

1995

Image of a failure : the symbolism of American Nazis during the depression

Kurt A. Brader
San Jose State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses

Recommended Citation

Brader, Kurt A., "Image of a failure : the symbolism of American Nazis during the depression" (1995). *Master's Theses*. 1122.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.xtj4-jkxz>
https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/1122

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Graduate Research at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@sjsu.edu.

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI

A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

**IMAGE OF A FAILURE:
THE SYMBOLISM OF AMERICAN NAZIS
DURING THE DEPRESSION**

**A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
San Jose State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts**

**By
Kurt A. Brader
December 1995**

UMI Number: 1377213

**Copyright 1995 by
Brader, Kurt Arne
All rights reserved.**

**UMI Microform 1377213
Copyright 1996, by UMI Company. All rights reserved.**

**This microform edition is protected against unauthorized
copying under Title 17, United States Code.**

UMI


**300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103**

© 1995

Kurt Brader

All Rights Reserved

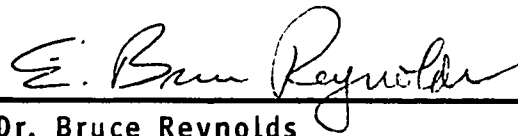
APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Peter Buzanski", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Peter Buzanski


A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert Kumamoto", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Robert Kumamoto

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bruce Reynolds", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Bruce Reynolds

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lou Lewandowski", written over a horizontal line.

ABSTRACT

IMAGE OF A FAILURE: THE SYMBOLISM OF AMERICAN NAZIS DURING THE DEPRESSION

By Kurt Brader

This thesis deals with American fascist groups as they struggled for identity in the political and social arenas of the United States. It concentrates upon symbols and imagery the Nazi movement used to direct attention to itself, promote its intentions and recruit American citizens as followers during the depression of the 1930s. The antagonistic nature of American Nazis will be examined in relation to conflicts with Jewish organizations, New Deal interests, and traditional American values.

Investigations of this subject determine Nazi groups including the Silver Shirts, the German American Bund, and others consciously utilized symbols to influence United States public opinion away from interfering in Nazi Germany's affairs. This examination deals with cultural, psychological and social aspects in a historical context. The documented investigation will present a history of the past so the American public may avoid future manipulation.

Dedication

I respectfully dedicate this thesis to the individuals who have contributed the greatest impact upon my life. From the teamwork of my parents, David Brader and Marilyn Brader, my scholastic career has achieved this success. The historical work here enclosed represents the consistency and intensity of the countless contributions my parents have made to my life.

Acknowledgements

Throughout the development of this thesis, I was endowed by assistance and guidance generously given from countless sources. The contributions of time, knowledge and expertise supplied by historians, researchers and scholars made positive influences to the content and professionalism of this work. I am grateful to:

Dr. Abraham Peck of the American Jewish Archives and his associates, particularly Kathy Spray, for the identifying and locating of pertinent Jewish documents.

Marc Lee Raphael of the journal American Jewish History for his suggestions and critiques on the subject matter within this thesis.

Retired Professor of History Dr. Irma Eichhorn, San Jose State University, for imparting her knowledge of research methods and literary presentation.

Historians Ed Schamel and Lisa Thacker, of the National

Archives, for their understanding of government documents and for permitting my access to the publications.

Laura Moody, periodical librarian, University of California at Berkeley's Doe Library, for tireless assistance in locating publications of the American Nazi movement.

Reference Librarian Jo Beth Whitlatch, San Jose State University, for information services coordination and identifying publications correlating to the symbolism this thesis examines.

International Library Loan Coordinator Shirley Miguel, of San Jose State University, for insuring the transportation of research materials between numerous archives within the United States and San Jose State University.

United States Government Publications Librarian Linda Johnson, San Jose State University, for referring my research to specific government documents involving my thesis topic.

The formulization of this thesis received the direct guidance of my advisory committee. Each member contributed in a unique manner for completing this enterprise. In gratitude I appreciate:

Dr. Peter Buzanski, Professor of History, San Jose State

University, for his insight into historical events, understanding of research documentation and knowledge of presenting evidence in a literary work.

Dr. Robert Kumamoto, Chairman, Social Science Department, San Jose State University, for his experience in obtaining United States Government documents, technical advice and cultural understanding.

Professor Ursula Moessner, Professor of History, San Jose State University, for pertinent and prompt critiques of the writing style involved in this thesis and her comprehension of German subject material.

Dr Bruce Reynolds, Chairman, History Department, San Jose State University, for his timely understanding and final review of the thesis.

Kimberly and Phil Just for extensive computer language and word processing instruction which was essential in the forming of this endeavor.

Seminary scholar Kevin Schaeffer, for his support and encouragement.

Graduate student, David Barry, History, San Jose State University, for research assistance and camaraderie.

Graduate student, Ronald Jones, former president of Phi Alpha Theta's Beta Lamda Chapter, for thesis knowledge and electronic publishing expertise.

Dorothea Dubé, for her understanding and positive influence.

My devoted parents, David and Marilyn Brader, whose support and commitment to my academic career is beyond evaluation. They have my most sincere gratitude.

Kurt A. Brader

October 1995

San Jose, California

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	vi
Preface.....	xi
Chapter 1: A New Cross for America to Bear.....	1
Chapter 2: Growth of the Virus.....	21
Chapter 3: Hate Makes Waste.....	37
Chapter 4: Wild Cards Against the New Deal.....	53
Chapter 5: Race to Oblivion.....	70
Epilogue:.....	101
Bibliography.....	106

Preface

As the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II has passed into the ages, the lessons of the conflict continue to guide humanity. Examples of its consequences serve to remind civilization of the potential of the human race to practice extreme bigotry and hatred. No other lesson from World War II illustrates this testament more than the Nazi Party of Germany. The concepts of extreme nationalism, master race theory, political and social dictatorship with the idea of world domination today serve as elements of how perverse a culture can become.

Despite the negative connotations of the Nazi era, several nations are presenting evidence they are drifting toward similar styles of racism and extremism. In reunified Germany, neo-Nazi groups have surfaced. The activities of fascist groups vandalizing a Jewish cemetery or initiating arson fires at refugee centers have become so frequent in recent years that such acts are considered routine for German politics.¹ In May of 1994, 200 Nazis demonstrated in the Italian city of Vicenza complete with banners bearing swastika-like signs and the shouts of fascist slogans to the

¹James O. Jackson, "Fascism Lives," Time Magazine, 6 June 1994, 51.

amazement of the unsuspecting citizens in the otherwise peaceful town.²

While the United States does not possess a history of fascist government as does Germany, Italy and other European nations, the United States experienced a period of far right politics in the 1930s which challenged the traditional values of American society. The economic crisis of the great depression provided a struggle in which many people became frustrated with the status quo of their nation's leadership. As a result, alternative politics, both in liberal and conservative extremes, were considered by many to be the answer to the nation's economic and social hardships. With the harsh economic environment touching every American citizen, fascist elements, particularly those of Nazi character, observed an opportunity to alter the political climate.

While fascist movements do not influence the most significant events in the American continuum, their activities and consequences are documented intensely by historians. Leland V. Bell, Susan Canedy, Sander A. Diamond and Charles Higham, among others researched and analyzed the concept of an American Nazi movement gaining political strength in the United States during

²Jackson, "Fascism Lives," 50.

the decade before World War II.³ These researchers have primarily concentrated upon the conflicts of the groups within the fascist movement during their quest for national influence and ultimate fate. A consensus can be reached regarding the nature and negative impact the movement eventually had on the American public. The failure of the ideology of elitism, the concept of totalitarian government and anti-organized labor practices of the fascists are established.

Several historical investigators such as Moshe Gottlib and Meyer Weiberg and others have examined the American Nazi movement as it impacted religious aspects of the United States population.⁴ As the American Nazi movement mirrored the fascists of Germany in anti-semitism and other religious discrimination, the conflict between the Aryan Nazis, who stood for white racial purity, in the United States and Jewish organizations has also been widely studied. Still, other aspects of the non-conventional political force remain obscure.

³See Leland V. Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kannikat Press, 1973), Susan Canedy, America's Nazis, (Menlo Park, CA: Markgraf Publications Group, 1990); Sander A. Diamond, The Nazi Movement in the United States, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974); Charles Higham, American Swastika, (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Press, 1985).

⁴See Moshe Gottlieb, American Anti-Nazi Resistance, 1933-1941, (New York, N.Y.: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1992); Meyer Weinberg Because They Were Jews, (New York, N.K.: Greenwood Press, 1986).

Some historians and authorities have observed and documented the similarities in appearance in fashion and manner of the American Nazis to their counterparts in Europe. The American fascist movement utilized symbols and values such as military uniforms, the swastika and the fascist arm salute, among others to present itself a specific identity. While not all organizations within the movement applied the same symbols within their respective groups, fascists attempted to use both foreign and traditional American symbols to further their political goals. They intended to use American flags and Nazi banners, intermingled with other recognized emblems of United States society and the European far right political scene to express their cause in contemporary American terms.

As the American fascist movement displayed itself through rallies, parades, antagonistic demonstrations and other activities, culture clash and social conflict erupted. The Nazis, despite elaborate efforts, to meld the fascist symbols which they used to identify themselves with the traditional signs and archetypes Americans identified with.

Despite the ultimate failure of alternative politics during the Great depression, the American fascist movement succeeded in recruiting a larger following than any other extremist political group of its time. Nazi groups with their prominent and often antagonistic use of symbolism easily drew both positive and

negative attention throughout the nation's forty-eight states. The symbolism they used, in its historical context will be examined in this study. This subject is directly relevant to present day American society. Currently, without a depressed economic climate fascist organizations are again on the rise. In the 1990s, with new means of expression such as the skin head movement, hate rock and Aryan youth groups, Nazi style fascism is gaining momentum. This study will examine the actions and reactions of the 1930s past so that we may understand the ideals which were symbolically contested then. The way American fascists manipulated both United States and Nazi symbols during the last major movement can help us to better understand similar movements in the future.

Chapter 1

A New Cross for America to Bear

The swastika is an ancient symbol. In Greece, before the birth of Christ, the crooked cross was associated with medicine. Before Christopher Columbus reached the Caribbean, native Americans used the emblem as a form of decoration.¹ In Germany, the swastika was given new meaning at the start of the twentieth century. In the years immediately prior to the Great War, proponents of the aryan race used the swastika, (translated in German as the Hakenkreuz), as the representative symbol for their movement of establishing a genetically pure national race.² To the American community, the German Aryan movement would not spread in an organized fashion until the mid 1920s.

Among the symbols the American fascist movement reacted against was the Star of David. The six pointed emblem known in Judaism as the Magen David or Shield of David is a symbol with a

¹James A. H. Murray, ed. Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1961; reprint), s.v. "Swastika."

²Leo Louis, Encyclopedia of the Third Reich (New York: McGraw Hill Publishing, 1976), s.v. "Swastika."

history as old as that of the swastika. Archaeologists date the star back to the Bronze Age in Britain and Mesopotamia. While the Moslems attributed the symbol to the biblical King David, to whom they believed God gave the ability to make armor, it did not become an emblem which stood for the Jewish religion until the nineteenth century. At that time, historians believe, Jews adopted it as a simple recognizable sign for their religion. Some authorities consider this application of the Star of David to be an imitation of the Christian cross as a religious symbol which could easily be associated with the faith. Jewish leaders, however, consider the Menorah to be the true symbol of the religion.³ As the American Nazi movement and the Jewish community confronted each other during the depression, the Star of David was rarely utilized, despite graffiti on synagogues and Jewish businesses in the early 1930s.⁴ As the United States depression continued and Nazi activities became more visible, the American Jewish community continued to resist its antagonists. Jewish groups protested the Nazi movement with secular symbols rather than confronting the fascists on a religious level.

The most intense arguments concerning symbols in the

³Encyclopedia Judea (New York: Macmillan Company, 1971), s.v. "Megan David," by Gershon Shacked.

⁴Leland V. Bell, In Hitler's Shadow (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1973), 13.

American fascist movement was the identification of the Nazis with official United States archetypes. The American flag became a rallying point for both the supporters of the fascists and their detractors at virtually all rallies, parades, demonstrations, public speaking engagements and minor activities. The Stars and Stripes was displayed by both elements. Every American was familiar with the United States National flag which dated back to the flag resolutions passed by the Continental Congress in the 1770's.⁵ Both sides of the fascist argument recognized this and tried to exploit the national symbol to their benefit.

In addition to the swastika, the American Nazis adapted many other fascist symbols. Different Nazi groups would derive alternative uniforms to those of the brown clothed National Socialist Party, (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei), in Germany. Some of the organizations would employ the fascist arm salute and other Nazi symbolic characteristics.⁶ The American Nazi movement relied heavily upon German culture to accent its symbolism for the fascist cause. Ethnic German folk songs, German made consumer goods and other aspects of Germany supplemented the symbols the Nazis used.

⁵Milo M. Quaife, The History of the United States Flag (New York, N.Y.: Harper and Brothers, 1961), 54.

⁶Susan Canedy, America's Nazis; A History of the GermanAmerican Bund (Menlo Park, CA: Markgraf Publications Group, 1990), 121.

While the clash of the fascist symbols and the ancient representative signs of the United States and Jewish faith were paramount during the depression, the hard economic times introduced a new pantheon of symbols into the equation. In addition to the orthodox emblems of the United States, the depression generated a new chapter of symbolism into the American scene. Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his New Deal sponsored new emblems to accompany the President's administration.

Fascism was not the only political system to exploit the depression. Competing with the Nazis for America's alternative leadership was the United States Communist Party. Although less organized and visible than the fascists, left wing extremist politics were natural enemies of the Nazis. American fascists, like those in Europe, claimed communism was a Jewish plot to control the world as it originated from Karl Marx who came from a Jewish family.⁷ Because economic and political views of communism were the antithesis of fascism, these also played into the rhetoric of Nazis in the United States. The hammer and sickle which represented the Soviet Union, the only communist nation in the world became a symbol for all communism to America's Nazis.⁸ Further

⁷Lenni Brenner, Zionism in the Age of the Dictators (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill Publishing, 1983), 24.

⁸Mary Elting and Franklin Folson, Flags of All Nations (New York, N.Y.: Grosset and Dunlop, 1967), 43.

symbolism took the forms of personalities and animals. As fascists struggled to secure an American identity, they attempted to align themselves with America's historical figures. Past presidents and the founding fathers of America were used by both the Nazis and their critics as different political groups vied for the public's support. In print and speech, both the Nazis and their attackers labeled each other with animalistic names such as snakes, monkeys and dogs. This bestiality symbolism became amplified as the depression dragged on through the late 1930s.

The conflict between the American fascist movement and its detractors can be traced to the ending of the First World War. In the United States, first generation German immigrants were held in suspicion by the government and public as being unpatriotic sympathizers. Unnaturalized Germans were required to register with the government, as their property was controlled by federal agencies.⁹

While America emerged victorious from World War One, it faced a reality it had not experienced before. The United States and its allies were now responsible for the peace process which followed. Unlike the war with Mexico and the Spanish-American War, the United States did not win territory, but had to supervise reparations and establish a Germany free of the elements which had led to World War One. After Germany subdued its radical fac-

⁹Canedy, America's Nazis, 10.

tions and United States troops were positioned for occupation, in America's perspective, Germany was transformed from an enemy nation to a country which now required our aid.¹⁰

As Germany plunged into a series of economic disasters from 1919 onward, the United States contributed massive amounts of private and public support. Sympathy for the vanquished nation's poverty resulted in American charitable organizations rallying in assistance. The Quaker Relief Committee fed some sixty thousand Berlin children in December of 1923.¹¹ In New York City, a food drive to aid young Germans collected ten million dollars. A former American war veteran proclaimed "The war is over, the time is past when we can pay for the destruction of...Germany."¹² American sympathy for the German nation reached an all time high.

Still, difficult economic times persisted. Immigration from Germany to the United States skyrocketed. Individual Germans made personal requests to relatives living in foreign nations for hard currency. One-fifth of the population of the United States was of German ancestry and one-quarter million Germans immigrated to the United States after the end of the Great War, flooding

¹⁰ Alfred E. Cornebise, The Weimar in Crisis, Cuno's Germany and the Ruhr Occupation (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, -1977), 190.

¹¹ "Germany Hungers," Nation, 30 January 1924, 115.

¹² "Ten Million Dollar Food Drive to Aid Young Germans," Nation, 24 September 1924, 101.

capacity of America's naturalization system in the early 1920's.¹³ This influx of native born Germans to the United States provided a foundation for fascist groups who would recruit prospective Nazis from among the new immigrants.

By 1923, Germany had endured Adolf Hitler's public demonstrations of his National Socialist Party. The enigmatic leader conducted the political group's first party congress in Munich during January. By November he had initiated the ill-fated "Beer Hall Putsch." Despite this fascist failure, the swastikas which symbolized Nazism in Germany soon were displayed in America as political idealists attempted to found national socialism in major American cities. In that year, the storm trooper uniform of brown shirts, black ties and swastika armbands was already in deployment.¹⁴ Public displays of this nature, however, were infrequent during the 1920s.

The symbols of fascism were not restricted to Germany. In 1922, Benito Mussolini had become the first fascist dictator with his ascent to power in Italy. In correspondence with Mussolini's establishment of a new political system in world affairs, an Italian-style fascist movement led by Mario Morgantine emerged in

¹³U.S. Department of Justice, Table of Immigration and Nationalization Service, U.S. Department of Justice Statistical Yearbook, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981), 24.

¹⁴Canedy, America's Nazis, 33.

the United States. As Mussolini solidified his government, Morgantine developed a microscopic fascist group entitled The Black Shirts.¹⁵ Typical of fascist groups in its symbolism of military uniforms, in this case black boots, trousers, shirts and garrison caps, this organization did not develop into a contingency large enough to stage large scale rallies. The Black Shirts rarely fielded a membership above two hundred. While the Nazis employed the swastika as their primary symbol, the Black Shirts associated with, but rarely used the Italian fasces axe. Throughout the 1920s this group existed to support Mussolini, not Hitler.¹⁶ On occasion, however the Black Shirts would participate in German Nazi rallies.

