

OBSERVING A DICTATORSHIP: AMERICAN CONSULAR REPORTING ON GERMANY, 1933–1941

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I.

“During the critical period under survey the political reporting of the consular offices has on the whole been satisfactory and in many instances of great value to the Embassy. . . . [T]he Embassy relies upon the consular offices not only to report local happenings of moment, but also to furnish it with information concerning sectional reactions to national trends which help this Mission in forming a comprehensive picture of the German political situation.”¹ At the end of 1939, Alexander Kirk, *chargé d'affaires ad interim* at the American embassy in Berlin, gave his consuls a good grade—literally, because the embassy had developed a system of six grades that rated the political reports it received. Throughout 1939 Frankfurt Consul General Emil Sauer had been the most productive with forty-one submissions. However, “some of Mr. Sauer’s reports are of a very vague and discursive nature and depend for their material upon the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. . . .” Kirk criticized the fact that Sauer did not get more politically relevant information out of the business community of the city. Equally frankly, he criticized Cologne Consul General Alfred W. Klieforth: Although with thirty-two submissions Klieforth, too, was an ardent writer, his reports suffered from overly subjective viewpoints and “a lack of critical insight.” Kirk also noted the lack of information on the Catholics in the Rhineland. Sauer’s colleague from Stuttgart fared much better: Consul General Samuel W. Honaker received the top rating of “excellent” no fewer than four times. “In addition to being opportune, his reports indicate a comprehension of local opinion and its relation to national events and furthermore are always extremely readable. . . .” Well received were also Vice Consul Stephen B. Vaughan’s reports from Breslau, not least because “[t]he Embassy was favorably impressed by Mr. Vaughan’s initiative in traveling to many points in his consular district for information as well as by his evaluations and powers of observation.”²

In the early 1930s, the State Department maintained Consulates General in Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Munich. Consulates existed in Bremen, Breslau, Cologne, Dresden, Leipzig, and Stuttgart. After the Ger-

man annexation of Austria in March 1938, the Consulate General in Vienna also came under the supervision of the Berlin office, and in the fall of 1939 Breslau was closed and an American consulate opened in Königsberg in East Prussia instead. Until July 1941, when all American consulates were ordered closed by the German government, the regular reporting of its consuls helped the embassy in Berlin and the State Department in Washington gain insight into a broad range of political, social, and economic aspects of life in Nazi Germany. The United States could then adjust its policies accordingly.³ The consuls transmitted publicly available information from German newspapers or official reports as well as information that was acquired informally in personal conversations, from confidential letters, or through observations on the spot. They did not give policy recommendations but were certainly encouraged to include their own evaluations of the material. Whereas some of the reports consisted of just a page or two and included information on a particular problem or event, others were twenty or thirty pages long and discussed fundamental questions of German politics and society.

Today the American consular reports form a treasure trove of uncensored information on the "Third Reich" that so far has been largely ignored by historians.⁴ In comprehensively analyzing the reports for the first time, the GHI joins forces with the Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg (FZH) and contributes to its comparative research project "Foreign Views on the 'Third Reich.'"⁵ Under the guidance of FZH director Axel Schildt and research fellow Frank Bajohr, a dozen international historians will tap into the reports of consuls from twelve different countries to shed new light on the character of German society in this period, the perception of Nazi politics in the different regions of Germany, and the extent to which its population supported Hitler. More than twenty years after the ground-breaking publication on everyday life in Bavaria in the Nazi period by Martin Broszat and the Munich Institut für Zeitgeschichte, there is still no scholarly consensus on these questions, as recent publications by Peter Longerich, Götz Aly, Robert Gellately, Ian Kershaw, and many others have shown.⁶

The sources that have been used so far to assess public opinion and public morale in Germany all have their limitations and shortcomings. Published memoirs, personal diaries, and collections of letters are available in large numbers, but their range is limited to the experiences of individuals, and information usually cannot immediately be cross-referenced. Editions of confidential situation reports [*Lageberichte*] of the German secret police and other official institutions have a broader scope but suffer from the fact that these sources have been generated by the perpetrators themselves. Even though they were supposed to offer the

political leadership accurate insight into what everyday Germans were really thinking and talking about, the way the secret police gathered and processed this information calls for caution when using it for scholarship.⁷ A critical stance is also necessary in dealing with the several thousand pages of reports the Social Democratic Party published from exile in the 1930s on the situation in Germany.⁸ Lastly, newspaper coverage by foreign correspondents probably comes closest to the consular reports in terms of a broad and well-informed perspective on German events, but due to its public nature, foreign journalists had to take into account possible repercussions by the Nazis, thus limiting the journalists' freedom.⁹

By focusing broadly on foreign consular reporting from Germany, the Hamburg project attempts to introduce new sources into the scholarly discussion and to open new paths of interpretation. There are already examples of critical editions and studies that have successfully utilized diplomatic and consular reports in a similar way for other time periods and historiographical questions.¹⁰ The project of the Forschungsstelle, however, is unique in its scope. It will include several European states: France, Italy, Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. It will also examine the United States and Japan. In addition to Costa Rica, one more country from Latin America will be selected later. This list has been designed to cover allies of the Nazi regime, neutral states, and states with which Germany went to war after 1939.

Today most research on foreign policy and international relations takes into account the importance of mutual perceptions of states, governments, and their representatives, as well as the influence of public opinion and other "soft" factors outside the focus of traditional political historiography. Historians who are interested in ideas, images, and perceptions and their consequences for policy decisions have become increasingly aware of the methodological challenges involved. Every form of perception is selective and depends on many hidden factors, and the American consular reports in the end come down to individual perceptions and the processing and aggregation of these perceptions in writing.¹¹ Consuls may have genuinely attempted to report truthfully and inform their superiors as well as possible, but the institutional setting of the reports already constituted a first element of distortion. Varying personal interests and different levels of acquaintance with the situation in Germany further influenced their findings. The limits of their contacts, usually focused on local elites in the bigger cities, affected their judgment. Established images of Germany and prejudices between peoples also came into play.¹² Obviously, the information in the consular reports cannot simply be taken at face value. The "alien" view of trained diplomats

may be revealing in many particular cases, but generally the observations of the consuls were not more “objective” or “neutral” and pose as many interpretive challenges as the confidential German sources. On the other hand, the availability of the German documents and additional materials such as diaries will greatly facilitate the “reality test” (Niedhart) of the American perceptions.

