failure of receiving a postwar mandate was "a verdict". It was of no more use and might change into "a kind of German Mazzini Society" or just "a mailing address in New York". Frank believed that "the period of real chances is over". Certain Council members like the Social Democrats still hoped "to play some reconstruction role above and beyond their individual capacities". But "they are waiting for a call which will not come".<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Paul Hagen, Erklärung an Mitglieder und Freunde des CDG, 18 October 1945, EK Mappe 194.

<sup>95</sup> Frank to Hermens, 19 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.



The Social Democratic members of the Council were bitter about the behaviour of Frank, with some justification. They emphasized their past good will to make the CDG work. In the interest of unity, they had "tolerated a series of incidents", that is, of "separate actions and independent publications by Paul Hagen". They had also resented his "subjective orientation of the Association for a Democratic Germany" but had not insisted on an open discussion of the latter. In the matter of Potsdam, they forsook party political interests and submitted a compromise statement that should have been acceptable to a well intentioned Left and Right. They felt betrayed by Frank for whom the Council was "an instrument for [his] special interests". He split the CDG when it failed to serve his purposes. For this, he used the issue of Potsdam as an opportunity. He prematurely publicized his personal viewpoint on the Allied decisions without regard to the Council. Then, he wanted to "impose on the Council his propagandistically overstated view in its entirety". When he failed, he quit.<sup>96</sup>

Without the NB members and the AADG, the Council survived for another four months but it did not really function. Tillich agreed on Potsdam with the departed members. But he accepted the compromise statement by Aufhäuser and remained chairman of the CDG in the hope of rebuilding it. The last meeting of the executive committee took place in October 1945. It decided that the Council should continue but should abstain from an outward activity until it could replace its

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<sup>96</sup> Aufhäuser, Glaser, Julius Lips to Tillich, 27 January 1946, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II, pp. 237, 238.

losses with new members from the same groups, especially the Catholics and the bourgeois emigrants.<sup>97</sup> But Tillich could not win over any members of "the Right and of the Catholic wing". In particular, he failed in persuading Pastor Forell to rejoin. Then, he arranged for a conversation between Niebuhr, Budzislawski, and Lips, in the hope of healing the breach with the AADG. When that failed, he proposed to a meeting of the executive committee without a quorum the transformation of the Council into a relief organization "as the only basis on which a German political group in America could be formed".<sup>98</sup> The emigrant observer, Otto Piper, agreed with Tillich. For him, it had been predictable that the CDG would not work since "it was never the task of the German emigration to form a government in exile".<sup>99</sup> But nobody favored the welfare idea. The Social Democratic members criticized Tillich severely for his passivity at a time when "the most important decisions in the world and especially in Germany" were at issue. Tillich claimed that "any activity of the rump Council would have prevented the rebuilding of a full Council". But the Social Democratic members rejected the argument that he could not represent a Council that consisted only of the two labor parties. Then they left the Council and made him responsible for its final collapse. Tillich had not been comfortable with the Social Democratic and communist members

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Tillich to Aufhäuser, Glaser, Lips, 6 February 1946, Sammlung Glaser, vol. II, pp. 239, 240.

<sup>99</sup> Hermens to Frank, 15 October 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

in the CDG. He could accept them as a group submerged in a larger movement. This had been the point of his constitutional ideas about the Council and his earlier quarrels in the latter field with the Social Democratic members. He considered the dissolution of the CDG as "an advantage for a potential refoundation on a different, larger basis".<sup>100</sup> But the Council faded away at the time of its best opportunities.