The primary American Nazi movement originated in 1924 with the Nationalsozialistische Vereinigung Teutonis, (referred to by its English speaking members as the Teutonic Association). This organization never became identified as the official United States counterpart to the German Nazi Party, yet it collected funds for Hitler's movement and supported the ideals of German fascism.¹⁷ Despite interacting with the Ku Klux Klan, German-Americans and business executives such as Henry Ford, the group's efforts of

¹⁵New York Times, 30 August 1938, p. 3 (5).

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Donald S. Strong, Organized Anti-Semitism in America, (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1941), 31.

expansion were met with apathy.¹⁸ The political climate of the "Roaring 20s" accepted charities to assist the German people, but was unresponsive to political fund raising. Under the leadership of Fritz Gissibl, the Teutonia Association, headquartered in New York City, maintained a small but uniformed following throughout the 1920s.

In October of 1929, the United States Stock Exchange crashed, signaling America's abrupt entry into the depression. As the economy struggled to correct itself, national leadership appeared incapable of providing a solution. The opportunity arose for American fascism to exploit the chaotic national scene; however, the fledgling Nazi movement withstood troubles of its own. While the Teutonic Association had spread throughout many major American cities, its membership was divided. Gissibl's failure to recognize a new group entitled the National Socialist German Workers Party of New York, led to a split in the American nationalist socialist movement.¹⁹ Gissibl could not tolerate the conflict and dissolved his association in 1931. This created a void the Teutonic Association took with stoic resolve. This persistence of the movement would guide those who followed fascism throughout the depression.

¹⁸Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 7.

¹⁹Canedy, America's Nazis, 39.

The American Nazi movement did not wait long for new leadership. An aggressive individual claimed the executive powers of the a movement. Berlin-born Heinz Spanknoebel, a former member of the association who lived in Chicago, took control.²⁰ Under Spanknoebel, Nazi symbolism in public increased dramatically. He mobilized the remnants of the association and National Socialist members into a new faction entitled Gau-USA, gau in German meaning "district." He traveled to Germany and managed to convince Nazi party deputy Rudolf Hess that Gau-USA had thousands of members.²¹ With the approval of the German Nazi Party, Spanknoebel endeavored to launch his new organization into the forefront of American society.

As the depression raged in 1932 and early 1933, Spanknoebel became increasingly active. He organized torchlight street parades at which he and his followers marched in uniform to promote the fascist cause. His supporters took direct action against the Jewish community by defacing synagogues and shops. Spanknoebel's personnel also assaulted Jews in public, leading to public disfavor toward his organization. Spanknoebel's activities became increasingly violent, as he mimicked the public demonstrations the Nazi's

²⁰Charles Higham, American Swastika (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Press, 1985), 4.

²¹Canedy, America's Nazis, 50.

used in Germany in the late 1920s.²² His actions became so violent that, after a series of New York riots, he was placed under Federal indictment for failing to register as an agent of a foreign government.²³ The American government had begun to perceive Nazi activities as criminal acts. The United States Nazi movement had come to conotate political and social hatred. Spanknoebel generated early negative images of fascist symbolism which America would not forget.

In Asheville, North Carolina a new fascist organization developed led by William Dudley Pelley. This unit, which called itself the Silver Shirts, supported the ideals of Nazi fascism yet its symbolism was more discreet. The Silver Shirts did not display the swastika with their uniforms nor did they practice the fascist arm salute. Pelley considered the symbolic gesture "silly."²⁴ This was not, however, the attitude of other Nazi groups. Before turning to fascism, Pelley was among the more respected of America's political extremists. During the 1920s he wrote for Collier's, Good Housekeeping and Redbook magazines. The Massachusetts native

²²Harry Schneiderman, "The Previous Year," in The American Jewish Yearbook, vol. 37, (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1935), 151.

²³Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 3.

²⁴U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), 7228.

was popular enough to be listed in the 1923-24 edition of Who's Who in America.²⁵

As the early 1930s progressed, Pelley's Silver Shirts expanded throughout the United States in limited numbers. His literary talents fostered new political newspapers entitled Liberation and Pelley's Weekly. These periodicals dealt extensively with anti-semitism and Aryan race dogma.²⁶ Like most fascist organizations, Pelley's Silver Shirt Legion featured a complex enrollment application. True to the symbolism of the Aryan race it specifically inquired as to the potential member's hair and eye color. It also required applicants to list their "racial extraction."²⁷ In order to exclude Jews from his organization, Pelley required potential members list the name they were christened under.

Other organizations which added to the fascist spectrum and its use of symbolism included a group in New York known as the Steel Helmets. This group, comprised primarily of German world war veterans who had legally immigrated to the United States, took some German military symbolism to the extreme. So commit-

²⁵Strong, Organized Anti-Semitism in America, 43.

²⁶Ibid., 42.

²⁷U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), 7224.

ted were they to the Nazi cause, they smuggled German uniforms into the United States and drilled complete with infantry rifles.²⁸ While a German military style uniform was typical of those who supported the Nazi cause in America, the Steel Helmets was the only group whose members paraded under arms.

Still other organizations sprouted in the garden of extremist politics. Minor fascist units such as the American White Guard and other colored shirt organizations, to imitate the Nazi Brown Shirts in Germany, appeared on the American scene. While the White Guards initially managed to achieve funding from the newly established Nazi government, it, like many other minor Nazi organizations, collapsed.²⁹ Regardless of the type or intensity of the symbolism being used, leadership to establish and maintain an organization would always be a problem for fascism during the depression.

In Detroit, during July 1933, Ernest W. Bohle founded the Association of the Friends of the New Germany. The violent public acts of the past had led those who supported fascist style economics and government with a need to rectify their image. In Germany, as the new Nazi government struggled to establish itself as a legitimate administrative institution, America's Nazis also

²⁸"Brown Shirts and Silver Shirts Under a Federal Microscope," Newsweek, 16 June 1934, 8.

²⁹Harold Levine, The Fifth Column in America (New York, NY: Doubleday, Dorin and Co., 1940), 194.

attempted to gain legitimacy. The Association was directed by Bohle to tone down rallies and public demonstrations in regard to the New York riots. He also adopted a political agenda which gave the Nazi movement coercive influence on America. From 1933 onward, Bohle was determined to secure a Western alliance with fascist Germany.³⁰ The course was now arranged for Nazi symbolism to be used as an element for the manipulation of American international politics.

If the American fascist movement was to clear its early impressions of being little more than immature toy soldiers waving banners in parades and fighting like street gangs, new tactics would be required. Spanknoebel's cruel public displays prompted his recall to Berlin where he was lectured to by subordinates of Rudolf Hess, who was now Hitler's deputy. The United States Nazi leader was instructed to conduct his actions in a less violent manner. Bohle, however believed Spanknoebel was uncontrollable. While Nazi organizations in America ostracized Spanknoebel, he feared further legal action against him. In October 1933 Spanknoebel fled the United States never to return.³¹ By the time of his departure, the Association of the Friends of the New Germany had already expanded to most major American cities

³⁰Higham, American Swastika, 4.

³¹Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 13.

including New York, Chicago, Cincinnati, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Ernest Bohle personally took control of the organization's chapters in Chicago and New York.³² Soon the foundation was laid for a nationwide Nazi organization, but the structure for the institution would prove to be more difficult to build.

As the depression continued, appearances of storm trooper-like uniforms, swastika banners, and armed saluting Nazis slowly grew in frequency. As United States fascist organizations became more visible in American society, the public became suspicious. Many believed United States fascist organizations received their leadership directly from Hitler.³³ In reality, Bohle and Spanknoebel's liaison with Rudolf Hess was an exception to German policy. Virtually all American organizations operated independently as the German hierarchy was preoccupied with European developments. Hitler significantly ignored the United States because of its apparent inability to overcome economic depression. Politically, Hitler believed the wrong side had won the United State's Civil War.³⁴ America was racially degenerate and strategically isolationist by his assessment. Considering Germany was commandeered by the Nazis while it was in economic ruin during

³²Higham, American Swastika, 4.

³³Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 8.

³⁴Ibid., 9.

the early 1930s, German authorities missed the obvious opportunity to foster the growth of Nazi politics as America continued to struggle with economic calamity.

While Hitler occasionally met with American fascist leaders, his involvement with United States Nazism did not develop beyond his fanatical speeches. One other German official however, wasted no effort in the attempt to influence American pro-Nazi affairs. Workaholic Dr. Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda and Enlightenment, insured that American fascist publications had complete access to the official Party newspaper Volkischer Beobachter.³⁵ When looking for Nazi symbolism, American fascist groups possessed a primary source.

As Goebbels directly supported fascists in the United States, he personally developed goals for the American Nazi movement. First, Goebbels intended to construct a Nazi political base utilizing the German American Committee. Second, he plotted to sway American public opinion so the federal government would not forcefully oppose Nazi goals in Europe.³⁶ Goebbels, however, required quality leadership and dedicated followers on the part of America's fascists. He hoped the new leaders of the United States Nazi movement would be instrumental in this complicated task for

³⁵Higham, American Swastika, 12.

³⁶Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 15.

building growth.³⁷ Despite these foreign intentions, the United States movement took its own direction while freely adapting Nazi symbols to its own purpose.

As the Friends of the New Germany established themselves in major American cities, they created a symbol to mark their identity based upon the old swastika. The crooked cross was raised at an angle above a half-circle which enclosed the organization's German initials.³⁸ Soon the new symbol was displayed on banners and meeting halls mingled with Germany's Nazi flag and the Stars and Stripes. The Friends of the New Germany emblem adorned podiums at group rallies and even tie stickpins.³⁹ Although the new symbol clearly proclaimed that the Friends of the New Germany was a Nazi organization, it served to alienate the group as it lacked traditional American appeal. Had the organization's leaders attempted to represent themselves with a more conventional American symbol or at least incorporated the swastika in an American motif, the fascists would not have isolated themselves as they did.

Although elements within the United States fascist movement desired the moderation of tactics and Nazi-like spectacles, the past behavior of various Nazi groups continued to generate nega-

³⁷Higham, American Swastika, 5.

³⁸Canedy, America's Nazis, 65.

³⁹Alison J. Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," Christian Century, 8 March 1939, 321.

tive publicity. The movement's leadership could not satisfy the whims of its more intense members. As government agencies and American community groups examined the movement with scrutiny, many people reacted negatively. Still the Friends of the New Germany increased its ranks. Primarily through the recruitment of newly arrived German immigrants, fascist camps were founded in Philadelphia, Detroit and other American cities. Summer schools within the camps catered to families who belonged to the Friends of the New Germany. Some schools supported up to 200 children each who were organized in respect to the Hitler Youth. The adolescents marched to German music and sang Nazi anthems.⁴⁰ These camps served as staging areas where rallies and marches could be rehearsed. The camps also served as meeting places where members could concentrate away from public scrutiny.

While the camps became focal points for Nazism, the fallout from the American Nazi concentrations intensified Congressional investigations and the organization of anti-fascist groups. Clearly battle lines were forming between the fascists and their more traditional American detractors. While the Nazis continued to recruit in large numbers, (membership reached above 5,000 for the Friends of the New Germany alone by early 1935), their leadership again failed to achieve unity. Opportunities for the Nazis continued to

⁴⁰Higham, America's Swastika, 7.

exist, but unfortunately for the movement, Nazi leaders failed to grasp them.

By 1935 the American depression had shown few signs of abating. Unemployment remained at approximately twenty percent while manufacturing remained two-thirds of what it previously was.⁴¹ After half a decade of difficult economic times, people still felt disillusioned about their business prospects and the government which supposedly would return the nation to financial prosperity. In Germany, the Nazi government managed to correct its nation's subdued economy, seeming to insure that while apparently the nation would experience continued industrial growth. Social and political unrest remained present for America's Nazis to exploit, yet it did not appear they possessed the means to accomplish the task.

At this time a crisis struck the Friends of the New Germany. On October 11, 1935, in an attempt to distance Germany from the negative media coverage the American fascist movement was generating, the German Foreign Office ordered all German citizens to resign their membership from the Friends of the New Germany. This devastated the organization as approximately sixty percent of the unit's ranks were comprised of newly immigrated German citi-

⁴¹Wilbur E. Garret, ed., Historical Atlas of the United States (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1988), 227.

zens.⁴² This crippled the largest fascist organization in the United States and with the combined efforts of the Nazis' critics could have ended the movement for all time.

Despite the chance to unify large factions of the American people, the United States Nazi movement had become its own worst enemy. Its initial opportunity to galvanize the American public was lost forever as the average citizen refused to identify with the symbolism, tactics and rhetoric of an organization which was more inclined to be German than nationalistic. The United States Nazi movement had squandered its greatest opportunity for success. At this point most Americans and even German Nazis may have preferred the movement to cease yet new elements refused to surrender the cause. The early stages of United States Nazi fascism had concluded as an episode in history marked by intense symbolism. The future would witness the same symbolism explode.

⁴²Canedy, America's Nazis, 65.

Chapter 2

Growth of the Virus

The year 1936 would witness vast changes in world politics. Fascism would become entrenched in Europe, the Spanish Civil War created a cauldron of fascist intrigue as a new political system would rise from the nation's ashes. Germany would host the Olympics in an unparalleled spectacle promoting the Aryan race. World media would be saturated with newsreel views of swastikas, the established government symbol of Germany, as athletes participated in Olympic games. America would soon observe Europe accelerate on the road to the Second World War.

In the United States, those who imitated fascism in Europe remained committed to expanding extremist politics. Because of poor leadership, an uncoordinated movement between factions and the lack of international support, Nazis in the United States desperately needed to reorganize. The public image of domestic fascism also required adjustment. The symbolism of the movement possessed too many negative connotations to be effective in offering a positive fascist alternative to contemporary American society regardless of the negative effects of the nation's economic depression.

As 1935 concluded, American fascism appeared to be facing

termination. The decree by Germany for American fascist organizations to exclude those without United States citizenship devastated the ranks of the movement while the American public considered the fascist cause to be violent and antagonistic. The symbols of the movement had become focal points of disdain. In August 1935 two hotels and a social club in New York City refused to display the Nazi swastika flag for the Association of German-American Technologists because it was stated "...this flag, on a number of occasions...incited riots and major disturbances."¹ In October 1935, the Milwaukee, Wisconsin Central Federation of German Societies defeated requests to have the swastika displayed at a German-American celebration by a vote of 53 to 19.² Such was the symbol's negative connotation to a group which possessed no Nazi affiliation.

In the context of the situation, clearly the movement required a new, more positive approach if it intended to succeed in generating public support for itself. This did not occur. The Nazi cause attracted those who were addicted to its mixed characteristics of idealism and hatred. Instead of modifying its mannerisms, the movement intensified them. As the Friends of the New Germany recoiled from the loss of its German citizen members, its

¹Harry Schneiderman, "The Previous Year," in The American Jewish Year Book, vol. 38 (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1936), 219.

²Ibid.

hardcore followers endeavored to maintain the organization in its past form.

In the early months of 1936 the Friends of the New Germany consolidated its reorganization process. Under the new restrictions of membership the old organization began its existence again. A devoted crowd of 1,500 supporters conferred at New York's Turnhalle in April. Fritz Gissibl was replaced by Fritz Julius Kuhn as the primary leader of the American fascist movement and its organization became known as the German-American Bund.³ Those addicted to Nazism and its symbolism became more extreme. Kuhn pursued more intense interaction between the German Nazi State and what was now his association. The German government, however, payed little attention to the new movement because of the negative publicity American fascists had previously generated. German officials did allow a member of the Nazi foreign office in the person of Gerhardt Kunze of Camden, New Jersey.⁴ Kunze was promptly made deputy of the Bund.

Fritz Kuhn was indelibly marked by German militarism. He had served as a machinegunner in the German infantry during the Great War. Because of Germany's severe financial turmoil he immigrated to Mexico in May of 1923 before Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch in November. After relocating and becoming a United States citizen

³Canedy, America's Nazis, 73.

⁴Higham, American Swastika, 5.

he became a member of the Steel Helmets Association.⁵ In 1934, after joining the Friends of the New Germany, he received his citizenship while living in Detroit.⁶ Kuhn's rise in leadership was so swift and effective, virtually no one within the organization questioned his exalted position.

The German-American Bund consolidated affiliate groups. It rapidly built upon the nationwide network of chapter organizations the Friends of the New Germany initiated. Fritz Kuhn, like Hitler when he assumed national power in Germany, squandered no time in calling his followers to action. Kuhn felt charismatic leadership and expression of the Nazi message would be the sparks necessary to unite the American people. His leadership extended completely over the Bund; he could excommunicate members, control funds and set doctrines as he desired. His only challenge to power was the need to be re-elected at each annual meeting of the organization's inner circle.⁷ The symbolism of Kuhn's authority was expressed in his title, "Bundesführer."⁸ Kuhn welded his followers together like the Iron Cross he was awarded during the World War.

⁵U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), 3707.

⁶Ibid., 3709-3712.

⁷Higham, American Swastika, 5.

⁸Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 17.

When Kuhn was elected at the Turnhalle meeting, he was attired in the Bund's storm trooper-like uniform complete with his German war decorations.⁹ This symbolized Kuhn's relationship to Germany and therefore a strong fascist partnership. It also made the Bundesführer mimic the German Führer in appearance. This imagery contributed to the foreign symbolism which would alienate the movement from native-born Americans.

If the American Bund's leadership authority and uniforms did not alienate the people, other activities the Bund promoted did. Local Bund affiliates increased enrollments at the organization's rural campsites where infantry marching and military drill was practiced along the lines of the Hitler Youth.¹⁰ In Grafton, Wisconsin, a youth school known as Camp Hindenburg was constructed. It included flag poles displaying the German Hitler youth emblem along with the United States flag. Similar camps were situated near Philadelphia, Detroit, Pontiac and other municipalities. At such schools, bands played German anthems and parades were conducted as adolescents marched behind swastika banners.¹¹

With the galvanization of Kuhn's leadership, symbolism expanded and divided dramatically. The youth groups of the Bund

⁹Canedy, America's Nazis, 73.

¹⁰Higham, America's Swastika, 7.

¹¹Ibid.

possessed their own emblems. Throughout a child's experience within a Bund youth camp, the individual constantly observed the youth group's emblem of a two-dimensional spread winged eagle perched upon a four sided diamond which enclosed a Nazi secret service-style S. This symbol was carried on flags and marched with the Stars and Stripes.¹² It was also a key fixture upon the youth group's periodical, Junges Volk.¹³ Early indoctrination into Nazi culture was clearly a concentrated effort by those who organized the movement.