This project aims to produce a collection of substantial scholarly articles that will summarize and analyze the consular reports for each country with a special focus on consensus and dissent in the *Volksgemeinschaft* and on the persecution of the Jews. In a second step, a selection of the original documents will be published, most likely in a digital format, to make them available for further research. The American component is in part set up as a trial run. Depending on its results, it may help clarify research strategies for the other countries.

II.

In the 1930s, the American embassy in Berlin certainly had far-reaching opportunities to observe Nazi politics from up close and to gather public and confidential information, even though Ambassador William E. Dodd, who held the post from July 1933 until the end of 1937, is largely considered to have been ineffective.¹³ The embassy was well aware of the additional opportunities its network of consulates throughout Germany offered. With ten posts, this network was not as extensive as it had been up until World War I, when many smaller consulates closed and never reopened. Nevertheless, it could still facilitate a steady stream of information on regional and local developments in Germany.¹⁴ The embassy and in turn the State Department welcomed and at times actively commissioned reports from its consuls.

Since the turn of the century, a series of reforms had professionalized the American foreign service and had brought about “the triumph of careerism over amateurism.”¹⁵ President Theodore Roosevelt had taken the first steps toward replacing the spoils system with appointments based on merit and proven qualification. Trade issues and—after 1914—the new demands World War I brought upon American diplomats accelerated the changes.¹⁶ Heated debates in the State Department revolved around opportunities of promotion in the service and adequate salaries for diplomats. Politicians and the public alike discussed the outdated schism between the political responsibilities of diplomats and the purely economic and administrative tasks of the consuls. Finally, the social composition of the service gave reason for concern. Consuls were reasonably paid, were not necessarily based in expensive cities, and were not expected to engage in extensive socializing. By the early 1920s, consuls

typically had a middle-class background and could come from any region of the United States. They had attended public schools and college, though they rarely had an Ivy League education. They were “keen, highly-trained, and efficient to the last degree,” and their work yielded concrete results. Ambassadors, however, basically needed to be financially independent to fulfill their duties. More than 60 percent had graduated from Harvard, Yale, or Princeton, and more than 75 percent came from the New England and Middle Atlantic regions of the United States. The general public tended to view them as upper-class snobs who were alienated from and not representative of a democratic society.¹⁷

The various initiatives, suggestions, and criticisms culminated in the Rogers Act of 1924. This removed the career barrier between diplomatic and consular services and combined the two into one personnel system without fully fusing them. Proponents of the bill hoped for more practical sense and economic expertise in the embassies when consular officers received the opportunity to serve under ambassadors, and for more diplomatic skills in sensitive consular posts. The consular service benefited from the reforms primarily in terms of prestige and opportunities for promotion. The Hoover and Roosevelt administrations supported the consular interpretation of the Rogers Act, which stressed interchangeability on the personnel level and assigned a greater role to the consuls in the conduct of American foreign affairs.¹⁸ In addition to their traditional tasks—looking after the economic interests of the United States, issuing passports, assisting American citizens in need, and issuing visas to foreigners—by the 1930s, political reporting had become an accepted responsibility of consular officers. Some viewed this as an opportunity to qualify for prestigious diplomatic positions. Others may have seen it as a burden and a distraction from their administrative functions.¹⁹ With the ever-growing number of visa applicants after 1933, these functions strained the resources of the consulates in Europe anyway.

A look at the diverse social, educational, and professional background of the American consuls serving in Germany in the 1930s shows that as a group they were well-qualified and in some ways probably even better suited as political observers than the career officers at the embassy.²⁰ Carlton B. Hurst, consul at Bremen and later Breslau, held a Ph.D. from the University of Tübingen. Berlin consul Raymond H. Geist had received a Ph.D. from Harvard in 1918. Orsen N. Nielsen, consul general at Munich in 1939, apparently wealthy and for a while one of Washington’s “most eligible bachelors,” had been a student at the University of Berlin. Emil Sauer, consul general at Frankfurt, Alfred R. Thomson, consul general at Dresden from 1935 to 1940, and Leonard G. Dawson, who served as consul at Munich for two years beginning in 1933, had all joined the foreign service after working for other federal

agencies.²¹ Ralph C. Busser in Leipzig, John G. Erhardt, consul general at Hamburg from 1933 to 1937, and his successor Wilbur Keblinger held law degrees, but Keblinger had also worked as a journalist. Douglas Jenkins, consul general in Berlin as of 1934, had an almost identical professional background, with experience in law and journalism. Arminius T. Haeberle at Dresden had been a school teacher, Leon Dominian, consul general at Stuttgart in the first half of the 1930s, was a geologist, Edward A. Dow, in charge of the Leipzig office from 1939 to 1941, came from the real estate and insurance business, and George A. Makinson, Sauer's predecessor at Frankfurt, had a technical background.

Even if they had not spent time at German universities as Hurst and Nielsen had, many of the other consuls were well acquainted with the country after having served for years at different posts throughout Germany. Haeberle held the appointment at Dresden from 1925 until his retirement in 1936. John E. Kehl had served at Stettin around the turn of the century, and beginning in 1921 held successive appointments at Berlin, Breslau, and Stuttgart before becoming consul general at Hamburg in 1929. Alfred W. Klieforth, consul general at Cologne, had spent the second half of the 1920s in Berlin. Sauer had been at the Cologne post from 1915 to 1917 and again from 1919 to 1925. Others could rely on pre-war experience as well: Busser had been assigned to Erfurt before the war, Makinson had worked at the Berlin and Sorau offices from 1908 to 1914, and Thomson had been a consul in Berlin from 1912 to 1914.