Frank had been impatient with the CDG because of his personal political ambitions. By September 1945, he was determined to return to Germany as a liberal. He applied for a passport in London and, as a formality, also in Washington "where I have no chance of being successful". He found "after a long period of thinking about it", that "I must make an attempt".<sup>101</sup> As an American mandate, the CDG had become worthless. For this reason, Frank hoped that the Council would fail faster than it actually did. The latter had looked, at first, like "a model of a possible democratic reconstruction". But in September 1945, Frank needed a liberal sponsor group. He told Niebuhr that "it is exactly with the vision of a returned German liberal ... that I envisage again with more interest than ever a continuation of a group like the American Association. We will need a bridge to this country" from Germany. Frank proposed to reactivate the AADG "independently of what the Council will do".<sup>102</sup> He wanted to free the Association from

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Frank to Hermens, 19 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

<sup>102</sup> Frank to Niebuhr, 11 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

the handicap of the CDG by a complete dissociation. For this reason, he wanted to hasten the demise of the Council. He proposed to Tillich a transformation of the latter into a non-political ethnic organization that could engage in German postwar relief. He specified that "those who want to be more politically active should be invited to enter the Association".<sup>103</sup> Tillich declined because he was too closely identified with the idea of the Council to join the organization of one of its member groups. After September 1945, Frank intended to limit his activity to the AADG. In October, he quit the Council.

Frank made ambitious plans for the American Association. During the spring and summer of 1945, the AADG had "nearly come to a standstill". It was isolated by the reaction to the revelations about the Nazi atrocities. It had "absolutely no money" and was "kept on ice" for future activity.<sup>104</sup> In September, Frank saw already "some more wind in the sails" of the Association. He expected public opinion to be "more articulate than it was during Potsdam". From England would come "voices of reason" like a critical editorial on Potsdam in the London Economist. Frank also asked Niebuhr to continue as chairman of the AADG for another year. He devised a new strategy and a new budget for it. The latter would amount to \$500 to \$600 a month. Frank could account for pledges of half of this monthly sum. For a new propaganda effort, he proposed to intensify the research section of the Association and to issue some new publications so that there would be "one sincere

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<sup>103</sup>Hertz to Tillich, 18 October 1945, Nachlass Hertz, reel 20.

<sup>104</sup>Frank to Hermens, 19 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

reporting organization in New York". The main new publication was the monthly Facts about Occupied Germany. According to Frank, the more important members of the AADG thought that "for a while it [the AADG] will not yet be an important political group because the time has not yet come for real mass support". This meant that Frank expected the American Association to become "a policy making pressure group" eventually.<sup>105</sup>

But the affairs of the American Association did not improve that fast. By the spring of 1946, its activities were still "ridiculously limited" and "we muddle along with a budget of only about a thousand dollars monthly". But there was no question of giving up. Frank insisted that "we can't do that and particularly [not] now".<sup>106</sup> The American Association needed about two or three thousand dollars monthly. It negotiated a fundraising agreement with the firm of Harold L. Oram which worked "only for liberal causes" and with which the AADG had previous relations. The arrangement provided for "a minimum additional income of about \$20,000". Before the final agreement, Oram conducted a preliminary campaign because the Association, "after managing to remain solvent during the last eight months, is at the end of its rope".<sup>107</sup> But the Association hoped that the \$20,000 "together

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<sup>105</sup> Frank to Niebuhr, 11 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

<sup>106</sup> Frank to Victor Reuther, 13 May 1946, Frank Papers, box 9, folder R.

<sup>107</sup> Anna Caples to Niebuhr, [spring 1946], Frank Papers, box 10, folder 5.

with our small other income, will permit a better start for the greater task ahead".<sup>108</sup> Frank also appealed to union leaders like Victor Reuther. He became "a little impatient" with the latter and other officials of the United Auto Workers and of the CIO, still hoping that "one day our numerous expectations upon your help will come true". He reminded Reuther that the American Association and its predecessor had been working for ten years and that "you were never able to give us more than moral support and sometimes ... little of that". At the return of a UAW official from Germany, Frank expected Reuther to help arrange a fund raising affair that would net "a couple of thousand dollars".<sup>109</sup>