The symbolism of adolescent fascists in uniform was not a unique concept. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Brownies and other youth organizations conducted their activities in uniform, but with American symbols only. While the use of German emblems gave the young members of the movement an ethnic identity, it isolated Americans who were not related to German immigrants. This restricted the drawing power of the American Nazi movement. The potential to reach mainstream America was being missed by Nazi leaders.

As 1936 progressed America saw Fitz Kuhn rally his Bund in support of Republican Presidential candidate Alfred Landon, conduct annual German Day celebrations and increase Bund member-

¹²Paul M. Ochojeki, "First Hike," Junges Volk, March 1937, 6.

¹³"Unsere Mission," Junges Volk, November 1937, 2.

ship to approximately 100,000 people.¹⁴ Hardcore members of the Bund expanded the practice of wearing German brown shirt style uniforms. Other symbols of Nazism increased as the Bund's women's auxiliaries manufactured Nazi flags, banners and painted placards which espoused Nazi dogma.¹⁵ With the expansion of his movement, Kuhn hungered for further growth for the German American Bund.

The fact the 1936 Olympics were to be held in Berlin did not go unnoticed by Nazis in America. As early as February, the Olympic rings were displayed on posters in the promotion of fascist activities and to represent German pride. While Nazi spokesmen preached Nazi politics, the Olympics became an issue to draw the public's attention. Few fascist events would be conducted without some aspect of the Olympics incorporated into the presentation. Even the Food Show Exhibit in White Plains, New York featured Nazi Olympic posters as German foods were being promoted by American fascist groups.¹⁶

The Olympic rings became a symbol for the promotion of the Nazi movement. Throughout the United States exhibitions were

¹⁴Canedy, America's Nazis, 80.

¹⁵Donald S. Strong, Organized Anti-Semitism in America, 78.

¹⁶H. W. Kartluke, "Photography of White Plains Food Exhibit," National Archives, (Records Group 131, packet 2), 18-22 February 1936.

conducted by athletic teams from Bund camps. Major cities such as Los Angeles, Detroit and New York witnessed these events.¹⁷ American Nazis believed, as did Germany's government, the Olympics would amaze the world with the ability of the former destitute nation to stage the Games with splendor and efficiency. The American public could observe the economic prosperity of Germany while the United States lingered in the depression. The implication that a fascist Nazi government was more capable of handling social indigence than traditional American government was clear.

In August of 1936, Fritz Kuhn staged an event which displayed the German American Bund's recent success. Using committee funds, Kuhn sponsored a voyage for several of the organization's members to Germany. He intended to impress the Nazi government with the Bund's rise in membership and public influence. In the Nazi Chancellery on the second of August, with propaganda ministry cameras rolling, Kuhn personally presented Hitler with a gift on behalf of the Bund.¹⁸ The Nazi head of state was presented with The Gold Book of German Americans. This text of glorified histories of the Bund organization included some six thousand member signatures. Kuhn euphorically invited Hitler to tour the United States personally. The German Chancellor inadvertently

¹⁷Canedy, America's Nazis, 62.

¹⁸Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 7.

proceeded to curse forever the American Nazi movement by insulting the "evil United States press."¹⁹

The meeting was filled with negative symbolism for the fascist movement. Kuhn and his subordinate leaders were photographed with Hitler not only wearing Bund uniforms, which were similar to "Der Führer's," but World War I decorations as well.²⁰ For United States citizens who learned of the meeting and its images, the link between the American fascist movement and Nazi Germany would be difficult to deny. Even worse for the Bund's popularity was an incident in which visiting members marched in a parade down Berlin streets. Before an audience which included Hitler, Hermann Goering and Joseph Goebbels, the American fascists marched behind a United States flag in their Nazi style uniforms.²¹ This gave further evidence to the American public that America's Nazis were German-controlled, despite the fact the German American Bund was attempting to impress German officials to recognize the organization. After the Bund Marched in Berlin, the German government continued to ignore the American Nazis' symbolic gestures.

¹⁹Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 7.

²⁰Canedy, America's Nazis, 115.

²¹U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., 3776.

When Fritz Kuhn returned to America, he decided to change Nazi propaganda and the fascist organization's emphasis on trying to convert the public while increasing attempts to steer United States policy away from European involvement. As German officials attempted to distance themselves from Kuhn, he continued to organize the German-American Bund. Although he was able to claim one hundred thousand members, he was unable to overcome his organization's alienation from mainstream America.²² Bund publicity director and vice president Gerhardt Kunze, mid western leader George Frobous and other Bund members openly offered recommendations to make the organization more appealing, but they were ignored.²³

As the movement began 1937, its fascist symbolism intensified. The German American Bund's official newspaper, Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, continuously displayed the swastika emblem throughout its pages. A section of the publication entitled Aus der Bewegung featured the symbol on a Viking ship.²⁴ The newspaper, which contained text in both German and English covered events of American fascist groups, related United States news and German activities.

²²Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 8.

²³Ibid.

²⁴"Aus der Bewegung," Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 1 July 1937, p. 5.

As Nazi symbolism expanded in print, it also intensified in uniform. In Germany, the Nazi government selected elite soldiers from its armed forces to become uniformed bodyguards in service to the nation's political dignitaries. Such soldiers formed special units of the German SS. In Detroit, Fritz Kuhn founded a security force for the German American Bund similar in purpose to the German bodyguard. Kuhn's force was called the Bund's Orderly Division and the subgroup became known as the OD.²⁵ Its function was to maintain order at the organization's meetings and public events. Virtually all city branches of the Bund had OD detachments.

Within the camps of the German-American Bund, symbolism was literally etched in stone. At Camp Siegfried on Long Island a swastika was displayed over the door to the installation's primary meeting house. The angled cross was set in masonry above the structure's main door.²⁶ In front of the facility flew the American flag. Ironically, before being utilized by the fascists, the compound had served as a United States army post in World War I.²⁷

²⁵U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propoganda Activities in the U.S., 3757-3758.

²⁶Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 22 July 1937, p. 5.

²⁷"Heiling Muffled," Newsweek, 25 July 1938, 13.

Camp Siegfried became the Bund's primary stage to display the costumes and banners the organization proudly presented. Visiting dignitaries such as Joseph Sante, commander of the Italian Liktor Assozione inspected uniformed ranks of the Bund at Camp Siegfried as though he were at a military review with Fritz Kuhn by his side. Sante was attired in the all black uniform of his American fascist movement.²⁸ Apparently the extreme and elitist political movement could not take itself seriously unless it was a slave to fashion.

As the fascist movement increased its efforts to manipulate the American public to support its politics, symbolism focused on the Nation's past leaders. The magazine Junges Volk published an issue which pictured portraits of Abraham Lincoln and Horst Wessel on its cover. The men were compared in terms of martyrdom as they "...died for the future of the nation!"²⁹ The Bund's primary newspaper further glorified the supposed similarities by stating "...the two men stand out, kindred spirits each typical of his era." To emphasize the point the Nazis intended to make, the newspaper stated "Both died to make their country greater."³⁰ Such a gener-

²⁸Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 15 July 1937, p. 5.

²⁹Canedy, America's Nazis, 92.

³⁰"Honest Abe and Horst Wessel," Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 12 August 1937, p. 6.

ality was typical of domestic Nazi propaganda in terms of sensationalism and slander.

In a similar effort to associate fascist ideas with a great American, the leader of the Silver Shirts, William Pelley, wrote in his organization's newspaper Liberator that Benjamin Franklin had remarked if the immigration of Jews was not regulated it would ruin the country.³¹ The use of any symbol, regardless of its true meaning, be it either an American founding father or simply the obvious display of the United States national flag was simply another element which the Nazi movement exploited for its own gain.

Throughout 1937 the pageantry and spectacle of the American fascist movement continued to expand. Investments committed by the German American Bund and other groups paid dividends in terms of mass rallies, parades and arena sized meetings. On October 3, 1937, 20,000 people filled Madison Square Garden to hear fascist speeches by uniformed Bundists surrounded by Nazi banners.³² Nazi symbolism increased in the cultural aspects of the fascist movement as well. Lyrics quoted from verses in a June 1937 issue of Junges Volk typified the Bund's attitude. One line

³¹Harry Schneiderman, "The Previous Year," in American Jewish Yearbook, vol. 39, (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1937), 218.

³²Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 7 October 1937, p. 2.

of the song was phrased "The flag is our faith in God, people and country." The song was referring to the German flag.³³ Another song quoted a passage "Announce war to all far and near/to who dare argue with us." These passages may have motivated members of the fascist movement, but they enraged the United States Congress.

Resistance to the fascist movement intensified. With increasing frequency fascist leaders defended their actions. In 1938 the celebration of international German Day was typical of the rhetoric American Nazis would generate in response to their critics. As controversy increased between Jewish leaders and fascist organizers, Fritz Kuhn stated illogically "...as American citizens we have a right to German Day." The German American Bund invited President Franklin Roosevelt, Vice-President John Garner and other federal government officials to their meeting to show fascist supporters were "good Americans."³⁵ Kuhn remarked the German flag never flew at fascist establishments without the American flag. He went as far as to proclaim the Star Spangled

³³Report of Investigation of the Un-American Activities and Propaganda to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), 7.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵New York Times, 30 August 1938, 3 (5).

Banner played before all major Bund events.³⁶ Kuhn's reassurances failed to silence his detractors.

More difficulties plagued the fascist movement. Regardless of the symbolism America's Nazis adapted to their cause, it could not protect the faction from its inherent internal weaknesses. With increasing frequency, the German American Bund, the primary organization of the entire political group found itself mired in its own conflicts.

Several of the Bund's officials believed Kuhn's rigid adherence to Nazi style would destroy the unity they had worked to develop. Senior members argued over who could spend the Bund's treasury. The youth division wanted its own headquarters. Local affiliations conducted regional power struggles.³⁷ Elements which should have supported the movement's infrastructure now weakened it.

As the 1930s reached their final years, world events cast their influence upon the American fascist movement. German acquisitions of Austria and Czechoslovakia revealed Germany as an expansionist threat. While past financial achievements of the German economy provided a positive facet for the American fascist cause, European political crises and increased anti-semitism were becoming burdens to the domestic movement. As the United States

³⁶New York Times, 30 August 1938, 3 (5).

³⁷Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 75.

public became increasingly alarmed by the behavior of fascist groups support was generated for political action. The result was the formal appointment of a Special Committee to investigate un-American activities in the United States Congress.³⁸ While the committee was not the first such investigative forum to examine the United States fascist movement it would eventually concentrate upon undermining its viability.

The extreme use of Nazi symbolism had served well to publicize and increase participation in the American fascist cause and generated an intense support base of thousands of Americans. However, it alienated the majority of the United States public. The American fascist movement would continue, yet its ultimate course to destruction was now plotted.

³⁸Cedric Bellfrage, American Inquisition (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs and Merrill, 1973), 30.

Chapter 3

Hate Makes Waste

The American Nazi movement did not initiate anti-semitism in America, but hatred against Jews was a cornerstone of the Nazis in the United States as well as in Germany. Unlike most German citizens, however, the American public would react differently to such hostile emotion. The symbols used by the American Nazi movement would only further the negative image the public saw the fascists in.

Before the onset of the depression, antagonism against Jews in the United States was a staple of the Ku Klux Klan, which made a resurgence in the 1920s. Even a Prominent Americans like Henry Ford disseminated anti-semitic views in his newspaper The Dearborn Independent.¹ When Germany experienced hyperbolic inflation and a shattered economy in the early 1920s, fascist groups wrongfully blamed Jewish interests for the insolvency of the nation. As the United States endured severe financial times, America's Nazis came to the same conclusion.

The depression created the temptation to scapegoat parties deemed responsible for America's financial plight. Ignoring the fundamental Yankee value of religious tolerance, the domestic fascist movement espoused anti-Semitism and its symbolism in imita-

¹Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 47.

tion of the German Nazi movement. This use of symbols was practiced by American fascists to generate antagonism against Jewish groups and to rally support for the Nazi campaign for social prominence. The confrontations between the American fascist movement and Jewish groups ignited intense conflicts. The symbolism involved created a unique case in American history and a primary reason why Nazi interest failed in the United States.

As the National Socialist Party of Germany grew under Hitler's leadership in the 1920s, few American intellectuals gave attention to the political group. The United States Jewish community, however, gave the issue more attention. Institutions like the American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, provided a social unit other Jewish groups could identify with.² By the depression, the United States contained over two thousand organizations which provided fellowship and comraderie to members.³

In 1933, Hitler's fledgling government motivated resistance by the Jewish community in America. The American Jewish Congress, the former American Jewish Committee, stated it would support all Jews in the resistance of Nazi persecution.⁴ In syna-

²Meyer Weinberg, Because They Were Jews, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 216.

³Moshe Gottlieb, American Anti-Nazi Resistance 1933-1941, (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1992), 46.

⁴New York Times, 23 March 1933, 6 (3).

gogues collections were conducted for aid to German Jews. This preliminary action served to mobilize the Jewish community.

The confrontational violence of Heinz Spanknoebel's Friends of the New Germany initiated the intense conflict between America's Jews and the antagonistic fascists. As in Nazi Germany, stores and Jewish establishments in New York were marked by anti-semitic graffiti and were picketed by fascist groups.⁵ The picket sign became a weapon for both factions. It symbolized the basic American rights of free speech and assembly. In the early stages of fascist versus Jewish rivalry, both sides carried their signs on extensive marches against each other.

Rabbi Stephen Wise of the American Jewish Congress became the primary leader in the religious crusade against Nazism in the United States. He decided to target the German Nazi movement in a particularly strategic place, the balance sheet. Rabbi Wise organized the Joint Boycott Council to halt American purchases of German manufactured goods.⁶ Jewish groups were quick to support the council.

Protests from the Friends of the New Germany came in the form of speeches and handbills which supported the organization's opinions and was detailed by its newspaper, Das Neue Deutschland.

⁵Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 52.

⁶Gottlieb, American Anti-Nazi Resistance 1933-1941, 136.

Statements of "Jews plotting revolutions" and "(Jews) being in league with communists" were designed to portray Jews as being un-American and contradictory to American politics.⁷ The attempt by Nazis to imply that Jewish organizations symbolized revolutionary activities was a deranged use of imagination.

On the west coast of the United States, William Pelley's Silver Shirts became one of the most intense antisemitic groups in the United States, distributing extensive amounts of anti-semitic literature.⁸ Pelley's executive officer Robert Summerville was instrumental in producing hateful publications. Summerville was a rarity in the fascist movement. Like Pelley he was not of German extraction but was one of the few pro-Nazis who was a former member of the Ku Klux Klan.⁹ Despite limited success with Klan interaction, Nazi marches did not include white robed and hooded supporters. The uniforms of the American fascist movement symbolized the Nazis of Germany, not the traditional bigots of the United States.

As 1933 progressed, conditions for the World Jewish Committee became critical as the new Hitler government exercised its will against what American Nazis labeled "Zionist dominated

⁷Canedy, America's Nazis, 52.

⁸Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 83.

⁹Donald S. Strong, Organized Anti-Semitism in America (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1941), 48.

society."¹⁰ The Jewish population of Germany withstood the official persecution of Nazi politics. The New York Board of Aldermen voted unanimously to have the federal government discuss the persecution of Jews with the new German politicians.¹¹ Americans suffering in the depression needed solutions, not hatred and this negative aspect of anti-Semitism had no positive influence on United States citizens.

Protest groups against the Nazis which were organized by Jewish associations and other interests had international examples on which to base their protests. The Anti-Nazi League, (founded in 1932 by Jewish leaders in Amsterdam), served as a multinational entity to concentrate Nazi criticism and detail civil rights abuses by Nazis against Jews.¹²

Nazi symbolism was rarely employed during early antifascist protests. The American Jewish Committee and the B'nai B'rith organized the first major Jewish anti-Nazi march in the United States. Shouts of "Down with Hitler" and "Boycott German goods" flowed from New York picket marchers on May 10, 1933.¹³ At the

¹⁰Sander A. Diamond, The Nazi Movement in the United States 1924-1941, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), 136.

¹¹New York Times, 29 March 1933, 4 (7).

¹²Gottlieb, American Anti-Nazi Resistance 1933-1941, 136.

¹³Ibid., 67.

time, fascist groups were too disorganized to mount a counter protest against the working class factory men who comprised the processions. This show of unity served as an important step toward unifying the Jewish cause and influencing public opinion.

Fascist groups were vulnerable to the organized resistance spearheaded by Jewish associations. The Friends of the New Germany searched for new leadership after the negative publicity from Spanknoebel's violent attacks on Jewish people and businesses. The Nazi movement in general lacked morale and motivation to form a campaign against the Jewish resistance. As the Nazi movement showed signs of weakness in the early 1930s, the American Jewish Congress took action.

Jewish leaders desired broad based American support for their anti-fascist task forces. Samuel Untermyer founded the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League. Despite a public relations attempt to recruit a non-Jewish membership, many associates of the American Jewish Committee joined the ranks.¹⁴ Another organization, founded in the early 1930s, was the Jewish Boycott Council. The symbolism of the word Jewish was later changed to convey the image that the organization was not a basic religious movement. This association would later become the World Non

¹⁴Gottlieb, American Anti-Nazi Resistance 1933-1941, 119.

Sectarian Anti-Nazi Council.¹⁵ This group coined slogans to be shouted at boycott marches such as "For Heaven sake don't buy German goods" and "support the German boycott." The Jewish War Veterans association provided assistance to the Council by constructing placards and flyers which explained the cause.¹⁶ The open anti-Semitism of the American Nazi movement terrified the Jewish community. Jewish families believed, like most Americans, that the United States signified religious freedom and tolerance. Members of the ancient Jewish faith expressed astonishment Nazism could be promoted in a free society.¹⁷ Many Jews openly questioned their security within the American way of life. The symbolism of America's Nazis had made clear its hatred.

Despite the severity of the depression, the Jewish boycott rallied American business interests against German products. For Example, Woolworth department stores agreed to ban German goods from its 1,941 franchises in late 1933. Saks later joined the boycott in February of 1934.¹⁸ This success pleased Jewish leaders.