Unfortunately, only George S. Messersmith, consul general in Berlin until 1934, seems to have left papers that are available for research. This collection has been used in many projects on German-American relations in the 1930s.²² So far we have not succeeded in tracking down additional collections, not even for Raymond H. Geist, the long-time Berlin consul, influential "trouble-shooter" and "most widely-known American official in Germany," as the *New York Times* characterized him in 1939.²³ With the exception of a collection of letters published by Alfred Thomson's wife Marion that contains little of value on his time in Dresden, there are no memoirs or other published documents by the consuls that could provide background on their service in Germany.²⁴ There also seems to be no research on the consular offices so far.²⁵ This will add to the difficulties in determining whether variations in their reporting in terms of frequency, topics, and evaluations were the result of different personal attitudes, different work conditions at the consulates, or differences in the flow of information between larger and well-connected cities such as Hamburg or Frankfurt and more provincial posts such as Breslau. The lack of biographical or institutional research and additional sources will also hamper any discussion of the intellectual origins of their interpretations and their "image" of Germany.

Access to the consular reports themselves is also more complicated than one would expect because with minor exceptions for the American consulates in Bremen and Cologne, all other original consular papers from Germany for the 1930s are lost.²⁶ The same is true for the records of the American embassy in Berlin, which were destroyed in a fire during the war.²⁷ Therefore, the fall-back collection has to be the State Department records in the National Archives at College Park, Maryland, which contain all reports sent from Berlin and some of those from the other consulates.²⁸ Since 1910, the State Department filed all documents in an elaborate decimal system that assigned each document a number identifying it by topic, the country involved, and the date. Even though consular reports from Germany can be found in several subseries, by far the most relevant subseries for this project is 862: "Germany, Internal Affairs," which is also available on microfilm.²⁹ Its subdivisions cover the broadest possible range of topics: from overviews of the domestic political situation to matters of justice, public health, the military, race relations, religion, education, transportation, and the press. Almost half of the material is devoted to economic and financial topics.³⁰

As has been mentioned before, so far the consular reports as a whole have not figured prominently in historical research. In the early 1980s, the reports by George Messersmith, Raymond Geist, and Ambassador Dodd on the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936 became the topic of two short articles.³¹ Given the importance of economic aspects in American international relations in the 1930s, it is no surprise that Messersmith's analyses of the German economic situation and the consequences of Hitler's ascent to power also have been featured in several studies. Messersmith had a keen eye for the problems of German-American economic relations and strongly supported American interests in trade issues. His expectations that economic necessities would force Hitler to soften his political positions or would lead to an early downfall of the regime, however, proved to be wrong.³²

Messersmith's reports on the violence in the early months of the Nazi regime and the antisemitic movement in Germany have received considerable attention from his biographers.³³ The actions of the Hitler government caused public and political concern in the United States almost from the beginning, and in March 1933 the State Department requested the first comprehensive report on the situation. It was authored by Messersmith, and several more extensive memoranda would follow.³⁴ A few years ago, Richard Breitman reevaluated the work by Messersmith and Consul Geist on the situation of the Jews, both of whom supplemented their reports with additional letters to government officials in Washington. Breitman concluded that both men clearly saw the extent of the anti-Jewish actions

by the regime, but also distinguished between the Nazis and the German people and may have underestimated popular antisemitism.³⁵

The perception and evaluation of German antisemitism and the danger for Jews—which Messersmith and Geist in Berlin both took seriously—should have had consequences for U.S. visa policies, but this was not the case. State Department and foreign service officials alike upheld the restrictive regulations of the 1920s and early 1930s.³⁶ In Germany only the American consuls in Berlin, Hamburg, Stuttgart, and, after 1938, Vienna had the authority to grant immigration visas. The Israeli historian Bat-Ami Zucker has done extensive research on these “‘gate-keepers’ who held the key to freedom and safety” and paints a generally unfavorable picture of the consuls.³⁷ Zucker strongly criticizes the restrictive handling of the immigration laws in the 1930s, the unwillingness to overcome bureaucratic hurdles in the interest of humanitarian help, and the lack of compassion for the victims of racial and political persecution in the Third Reich. “Though the consuls by no means acted uniformly, the overall results . . . indicated a clear preference for delay or denial of immigration visas, frequently for no substantial reason.”³⁸ For Zucker, this included Messersmith, who championed a restrictive application of the immigration laws throughout his tenure in Berlin, Vienna, and later at the State Department.³⁹

Zucker blames a deeply rooted antisemitism in the foreign service and in American society in general that had gained ground in the 1920s and led to ever-stricter and racially biased immigration policies.⁴⁰ In the economic crisis of the early 1930s, consuls were ordered to rigorously apply the so-called “LPC clause” and to refuse visas to anyone who was “likely to become a public charge.” This policy was relaxed slightly in early 1937 but basically remained in effect until the war. It proved disastrous for many refugees who could not obtain affidavits or whose documents were considered insufficient.⁴¹

III.

After 1933 the situation of the Jews in Germany became a key issue in the reports of the consuls, and Messersmith’s and Geist’s memoranda certainly deserve the attention they have received in the literature so far. However, as has been indicated above, the range of topics addressed by the consuls was much greater. The following examples are intended to offer a first glimpse at the full scope of the project and the types of information and evaluations the reports contain.