Despite this optimism, the American Association had hard post-war times. Frank failed to get permission from the War Department and from the American Military Government for a return to Germany, which practically ended his political career. Despite this setback, the AADG developed enough German contacts to claim something of a new German mandate. There were the NB members and friends in Berlin whom the American Association and Frank encouraged successfully to oppose a merger between the SPD and the KPD in Berlin. It also established "quite a network of contacts outside of Berlin". There were the former London emigrants Schöttle and Knöringen who later presided over the SPD organizations in Württemberg-Baden and in Bavaria. The AADG

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<sup>108</sup> Frank to Alfred W. Bingham, 9 April 1946, Frank Papers, box 8, folder B.

<sup>109</sup> Frank to Victor Reuther, 13 May 1946, Frank Papers, box 9, folder R.

ject before you leave the country". In case of a negative answer, the AADG would dissolve.<sup>111</sup> Frank agreed that the latter could "not for a second time spend years of unnecessary frictions, this time with a real party executive".<sup>112</sup>

When Schumacher left without answering the telegram of Niebuhr, the American Association was in a dilemma which Niebuhr and Frank saw in different perspectives. The latter did not consider the nonresponse of the SPD executive as final. He hoped to retain Niebuhr by withdrawing himself from the AADG. He thought that his continued prominence in the Association was the main obstacle to relations with the SPD. His withdrawal could overcome "the present prestige touchiness among the not really independent new German democratic leaders". They would do business with Niebuhr, Bingham, and Goldbloom, that is, with a purely American Association. In the postwar situation, Frank was dispensable and would retire together with Hertz.<sup>113</sup> He had already been devoting much of his time to his psychological counseling practice and to psychological and political studies. The latter would give him "a better understanding of some of the reasons for the lack of success of such good causes as ours". More personally, he felt that he had been "weighed and found too light".<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Niebuhr to Kurt Schumacher, 28 October 1947, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

<sup>112</sup> Frank to Niebuhr, 7 November 1947, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Frank to Maurice Goldbloom, 9 March 1948, Frank Papers, box 8, folder G.

The above changes were designed to overcome "Schumacher's passive resistance". In another message to the SPD chairman, the Association should mention its shift to purely American representation and its hope "for better cooperation with the Social Democratic party executive".<sup>115</sup> In the meantime, the secretary of the AADG, Goldbloom intended to visit Schumacher in Hannover after his attendance of a conference of European socialists in Amsterdam in November 1947. He expected to get "some kind of an encouragement ... if not a better 'mandate'".<sup>116</sup> Frank did nothing to jeopardize good relations with the new SPD. He even discouraged old NB friends in East Berlin from reviving a conspirational NB Group against Russian political intolerance. He refused to sponsor any such group from abroad. Another positive measure was the inclusion of the American Jewish laborite Charles Zimmermann, who was favorably regarded by Lovestone, in the national board of the AADG. Niebuhr also had the idea of including some members of the GLD in the Association. Frank originally thought that after the departure of several GLD members, there was "no worthy personality of the former 'other side' in New York". But a week later, he changed his mind because he did not want to withdraw completely from the AADG. He resigned the vice chairmanship but wanted to remain on the national committee of the Association. As a counterbalance, he agreed that the Association should accept "some of the old Social

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<sup>115</sup> Frank to Niebuhr, 7 November 1947, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.

<sup>116</sup> Frank to Niebuhr, 13 November 1947, Frank Papers, box 9, folder N.