Symbolism of the boycott centered upon Nazi emblems. While

¹⁵Harry Schneiderman, "The Trade Boycott Movement," in The American Jewish Yearbook, vol. 38 (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1936), 191.

¹⁶Gottlieb, American Anti-Nazi Resistance 1933-1941, 49.

¹⁷Weinberg, Because They Were Jews, 220.

¹⁸Gottlieb, American Anti-Nazi Resistance 1933-1941, 136.

anti-Nazi protests may have originated with religious organizations, Jewish symbols and other spiritual references were seldom seen in the conflict. The Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League to Champion Human Rights of New York, (whose president was Samuel Untermyer) used Nazi symbolism against the fascists. Even the Nazi publication Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter complained the organization improperly used Nazi symbolism in a derogatory manner. The newspaper published a reproduction of a Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League leaflet which printed the slogan "Smash the Swastika With the Boycott" beside a club-wielding fist hitting the Nazi cross. The newspaper captioned the illustration with the words "IS THAT AMERICAN???-NO!"¹⁹ An average American would form a different conclusion.

By 1935, Jewish organizations believed the Nazi movement was in decline. The American Jewish Yearbook offered specific reasons for the fascist groups' lack of political progress. Reasons for their decline included bad publicity for European Nazis, Congressional investigations, and the open opposition to established German American groups such as the United German Societies and German American League. The continuing practice of American Nazis defacing synagogues and Jewish shops further con-

¹⁹Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 12 August 1937, p. 4.

tributed to the negative image of the fascist movement. Internal divisions within Nazi groups made it difficult for the movement to adopt positive techniques to improve the movement's image in public. The American Jewish Yearbook also editorialized that the fascists were attempting to "transplant the noxious weed of Nazi radicalism on American soil."²⁰ While the symbolism of swastikas on synagogues clearly created negative publicity for the Nazi cause, the metaphor of fascist politics being unwanted vegetable matter was a new image for America in the Anti-Nazi campaign.

As the American Nazi movement did not foresee the organized Jewish resistance against it, neither did Jewish groups anticipate the resurgence of the Nazis in the United States. Fritz Kuhn's command of the German American Bund presented a new challenge. Anti-semitism by the Nazis and their supporters escalated dramatically. Physical violence against Jewish property and American citizens decreased while anti-Jewish rhetoric expanded. The Edmonson Economic Service of New York City assisted the fascist movement by directly supplying anti-semitic literature. The Service transferred printed material from the German Office of Propaganda and Enlightenment directed by Dr. Joseph Goebbels to fascist groups

²⁰Schneiderman and Fagan, "The Year in Review," in The American Jewish Yearbook, vol. 38 (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1936), 151.

like the National Gentile League and the American Nationalist Party. ²¹

In contrast, Jewish resistance to Nazi attacks often took a broader focus. Antisemitic symbolism was countered in many ways besides focusing upon Jewish issues. Nazi aggression was portrayed in cartoon form by the Jewish newspaper Every Friday of Cincinnati, Ohio. The weekly publication characterized the Nazi movement in world terms. It showed Nazi politics as that of aggression with a political cartoon featuring a caricature of Hitler as a swastika-shaped fish consuming small fry. In the political cartoon the smaller fish were labeled the Czechs, Hungarians and Rumanians.²² This concentrated attention on international affairs while still casting the Nazis in a negative manner.

Global conflicts provided several distractions to the American Jewish community. In addition to Jewish oppression in Germany, the establishment of a new nation in Palestine drew attention from the American Hebrew community. From late 1933 onward, the American Jewish Congress worked closely in support of the World Zionist Organization for the establishment of the Jewish independent state in the religious holy land many Jews considered to be

²¹Robert E. Herzstein, Roosevelt and Hitler, (New York, NY: Paragon House, 1989), 172.

²²"Liquidating the Small Fry," Every Friday, 10 June 1938, 1.

their destiny.²³ This endeavor would continue to draw upon the attention of Jewish groups throughout the depression, yet it would not blur the vision of anti-Nazi resistance.

Jewish literature countered the use of American political leaders as symbols for the fascist cause. After William Pelley had written concerning an alleged anti-semitic remark by Benjamin Franklin, Jewish publishers responded. The San Francisco-based Jewish Tribune utilized George Washington as an American hero opposed to Nazi-style principles. To commemorate the first President's birthday in 1936 the newspaper referred to the executive leader as "the first anti-fascist." The Jewish Tribune declared that Washington refused to become America's first dictator.²⁴ The newspaper furthered its symbolic treatment of the founding father in 1938 by reprinting personal letters the President wrote during a speaking tour which included engagements at several Hebrew congregations. Washington's gratitude to the attentive fellowships in Newport, Rhode Island, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Savannah, Georgia were reprinted verbatim.²⁵

In response to the Nazi pageantry which was to be showcased

²³Naomi W. Cohen, American Jews and the Zionist Idea, (Los Angeles, CA: KTAV Publishing House, 1975), 6.

²⁴Estelle M. Sternberger, "The First Anti-Fascist," Jewish Tribune, 21 February 1936, p. 5.

²⁵Jewish Tribune, 22 February 1938, p. 4.

at the 1936 Olympics an alternative event was proposed. Jewish leaders realized the Nazis would use symbolism for their own interests. As American fascist groups promoted the Olympics the Jewish Labor Committee suggested an alternative competition be staged. The event was christened the "World Labor Athletic Carnival." It was arranged at New York Stadium on Randal Island. The sporting event was scheduled to commence on August 15th in conjunction with the Berlin Games.²⁶ The timing of the competition was specifically intended to draw attention away from the official Olympics.

The Jewish Labor Committee controlled the event's administration including publicity. The traditional symbol of the Olympic rings was not used. Trophy cups instead of Olympic medals were awarded to victors of individual competitions. The traditional gold, silver and bronze medallions were interpreted as being military style symbols.²⁷ The event attracted athletes from nations as diverse as Hungary, Japan and Finland. The sporting competition was witnessed by the Governor of New York and other political dignitaries.²⁸ The event drew eighteen thousand spectators and raised thirty-six thousand dollars. Members of the crowd, in con-

²⁶Edward S. Shapiro, "The World Labor Athletic Carnival of 1936," American Jewish History 74 (January 1985): 260.

²⁷Ibid., 262.

²⁸New York Times, 17 August 1936, p. 12 (S).

trast to the Nazi flags which saturated the Berlin games, displayed labor union banners as they rooted for their favorite athletes. The fact that labor interests appeared to support athletes instead of Jews protesting the Nazi event did not displease Congressional leaders. The sporting event received widespread press.²⁹ In a rare case, the World Athletic Carnival represented a constructive event formed out of conflict in which many people benefited.

Jewish groups continued to concentrate on anti-Nazi resistance. In an unusual utilization of Jewish symbols the Jewish Tribune carried a political illustration that signified Jewish efforts against the Nazis. In October of 1936 the newspaper displayed a drawing of a synagogue, which was adorned with Stars of David, desecrated by graffiti of swastikas. Beneath the scene the Tribune gave President Roosevelt's Rosh Hashanah message "mindful of the single part taken by the Jewish people of America in upholding the traditions and aims of our country..." It was clear to all citizens of the United States how the President felt concerning the Jewish community. Roosevelt's message continued "I trust the new year will bring...great prosperity and happiness."³⁰

For all purposes, the anti-semitism of the American Nazi

²⁹Shapiro, "The World Labor Athletic Carnival of 1936," 266.

³⁰Jewish Tribune, 15 October 1936, p. 1.

movement brought the fascist cause nothing but bad publicity and a dedicated enemy. If the Nazis had relaxed their hateful rhetoric, their fortunes might have improved, but no attempt was made to do so. When three Jewish officials explored Camp Nordland of the German American Bund, the organization's newspaper referred to them as "three young braves from the tribe of Judah."³¹

The German American Bund ran political cartoons of its own in the conflict. The *Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter* carried a cartoon intended to symbolize the nation's leadership being swayed by Jewish interests. A scene featured Franklin Delano Roosevelt as a blind administrator being led by a Jewish official to the left. The caption read with Roosevelt speaking "Where are you taking me?" To which his Jewish leader replied "You'll find out!"³² The illustration was typical of Nazi implications that a Jewish conspiracy was running America.

Anti-Jewish rhetoric from the Nazi side continued to escalate despite all actions to discredit the source and methods it came in. To no surprise to Jewish leaders, a congressional investigation determined the Silver Shirts and the German-American Bund contin-

³¹Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 26 August 1937, p. 8.

³²Haugh, Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York, NY), 19 January 1939, p. 1.

ued to receive information directly from the Ministry of Propaganda and Enlightenment in Stuttgart.³³ German publications included pamphlets entitled "The Riddle of the Jew's Success" and "The Truth About Jews in Germany." One particular fascist organization, the Defenders of the Christian Faith, led by Reverend Gerald Winrod, whose early life as a bartender in Wichita, Kansas was highlighted by Carrie Nation's hatchet decorating, specialized in propaganda publications. While his newspaper The Defender had a distribution of over one hundred thousand, he also authored brochures entitled, "The Jewish Assault on Christianity" and "The Curse of Modern Deism."³⁴

In response to the anti-semitic media distributed in the United States, Jewish organizations continued to attack the source. B'nai B'rith Magazine ran a cartoon showing Hitler in Rome's Coliseum above a Nazi flag throwing a dove labeled "Democracy" to the lions of fascism.³⁵ As the German American Bund became the primary organization of the Nazi movement, it was directly attacked by Jewish groups. The newspaper Every Friday offered the public a political cartoon saturated with sym-

³³Report of the Investigation of the Un-American Activities and Propaganda to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, 2.

³⁴Strong, Organized Anti-Semitism in America, 72.

³⁵Jewish Tribune, September 1938, p. 4.

bolism. The scene displayed Uncle Sam with a fly swatter in hand, looking under a United States flag for a swastika bearing Hitler's face and six insect legs. Underneath the creature was a paper reading "German American Bund activities."³⁶ The intensity of anti-Nazi Jewish symbolism never relented. As if making a prophesy, an American Jewish Congress publication warned of the future. The organization's pamphlet entitled "Hitler's War of Extermination Against the Jews" featured a dead man lying on a swastika for its cover.³⁷

Until America's entry into World War II, neither the Nazi movement nor the Jewish community relaxed their attacks. Jewish groups, portraying the Nazis as a hate group, won far more Americans to their side than did the Nazis. European events and the undignified acts of the Nazis assisted the Jewish cause. The symbolism used by Jewish organizations overpowered the images cast against them. It was a major success in an undeclared war.

³⁶Every Friday, 17 June 1938, p. 1.

³⁷"Hitler's War of Extermination Against the Jews," (New York: American Jewish Congress Publications, 1936), 1.

Chapter 4

Wild Cards Against the New Deal

In 1936, a socialist pamphlet described President Franklin Delano Roosevelt as a leader with "Charm, an engaging smile, gallantry of a Hyde Park gentleman..."¹ President Roosevelt, the author of the New Deal, became a personal symbol of the effort to overcome the American depression. As relief agencies and charities became overwhelmed in administering relief for America's disadvantaged, the average citizen looked to the government for provide assistance. The leadership of President Roosevelt provided the stability and confidence the nation would require to allow the public to continue supporting traditional American representative government. Critics of the Roosevelt Administration feared the President would lead the United States toward an economy based on socialism. The American Nazi movement agreed with this criticism. The fascist movement of the United States quickly attacked the New Deal and its originator.

The New Deal and the controversies which grew because of it created their own symbolism. Concentrated efforts by Nazi organi-

¹McAlister Coleman, Symbols of 1936, (New York, NY: Thomas and Nelson Independent Committee, 1936), 1.

zations took advantage of public skepticism. Organized labor, supporters of Roosevelt and economists endorsed the New Deal. The American Nazi movement challenged them because it believed the New Deal was socialist and run by communist agents. The symbolism both sides employed in this battle typified the ideals of America's government and the challenge of the largest group opposed to it.

Before Franklin Roosevelt became President, the economics of the depression were already determining America's international politics. By February 1933, corporations such as Dupont and other chemical manufacturers secretly signed contracts to sell Nazi Germany military materials. This action was taken despite the fact such activities violated the Versailles Treaty.² Future economic considerations would keep United States industry in Germany's favor simply due to the German need for materials and America's need for work. Despite the rapid economic growth of Nazi Germany, the Roosevelt Administration would experience difficulty producing similar results in the United States. This lack of success would plague the New Deal and delay America's recovery from the depression.

The symbolism of the New Deal started from the Roosevelt Administration's inception. In July 1933, the New Deal's primary

²George Seldes, One Thousand Americans, (New York, NY: Boni and Gaer, 1947), 161.

agency, the National Recovery Administration revealed its basic symbol. The NRA's emblem was a blue eagle with a mechanical cog clutched in its left talon and lightning bolts grasped in its right. The eagle was centered in a white circle with the Administration's initials on top and U.S. to its right. The blue eagle was introduced by the NRA's Administrator Hugh Samuel Johnson.³ The American symbolism involved with the emblem was clear. Time Magazine referred to the symbol's bird of prey as resembling the Nation's national symbol, the bald eagle.⁴

The NRA utilized a traditional American icon like the eagle to be identified with, a device not appreciated by Nazis in the United States. With the depression forcing Americans to question their economic system, fascists believed United States citizens would be attracted to, if not converted to, Nazism. Germany, had become an economic miracle, developed from a depression far more severe than that of the United States.⁵ The Nazis however, disregarded reality. While America was comprised of multiple nationalities and institutions, it could not openly accept anything as intensely foreign as the orthodox German Nazi organization. This fact escaped the American Nazi movement.

³"Debut of the Blue Eagle," Time Magazine, 31 July 1933, 11.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Higham, American Swastika, 8.

Enthusiasm for the National Recovery Administration enveloped America. On the 27th of July 1933, the United States Post Office mailed letters to all businesses who employed three or more people detailing NRA goals to increase employment and productivity in "a partnership" between government and labor. After businesses signed a fair conduct agreement with the NRA's legal representatives, the Administration made it a matter of patriotism for the public to exclusively patronize establishments which had permission to display the eagle emblem.⁶ Publicity for the NRA spread its eagle symbol rapidly across the United States. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt personally embarked on a tour where she was photographed installing posters of the symbol on the doors of factories and workshops.⁷ The public immediately endorsed the government symbol.

Support for the National Recovery Administration became a rallying point for Americans against the depression. By mid-October 1933, businesses openly used the NRA symbol to promote their products. Of 63 advertisements in one magazine, 20 featured the NRA eagle with the phrase "WE DO OUR PART."⁸ This open

⁶"Debut of the Blue Eagle," Time Magazine, 31 July 1933, 11.

⁷Wilbur E. Garrett, Ed., "Headfirst into the Busted Thirties", Historical Atlas of the United States, (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1988), 229.

⁸Time Magazine, 16 October 1933.

acceptance in commercialism of a Federal symbol representing an economic recovery program provided evidence people had placed their faith in the New Deal.

The NRA eagle appeared everywhere. The symbol was even utilized by the American Jewish Congress as it placed the eagle emblem upon its pamphlets.⁹ The symbol became so accepted it was offered in production by private companies. The Consolidated Lithograph Corporation offered posters of the emblem in its "Official design" with the Capital building's dome in the background. The lithograph company was dedicated enough to the cause to offer its reproductions complete with the official NRA motto "Now is the time to buy."¹⁰ The American public clearly had no choice but to absorb the media's onslaught for the New Deal and the symbolism it generated.

The New Deal's projects like the National Recovery Administration and the Public Works Administration were featured on radio and inside movie theaters. These were media the American Nazi movement could not reach while it was in its developing stages. Nazi protests against the New Deal began with speeches and pamphlets informing listeners and readers of fascist

⁹"Hitlerism and the American Jewish Congress", (New York, NY: American Jewish Congress, December 1934), p. 14.

¹⁰"Consolidated Lithograph Corporation advertisement", Time Magazine, 16 October 1933, 57.

economic plans. This attempt to influence the public fell far short of the New Deal's widespread media coverage. Individual products soon were labeled with the NRA eagle. Time Magazine placed the symbol directly upon the front cover of its publication, centered prominently above the magazine's name. No conscious reader could avoid the emblem. Ironically, the first magazine to feature the NRA symbol, (21 August 1933), also featured the German Iron Cross; the front was illustrated by a photograph of Reichsmarshal Hermann Goering.¹¹

Within months of Hitler taking power, his government abolished Germany's labor unions. This extreme act against the principles of organized labor was not lost on American workers. If Nazism represented the politics of an antilabor political system, America's union organizers would universally reject the Nazi movement. To protest the Nazi attitude against a unionized workforce, Americans took action. In the summer of 1934, the American Federation of Labor performed a mock trial of Hitler in New York Central Park.¹² Union members publicly condemned Hitler's divisionary tactics against organized workers. This was an example of unexpected resistance fascists faced.

As America embraced the New Deal in its initial year few cit-

¹¹Time Magazine, 21 August 1933, cover.

¹²Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 14.

izens seriously concerned themselves with the Nazi movement. The public watched with anticipation as the New Deal's acronym titled programs commenced operating. The United States Nazi movement, with its unusual symbolism, was under investigation by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. This investigative entity was chartered by the United States House of Representatives in May of 1930.¹³ Originally created to investigate communist subversion, the Committee was headed by its instigating founder, New York Republican, Hamilton Fish. In 1933, Fish initiated an investigation concerning the rise of Nazi propoganda in the United States.¹⁴ Despite protests from Nebraska congressmen, the investigation progressed. New York Representative Samuel Dickstein drafted a resolution to formally investigate Nazi activities in the United States. In January of 1934, it was authorized by a congressional vote of 168 to 31.¹⁵

The Committee experienced no difficulty exposing Nazi organizations and the symbolism they employed. When Fritz Gissibl, leader of the Friends of the New Germany, testified before the Committee he gave the Nazi arm salute. He boasted his fellowship

¹³Congress, House, Domestic Affairs Committee, 71st Cong., 2nd sess., Congressional Record, vol. 78, no. 78, (12 May 1930), 9.