Given the traditional responsibility of the consulates in economic and trade issues, it comes as no surprise that they continued to be of crucial importance in the reporting after 1933. The consuls did their best to pool

information on German economic policies, the response from the business world, and the complicated organizational structures that emerged under the Nazi regime.⁴²

At the end of 1935, Raymond Geist undertook a broad review of the German economic situation and tried to assess the political consequences. Geist focused on the export losses and the passive trade balance of the country, the danger of inflation, and the volatile status of the German currency. He hinted at tensions between the “unorthodox” economic ideas on public works programs within the party and the concepts of Hjalmar Schacht, president of the Reichsbank, and Finance Minister Count von Schwerin-Krosigk, both of whom favored private industrial initiatives.⁴³

In terms of politics, Geist distinguished between the bureaucracy, the army, and industrial circles, which he considered all predominantly conservative. The Nazi party was unified by antisemitism and a “constant state of aggression,” in need of “an ever present object of attack.” It was also characterized by strong but undefined socialist tendencies. The labor classes by now had lost confidence in the socialism of the Nazi party and strongly rejected its antisemitism. In fact, according to Geist, antisemitism was “a barrier which prevents union between the members of the old socialistic parties and those of the Nazi movement.” Over the summer and fall of 1935, the “Schacht-Schwerin-Seldte group” had come under pressure, whereas the “Goebbels-Streicher-Rosenberg group” had considerably gained in prestige, a fact that caused concern in the business world. “Among the broad masses there is growing indifference regarding the pathos-propaganda of the Party and a real bitterness on account of mounting cost of living, the large deductions for Party purposes from wages which are already inadequate, and the long hours (ten- to twelve-hour shifts) in the factories. . . .” Even though an economic collapse of the country was not imminent, Geist expected a major crisis in the future, and closed with thoughts on who could take over the political leadership of the country. In his opinion, no single group—neither the army, the churches, industry, nor the labor movement—was capable of such a step. “In this sense Germany today is identical with Adolph [sic] Hitler, as is sometimes openly proclaimed by ecstatic Party members. There is no longer chance of any organic change in the regime. Whoever may be the new participants in any future constellation[,] the basis will remain that created by Hitler. . . .”⁴⁴

Other reports paid even more attention to unrest or resistance against economic measures of the regime. In July 1935, Berlin Consul General Douglas Jenkins forwarded information on a plan by Hjalmar Schacht to establish an export subsidy fund of one billion marks with mandatory contributions from the different industries. Jenkins pointed out that the

reaction among businesses had been "extremely unfavorable" and so far only the iron and sugar beet industries had paid their share.⁴⁵ In early 1936, Consul Klieforth submitted a report from Cologne on a meeting between regional government leaders and business representatives: "the first instance in this district that has come to my attention of a definite and organized registration of dissatisfaction on the part of industry with the authorities, especially with respect to governmental interference in business and the Jewish program."⁴⁶

Another important topic the Americans followed closely was the "Kirchenkampf," the conflict between the regime and the Catholic and Protestant churches. Ambassador Dodd and his consuls sent a steady stream of detailed memoranda to Washington.⁴⁷ Initially it was the attempt by the regime to gain control of the Protestant churches that caught their attention. In August 1933, Consul Geist wrote a comprehensive report on the appointment of a head commissioner for the Prussian Protestant churches and the subsequent "storm of protest from the great masses of the clergy as well as from the majority of those who have always taken active interest in church matters."⁴⁸ He described the activities of the "German Christians," the spearhead of the "National Socialist onslaught on the Protestant Churches," and President Paul von Hindenburg's plea for restraint in religious matters in a letter to Hitler from July 1933. Geist interpreted the new constitution of the unified Protestant church that was ratified in July of that year as a document that, even though basically of Lutheran character, acknowledged the existence of other forms of Protestantism in Germany. It was, however, at odds with the centuries-old tradition of regionalism and the strong identification of German Protestants with their state church. Geist pointed out that the new constitution did not create an official church, guaranteed Protestant independence, and contained no clause excluding non-Aryans. However, he did not expect this to last. Under the new organizational scheme it already was easier for the Nazi regime to deal with Protestants and to utilize the church in their educational campaigns. Geist also foresaw a major conflict between the regime and all Christian denominations over the anticipated racial and eugenic marriage laws. The quasi-religious character of the National Socialist movement would inevitably lead to attempts to supplant or at least diminish the Protestant and Catholic churches. On the one hand Geist had faith in the ministers in this struggle, asserting that "only under coercion will the majority of the clergy teach the fanatical racial doctrines of the National Socialists" and citing examples of open resistance from the pulpit in northern Germany and Berlin. On the other hand he acknowledged that under the current dire economic circumstances the fear of losing his position could easily force a minister "to act directly contrary to his conscience."⁴⁹

The Berlin reports were corroborated by information from the regions. In April 1935 Stuttgart consul Honaker shed light on the situation in Württemberg and Baden.⁵⁰ He described in detail the conservative attitude of the church in Württemberg, a stronghold of the Confessing Church; the role of the popular state bishop Theophil Wurm, who would gain fame openly criticizing the terror of the regime in the 1940s; and the massive internal conflicts among the Protestants in the years 1933 and 1934.

Beginning in the mid-1930s, tensions also escalated between the state and the Catholic church. In the face of rising outrage in Congress, the State Department let it be known that its European experts were keeping a close eye on the situation.⁵¹ In April 1937, J. Webb Benton from the Bremen consulate pointed out how harmful the actions of the regime were: "A large proportion of the younger generation of Catholics in this part of the country, appreciating no doubt many of the benefits that National Socialism has brought to Germany, were at first heart and soul with the movement. Now, largely as a result of the continued attacks on religion, they are disillusioned, sick at heart and absolutely opposed to the present government." Benton emphasized that the constant political pressure had been leading to a rapprochement of the two major denominations in northern Germany. Pope Pius XII's critical encyclical "With Burning Sorrow" on the situation of the church in Germany had advanced this process. Benton recounted incidents of religious defiance: At a local Catholic church after mass the priest had been confronted in the vestry by state officials who forcibly confiscated his copy of the papal encyclical. The priest did not hesitate to make this immediately known to his congregation. A shop owner in Oldenburg found his window display of religious books painted with graffiti reading "No one should believe this rubbish." After failing to get help from the authorities, he simply exchanged the bibles for Hitler's *Mein Kampf*—and got his window cleaned.⁵²