Democrats" into its national committee and its board. He hoped that this would "make for a new start". Furthermore, "if Schumacher can be calmed down and if you [Niebuhr] decide to go on", then "something strong must be done" to arrive at a friendly cooperation with the international office of the AFL under Lovestone. Perhaps, Dubinsky, as one of the vice presidents of the AFL could help in this endeavor.<sup>117</sup>

When neither the SPD nor the AFL responded, the American Association went on working anyway. Niebuhr upheld his decision to resign. But in order to facilitate this step, he conceded that the AADG should continue without his leadership. Frank made a last effort to retain him. He tried to win James Loeb of the UDA for getting together a small delegation of Washington liberals which would ask Niebuhr to reconsider his decision. This group should also contact the State Department and "get some definitive promise of cooperation". Frank thought that the American change of attitude towards Germany presented a good opportunity for such an initiative. The new American foreign policy which heralded the Marshall Plan offered "a much greater chance for a group like the AADG in [the] future". Frank believed that "just now, some kind of an AADG should be founded and not liquidated".<sup>118</sup> Yet, for exactly this reason, he soon reversed his attitude towards Niebuhr. The latter might interfere with the further potential of the Association which should not go down with him. Frank became aware of "the frustration and relative futility of his [Niebuhr's] great sacri-

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Frank to James Loeb, 15 January 1948, Frank Papers, box 8, folder L.

face of more than ten years chairmanship". He felt that it was unfair to try to retain him any longer. He also wondered whether the compromise of Niebuhr was "enough of a basis" on which to continue the Association. Then, he told Loeb that he did "not think that a revival of the Association ... is tied with Reini's continuing services". Since a pro-German attitude began to be "more fashionable" for American liberals, it should not be too difficult to replace Niebuhr. Frank objected only to Norman Thomas, whom the latter had recommended as a successor. A Thomas chairmanship would "limit the efficiency of the group very much". Frank asked Loeb to think of alternatives to Thomas.<sup>119</sup> Eventually, Alfred Bingham, who had in the meantime served with the American Military Government in Germany, became the new chairman of the American Association. The executive committee of the latter was also reorganized to include Loeb, Thomas, and Shuster.<sup>120</sup>

In its postwar policy, the AADG had to fight an uphill battle also, most of the time. In 1945, the situation seemed hopeless. Frank confessed that "the outcome of this war has ... disappointed me" despite his attitude of realism and skepticism throughout the war. This compelled him to revise his view of "the proportion of good and evil" in human nature. In personal terms, he was afraid that "there is relatively little to be done in which we still can be of help during

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<sup>119</sup> Frank to Loeb, [n.m.] 1948, Frank Papers, box 8, folder L.

<sup>120</sup> Frank to Maurice Goldbloom, 9 March 1948, Frank Papers, box 8, folder G.

our lifetime".<sup>121</sup> This assessment was inspired by his ambition for a postwar career in Germany which soon foundered on the obstruction of the War Department and the American Military Government in Germany which was in contact with the postwar SPD.

The AADG had to center on the more practical goal of pro-German propaganda. Emigrants like Hermens and Piper had thought all along that the CDG and the American Association should have limited themselves to the latter task. The two organizations should have tried "to liberate American public opinion from the impact of wartime stereotypes".<sup>122</sup> The issue was that of "countering the Morgenthau mentality".<sup>123</sup> For this job, Frank was eminently qualified as "the most effective single writer among the emigrés from Germany". Hermens thought that "our most fruitful work should just begin".<sup>124</sup> He had even considered "the advisability of setting up a new group for exactly this purpose" if the Association shirked its duty. He held the mistaken view that American public opinion was volatile and would reverse itself "certainly within a year".<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Frank to Hermens, 19 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

<sup>122</sup> Hermens to Frank, 16 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

<sup>123</sup> Otto A. Piper to Frank, 10 November 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder P.

<sup>124</sup> Hermens to Frank, 16 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

<sup>125</sup> Hermens to Frank, 15 October 1945, Frank Papers, box 8, folder H.