¹⁴William F. Buckley, The Committee, (New York, NY: Putnam Press, 1962), 90.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 10.

had increased from 62 at the founding of the organization to 5,000 in seventeen cities by the end of 1933.¹⁶ Nazi supporters voiced their emotions for the fascist cause with choruses of "down with Dickstein." Nazi protesters continued their disturbance of the hearings with shouts of "Heil Hitler" while imitating Gissibl by performing the Nazi arm salute.¹⁷ When the proceedings concluded in the fall of 1934, investigating congressman John McCormack of Massachusetts declared the Nazi groups were not a substantial threat, "...the movement is nowhere near as strong as it appeared."¹⁸ Congress continued to observe the nation's Nazis as the depression continued without signs of recovery.

By the end of 1934 the New Deal had generated tangible results. Economic production rose from fifty six billion dollars in 1933 to sixty five billion. Still unemployment continued unabated.¹⁹ If Roosevelt had to endure opposition to the New Deal from fascists, he had to withstand protests from others. Socialists blamed him for not providing a recovery quickly enough for the common man. Regional political leaders such as Robert La Follette

¹⁶"Brown and Silver Shirts Put Under Federal Microscope," Newsweek, 16 June 1934, 8.

¹⁷Buckley, The Committee, 11.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Howard Zinn, New Deal Thoughts, (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbe-Merril Co. Inc., 1966), 287.

openly opposed the New Deal on principle. Still, the American public continued to support the man who proclaimed "all we have to fear is fear itself."²⁰

For the Nazi movement the results of Germany's economic growth during Hitler's first year in office gave American fascists evidence to support the financial aspects of their movement. In a January issue of *Newsweek*, Germany's recovery was detailed. The German "labor service" had reduced the nation's unemployment by 2.3 million people while increasing the nation's gross national product.²¹ Nazis used such documentation as an expression of their cause's viability as an economic program.

Regardless of protests, the New Deal soldiered on. President Roosevelt was the head cheerleader of his economic reform movement. Blue eagle symbols continued to be requested by agreeing companies to promote products. Even the term "New Deal" symbolized Americana. Roosevelt acquired the term from the Mark Twain novel *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. The President rejected other phrases such as "square deal" from fifth cousin Theodore Roosevelt and "new freedom" by Woodrow Wilson.²²

In some manners, the New Deal and Nazi movement resembled

²⁰Dixon Wecter, *The Age of the Great Depression*, (New York NY: The MacMillan Co., 1948), 38.

²¹"Hitler's First Year," *Newsweek*, 27 January 1934, p. 8.

²²Wecter, *The Age of the Great Depression*, 53-54.

each other. The Public works Administration with its Civilian Conservation Corps used government authority to develop national infrastructure.²³ This federally regulated agency could not curb persistent employment, yet like German national programs, it served to orient people towards positive government actions. The New Deal with its progressive intent of building a better future was identical in psychology to its Nazi counterparts. Also like German programs, New Deal activities centralized national authority. Americans, like Germans, looked for the national government to improve their financial status. In the United States, this condition hampered American Nazi objectives.

While the Civilian Conservation Corps conducted its activities in uniforms and based itself on military unit structuring, its symbolic resemblance to a Nazi labor force ended in all other respects. Fascists and their sympathizers repeatedly attacked the New Deal for its left-wing similarities. Nazis used anti-communist author Elizabeth Dilling to promote their criticisms. Dilling was a dedicated right wing fanatic who despised liberal politics. She accused Roosevelt economics of being communistic by citing the words of radical supporters. She accented this with the words of Karl Marx's grandson Jean Longuet, a French socialist leader who backed the New Deal "...because it was rapidly trade-unionizing the

²³Ted Morgan, FDR A Biography, (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1985), 217.

United States."²⁴ Dilling also played upon the fears of racists stating "New Dealists now operating the National Democratic Party seem determined...to win the vote from 13 million Negroes...to stamp out the color line in social affairs."²⁵ While American Nazis did not espouse racism as vehemently as they practiced anti-Semitism, it did coincide with their Aryan beliefs.

Other Nazi support came from independent congressmen, like South Dakota Republican Representative Karl Mundt. Surrounded by swastika flags of the German American Bund and other Nazi groups, Mundt spoke favorably of German politics at Nazi rallies. Democratic Senator of Nebraska Robert Reynolds publicly supported Hitler's reconstruction of Germany in the Congressional Record and later visited the Third Reich.²⁶ Even more amazing, Mississippi Senator Theodore Bilbo went to the extreme of complimenting Hitler's racial policies in the Congressional Record while criticizing the New Deal.²⁷ Such opposition occurred as the media presented such images of the NRA eagle lifting up a grateful Uncle Sam.²⁸

²⁴Elizabeth Dilling, Roosevelt's Red Record, (Kenilworth, KY: Published by the author, 1936), 152.

²⁵Ibid., 228.

²⁶Allan A. Michie, Dixie Demagogues, (New York, NY: The Vanguard Press, 1939), 224.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Vanity Fair, September 1934, cover.

As American business gave the public the impression it supported the New Deal, the United States Nazi movement experienced no difficulty in procuring corporate support for its efforts. While fascist groups did not seek financial donations from industrial giants, small businesses patronized the Nazi cause by accepting contracts from the organizations and advertising in fascist publications. Island Coal and Lumber Company of New York supplied building and masonry materials to the German American Bund's Camp Siegfried in New York State. After the company announced its services to the fascist group, the owner published the comment "A satisfied customer is the best advertisement."²⁹

The German American Bund's newspaper also accepted international advertising from corporations such as the Red Star Line, Red Star Cruise Line and the German National Railway.³⁰ United States business interests did not exclude themselves from this form of Nazi support; American manufactured Lowenbrau Beer was advertised at fascist meetings.³¹ The severity of the depression made the financial attraction of Nazi customers too sweet a temptation for United States business interests to resist.

²⁹"Island Coal and Lumber Company Advertisement," Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 26 August 1937, p. 8.

³⁰"Red Star Cruise Line Advertisement," Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 15 July 1937, p. 5.

³¹"Lowenbrau Beer Advertisement," Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 15 July 1937, p. 4.

In 1936 the United States fascist movement sought to portray President Roosevelt as a symbol of a pending communist revolution. The American head of state had recognized the sovereignty of the Soviet Union in 1933 in an effort to increase international trade. While Roosevelt's action was undertaken primarily for economic growth, Nazis used the act as evidence the United States was being led toward Marxism. The German American Bund stated the recognition accorded the Soviet Union was designed to win the President the support of radicals. The fact Communist Party leader Earl Browder supported Roosevelt for election in his first two presidential campaigns provided fodder for such Nazi accusations.³² The President ignored such attacks.

After the President's landslide victory in November 1936, Bund members continued to attack the President as the American depression dragged on. The Nazi leaders claimed that Roosevelt knew that the New Deal's policies would fail, resulting in a communist revolution.³³ The mainstream press portrayed such far right views as insurgent and unrealistic.

The election of the President gave a further four years of consistent national leadership to the United States. To the American public Roosevelt symbolized the optimist who constantly

³²Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 51.

³³Ibid., 49.

championed those most severely afflicted by the depression. In his second inaugural speech he lamented "I see millions denied education, recreation, and the opportunity to better their lives and the lot of their children."³⁴ Roosevelt's concern for the financially handicapped gave his economic policies a public appeal which the United States Nazis could never approach.

Despite its lack of universal appeal, the American Nazi movement was influencing the society around it. The potential fear of a nationalistic movement overthrowing the American government inspired Sinclair Lewis to publish his novel It Can't Happen Here.³⁵ Regardless of negative attitudes, the American Nazi movement felt rewarded by some of the events in 1936. President Roosevelt had declined to involve the United States in the Spanish Civil War as he abided by his self-sponsored Neutrality Act of 1935. Roosevelt gave a speech in August at Chautauqua, New York which confirmed the President's "I hate war" attitude. He stated a theme throughout his depression-era speeches to keep America safe from any international intanglements. He stated "if we face the choice of profits or peace--the nation must answer--we choose

³⁴House Document No. 51, Inaugural Addressees of the Presidents of the United States. 91st Congress, 1st Session, 114.

³⁵Sinclair Lewis, It Can't Happen Here, (Service, NY: Dramatists Play 1936), text.

must answer--we choose peace."³⁶ Roosevelt's refusal to either endorse the faction of the fascist General Francisco Franco or support his Spanish opposition pleased Nazi authorities. Roosevelt's concentration on American affairs resulted in less emphasis being placed on international events. Roosevelt would not challenge the German acquisitions Hitler made in Europe before the advent of World War II in 1939. Fascist groups were also pleased at the increases in membership their organizations achieved. The State Department believed the membership total for the German American Bund, the largest of the organizations, was 8,500 at the end of 1936.³⁷

From swastika decorated podiums Nazi leaders referred to Roosevelt's economic program as the "Nudeal".³⁸ As if to state who the fascist movement looked to for leadership, the 1937 Yearbook of the German American Bund had a photograph of Hitler first and President Roosevelt second.³⁹ As symbolism like this continued, Fritz Kuhn endeavored to increase the political and

³⁶Harold R. Ryan, Franklin D. Roosevelt's Rhetorical Presidency, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988), 48.

³⁷Buckley, The Committee, 153.

³⁸H. D. Kissenger, Letter to the Editor, Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 9 February 1939, p. 4.

³⁹U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., 8267.

financial aspects of the German American Bund. While he did not submit plans for economic programs he coordinated efforts to elect those who opposed the New Deal's financial policies. The German American Bund successfully sponsored the re-election campaign of South Dakota Representative Karl Mundt. Ironically, after World War II, Mundt became a member of the House Un-American Activities Committee.⁴⁰ Kuhn intended to make the German American Bund a separate American political party when he felt his organization had achieved a large enough membership.⁴¹ No such expansion occurred.

As the 1930s progressed toward World War II, the United States depression lingered. The New Deal's economics could not cure the nation's financial ills. For the stability of American politics, it did not need to. To the average citizen, the New Deal used traditional symbols and was led by a man who symbolized the American way. Ultimately the New Deal did not require statistical results in economics, its achievements were psychological. The American Nazi movement could not exploit the German recovery of the 1930s, because the American public could not look past Nazi rhetoric and emblems in an effort to discover an alternative to the

⁴⁰Seldes, One Thousand Americans, 189.

⁴¹U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., 3770.

New Deal. While testifying before Congress, Fritz Kuhn stated he had no intention of organizing a Nazi movement to counter trade unions in the United States.⁴² But because of the fascist movement's hostile attitudes negative New Deal attacks, American labor and people in general would not have let him in any case. Even the economic catastrophe of the depression was not sufficient to induce Americans to embrace extreme solutions marketed with alien symbols.

⁴²U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., 3771.

Chapter 5

Race to Oblivion

By the late 1930s, Nazi symbolism was generating intense controversy throughout the United States. "Hitler swastikas" were removed from a New York hospital chimney in June of 1938 due to protests from the local community. The hospital had received the crooked crosses in 1927 as a decoration associated with Hippocrates.¹ The Nazi movement in America, as well as events in Europe had polluted the symbolism of the swastika. Regardless of any positive connotations the ancient cross previously experienced, it now would be placed in the context of evil.

The United States fascist movement took strides to reconstruct its damaged image in the last portion of the American depression. In early 1937, the German American Bund's senior leaders convened in New York to construct a new constitution for their association. The passages involved were written to influence directly the interaction the public would have in regard to the Bund. Symbolism was a major feature within the constitution. Article II, paragraph (2) stated under "Aims and Purposes" the

¹"Swastika on Huge Smokestack to be Out." Jewish Tribune, June 1938, p. 1.

Bund would respect and honor the flag...of the United States."² Article XXIV of the constitution re-affirmed the sentiment. Section 1, paragraph 1 stated the Bund would "Above all to honor and defend the Constitution, flag and institutions of these United States..."³ These aspirations would please any patriotic American yet the Bund document included symbolism which would smear any positive image the organization otherwise could have created.

The Bund charter specifically addressed its opposition to racial intermixing and Marxism, as well as the vehement anti-Semitism the organization had constantly practiced. Through the constitution's passages, Nazi symbolism was presented with particular care. Paragraph 6 of Article XXIV read "The swastika, our fighting symbol has already become the common sign of recognition of defenders of Aryan nationalism..."⁴ Within the same passage the constitution addressed the Nazi arm salute, "the greeting of the outstretched right arm and hand:, there can be no symbol or greeting better suited to unite the awakened, fighting, patriotic American millions..." The article, in the constitution's conclusion

²"Constitution of the German American Bund," U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), 3713.

³Ibid., 3721.

⁴Ibid., 3722.

stated "All patriotic Aryan Americans seeking truth and fighting spirit are welcome at our meetings and in our ranks."⁵

The statements and symbolism used by the Bund within its own constitution shows how removed the fascist movement was from American tradition and morality. While the United States was a nation comprised primarily of citizens of foreign ancestry, American culture always developed its own symbols to represent the nation instead of applying those of other countries or alien movements. The stigma of Nazi symbols, with or without intended loyalty to American institutions would be futile. The Nazi symbols could not be grafted on to American society. Despite negative connotations of violence, racial and religious intolerance and foreign relations, Nazism could not be adapted into the American mainstream. Traditionally, sensible aspects of foreign cultures assimilated into American society, such as St. Patrick's Day and Mardi Gras, yet alternative political movements which would alter racial, religious and economic elements of the nation were too estranged from domestic American identity to be acceptable.

The Nazi movement had yet to prove this to itself. Fritz Kuhn used the 1937 new Bund constitution as a guide to alter the

⁵"Constitution of the German American Bund," U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), 3722.

organization's emphasis on attempting to convert the public from displacing the American political system to keeping United States policy away from German involvement. The fanatical leader continually ignored requests from his subordinates to soften the tone of the German American Bund and make the association more mainstream.⁶

In June of 1937 the New York State Legislative Committee undertook an independent inquiry of the German American Bund. The investigation recorded the statements of several Bund officials. The quotations of the leadership surveyed was highlighted by Nazi symbolism. One leader stated the directive of the Bund was to "...build an Aryan movement under the swastika to liberate America from the Jews." The unnamed official furthered his comments by declaring the Nazi salute was "...coming...for the whole United States."⁷ Such optimism reflected hardcore devotion to the fascist cause. The average American now knew the context the swastika and Nazi salute represented. The New York State Legislative Committee's research merely confirmed the nation's consensus of opinion.

Religious symbolism was more evident in some factions of the Nazi movement than others. William Pelley's Silver Shirts used the

⁶Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 75.

⁷Harry Schneiderman, "Legislative Opposition", American Jewish Yearbook, 40, (1938), 129.

song "Onward Christian Soldiers" as their official battle hymn.⁸ Small ornamental crosses decorated publications by the German American Bund.⁹ Small splinter groups within the fascist movement even used religion in their names such as the Militant Christian Patriots founded by Henry Allen in Los Angeles.¹⁰ Religious connotations were employed to entice potential members of the Nazi movement into supporting the fascist cause. It was a minor aspect of the symbolism American Nazism generated.

Religious anti-Semitism, a cornerstone of the Nazi movement continued to agitate the American public as the fascist drive for increasing popularity progressed in the late 1930s. The New York branch of Jewish war veterans declared a resolution to call on Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and the city police commissioner to annul a permit for a Nazi rally. The veterans let it be known they "feared" the Nazis would parade in fascist uniforms with swastikas. LaGuardia requested the public ignore the event. He considered it the best advice possible. The New York Mayor seemed to take the attitude that if the Nazis were allowed to demonstrate, they would present themselves as being too radical for the rational American

⁸U.S. Congress, Hearings Before a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S., 7230.

⁹"Tilli Koch", Junges Volk, November 1937, 9.

¹⁰"Men Probe Coast Nazi Activities," Jewish Tribune, May 1938, p. 1.

to endorse. The march and rally commenced on October 30th with 800 uniformed ushers. 1,300 police provided security for the fascists. Within days the Jewish newspaper The Day produced an article calling for LaGuardia's defeat in upcoming mayoral elections.¹¹ This attitude would be unjustified as the outspoken LaGuardia would soon make his feelings regarding the Nazi movement more evident. Soon he would be quoted describing Hitler as "...that brown shirted fanatic who is threatening the peace of the world."¹²

The tolerance America showed in regard to the exploitation of its fundamental rights was immense. The American Civil Liberties Union supported anti-semitic publisher Robert Edmonson, who was widely quoted in Nazi pamphlets. Edmonson was served a summons from LaGuardia for libeling officials in the Roosevelt Administration and the Jewish religion in general. The Union declared "We must suffer the demagogue and the charlatan."¹³ As time advanced, LaGuardia would take an increasingly active stance against the Nazis.

¹¹"Nazi Issue in New York Mayoralty Campaign," American Jewish Yearbook, 40, (1938), 123.

¹²David M. Esposito and Jackie R. Esposito, "LaGuardia and the Nazis, 1933-1938," American Jewish History, 78 (September 1988): 48.

¹³Herzstiein, Roosevelt and Hitler, 172.

LaGuardia issued statements which aggravated the Nazis to the extent that the German press complained. The Berlin newspaper Der Angriff compared LaGuardia to a barking dog. The German Foreign Ministry chided the United States Government to silence the Mayor. The State Department argued LaGuardia was a municipal official and not subject to federal control.¹⁴ As LaGuardia's rhetoric intensified in 1937, he was awarded the American Hebrew Medal by the American Jewish Congress.¹⁵ At an anti-Nazi rally witnessed by 20,000 cheering people sponsored by labor leader J. L. Lewis, Rabbi Stephen Wise called LaGuardia "one of the greatest living Americans" for his support.¹⁶ Three days later at New York's Turn Hall, Nazis staged a counter rally. Amid swastika banners and American flags, the theme was American revolution. One Nazi speaker at the rally proclaimed "We are going to take America back from the Jews."¹⁷

Statistically, attendance in fascist groups was again on the rise. The September 1937 issue of Foreign Affairs magazine reported sharp increases in the membership for the principal factions of

¹⁴Esposito and Esposito, "LaGuardia and the Nazis, 1933-1938," 47.

¹⁵Harry Schneiderman, "Other Goodwill Activities," American Jewish Yearbook, 40, (1938), 265.

¹⁶New York Times, 14 March 1937, p. 1 (1).

¹⁷New York Times, 16 March 1937, p. 3 (1).