American consuls did not just keep their superiors informed about general political, economic, and social developments in Germany. The Leipzig consulate, for example, also sent extensive reports on the trial of the Bulgarian communist Georgi Dimitroff, accused of being one of the masterminds behind the fire that destroyed the German Reichstag in February 1933, and on the massive pogrom of *Reichskristallnacht* of November 1938. In October 1940, Leipzig Vice Consul Paul M. Dutko reported on mysterious death notices in the local newspapers. Further inquiry through personal contacts revealed "fantastic and gruesome" circumstances. Rumor had it that in the Castle of Grafeneck in Württemberg mental patients were either given lethal injections or were used as test subjects for medical and weapons research. Similar things appeared

to be going on in Hartheim near Linz. Within two weeks no less than twenty-two of the death notices had been in the papers. Dutko reported that "[t]he inhabitants of Leipzig are not only shocked beyond description, but are genuinely perturbed and stricken with a fear of the far-reaching consequences of this horrible affair. A feeling of horror and complete insecurity of life has begun to set in." Because of the attention they aroused, the vice consul expected the public notices soon to be repressed.⁵³ Additional reports on the killings and on the protest of Bishop Wurm reached the embassy later from Stuttgart and Munich.⁵⁴

Whereas the Messersmith reports from 1933 and Dutko's observations in Leipzig are examples of consuls being fully aware of and reporting on the criminal character of the regime, not all reports demonstrate the same level of insight into the implications of Nazi measures, and not all consuls tried to verify information they received from government officials. Hamburg Vice Consul Malcolm C. Burke's report on the "Sterilization of the Unfit in Hamburg" from October 1934, for example, was entirely based on an interview with an anonymous "Public Health Officer" and contained mostly legal, procedural, and statistical information. Its tone is markedly more reserved than the sharp criticism of the sterilization law of 1933 by Ambassador Dodd at the same time. Apparently Burke found little reason to doubt the "conservative spirit" of the measure. He pointed out however that to his knowledge, of the more than nine hundred people who had been sterilized in Hamburg to date, about four-fifths were mentally incapable of understanding the issue.⁵⁵

Vice Consul W. Ware Adams's visit to the labor camps at Papenburg in the Ems-Moorland in 1935 resulted in an even more problematic report.⁵⁶ Even though Adams briefly pointed out that the "worst-run institutions would naturally not be exhibited to foreigners," his observations were uncritical and at times almost apologetic. He was impressed by the "value of the work being accomplished" in land reclamation, and assured his superiors that "[a]ll of those now held in the colony are duly convicted criminals, selected from prisons and penitentiaries in other parts of the country for their fitness for outdoor labor." He filed this report at a time when the famous pacifist Carl von Ossietzky was languishing in the nearby Esterwegen camp.⁵⁷ Adams's description of the barracks and the common rooms as "all furnished with modern equipment, . . . all well aired and lighted, with high ceilings and many windows" and "connected by neat paths of pebbles or cinders" evokes a vacation camp. Lectures, concerts, and sports activities, shared by prisoners and guards alike, took place to boost morale. "The entire camps appeared to be remarkably clean and comfortable for temporary quarters. . . . The prisoners appeared to be well-nourished, healthy, and clean." After three days, Adams left with exactly the "favorable impres-

sion" that officials of the Ministry of Justice, among them the infamous later Nazi judge Roland Freisler, had hoped to create when they approved the tour.

IV.

The examples presented here show the potential and the challenges of this research project on American consular reporting from Germany during the Third Reich. The memoranda reveal what the consuls knew about the strengths and weaknesses of the regime, about the public perception and discussion of Nazi policies, and about concrete events—from the burning of the Reichstag in February 1933 to the outbreak of World War II and the first two years of the war—as well as how they interpreted their findings. They also shed some light on what was only vaguely known or remained hidden even to careful observers. But the reports also need to be contextualized: Background information on trends and events described must be included and an understanding of the general line of interpretation of the individual consuls is necessary. Detailed knowledge of their relationship to German politics and culture would be helpful but is often not possible due to the lack of sources. The interpretation of individual reports will, however, benefit from a comparative approach: Information and interpretations will be compared to other American (and German) reports on the same topic, to reports on other topics from the same consulate or consul, and, at a later stage when the international project of the Hamburger Forschungsstelle has made progress, to reports from other foreign consuls.

Notes:

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¹ Alexander Kirk, Confidential Memorandum on Political Reporting by Consular Officers in Germany, December 27, 1939, in National Archives, College Park, MD, Record Group 59: United States Department of State, Central Decimal File 1930–39 (NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File), 862.00/3938.

² Kirk, Confidential Memorandum.

³ After they were ordered to leave, more than 230 consular officials, employees and their families from all over Europe, including thirty-seven consuls from Germany, had gathered in Frankfurt and then went on via France and Spain to Lisbon to meet with seventy-six officials coming from Italy and Greece. The entire group was picked up by a U.S. Navy vessel. See "Ousted U.S. Consuls Converge on Lisbon," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 21, 1941, 8.

⁴ See, however, Richard Breitman, "American Diplomatic Records regarding German Public Opinion During the Nazi Regime," in David Bankier, ed., *Probing the Depths of German Antisemitism: German Society and the Persecution of the Jews, 1933–1941* (New York, 2000),

501–10; George Eisen, "The Voices of Sanity: American Diplomatic Reports from the 1936 Berlin Olympiad," *Journal of Sport History* 11 (1984): 56–78. For the 1920s, Sander A. Diamond, *Herr Hitler: Amerikas Diplomaten, Washington und der Untergang Weimars* (Düsseldorf, 1985), makes good use of diplomatic and consular reporting from Germany. On the practical organization of the reporting and the processing of the results in Berlin and Washington, see Diamond, *Herr Hitler*, 20–1, 46–7.