The American Association agreed that "the country is very badly misinformed about the real situation". But after it was reactivated it experienced "a certain futility in our present efforts ... it is like trying to drain the ocean with a teaspoon".<sup>126</sup> It published the Facts about Occupied Germany, and cultivated direct contacts with union representatives and government officials. In 1946, Frank urged the United Auto Workers to go ahead with the plan of sending a delegation to Germany. This should be done by a combination of UAW locals if the national office could not do it officially. Frank also asked V. Reuther to take the initiative in establishing an American labor committee with the purpose of supporting the democratic labor movement in Germany. A number of union and American Military government officials who returned from Germany reported to the AADG like William Kemsley, George Fischer, the son of Louis Fischer, the Jewish labor leader Charles Zimmermann, George Silver, and Alfred Bingham. Most of them were friends of the American Association. Sometimes they participated in meetings with prospective supporters of the AADG. A special action committee prepared a meeting with Senators and Congressmen in Washington. Also, Victor Reuther kept Frank informed about his involvement in the shaping of a more liberal labor policy towards Germany and in the selection of labor attachés for the Military Government. He asked Frank for his views on these policies. One of the labor

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<sup>126</sup>Frank to Bingham, 9 April 1946, Frank Papers, box 8, folder B.

attachés was Frank's friend, Paul Porter. Before his departure, the latter had also conferred with Katz and Brauer of the GLD in Washington.<sup>127</sup> This made the GLD officials think that "this contact was extended only to us, not to other groups in the political emigration" like "communists, fellow travelers and United Frontists".<sup>128</sup>

In its publications and its correspondence with the government, the American Association severely criticized the American postwar policy of economic stagnation and limitation of political activity in Germany. It wanted the American government to give up its use of Germany as a pawn of international power politics and to assume the leading role in the struggle for world democracy. The new framework of AADG ideology was East-West confrontation rather than cooperation. The American Association hoped to win new support from American liberals who had become anticommunist rather than remain anti-German. The AADG believed that Germany was then "at the principal frontier and point of contact between the communist world and the free world".<sup>129</sup> Germany became "the battleground where the struggle for a democratic world has reached its most acute stage". The American Association told President Truman that it considered the West "in imminent danger of defeat" on the German battleground. It urged on the President the adoption of "a minimum program of economic revival" in Germany. That

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<sup>127</sup> Thomas D. Schocken to Frank, 28 September 1945, Frank Papers, box 9, folder S.

<sup>128</sup> Katz to Plett1, 30 March 1945, Nachlass Martin Plett1.

<sup>129</sup> AADG, Statement of policy and program for a democratic Germany, May 1950, Sammlung Eliasberg.

included the importation of raw materials on credit and "the essential socialization of major industries".<sup>130</sup> It welcomed the economic merger of the American and the English zones in an economically more feasible bi-zone.

This "positive policy" required also the establishment of a unified and democratic Germany and its integration into Western Europe and the Western World.<sup>131</sup> But this was an unrealistic goal of liberal propaganda. The main concern of the American Association was that the American government counter the Russian plan for the conference of foreign ministers in London in December 1947. The latter proposed the withdrawal of all Allied troops from Germany, national elections and the establishment of a central government. The AADG felt that the Russian government wanted to use the rejection of its plan as a pretext for including Eastern Germany into the Soviet system. Free elections were impossible while the SPD was illegal in the Russian zone. The Russian proposals concealed "behind fair words a plan for the extension of totalitarianism to all of Germany". Yet, their propaganda appeal would create the impression that the Western powers were responsible for the division of Germany.

In this way, the American Association put pressure on the American government. It offered Secretary of State Marshall its own plan for bringing about a result opposite the Russian intentions. This plan

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<sup>130</sup> AADG to President Truman, 12 June 1947, Sammlung Eliasberg.