Nazism.¹⁸ The year also raised new criticism against the growing influence fascism was exerting on American society. Congressman Samuel Dickstien complained to the House "Rules Committee that fascists, who were United States citizens, were swearing oaths of "...fidelity to my leader Adolph Hitler."¹⁹ The Congressman also declared American Nazis represented a group of some two hundred thousand members.²⁰ While the number of organized fascists in America was exaggerated, the fact Americans were swearing loyalty to a foreign leader disturbed the citizens of the United States. William Pelley followed the same system with his members of the Silver Shirts. Since Pelley was the executive of his own organization, he had his followers swear fidelity to him.²¹

Within the German American Bund, small steps were taken to advance the appeal of the organization to average Americans. The group's official newspaper Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter was subtitled "The Free American." Bund publications were mingled with alternative literature such as Catholic Reverend Charles E.

¹⁸Foreign Affairs, September 1937, 123.

¹⁹Los Angeles Times, 25 March 1937, p. 27 (1).

²⁰Report of Investigation of the Un-American Activities and Propaganda to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, 8.

²¹Donald Janson, The Far Right, (New York, NY: McGrawHill, 1963), 17.

Coughlin's magazine Social Justice.²² Despite the priest's grass roots tone of writing, the periodical was anti-New Deal and anti-semitic like fascist publications. Social Justice generated sales of fifty thousand issues in the winter of 1938.²³ Token attempts to "Americanize" the Nazi movement away from German characteristics was a futile exercise. The swastika shield symbol of the German-American Bund continued to be used throughout the organization's printed material. United States citizens were not impressed with the Nazi's use of American symbols as long as fascist arm salutes were still given, storm trooperesque uniforms were still being worn and youth groups continued to parade under their fascist banners.

On the 18th of July 1937, Camp Nordland was opened at Andover, New Jersey. Like Camp Siegfried near Long Island and the approximately twenty other Bund camps in the continental United States it served as a breeding ground for Nazi symbolism, a symbolism which continued to grow in intensity. Boys performed garrison guard duty complete with German army helmets. They were armed with German manufactured knives complete with Nazi eagles. Children sang songs "Deutschland Ueber Alles" and other German nationalistic music. Lyrics included "...sparks fly into our

²²Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 1 July 1937, p. 1.

²³Harold Lavine, The Fifth Column in America, (New York, NY: Doubleday, Dorin and Co., 1940), 98.

time/announce war to all far and near/who dare argue with us." Another song stated "Fuehrer we belong to you/yes we comrades belong to you."²⁴ This reference of ownership was to Hitler, not a domestic Nazi leader.²⁵ Regardless of whether an American citizen was of German ancestry or not, this foreign fanaticism served to aggravate the majority of people who were becoming ever more fearful of the Nazi movement.

Those who belonged to Nazi organizations, in the late 1930s were members of an extremely ordered and well-disciplined units. Nazi groups, led by the German-American Bund, staged a rally of 20,000 supporters in Madison Square Garden for National German Day. This spectacle was typical of most fascist convention-like meetings. The event, held on the third of October 1937, included a standing room only crowd inside the amphitheater, which was divided on the main floor by an aisle with Nazi flags. The German American Bund flag and American flags were paraded before the commencement of ceremonies. Upon the stage more Nazi banners were arranged. Uniformed Nazis praised their movement. With the exception of the English language being spoken, slight differences in uniforms and the appearance of United States flags, the

²⁴Report of Investigation of the Un-American Activities and Propaganda to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, 99.

²⁵Ibid., 101.

American Nazi rallies were virtually identical to those in Germany²⁶.

American Nazi leaders hoped their mass meetings, parades and other activities would attract a mass following throughout the United States. The movement itself had become too entrenched in its dogma and radical beliefs to change. At a Bund national rally Fritz Kuhn told the members of his organization "...we should go our own way...we shall let nothing swerve us."²⁷ Kuhn, for all practical concerns was speaking for all Nazi leaders. Whether or not the Nazi movement in America could have ever achieved its goal of political domination, the mold was cast, negative symbolism and all.

As Germany annexed European territory in 1938, the United States Government became cautious of increased Nazi expansionism. The American public's suspicion concerning the intentions of the domestic Nazi movement prompted Congress to quick take action. In June 1938, the House of Representatives responded. The legislative body heeded the will of the people and voted 181 to 41 for the appointment of a Special Committee to investigate un-American activities, particularly the activities of the Nazi

²⁶"National German Day at the Garden," Deutscher Weckrufund Beobachter, 7 October 1937, p. 2 and 5.

²⁷Bell, In Hitler's Shadow, 75.

movement.²⁸ Headed by Texas Representative Martin Dies Jr., who drafted the Committee's authorization, the House gave its full support. Dies reported to Congress he had no fewer than twenty five civil organizations supporting his legislation. These groups included the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League and the German-American League for Culture. The committee was supported by the American Legion leader Alvin Osley, who ironically stated in 1932 "the fascists are to Italy what the American Legion is to the United States."²⁹

Congressman Dies concentrated on the role of foreign governments in regard to subversive activities and the use of propaganda in the United States. Under the Committee's direction, groups such as the German American Bund were infiltrated. Informant John C. Metcalf gave the first hard testimony before Congress on the Bund's anti-Semitism and anti-government positions.³⁰ The public reacted bitterly to his revelations. Government officials perceived the Nazis as a direct threat. A federal prosecutor told Newsweek magazine that Americans must "stop Dutchmen (Germans)

²⁸U.S. Congress, The House Committee on Un-American Activities, 75th Cong., 1st sess., Congressional Record. Vol. 83, no 84, 26 May., 78.

²⁹William Gellerman, Martin Dies, (New York, NY: Putnam Press, 1962), 64.

³⁰"The War on Isms," Newsweek, 22 August 1938, 12.

from saluting the American flag with a Nazi salute."³¹ Civil rights laws were enforced against those whom district attorneys could determine had sworn oaths to Hitler yet had failed to register for taking allegiance to a foreign power.

Nazi symbolism, by this time, had made many Americans paranoid. People in New York protested the hand signals made by police officers because they felt they resembled the Nazi arm salute.³² The specter of Nazi symbols could promote apprehension in some, yet they attracted others with their flamboyance. The November 23rd, 1938 issue of the New York Post reported members of the United States National Guard's 244th Coast Artillery attended a Nazi social gathering in their American uniforms aboard the U.S.S. Illinois earlier in the month.³³ The militant style of the American Nazi movement, with its uniforms, marches and rank structure had the potential of natural appeal to Americans of prior military service, yet fascist organizations did not make a concentrated effort to recruit such men.

In the final years of the 1930s, the American Nazi movement

³¹"Heiling Muffled," Newsweek, 25 July 1938, 13.

³²"Police Traffic Signal," New York Times, 24 October 1938, p. 16 (4).

³³"American Nazi Activities," The American Jewish Yearbook, (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publications Society Press 1939), vol. 4, 124.

was being afflicted by severe difficulties. While memberships in its various organizations continued to increase German immigration declined. Much of this was the result of Nazi Germany's economic success. Hitler had created an example of how a Nazi government could administer a political system that maintained consistent economic growth. The financial improvements of Germany presented the world a model of how fascist economics could perform, but it gave native citizens no reason to leave the country. German immigration dwindled from a high in the depression of 36,329 in 1936 to virtually no immigrants from Germany in two years.³⁴ The American Nazi movement faced progressively lower numbers of new German American citizens to supplement its organizations. This previous source of potential followers had dried up.

Another significant difficulty facing Nazis in United States was the fact many of its members, lured by Germany's success, were returning to their native homeland. Fascist newspapers agonized that their "good comrades and able leaders of so many years" were returning to "the land of their birth."³⁵ This depletion of veterans within the legions of Nazis did significant damage to the movement's cohesion. The departure of former stalwarts was

³⁴Eastman Irvine, ed., The World Almanac, (New York, NY: New York World Telegram, 1939), 276.

³⁵Paul M. Ochojski, "Our Hugo Leaves," Junges Volk, September 1938, 23.

a problem fascist groups could not easily overcome. It took trust which could only be acquired through time because Nazi groups were concerned about federal agents infiltrating them such as in the case of John C. Metcalf had done.

Despite the difficulties the Nazi movement faced in the final years of the 1930s, its leadership pressed forward. Regardless of past negative public reaction to Nazi rallies, Fritz Kuhn directed his organization's officers to conduct an event symbolizing the German American Bund's discipline and devotion to its ideologies of totalitarian government, anti-Semitism, and politically controlled economic modes of production. Madison Square Garden, which hosted the 1937 Bund rally for National German Day was selected as the location.³⁶ George Washington's birthday would give the rally its theme.

To American Nazis, George Washington symbolized a successful revolution against British tyranny. The fascist movement felt it needed to rebel against Jewish-dominated government.³⁷ To Americans, George Washington symbolized the premier patriot of the United States' war for independence. Washington also represented truth and dignity, characteristics the Bund leaders wished to emphasize as they tried to leave their past of public violence.

³⁶Strong, Organized Anti-Semitism in America, 78.

³⁷Alison J. Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," Christian Century, 8 March 1939, 320.

The fanatical members of the Bund immediately supported their leader's intent of conducting the grandest publicity event the Nazi movement had ever attempted. Fritz Kuhn undertook extensive efforts to organize the George Washington rally. He appropriated Bund membership funds to transport regional leaders of the organization to New York. Kuhn also arranged simultaneous rallies focused on the George Washington theme in other cities as far away as Los Angeles.³⁸ He oversaw a massive publicity campaign for the Madison Square Garden event. He was determined not to throw a rally without massive participation. He studied the Nuremberg rallies which the Germans staged three years earlier. The symbolic gesture of having the Garden crammed to capacity with the masses became the Bund's goal.

As early reports of the planned spectacle became known in New York, different social groups reacted in various ways. The American Jewish Congress requested that the city of New York refuse to permit the assembly upon the grounds the Nazis would broadcast their typical dogmas of hatred toward the Jewish religion. In contrast The American Civil Liberties Union spoke up in defense of the Nazis. The Union argued the Nazis were entitled to free speech and therefore should be allowed to proceed with their activity regardless of how it effected other people or religious

³⁸Canedy, America's Nazis, 185.

organizations.³⁹ The Mayor of New York had his own opinion of the situation. Despite his sentiments against the fascists, Mayor LaGuardia refused to prohibit the rally. He sided with the American Civil Liberties Union perhaps expecting that the Nazis would further alienate public opinion.

As New York focused its attention toward the Bund event, municipal officials responded. Given the history of Spanknoebel's violence-oriented-activities, New York police were committed to extensive plans to deter civil unrest. On the 18th of February, Chief Inspector Louis F. Costuma announced that 1,000 police would be dispatched for the rally. The peacekeeping force consisted of approximately 700 patrolmen, 50 mounted police, and 150 other officers in support.⁴⁰ By the time the event commenced, some 1,745 police eventually participated in separating the Nazis from their detractors. This was by far the largest contingency of police employed at a single event to that time in New York history.⁴¹ Such a large security force was considered necessary as the American Legion and the Non Sectarian Anti-Nazi League declared its members would march in protest.

Publicity for the event was widespread. Posters announcing

³⁹"America's Ism," Newsweek, 6 March 1939, 14.

⁴⁰"Police For a Nazi Rally," New York Times, 18 February 1939, p. 30 (1).

⁴¹"The Nazis are Here," Nation, 4 March 1939, 253.

the event were hung throughout New York, especially in the German ethnic section of Yorkville. The posters featured a portrait of a male soldier holding a shield decorated with a stars and stripes motif. The soldier was poised with a spear that featured the swastika symbol of the German American Bund on its spearhead. This weapon was shown piercing the body of a snake whose head was adorned with the Soviet hammer and sickle emblem. This was a rare instance of the Nazi movement directly attacking a communist symbol.⁴² Nazi publications featured the poster and listed locations in New York and New Jersey where tickets could be purchased.⁴³

The day of the rally dawned quieter than most New York Mondays. The city celebrated the George Washington's birthday holiday in cold but clear weather. At Madison Square Garden preparations were underway for the night's activities. New York City's bomb and forgery squad oversaw a small detachment of officers searching the premises for explosives in response to telephoned bomb threats. Members of the German American Bund's women's auxiliary arrived at mid-morning with the symbols which would decorate the Garden. Banners, flags, streamers and signs

⁴²Egon Scheibe, "Madison Square Garden Rally Advertisement," Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 16 February 1939, p. 3.

⁴³Ibid.

were collected in red, white and blue displays inside the huge auditorium.⁴⁴

The main stage of Madison Square Garden was located on an elevated platform at the facility's western end. The dimensions of the stage were approximately one hundred feet above the Garden's pavilion floor.⁴⁵ The broad front of the stage which faced the audience was adorned in red, white and blue bunting. A raised podium stood upon the stage. It was ornately flanked by shrubs and flowers. From the scaffolding hung the largest symbols of the rally. A large beam suspended the emblems which declared the event's theme. Forty feet above the stage hung a full length portrait of George Washington in complete military dress. As this twenty-five foot wide rendering was centered on the back of the stage behind the podium, it was bordered by two American banners of forty-eight stars and thirteen red and white alternating stripes. Each flag was approximately twelve feet across and like the portrait, hung to the ground. Bordering the two American banners were flags of equal size which displayed the emblem of the German American Bund. Finally, these two banners were flanked by two thirteen star American banners in the style of America's first offi-

⁴⁴"Bund Rally to get Huge Police Squad," New York Times, 19 February 1939, p. 5 (2).

⁴⁵Diamond, The Nazi Movement in the United States, 1924-1941, 327.

cial flag. Above the portrait of George Washington rested a six foot tall figure of the national symbol, an American bald eagle complete with a red, white and blue shield along with arrows and an olive branch in its talons.⁴⁶

Around the interior of the Garden were hung banners which declared the German American Bund's dogma. They carried orders which stated "Smash Jewish communism" and "Stop Jewish domination of Christian America."⁴⁷ If the combination of the emblems from the German American Bund mixed with United States flags and George Washington seemed unusual, the slogans also did not represent traditional American values. Because the United States prided itself on religious tolerance, the anti-Semitism expressed in Nazi Germany had no place in America. There was no particular reason why mainstream Americans would persecute Jews or associate them with a political philosophy which was anti-religion to begin with. The Nazis were shouting at a national audience which had contempt for their hatred.

At four o'clock in the afternoon the police initiated security around the Garden. Acting Mayor Newbold Morris issued orders they were to avoid confrontations. He also made a formal announcement to the people of New York that they should avoid

⁴⁶Canedy, America's Nazis, 182.

⁴⁷Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 321.

the event. He told his constituents the rally symbolized "...one world's pestilence."⁴⁸ Mayor LaGuardia informed the Associated Press in Memphis (he was returning from a trip to Little Rock, Arkansas) he still approved of the rally and free speech as it even "...included the Nazis."⁴⁹ Some of the police who provided security had witnessed another fascist rally earlier in the day for Francisco Franco, the dictator of Spain, at the New York armory.

Bund leaders arrived at the Garden at 6:00 pm. The fact they entered the premises two hours before the rally's commencement allowed them to avoid confronting demonstrators and to inspect the facility. Shortly thereafter, uniformed members of the Bund who were to provide personal security for the leaders and participate in the festivities filed inside.⁵⁰ The police, on order of Acting Mayor Morris cordoned off a two block perimeter around Madison Square Garden. Morris later defied his own advice and arrived at the scene with Police Commissioner Robert Valentine to help preserve order.⁵¹ Morris feared a riot would occur and the event might lead to massive arrests. Commissioner Valentine stated he had "Enough police to stop a revolution" and described

⁴⁸"The Nazis are Here," Nation, 4 March 1939, 253.

⁴⁹"22,000 Nazis Hold Rally in Garden," New York Times, 21 February 1939, p. 1 (1).

⁵⁰"Uncle Sam's Nazis," Newsweek, 18 July 1938, 11.

⁵¹"The Nazis are Here," 253.

Madison Square Garden as "a fortress."⁵² The metropolitan police were out to eliminate any margin of error in security.

As ticket holders proceeded through police lines, bystanders yelled at them "Dirty Nazis" as the doors opened on schedule at seven o'clock that evening.⁵³ Protesters concentrated at the intersections by 48th and 47th Streets near the entrance of the Garden. Some carried street flares to draw attention to themselves.⁵⁴ Protesters did not march in a specific pattern; they gathered in large groups. It became impossible to separate protesters of Jewish organizations, from labor unions, or from the communist party. Teams of protesters displayed handmade banners which read, "Drive the Nazis out of New York" along with "Smash Anti-Semitism."⁵⁵

Protesters utilized the same symbolism as the Bund. Demonstrators waved United States flags to portray their patriotism. Police linked lines of officers, joined hand to hand, to separate them from rally spectators. A loudspeaker on the second story of a building at 49th Street and 8th Avenue began blaring

⁵²"22,000 Nazis Hold Rally in Garden," p. 1 (1).

⁵³Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 321.

⁵⁴"22,000 Nazis Hold Rally in Garden," p. 1 (1).

⁵⁵"Nazis Rally in New York," Los Angeles Times, 21 February 1939, p. 2 (3).

anti-Nazi slogans and announced "Be American, stay at home."⁵⁶ The police stormed the room where the audio originated. They found no one there.

Despite the massive protests, which according to Chief Inspector Costuma included 100,000 individuals, the spectacle commenced on schedule.⁵⁷ Spectators, who had paid up to \$1.10 for reserved seating, numbered some 22,000 people.⁵⁸ Three thousand members of the Bund were in uniform.⁵⁹ To maintain order, four hundred of these individuals lined the center of the stadium's floor and created a corridor in the crowd which led to the stage.⁶⁰ Jewish protesters, who had used phony press cards to enter the Garden, removed picket signs from underneath their overcoats and began to shout criticism at the Nazis. Police quickly escorted them outside for their safety.⁶¹ This small demonstration served as a harbinger of a protest to come.

Unperturbed, a parade of flags started a procession down the corridor as though they were marching at Nuremberg. As the Bund

⁵⁶"22,000 Nazis Hold Rally in-Garden," p. 1 (1)

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Canedy, America'sNazis, 178.

⁵⁹"Nazis Rally in New York," p. 2 (3).

⁶⁰"The Nazis are Here," 253.