⁵ This part is based on the project description "Fremde Blicke auf das 'Dritte Reich': Konsulatsberichte über die deutsche Gesellschaft in der NS-Zeit 1933–1945" by Axel Schildt and Frank Bajohr from April 2006. See also Frank Bajohr, "Zwischen Wunschdenken und Realität: Die Berichte des britischen Generalkonsuls über die Judenverfolgung in Hamburg 1938/39," in Andreas Brämer, Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, Michael Studemund-Halévy, eds., *Aus den Quellen: Beiträge zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte; Festschrift für Ina Lorenz zum 65. Geburtstag* (Hamburg, 2005), 325–33. The FZH, founded in 1960, is one of the leading German institutions for research on twentieth-century history with an emphasis on Hamburg and northern Germany. For additional information, see the FZH website (<http://www.zeitgeschichte-hamburg.de/>), and the interview with its director Axel Schildt in the spring 2006 *Bulletin* of the GHI: Christof Mauch and Richard F. Wetzell, "German Institutes of Contemporary History: Interviews with the Directors," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute, Washington, DC* 38 (spring 2006): 59–79.

⁶ Martin Broszat et al., eds., *Bayern in der NS-Zeit*, 4 vols. (Munich, 1977–1981); Peter Longerich, *Davon haben wir nichts gewusst! Die Deutschen und die Judenverfolgung 1933–1945* (Munich, 2006); Götz Aly, *Hitlers Volksstaat: Raub, Rassenkrieg und nationaler Sozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 2005); Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler: Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford, 2001); Ian Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth': Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford, 2001). See also Richard J. Evans, ed., "Understanding Nazi Germany," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39 (2004): 163–270, with articles by Jeremy Noakes on the Nazi party and German society, David Welch on propaganda and "Volksgemeinschaft," and Ian Kershaw on Hitler and the uniqueness of Nazism; Francis R. Nicosia, Lawrence D. Stokes, eds., *Germans against Nazism: Nonconformity, Opposition and Resistance in the Third Reich; Essays in Honour of Peter Hoffmann* (New York, Oxford, 1990).

⁷ Heinz Boberach, ed., *Meldungen aus dem Reich, 1938–1945: Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS*, 18 vols. (Herrsching, 1984). In addition, see the following publications with a regional or local focus: Hermann-Josef Rupieper, ed., *Die Lageberichte der Geheimen Staatspolizei zur Provinz Sachsen 1933–1936, vol. 1: Regierungsbezirk Magdeburg; vol. 2: Regierungsbezirk Merseburg; vol. 3: Regierungsbezirk Erfurt* (Halle/S., 2003–2006); Wolfgang Ribbe, ed., *Die Lageberichte der Geheimen Staatspolizei über die Provinz Brandenburg und die Reichshauptstadt Berlin 1933 bis 1936, vol. 1: Der Regierungsbezirk Potsdam*, ed. Sibylle Hinze (Cologne, 1998) (Veröffentlichungen aus den Archiven Preußischer Kulturbesitz; 40,1); Gerd Steinwascher, ed., *Gestapo Osnabrück meldet. . . : Polizei- und Regierungsberichte aus dem Regierungsbezirk Osnabrück aus den Jahren 1933 bis 1936* (Osnabrück, 1995) (Osnabrücker Geschichtsquellen und Forschungen; 36); Joachim Kuropka, ed., *Meldungen aus Münster 1924–1944: Geheime und vertrauliche Berichte von Polizei, Gestapo, NSDAP und ihren Gliederungen, staatlicher Verwaltung, Gerichtsbarkeit und Wehrmacht über die politische und gesellschaftliche Situation in Münster* (Münster, 1992); Peter Brommer, ed., *Die Partei hört mit, vol. 2: Lageberichte und andere Meldungen des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS, der Gestapo und sonstiger Parteiinstanzen im Gau Moselland, 1941–1945* (Koblenz, 1992) (Veröffentlichungen der Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz; 58); Christian Tilitzki, ed., *Alltag in Ostpreußen, 1940–1945: Die geheimen Lageberichte der Königsberger Justiz, 1940–1945* (Leer, 1991); Peter Brommer, ed., *Die Partei hört mit, vol. 1: Lageberichte und andere Meldungen des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS aus dem Großraum Koblenz, 1937–1941* (Koblenz, 1988) (Veröffentlichungen der Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz; 48); Thomas Klein, ed., *Die Lageberichte der Geheimen Staatspolizei über die Provinz Hessen-Nassau, 1933–1936*, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1986) (Veröffentlichungen aus den Archiven Preußischer Kulturbesitz; 22); Klaus Mlynek, ed., *Gestapo Hannover meldet. . . : Polizei- und Regierungsberichte für das mittlere und südliche Niedersachsen zwischen 1933 und 1937* (Hildesheim, 1986) (Veröffentlichungen der Historischen

Kommission für Niedersachsen und Bremen; 39,1). On the value of these reports, see David Welch, "Nazi Propaganda and the Volksgemeinschaft: Constructing a People's Community," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39 (2004): 215.

⁸ *Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, 1934–1940*, 7 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1980).

⁹ Several American correspondents published their unfiltered impressions of Nazi Germany after their return to the United States. See William L. Shirer, *Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent, 1934–1941* (New York, 1941); Howard K. Smith, *Last Train from Berlin* (New York, 1942); Louis P. Lochner, *Always the Unexpected: A Book of Reminiscences* (New York, 1956). See Morrell Heald, *Transatlantic Vistas: American Journalists in Europe, 1900–1940* (Kent, OH, 1988); Michaela Hönicke, "Know Your Enemy": *American Interpretations of National Socialism, 1933–1945* (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1998). Further contributing to the selective character of newspaper coverage were the interests and expectations of publishers and the audience. For a detailed discussion, see Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933–1945* (New York, 1986).