<sup>131</sup> Statement of policy of the AADG, April 1947, and Statement of policy and program for a democratic Germany, May 1950, Sammlung Eliasberg.

proposed to end Russian influence in Eastern Germany by a transitional arrangement. The latter would abolish the four zones and replace the military governments with "one civilian international control body for all of Germany". The latter would be under the direction of the United Nations. This international control council would call free elections and distantly supervise a new German democratic government. With such a plan, the United States could demonstrate to the German people that "its aim is the protection and extension of freedom throughout the world".<sup>132</sup> Later, the American Association was afraid that the American government might be settled with responsibility for the division of Germany because of its insistence on extensive state rights in a federal system. A central German government should be the mainstay of any American program.<sup>133</sup> If that were not possible, the Western powers should set up a Western Germany which should include Berlin. The AADG also demanded "the revision of Germany's tentative Eastern boundaries in accordance with the principles of the Atlantic Charter". But its anticommunism did not interfere with its championship of German progressivism. The Association opposed the revival of a German army even for the sake of a better Western defense against communism. It considered a new military establishment as a threat to the German democratic forces.<sup>134</sup> It also deplored American obstruc-

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<sup>132</sup> AADG to Secretary of State George C. Marshall, 24 November 1947, Sammlung Eliasberg.

<sup>133</sup> AADG to Dean Acheson, [n.d.], Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Vol. Fb 224, OWI, Deutschlandpropaganda, p. 12.

<sup>134</sup> Statement of policy of the AADG, April 1947, Sammlung Eliasberg.

tion of economic codetermination for the German unions, a goal that was finally achieved in West Germany in 1974.<sup>135</sup>

With the European Recovery Plan, the American government adopted the outlook of the AADG. The latter credited itself with having contributed to this development. Its program finally received the mass support for which the liberals of the American Association had hoped. Their organization should then have been in business and actually planned to expand. In the spring of 1950, it believed that its work of influencing public opinion and the policies of the State Department had to continue. It even felt that "the urgency of the job to be done calls for expansion". It planned to go beyond research and publicity and organize "branch activity throughout the country". With its headquarters in New York, a representative in Washington was "desirable". The AADG also planned to establish a representation in Germany that would maintain close contacts with German democratic leaders and influence American officials in Germany. The American Association had never been so dynamic and confident since the end of the war. It felt even that "the effectiveness of American promotion of German democracy depends to a large degree on the support which will be given to the American Association for a Democratic Germany. The stakes are high. We cannot afford to fail".<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Voice of America, February 1949, Sammlung Eliasberg.

<sup>136</sup> Statement of policy and program for a democratic Germany, May 1950, Sammlung Eliasberg.



Yet, half a year later, in January 1951, the AADG suspended its activity. The official explanation contradicted the feeling of indispensibility of 1950. It stated that the issues of 1951 were "not those for which this Association was organized to deal".<sup>137</sup> Actually, after the war years of victimization by German emigrant anticommunists, it fell victim to the new native anticommunism of the McCarthy era to which the ideology of the American Association had contributed.

The plan of the NB sponsor organization for reorganization and reconstruction did not work out. The Council for a Democratic Germany did not play its expected role. In the face of the Allied policy towards Germany, the American Association revised its attitude to postwar international relations. It became anticommunist and advised the American government to follow this switch from East-West cooperation to confrontation. But what became the government was fatal to the American Association.

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<sup>137</sup> AADG to members, 22 January 1951, Sammlung Eliasberg.

## CHAPTER XI

### CONCLUSION

The German socialist emigration in the United States ended up as divided as it had begun, with accordingly minimal political results. The Popular Front as a communist concept could not unite this emigration. It anticipated a second world war and aimed at the defense of the Soviet Union in the form of an end to American neutrality at a time when the German American and emigrant socialists still had the illusion of a domestic solution to the German problem in the form of an overthrow of Hitler. Before the belated split of the Socialist Party of America, there was at first some Social Democratic cooperation in the Popular Front which was abetted by the comprehensive nature of the secondary German American labor organizations. But after 1936, the conservative socialists had their own political group in the Social Democratic Federation and their own publication in the Neue Volkszeitung. Then they engaged in an endless tug of propaganda war for the secondary labor organizations which they could not even win after September 1939 when they came into their aggressive own with the diplomatic end of the Popular Front.