⁶¹Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 321.

brass band played German songs, the procession advanced. The lead flag displayed the emblem of the Bund. This choice of symbolism appeared to be counter to the event's theme of Americanism. To be more accurate, the Bundists should have presented the American flag first. In this case it appeared second, followed by an Italian flag, then German banners.⁶² Marchers had gold swastika stickpins inserted through their black ties. They carried the emblems upon the stage behind the band.⁶³ At this point the band stopped. A brief interlude followed as the rally commenced the formal events of the evening.

Margaret Rittenhaus took to the podium. To the band's accompaniment, she sang the National Anthem. This was perhaps the only act of true Americana the rally would experience. The Garden erupted in cheers. The National Chairman of the Bund, James Wheeler Hill, opened the meeting with the words "My fellow Christian Americans."⁶⁴ Every time Hill's commencement speech mentioned the name of Franklin D. Roosevelt or people in his administration, cheers and boos followed. In contrast, when he mentioned Republican Party members or politicians who supported the Bund such as Senators Gerald P. Nye and William Borah, cheers

⁶²"The Nazis Are Here," 253.

⁶³Canedy, America's Nazis, 182.

⁶⁴Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 321.

resulted.⁶⁵ The rally had begun with a fanatical start, but its tone and theme were contrary to public opinion. The American people, despite the continuing depression, continued to favor the New Deal. The American majority did not associate the Roosevelt attempt at economic recovery with socialism and communism as had the Nazis.

Outside the rally traffic became congested as the police struggled to maintain order.⁶⁶ The stagnation served as a paradox to the Nazi movement. The fascists intended to change America's political order and move the nation into prosperity. In ironic reality, they were antagonizing society.

Inside the Garden, Hill was followed by guest speaker, Lutheran Reverend S. G. Von Bosse from Chicago. Von Bosse made several bizarre statements. He declared, "If Washington were alive today he would be a friend of Hitler as he was a friend of Frederick the Great."⁶⁷ The Reverend stated there were "serpents of intrigue" who were corrupting America through the nation's politics. He also made arguably the most puzzling statement of the rally. He called for the unification, "...of all isms."⁶⁸ This pro-

⁶⁵Smith "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 321.

⁶⁶"22,000 Nazis Hold Rally in Garden," p.1 (1).

⁶⁷Smith "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 321.

⁶⁸Ibid.

nunciation must have surprised the Bund leaders who probably abhorred the idea of mixing fascism, communism, socialism, and other ideologically opposing political systems.

Von Bosse was followed by the national public relations director of the Bund, G. W. Kunze. He stated "...when Henry Morgenthau replaced Alexander Hamilton and Roosevelt replaced Washington...the nation had slipped into a terrible state."⁶⁹ Kunze relinquished the podium to regional leaders of the Bund who continued the Bund's anti-semitic rhetoric.⁷⁰ As the rally progressed, some areas of New York observed counter demonstrations. The scholastic fraternity Phi Beta Kappa conducted a 3,000 member protest at the Astor Hotel. This was a symbolic meeting place where two years earlier Mayor LaGuardia informed members of the Jewish Woman's Congress he would consistently stand against Nazi bigotry.⁷¹ The fraternity announced it would raise some \$300,000 to fight totalitarian idealism.⁷²

Another counter demonstration was conducted by the Socialist Workers Party at 51st Street and 8th Avenue. The party members, who were followers of Leon Trotsky, had requested a

⁶⁹Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 322.

⁷⁰"Nazis Rally in New York," p. 2 (3).

⁷¹"America's Ism," 14.

⁷²Ibid.

demonstration of some 50,000 people; however, police estimated the crowd to number in the hundreds.⁷³ The fact fewer people were drawn to the hammer and sickle than the swastika was more a testimony to the Nazi movement's superior publicity than any political virtue.

Just before the meeting adjourned, several hundred demonstrators were drawn to a waving American flag. This section of the crowd broke police lines at 48th Street. Reinforcements quickly closed the line again and made several arrests.⁷⁴ The symbolic use of the national flag to rally protesters helped define the Stars and Stripes as the most significant emblem of the night. Forces both for and against fascism attempted to claim it as their own.

Inside Madison Square Garden, the spectacle was reaching its climax. Throughout the presentations, the audience clearly reacted with support for the Bund. Anyone to whom the Bund pledged allegiance such as Adolf Hitler, or favored, such as Father Charles Coughlin, received cheers and praise. In contrast, the audience booed and hissed those the Nazi movement judged as Jewish or in support of communist ideals such as Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins and Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter.⁷⁵ The crowd

⁷³"Nazis Rally in New York," p. 2 (3).

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

inside the Garden was energized for the main speaker who would close the rally.

Fritz Kuhn approached the podium in his Bund uniform. The speech of the Bundesfuehrer was permeated with anti-Semitism. He listed a series of Jewish leaders he blamed for America's past and present strife. The Jewish Americans included Haym Solomon, who gave extensive contributions to the Continental Army during the American War of Independence. Kuhn also criticized Samuel Untermyer, leader of the non sectarian anti-Nazi league.⁷⁶ When Kuhn named the American President as "Franklin Rosenfeld," the crowd erupted in applause. From the press box, New York Herald Tribune writer Dorothy Tompson yelled out "Bunk!" As she continued to yell the word she was escorted out of the Garden.⁷⁷ Heywood Brown of the New York World Telegram intervened for her and she was allowed to return, only to be expelled permanently for repeating her outbursts.⁷⁸

Fritz Kuhn continued his speech unperturbed. He commanded his followers to halt the communist elements working on children to "...turn the United States into a Bolshevik paradise." He fol-

⁷⁶"Nazis Rally in New York," p. 2 (3).

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid.

lowed that statement by proclaiming the Jew is a driving force of the communist.⁷⁹ At this point the rally experienced its only attempt at violence. A young hotel worker from Brooklyn named Isadore Greenbaum rushed the stage. Before he could reach the podium he was apprehended by six of the Bund's O.D. guards. Police quickly restrained Greenbaum and carried him from the Garden over their heads as he yelled "I am not a Communist."⁸⁰ Kuhn concluded his speech by praising the Ku Klux Klan for fighting the Jews.

As the rally adjourned, the police struggled to maintain order. City officials commended their professionalism as only thirteen arrests were made the entire night including Isadore Greenbaum and those at the 48th Street disruption.⁸¹ Members of the Bund escaped safely. In the aftermath, the nation's media reacted swiftly.

While Newsweek chided Dorothy Thompson for being prejudiced against the Bund, she responded by saying she intended to be "provocative." She defended her actions by saying she wanted to demonstrate how absurd the policy of free speech for the Bund

⁷⁹"Nazis Rally in New York," p. 2 (3).

⁸⁰Smith, "I Went to a Nazi Rally," 321.

⁸¹"Nazis Hold Rally in Garden," p. 1 (1).

was.⁸² Public reaction agreed with her. The Bund's rhetoric and symbolism was considered so extreme that Colorado Representative John A. Marten stated, "Every man in that mass meeting who was in sympathy with it is a traitor to America."⁸³ On February 27, alarmed by the American mass media's critique of the rally, Berlin disavowed any affiliation with the Bund. The following day Father Charles Coughlin did the same.⁸⁴ Congressional investigations were intensified which would eventually send Fritz Kuhn to criminal sentencing for the misuse of Bund funds.

The German American Bund intended the rally to attract attention to its ideology, political standpoints, and fascist attitudes. The symbolism and the rhetoric which the leaders demonstrated at the rally were too foreign and extreme for America to tolerate, or even contemplate accepting. The American public could not assimilate foreign symbols which were interpreted as standing for hatred and intolerance. The Nazi movement had presented the swastika and their uniforms and had misused the American flag. While the depression provided an environment conducive to new social and political perspectives the Bund's portray-

⁸²"America's Ism," 14.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴"Coughlin on Radio Criticizes Bund Meeting Here," New York Times, 27 February 1939, p. 5 (4).

al of fascism at the Madison Square Garden rally on the George Washington holiday voided any possibility of such consideration by a retional American public.

Epilogue

Psychopathic Futility

Outrage in the reaction to the German American Bund's 1939 George Washington rally effectively set forces in motion which destroyed whatever potential the American Nazi movement possessed for success. The explicit symbolism of traditional American images and Nazi references had enraged public opinion and generated condemnation from the national media. Never again would fascism in America experience public support for Nazi organizations which would allow their ranks to be counted in terms of thousands.

Immediately following the George Washington rally, leaders of the Nazi movement were subpoenaed by the House of Representatives Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Under the supervision of committee chairman Martin Dies, members of the Nazi movement stated their intentions and beliefs to the Government they intended to take over. George Kunze, of the German American Bund, testified the use of the swastika was only to represent Christian nationalism. The fact Nazi Germany and other fascist entities used the symbol was purely coincidence. Kunze believed his American right of free speech was violated.¹

¹Investigation of Un-American Propaganda and Activities in the United States, U.S. Congress, House 1939, 8277.

But if the swastika was a symbol for Christian nationalism, it did not explain the prominent use of Germany's national flag at Bund rallies and marches. William Pelley told the Committee he founded his Silver Shirt Legion in 1933 as a protest response to the New Deal.² The Committee on Un-American Activities launched an investigation of Fritz Kuhn after he testified before the Committee. The United States Government filed federal charges against Kuhn for the misappropriation of his organization's funds. The expenditure of the German American Bund's assets was ultimately determined by its president Kuhn, so he had not violated any law in that regard.³ Regardless of this fact, Kuhn was prosecuted. After serving time in Sing Sing Prison for misuse of funds and activities against the United States, Kuhn was deported to Germany after World War II.⁴

Sympathy for the Nazi cause continued despite Germany's initiation of war in Europe on the first of September 1939. A new fascist group entitled the Christian Mobilizers held rallies in New York. The organization advocated American isolationism. Its members would chant "America for Americans...to hell with internation-

²Ibid., 2707.

³"Kuhn a Prisoner of War," Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter (New York NY), 16 September 1939, p. 1.

⁴Higham, American Swastika, 9.

alists."⁵ United States Ambassador to England Joseph P. Kennedy made pro-Nazi speeches urging the United States to refrain from involving itself in German affairs. He did so against the instructions of Secretary of State Cordell Hull.⁶

Further Nazi support came oddly from American folk hero Charles Lindbergh. While sent by the United States military to evaluate German aviation, Lindbergh received the Service Cross of the German Eagle from Hermann Goering, "by order of Der Fuehrer," when attending a party given by the American Ambassador in Berlin.⁷ After the German invasion of Poland, Lindbergh repeatedly made speeches against American involvement in the war.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States entry into World War II, America rallied to the war effort. The Free American, the official newspaper of what remained of the German American Bund stated "...when invaded the Bund and The Free American will abide by the decisions of Congress."⁸

World War II ended the American depression. Nazi genocide

⁵Lavine, The Fifth Column in America, 101.

⁶David E. Koskoft, Joseph E. Kennedy, A Life and Times, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 137.

⁷Charles A. Lindberg, Autobiography of Values, (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Press, 1974), 181.

⁸"Our Country, Right or Wrong." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, The Free American, 11 December 1941, p. 1.

in Europe placed a devastating negative legacy on fascist politics. The harsh reality of how the Holocaust devastated Europe and the megalomania of the German Nazis will constantly work against the consideration of any individual who who might join a fascist group. For a fascist movement to gain strength in the United States as it did during the depression would seem virtually impossible. Yet after World War II, Nazi groups surfaced again. George Lincoln Rockwell founded the United States Nazi Party in 1959. He desired world wide fascist politics. This political organization revived the traditional Nazi symbols of the swastika, storm trooper uniform and arm salute.⁹

In Europe, the 1970s skinhead fascist movement spread to the United States. Groups such as Aryan Nation and Blood and Honor have given the United States, in the 1990s, new neo-Nazi organizations. The Nazi movement of the information age uses compact discs and internet sites to distribute swastika labeled messages.¹⁰ While the depression no longer influences national politics, the concept of the angry white male supplies the spark which feeds the fire of the current Nazi fervor. With most currently living Americans being born after World War II, will they remember the Nazi failures and reject the hatred of the past? The sym-

⁹Higham, America's Swastika, 122.

¹⁰William Shaw, "Hate, Rattle, and Roll," Details, July 1995, 46.

bolism is remarkably alive, but how will America's public read the signs?

Bibliography

Books

Appleman, Roy, Milio M. Quaife, and Melvin F. Werg, The History of the United States Flag. New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1961.

Descriptive text detailing the creation and evolution of the United States flag. Information from the book was utilized to document what the flag represented as it was adopted as the National banner.

Bell, Leland. In Hitler's Shadow. New York, NY: Kennikat Press, 1973.

A complete work dealing with the early formation of the American Nazi movement in the 1920s, through the founding of the U.S. Nazi Party in 1945, up to fascist trends in the 1970s

Bellfrage, Cedric. American Inquisition. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs and Merrill, 1973.

Detailed account of un-American activities examined by various Federal Government agencies. The text deals primarily with communist affairs of the McCarthy era. This book was used for its early information regarding the United States fascist movement.

Brenner, Lenni. Zionism in the Age of the Dictators. Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill Publishing, 1983.

Primarily, a philosophical work dealing with Jewish social issues from the Bolshevik Revolution through the Cold War. It provides a few relative statements.

Buckley, William F. The Committee. New York, NY: Putnam Press, 1962.

Enlightening text providing information from the House Committee on Un-American Activities. This book details the Committee's proceedings, cast of characters and the groups and individuals it examined.

Canedy, Susan. America's Nazis; A History of the GermanAmerican Bund. Menlo Park, CA: Markgraf Publishing Group, 1990.

Informative narrative which details specific activities of the German-American Bund. It supplies information with few opinions. In covering the rally, it presents several photographs and a brief synopsis of the event.

Cohen, Naomi W. American Jews and the Zionist Idea. Los Angeles, CA: KTAV Publishing House, 1975.

A retrospective of Jewish culture in the United States from the 1880s through the twentieth century. It concentrates on social life and community structure.

Cornebise, Alfred E. The Weimar in Crisis, Cuno's Germany and the Ruhr Occupation. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1977.

A complex work involving the chancellorship of Wilhelm Cuno and his struggles to control his nation in the harsh realities of post world war Europe. Passages include descriptions of finance ministers, ambassadors to the United States and French antagonists.

Diamond, Sander A. The Nazi Movement in the United States 1924-1941. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974.

An opinionated history of German-Americans organizing support for the Third Reich until the advent of the United States in World War II. It details the political climate involved as the Movement interacted with the American Government.

Dilling, Elizabeth. Roosevelt's Red Record. Kennilworth, KY: By the author, 1936.

Caustic attack against Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential administration. No trivial detail was too minute for Dilling to omit from her opus. Much of the book features the supposed left-wing activities of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. This book was a

Bible to most American Nazis who quoted from it in speeches and literary works.

Elting, Mary and Franklin Folson. Flags of All Nations. New York, NY: Grosset and Dunlop, 1967.

Book describing the symbolism and meaning of the world's national flags. Specific facts from this publication were used to document the meanings of various international flags.

Garret, Wilbur E. ed. Historical Atlas of the United States. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1988.

A major source of facts and figures concerning United States history. This text was used for statistical information regarding the American depression.

Gellerman, William. Martin Dies. New York, NY: Putnam Press, 1962.

Biographical work about the life of Martin Dies, the Chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. The book relates Dies work with the Committee and the attitude of the American public toward the elements the Committee dealt with.

Gottlieb, Moshe. American Anti-Nazi Resistance. 1933-1941 New York, NY: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1992.

A selective work profiling the conflict of labor unions and ethnic communities against American fascists after the Nazi Party

was established in Germany. The book details Jewish activities against domestic Nazi episodes.

Herzstein, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hitler. New York, NY: Paragon House, 1989.

Comparative book which focuses upon how groups and individuals reacted to Roosevelt in the United States as Hitler was Chancellor of pre-World War Two. Special attention is given by Herzstein to those critics who attempted to make Roosevelt part of Jewish conspiracies against America.

Higham, Charles. American Swastika. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Press, 1985.

Chronological narrative explaining the highlights of the American Nazi movement throughout the twentieth century. This book focuses upon the movement in the decades after the Second World War.

Irvine, Eastman, ed. The World Almanac. New York, NY: New York World Telegram, 1939.

Statistical reference used for immigration figures of the United States concerning German Americans during the depression.

Janson, Donald. The Far Right. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 1963.

Reactionary politics in the extreme during the first half of the twentieth century in American history. The book provides a few details concerning the American fascist movement during the depression.

Kaskoff, David E. Joseph E. Kennedy, His Life and Times. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974.

Biography of United States Ambassador to England prior to World War Two. This text was used to convey the sympathy supporters gave the Nazi movement before the United States entered the Second World War.

Levine, Harold. The Fifth Column in America. New York, NY: Doubleday, Doris and Co., 1940.

Book written during the depression which focuses upon anti-American groups both liberal and conservative. While the publication deals little with the fascist movement in general, it does offer a few facts about the subject.

Lewis Sinclair. It Can't Happen Here. Service, NY: Dramatists Play, 1938.

Book based upon the play rewrite of the Sinclair novel. It deals with the hysteria many Americans felt during the 1930s as

they questioned if the Federal Government could provide for them or whether alternative politics would take over the United States.

Lindberg, Charles A. Autobiography of Values. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Press, 1974.

First hand account of the aviation hero's life. Lindberg explains his attitude for dealing with the Nazis during the depression, his support for the Nazis just prior to America's entry into World War Two and his participation in the America First Party.

Louis, Leo. Encyclopedia of the Third Reich. New York, NY: McGraw Hill Publishing, 1946. S. v. "Swastika."

A short descriptive article concerning the origins and use of the Nazi swastika or "Hakenkreuz."

Michie, Allan A. Dixie Demagogues. New York, NY: The Vanguard Press, 1939.

Informative yet tabloid-like approach to Congressional politics in the 1930s. Michie focuses on the outrageous statements of Southern politicians for and against the Roosevelt Administration.

Morgan, Ted. FDR a Biography. New York, NY: Simon Schuster, 1985.

Self-evident bibliography that examines the entire life of America's thirty-second President. This provided information concerning Roosevelt's attitudes before the statements he made.