¹⁰ See, for example, *British Envoys to Germany, 1816–1866, vol. 1: 1816–1829*, ed. Sabine Freitag, Peter Wende (Cambridge, 2000), *vol. 2: 1830–1847*, ed. Markus Mößlang, Sabine Freitag, Peter Wende (Cambridge, 2002); Detlef Wächter, *Von Stresemann zu Hitler: Deutschland 1928 bis 1933 im Spiegel der Berichte des englischen Botschafters Sir Horace Rumbold* (Frankfurt am Main, 1997); Karl Erich Born, "Französische Beobachtungen und Urteile zur Entwicklung der deutschen Wirtschaft im späten 19. Jahrhundert: Berichte der französischen Konsuln aus dem deutschen Kaiserreich," in Hans-Jürgen Gerhard, ed., *Struktur und Dimension: Festschrift für Karl Heinrich Kaufhold zum 65. Geburtstag, vol. 2: Neunzehntes und Zwanzigstes Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1997) (VSWG-Beiheft; 133), 120–33; Detlev Clemens, *Herr Hitler in Germany: Wahrnehmung und Deutungen des Nationalsozialismus in Großbritannien, 1920–1939* (Göttingen, 1996) (Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Historischen Instituts London; 39); Claudia Breuer, *Die 'Russische Sektion' in Riga: Amerikanische diplomatische Berichterstattung über die Sowjetunion, 1922–1933/40* (Stuttgart, 1995) (Transatlantische Historische Studien; 3); Cornelis A. van Minnen, *Yankees onder de zeespiegel: De Amerikaanse diplomaten in de Lage Landen en hun berichtgeving, 1815–1850* (Amsterdam, 1991) (transl.: *American Diplomats in the Netherlands, 1815–50* (New York, 1993)).

¹¹ For a more detailed discussion, see the excellent overview article by Gottfried Niedhart, "Selektive Wahrnehmung und politisches Handeln: Internationale Beziehungen im Perzeptionsparadigma," in Wilfried Loth, Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Internationale Geschichte: Themen—Ergebnisse—Aussichten* (Munich, 2000) (Studien zur internationalen Geschichte; 10), 141–57. See also Johannes Paulman, "Grenzräume: Kulturgeschichtliche Perspektiven für die Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen," in Christina Lutter, Margit Szöllösi-Janze, Heidemarie Uhl, eds., *Kulturgeschichte: Fragestellungen, Konzepte, Annäherungen* (Innsbruck, 2004) (Querschnitte; 15), 191–209.

¹² For the United States, see Thomas Reuther, *Die ambivalente Normalisierung: Deutschlanddiskurs und Deutschlandbilder in den USA, 1941–1945* (Stuttgart, 2000) (Transatlantische Historische Studien; 11), 55–81; Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, "Between Hope and Skepticism: American Views of Germany, 1918–1933," in David E. Barclay, Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, eds., *Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America since 1776* (New York, 1997), 191–216; Michaela Hönicke, "Das nationalsozialistische Deutschland und die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika (1933–1945)," in Klaus Larres, Torsten Oppeland, eds., *Deutschland und die USA im 20. Jahrhundert: Geschichte der politischen Beziehungen* (Darmstadt, 1997), 62–94; Hermann-Josef Rupieper, "Das amerikanische Deutschlandbild der Zwischenkriegszeit," in Henning Köhler, ed., *Deutschland und der Westen* (Berlin, 1984) (Studien zur europäischen Geschichte; 15), 131–9; Astrid M. Eckert, *Feindbilder im Wandel: Ein Vergleich des Deutschland- und des Japanbildes in den USA 1945 und 1946* (Münster, 1999) (Studien zu Geschichte, Politik und Gesellschaft Nordamerikas; 13).

¹³ Dodd was a professor of American history at the University of Chicago and a strong supporter of presidents Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt. He held a Ph.D. from

the University of Leipzig and admired German culture, even though in 1914 he had been one of the earliest and sharpest critics of the country in American academe. While trying to maintain an open mind during the first year of his ambassadorial appointment at Berlin, he became rapidly hostile to the Nazi regime after the Röhm Putsch in the summer of 1934. His observations were those of a professionally trained historian and devoted democrat, but his idealism and inexperience isolated him in Berlin as well as in the State Department. See Franklin L. Ford, "Three Observers in Berlin: Rumbold, Dodd, and Francois-Poncet," in Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds., *The Diplomats, 1919–1939, vol. 2: The Thirties* (New York, 1977), 447–60; Herbert Sirois, *Zwischen Illusion und Krieg: Deutschland und die USA, 1933–1941* (Paderborn, 2000), 46–9. See also William E. Dodd Jr. and Martha Dodd, eds., *Ambassador Dodd's Diary 1933–1938* (New York, 1941). Dodd's successor Hugh Wilson served for less than a year in Berlin. After him, the embassy remained in the care of Leland B. Morris as chargé d'affaires.

¹⁴ Between 1915 and 1917, consulates in Aix-la-Chapelle, Chemnitz, Erfurt, Kassel, Kiel, Lübeck, Magdeburg, Mannheim, Nuremberg, and Plauen closed. In the 1920s, they were followed by the closings of Koblenz, Königsberg, and Ludwigshafen.

¹⁵ Waldo H. Heinrichs Jr., "Bureaucracy and Professionalism in the Development of American Career Diplomacy," in John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody, eds., *Twentieth-Century American Foreign Policy* (Columbus, OH, 1971), 119.

¹⁶ Heinrichs Jr., "Bureaucracy and Professionalism," 119–57. See also Robert P. Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind: The Training, Outlook, and Style of U.S. Foreign Service Officers, 1908–1939* (Middletown, CT, 1975); Warren Frederick Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779–1939: A Study in Administrative History* (Chicago, Toronto, 1961), 85–172. Between 1880 and 1923 the consular reports on commerce and trade were published and made available to American businesses as a source of information (*Reports from the Consuls of the United States on the Commerce, Manufactures, etc., of their Consular Districts* (1880–1893); *Consular Reports* (1893–1905); *Special Consular Reports* (Washington, D.C., 1905–1923)). See also the following reports, published by the Bureau of Education: *Consular Reports on Industrial Education in Germany* (Washington, D.C., 1913) (United States Bureau of Education Bulletin; 565); Ernest L. Ives, *Consular Reports on Continuation Schools in Prussia* (Washington, D.C., 1913) (United States Bureau of Education Bulletin; 516).