The official Social Democratic group of the German Labor Delegation hoped to accomplish great things without any socialist cooperation. For this purpose, it tried to monopolize the socialist and unionist American sponsorship to the exclusion of the New Beginning

emigrants and their friends. It clung to the illusion of a majority opposition in Germany based on liberal, democratic masses which would only need some encouragement from abroad in the form of radio propaganda. In this spirit, the GLD continued the Social Democratic tradition of coalescing with bourgeois groups even though the emigration of the latter was insignificant in the United States. In this country, some GLD members hoped for a majority labor party with a progressive common denominator in which their German American Congress for Democracy could play a role. In order to follow its conservative political line and protect the personal ambitions of its members, the GLD maintained a complete independence from the Sopade from which it derived its initial authority. During the rescue crisis of 1940 and 1941, it was anxious to keep the remaining Sopade executives, as well as the majority of the Social Democratic refugees in Southern France, out of the United States. It also created problems for the rescue work of the American Friends of German Freedom, the American NB sponsor organization. These divisive politics were a major reason for which the American labor sponsorship lost interest in the German socialist emigration.

The NB emigrants did not believe in a general revolutionary spirit in Germany and had no confidence in bourgeois groups. They considered underground organization as essential and proposed a socialist concentration, that is, a reunification of all Social Democratic groups, which could, on occasion, cooperate with the communists in a pragmatic way. For the rejection by the GLD, they tried to compensate with the formation of international socialist emigrant coalitions. But

without more German emigrant cooperation, they were not successful in the pursuit of their goals.

For the planning of German reconstruction, the emigrant and German American socialists did not cooperate either even though the Office of War Information tried to promote their unity in the United Americans of German Descent. The GLD dropped out of that group because it did not want to deal with the second German American Popular Front. Its own reorganization failed to establish the emigrant support necessary to impress the American labor sponsorship or government. Accordingly, the GLD plans for reconstruction were unrealistic. In the hour of Allied victory, they advised the American government to conduct a cold war against Russia to forestall German territorial losses.

While the GLD refused to accept the probability of an Allied occupation of Germany, the NB sponsor organization planned for a total German defeat. It considered East-West co-existence as necessary for a lasting peace. Under this assumption, it initiated the Council for a Democratic Germany, a comprehensive German emigrant coalition with executive aspirations. The GLD refused to join, but two of its former chairmen and several other Social Democratic emigrants did so with the result of a serious division of the Social Democratic emigration. From the postwar power balance in Europe, the Council hoped to reap a compromise solution for Germany and Central Europe in the form of a Social Democratic system. But its lack of full emigrant representation and its refusal to resolve internal ideological differences at the expense of its maximal national program led to its dissolution when the Allied decisions of Potsdam revealed Western acquiescence in Russian terri-

torial acquisitions. Under these conditions, the American Association for a Democratic Germany as the main sponsor organization of the Council switched to an anti-Russian policy that urged containment of the Soviet Union on the American government. In this purpose, it was more specific and realistic and also more persistent than the GLD which still rejected a rapprochement with the NB organization.

It would have been difficult for the German socialist emigration in any case to win much consideration by the American government. But instead of doing everything possible to further such a purpose, it did everything possible to obstruct it. The fact that the American government procrastinated in permitting the return of socialist emigrants to Germany was partially due to their impractical politics. Frank was not allowed to return at all. The significance of the German socialist emigration in the United States for postwar German socialism is difficult to assess. The GLD anticipated the anti-communism of the postwar German Social Democratic Party under the leadership of Kurt Schumacher, who was succeeded by the less stern but unimaginative Ollenhauer, the former Sopade executive. At the end of the Cold War, Willy Brandt brought the more realistic, broadminded and conciliatory tradition of the former dissenting Social Democratic emigration to the leadership of the Social Democratic Party.

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The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

5 Jan. 1977  
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