Murray, James A. H. ed. Oxford English Dictionary. Reprint 1961 ed., Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 1961., S. X, "Swastika."

Dictionary article which provides historical background about the swastika. Details are included in the passage about its many definitions.

Ryan, Harold R. Rhetorical Presidency, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988.

Source for speeches and Roosevelt quotations. The text conveys President Roosevelt's feelings in regard to the depression and the factors which influenced it.

Seldes, George. One Thousand Americans. New York, NY: Boni and Gaer, 1947.

Book detailing the interactions between Jewish groups and the United States Government before, during and after the Second World War.

Schneiderman, Harry. American Jewish Yearbook. Vol. 41 American Nazi Activities. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1939.

Schneiderman was the Editor and primary contributor to the American Jewish Yearbook. This particular article examined the events the Nazi movement enacted against Jewish groups during 1938.

American Jewish Yearbook. Vol. 40. Legislative Opposition; Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1938.

This article within the Yearbook explains United States Government opposition to American Nazi groups. It also implies the support Jewish groups gave to the Government's negative attitude concerning the Nazis.

American Jewish Yearbook. Vol. 40. Nazi Issue in New York Mayoralty Campaign. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1938.

Article inside the Yearbook which details the conflicts the Nazi movement was giving to the City of New York. The article explains how Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia experienced in his dealings with respect to Nazi antagonists.

American Jewish Yearbook. Vol. 40. Other Good Will

Activities. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1938.

Article within the Yearbook which explains international activities of Jewish groups regarding the oppression Jews were suffering in Nazi Germany.

American Jewish Yearbook. Vol. 38. The Previous Year. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1936.

Article within the Yearbook detailing the activities of the American Jewish Congress and how it worked with Jewish groups. This article also tells of American Nazi resistance against the American Jewish Congress.

American Jewish Yearbook. Vol. 39. The Trade Boycott Movement. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1937.

Article within the Yearbook explaining the progress, both international and domestic of the Jewish boycott against German made products.

American Jewish Yearbook. Vol. 38. The Year in Review. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society Press, 1936.

Article within the Yearbook which covers a broad list of top-

ics about the conflicts Jewish groups faced against Nazi organizations. This article gives detailed information about how Jewish groups intended to face the fascist menace.

Shacked, Gershon. Encyclopedia Judea. New York, NY: MacMillan Company, 1971. S. v. "Megan David."

Article within the encyclopedia which explains the history and meaning of the "Star of David." Gershon Shacked is a Jewish historian considered an expert on such symbolism.

Strong, Donald S. Organized Anti-Semitism in America Washington, D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1941.

A United States government sponsored work. It gives detailed histories of fascist organizations in the United States up to the founding of the American Nazi Party. It supplies demographics and statistics for the rank and file members of the groups as well as short biographies of their leaders.

Wecter, Dixton. The Age of the Great Depression. New York, NY: The MacMillan Co., 1948.

A historical compendium which deals with the cultural

aspects of the American depression. This is good source for public opinion and social interaction during the 1930s.

Weinberg, Meyer. Because They Were Jews. New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1986.

This text profiles anti-semitism in the United States on an institutional and personal basis. It details statistics and information as they relate to the issue.

Zinn, Howard. New Deal Thoughts. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs, Merrill Co. Inc., 1966.

Commentary about the culture and events of the depression by those involved in the events of the era. The book is of value concerning the major leaders as they reacted to the times.

Magazines

"America's Ism." Newsweek, 6 March 1939, 14.

One page article involving the negative opinion the public developed against Nazi activities. The passage equates fascist

activities with gangster like motives and totalitarian politics while displaying German Nazi symbols..

"Brown Shirts and Silver Shirts Under a Federal Microscope." Newsweek, 16 June 1934, 8.

Brief article concerning the rise of early Nazi groups as they imitated the style of uniformed Nazis in Germany.

"Consolidated Lithograph Corporation Advertisement." Time Magazine, 16 October 1933, 57.

Advertisement offering the services of a business fully willing to support the symbols of the New Deal. It represents American business working with the United States Government in principle to end the depression.

"Debut of the Blue Eagle." Time Magazine, 31 July 1933, 11.

Informative article detailing the intentions of the Roosevelt Administration for the use of the NRA symbol. It details how leaders of the NRA desired to have American businesses support them for economic gain.

Foreign Affairs, September 1937, 123.

Nameless passage involving the statistical membership of Nazi groups during the middle of the American depression. It is not clear who supplied the amounts listed.

"Germany Hungers." Nation, 30 January 1924, 115-16.

Article explaining the poverty in post World War One Germany. The article's point is to invoke sympathy for those left hungry by the war's degradation.

"Heiling Muffled." Newsweek, 25 July 1938, 13.

Passage describing the efforts of Federal law enforcement against Nazi groups in the New York State area. Arrests and fines against Nazi leaders are dealt with in the article.

"Hitler's First Year." Newsweek, 27 January 1934, 7-9.

Statistical information of the economic accomplishments of Hitler's Germany in its first year of existence. Its accomplishments are compared to America's continuing economic crisis.

Jackson, James O. "Fascism Lives." Time Magazine, 6 June 1994, 50-51.

Contemporary article which deals with modern fascist groups in Europe as they increase activities in public. A disturbing piece concerning Europe's political future.

Nation, 30 January 1924, 101.

Article explaining how United States humanitarian efforts were benefitting Germany. The article explains that America was treating its former enemy with sympathy.

"The Nazis Are Here." Nation, 4 March 1939, 252-3.

Long article explaining the mass rally in Madison Square Garden the German American Bund staged on George Washington's birthday in 1939. It gives details about the rally and the public reaction to it.

Ochojski, Paul M. "First Hike." Junges Volk, March 1937, 4.

Passage in an American Nazi youth magazine. This article represents the indoctrination of spirit an American boy makes with Nazi symbols as he interacts with other youths in a Bund camp.

"Our Hugo Leaves." Junges Volk, September 1938, 23.

Article, (probably written by Paul Ochojski), which complains about the dwindling ranks of the established American Nazi members as they return to Germany.

Shaw, William. "Hate, Rattle, and Roll." Details, July 1995, 43-48.

Contemporary article detailing the American fascist movement as it has merged with white supremacy groups and spread through modern technology. It concentrates on the youth movement within the new Nazism and the music involved with it.

Smith, Alison J. "I Went to a Nazi Rally." Christian Century, 8 March 1939, 320-2.

An eye-witness account of a Madison Square Garden rally. The article is rich in detail with vivid descriptions and quotations. It gives a blow-by-blow account of the proceedings. Smith attempts to be objective yet occasionally allows his religious beliefs to influence his reactions, "When Reverend Von Bosse spoke these words, I hung my head in shame."

"Tilli Koch." Junges Volk, November 1937, 9.

Anonymous article detailing the symbolism involving women within the Nazi movement. It conveys a sense of harmony within the German American Bund.

Time Magazine, 21 August 1933, cover.

Picture cover of the magazine displaying the NRA symbol and the German Iron Cross. The image is a bizarre representation of two conflicting entities.

"Uncle Sam's Nazis." Newsweek, 18 July 1938, 11.

Article expressing concern about the growing rise of Nazi groups in the United States. It reports about the hierarchy and symbolism of the movement.

"Unsere Mission." Junges Volk, November 1937, 3.

German American Bund article which explains the symbolism of the youth movement and its banners. The passage attempts to convey the duty of a youthful Nazi to the cause.

Vanity Fair, September 1934, cover.

Cover illustration depicting a flying NRA eagle lifting a surprised Uncle Sam in his Stars and Stripes apparel. The cover is a symbol of American spirit to end the depression with traditional United States Government.

"The War on Isms." Newsweek, 22 August 1938, 12.

Brief article concerning conflicts between Nazi groups and the American Government as they fought over the expressions and symbols of fascism.

Public Documents

U.S. Congress. House. Cumulative Index to Publications of the Committee on Un-American Activities 1938-1954. Vol. 1-6. The House Committee on Un-American Activities. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962.

Multi-volume work detailing word by word testimony and submitted documents over the course of the 1930s and 40s as the United States Government examined the movements designed to overthrow it. This is a complete reference which explains virtually

everyone involved and every movement the American Nazis consisted of during the depression.

U.S. Congress. House. House Document No. 51, Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States. 91st Congress, 1st Session. House Documents. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1974.

Full text of President Roosevelt's second inaugural speech he delivered in Washington, D.C. The Government publication is a reference listing all inaugural speeches up to the time of its publication.

U.S. Congress. House. Domestic Affairs Committee. 71st Congress, 2nd Session. Congressional Record. Vol.78, No. 78. 12 May 1930.

Report concerning the economics of the depression and the implications for future United States Government. The report deals with immigration and production results.

U.S. Congress. House. The House Committee on Un-American Activities. 75th Congress, 1st Session. Congressional Record. Vol. 83, No. 84. May 1938.

Investigative reports requested by the House of Representatives are explained in this Government publication.

Nazi activities are detailed by Government sources taken from both civilian and Government documents.

U.S. Congress. House. Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States. Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939.

Congressional report which examines pro-Nazi literature with excerpts of songs and interviews from Congressional testimony.

U.S. Department of Justice. Table of Immigration and Nationalization Service. U.S. Department of Justice Statistical Yearbook. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981.

Self explanatory text requested by the Department of Justice to express past immigration trends. The document was evidence of Germans moving to America the Nazimovement could draw upon.

Pamphlets

Coleman, McAlister. Symbols of 1936. New York, NY: Thomas and Nelson Independent Committee, 1936.

Socialist propaganda pamphlet regarding political candidates

and what they symbolized in the 1936 National election. It details all the major candidates, concentrating on socialist prospects.

Hitlerism and the American Jewish Congress. New York, NY: American Jewish Congress Publications, December 1934.

Publication regarding how the international Jewish community would react to the growing anti-semitism of the German Government. It explains the oppression the Nazis had legislated upon German Jews.

Hitler's War of Extermination Against the Jews. New York, NY: American Jewish Congress Publications, 1936.

Prophetic pamphlet which foretells the Nazi plan of genocide against European Jews. The publication's symbolism of the swastika and a deceased Jewish man is an astounding image.

Newspapers

"Aus der Bewegung." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 1 July 1937, p. 5.

The German American Bund's weekly propaganda newspaper which detailed the organization's activities. This article deals with the increases in the Bund's membership.

"Bund Rally to Get Huge Police Squad." New York Times, 19 February 1939, S. 2 p. 5.

Article giving statistics about the police force to be provided for the German American Bund's rally at Madison Square Garden for George Washington's birthday.

"Coughlin on Radio Criticizes Bund Meeting Here." New York Times, 27 February 1939, S. 4 p. 3.

Radio priest Father Charles Coughlin disavows all association with the German American Bund following their George Washington rally at Madison Square Garden.

Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 1 July 1937, p. 5.

Short article dealing with Bund symbolism at a Nazi rally and the coverage the newspaper responded to the event in photographs.

Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 15 July 1937, p. 5.

Nazi symbolism is expressed in this brief article with the illustration of a swastika on the sail of a Viking longboat on the letterhead of the newspaper.

Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 22 July 1937, p. 5.

Short article regarding promotions and advertisements the German American Bund received within its newspaper.

Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 12 August 1937, p. 1.

Brief passage dealing with a Bund camp and the symbolism displayed at the campground. Photographs of banners and other Nazi symbols is covered in the article.

Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 26 August 1937, p. 8.

Minor article concerning fund contributions to the German American Bund.

Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 7 October 1937, p. 2.

Small article regarding Nazi events in Germany and the corresponding events and civic promotions in the United States at the same time.

Every Friday, 17 June 1938, p. 1.

Jewish Newspaper, (an obvious weekly), from New York City that was involved with American Jewish affairs in the 1930s and 40s. This article covers the activities of Nazi groups against Jewish individuals.

Haugh, "George Washington's Birthday Rally at Madison Square Garden, 1939, Advertisement." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 19 January 1939, p. 1.

Half page advertisement for the George Washington birthday rally at Madison Square Garden in 1939. It is a rare case of American Nazis using communist symbolism to promote a Bund event.

"Honest Abe and Horst Wessel." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 12 August 1937, p. 6.

Comparative article portraying Abraham Lincoln and Horst Wessel as individuals who were fighting for a common cause. An

example of how American Nazis used American leaders as symbols to a fascist end.

"Island Coal and Lumber Company Advertisement." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 26 August 1937, p. 8.

Advertisement showing how American business was willing to patronize the American Nazi movement.

Jewish Tribune, 15 October 1936, p. 1.

San Francisco based Jewish newspaper which constantly detailed Nazi activities against Jews. The article reports anti-semitism practiced in public.

Jewish Tribune, 22 February 1938, p. 4.

Short article regarding George Washington and his relationship with Jewish groups in the lateeighteenth century. This article showed how Jewish groups portrayed America's founding fathers as positive images.

Jewish Tribune, 15 September 1938, p. 4.

Brief article concerning anti-semitic literature on the

American west coast and the arrests made in the case of Nazi suspects.

Kissinger, H. D. "Letter to the Editor." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 9 February 1939, p. 4.

Letter to the Editor concerning how the Roosevelt Administration was attempting to persecute the American Nazi movement.

"Kuhn A Prisoner of War." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 16 September 1939, p. 1.

Nazi article detailing the American Department of Justice and its arrest of German American Bund leader Fritz Kuhn. The passage portrays Kuhn as an innocent victim of government persecution.

"Liquidating the Small Fry." Every Friday, 10 June 1938, p. 1.

Cartoon illustration showing Nazi aggression against Europe in the form of nations drawn as fish being attacked by a Hitler faced shark. A comical use of symbolism to belittle the Nazi movement.

Los Angeles Times, 25 March 1937, S. 1. p. 27.

Coverage of the American fascist activities and the use of Nazi symbols in a Bund march. A critical article against the elements of fascism in the United States.

"Lowenbrau Beer Advertisement." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 15 July 1937, p. 5.

Advertisement which shows how corporate America choose to endorse the Nazi movement by business agreements. Advertising was a constant source of income for the Bund newspaper.

"Men Probe Coast Nazi Activities." Jewish Tribune, May 1938, P 1.

Jewish periodical report which informs about Nazi events on the American west coast. This information includes the positions and opinions of national Nazi leaders.

"Nazis Rally in New York." Los Angeles Times, 21 February 1939, S. 3. p. 2.

West coast coverage and reaction to the German American Bund rally in Madison Square Garden from the massive Nazi event. The article is complete with photographs and commentary.

New York Times, 23 March 1933, S. 3. p. 6.

Short article giving early coverage of one of the first Nazi incidents of violence in New York City.

New York Times, 29 March 1933, S. 7. p. 4.

Brief article providing information of public reaction to early Nazi activities. A negative view of the Nazis was already being generated at this early time of the movement.

New York Times, 17 August 1936, S. 5. p. 12.

Article concerning Nazi symbolism used during the Olympics and the response by the World Athletic Carnival in New York.

New York Times, 17 March 1937, S. 1. p. 3.

Report that deals with the controversy involving Nazi demonstrations in New York. The rights of the Nazis to assemble is discussed.

New York Times, 30 August 1938, S. 5. p. 3.

Article that deals with American Nazis in relationship to Nazi

activities in Europe. The expansion of Germany is examined in respect to the growth of fascist movements in the United States.

"Our Country, Right or Wrong." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, The Free American. 11 December 1941, p. 1.

Front page article which details the position of the German American Bund as it pledges to abide with Congress and support America's war effort after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. This article proclaims the German American Bund would be in accord with the government it previously confronted.

"Police For a Nazi Rally." New York Times, 18 February 1939, S. 1. p. 30.

Report announcing the large contingent of police New York City would provide for the Madison Square Garden Rally. A good source for statistics and understanding of the fear the city civil service gave to the event.

"Police Traffic Signal." New York Times, 24 October 1938, S. 4. p. 16.

Article about public controversy concerning the symbolism of police hand signals compared to fascist arm salutes. It represents the psychological preoccupation people had of the Nazi movement.

"Red Star Cruise Line Advertisement." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 15 July 1937, p. 5.

Example of corporate support for the Nazi media. Despite the attitude of American business favoring the New Deal, capitalist interests were not against supporting alternatives.

Scheibe, Egon. "Madison Square Garden Rally Advertisement." Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, 16 February 1939, p. 3.

Newspaper illustrated ad produced and distributed by the German American Bund to promote their massive rally. It provides symbolism involved in the rally and how the Nazis manipulated it for public consumption.

Sternberger, Estelle M. "The First Anti-Fascist." Jewish Tribune, February 1936, p. 5.

Opinionated article proclaiming George Washington to be of the character which would reject the principles of fascism. This description of the symbolic founding father predates the Nazis' attempt to use Washington as their own symbol of independence.

"Swastika On Huge Smokestack to be Out." Jewish Tribune, June 1938, p. 1.

Descriptive passage explaining the removal of what were previously Greek symbols of health which were tainted by the Nazi use of the swastika. This transference of meaning shows the impact of the fascist cause.

"22,000 Nazis Hold Rally in Garden." New York Times, 21 February 1939, S. 1. p. 1.

Headline coverage of the German American Bund's rally at Madison Square Garden the day after the event. A great source of information detailing speeches, arrests, and public response to the spectacle.

Periodicals and Scholarly Journals

Esposito, David M. and Jackie R. Esposito. "LaGuardia and the Nazis, 1933, 1938." American Jewish History. Vol. 78, (September 1988): 38-53.

Journal article full of quotes, dates and biographical information of the LaGuardia era of New York at the time the Nazis concentrated there during the depression. The article portrays LaGuardia as some form of saintly icon as he is reported to either defend the Nazi's American right of free speech or to openly defy their agendas.

Shapiro, Edward S. "The World Labor Athletic Carnival of 1936." American Jewish History. 74, (January 1985): 274-86.

Detailed and comprehensive article regarding organized labor and Jewish groups alternative to the 1936 Berlin Olympics. The historical facts within the text include the banners spectators used, the awards athletes were given and who endorsed the sporting event with their presence.

Photograph

Kartluke, H. W. "Photography of White Plains Food Exhibit." National Archives, Records Group 131, packet 2. 18-22 February 1936.

Black and white image of public displays and onlookers reacting to Nazi symbols placed by American fascist groups to promote German goods for sale in America and the Berlin Olympics.