¹⁷ Heinrichs, "Bureaucracy and Professionalism," 157, quoting "The Yankee Consul, New Style, On the Job," *Literary Digest* 68 (1921): 60–2; detailed data in Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy*, 164–72.

¹⁸ Heinrichs, "Bureaucracy and Professionalism," 157–206; Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy*, 172–243.

¹⁹ So far I have not been able to locate a copy of Cummins E. Speakman Jr., *Political Reporting by American Diplomatic and Consular Officers* (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1955), 930 pp., which should shed light on these questions.

²⁰ The following biographical data are based on entries in: *Who's Who in America: A Biographical Dictionary of Notable Living Men and Women of the United States, vol. 16: 1930–1931* (Chicago, 1928); *Who was Who in America*, vols. 1–8 (New Providence, NJ, 1943–1985). Available on microfilm, though difficult to work with, are the handwritten personnel lists of the State Department for its consular posts in Germany: NA, RG 59, List of U.S. Consular Officers, 1789–1939, Microfilm M587 (21 rolls). Some additional information on Klieforth's work on Russia at the consulate in Riga (1927–29) is provided by Breuer, *Die 'Russische Sektion'*, 79, 84–5, 117, 170–1.

²¹ Jessie Ash Arndt, "Orsen Nielsen to Wed New York City Artist," *Washington Post*, August 11, 1936.

²² The Messersmith Papers are housed at the Department of Special Collections of the University of Delaware Libraries in Newark, DE.

²³ Otto D. Tolischus, "Trouble-Shooter in Berlin," *New York Times*, July 23, 1939, an informative portrait of Geist and his strenuous duties. As chief of the State Department's Divi-

sion of Commercial Affairs, Geist made headlines again in 1942, when he publicly declared that “the entire German people should be indicted for the ‘lust for power’ which led to the war.” He attacked the universities and the churches “for failing to foster the proper spirit in the people” (“U.S. Official Indicts Entire German Nation,” *Washington Post*, May 23, 1942.). A deposition by Geist from August 1945 on German militarization and the violence against American citizens in the early days of the regime for the Office of the United States Chief Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality is available online. See *The Avalon Project at Yale Law School: Nazi Conspiracy and Agression, vol. IV*, Document No. 1759-PS (http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/document/nca_vol4/1759-ps.htm).

²⁴ Marion Thomson, ed., *Historical Letters: A Collection of Letters of Historical Interest Written by a Career Officer in the American Foreign Service* (New York, 1946).

²⁵ Eberhard Brüning, *Das Konsulat der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika zu Leipzig: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Konsuls Dr. J. G. Flügel (1839–1855)* (Berlin, 1994) (Sitzungsberichte der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig: Philologisch-Historische Klasse; 134), is focused on the nineteenth century. It does contain, however, consul Ralph C. Busser’s speech at the commemoration of George Washington’s two-hundredth anniversary in 1932 (69–70), and a facsimile of Edward A. Dow’s letter of July 2, 1941 to the mayor of Leipzig on the forced closing of the consulate (84). *175 Jahre amerikanische Konsuln in Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt und Thüringen: 175 years of U.S. consular representation in Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia*, ed. U.S. Consulate General Leipzig (Leipzig, 2001) (online: <http://leipzig.usconsulate.gov/leipzig/img/assets/8617/leipzighistory.pdf>) is a short commemorative brochure with some useful data on the consular buildings and the consuls who served in the region, including Busser and Dow.

²⁶ Remnants in National Archives, College Park, MD, Record Group 84: Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, 1788–1990, subsection 3: Records of Consular Posts, 1790–1963. The consular records from Germany from the nineteenth century, by the way, have survived and are available on microfilm.

²⁷ Breitman, “American Diplomatic Records,” 502.

²⁸ NA, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, subsection 2.5: Central Decimal File, 1910–1963. Two valuable tools, the so-called Source Cards and the Purport Lists, facilitate access to this collection. The Source Cards, also part of Record Group 59, are chronologically organized in a To and From section for each American embassy or consulate. The Purport Lists, which have been microfilmed and consist of several hundred rolls (M 973), registered each document in the same order as in the files resp. on film. For the 862 subseries and the years 1933–39/1940–41, microfilm rolls no. 412–414, 590, 594–595 are relevant.

²⁹ Reports on economic topics and international trade issues were grouped in different series. A spot check of the source cards for the city of Hamburg revealed regular monthly reports on the markets for opium, grain, and hide and skin, as well as reports on newly imposed German duties, import controls, or a new method of marking cattle, none of which were filed in the 862 subseries.

³⁰ The microfilm call number for this subseries at the National Archives is LM 193.

³¹ Stephen R. Wenn, “A Tale of Two Diplomats: George S. Messersmith and Charles H. Sherrill on Proposed American Participation in the 1936 Olympics,” *Journal of Sport History* 16 (1989): 27–43; Eisen, “The Voices of Sanity,” 56–78.

³² Kenneth Moss, “George S. Messersmith and Nazi Germany: The Diplomacy of Limits in Central Europe,” in Kenneth Paul Jones, ed., *U.S. Diplomats in Europe, 1919–1941* (Santa Barbara, CA, Oxford, 1983), 114–6; Hans-Jürgen Schröder, *Deutschland und die Vereinigten Staaten, 1933–1939: Wirtschaft und Politik in der Entwicklung des deutsch-amerikanischen Gegensatzes* (Wiesbaden, 1970) (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz, Abt. Universalgeschichte; 59), 186–8, 277–9; Arnold A. Offner, *American Appeasement: United States Foreign Policy and Germany, 1933–1938* (Cambridge, MA, 1969), 93–103. For a recent overview of German-American economic relations, see Sirois, *Zwischen Illusion und Krieg*, 88–99.

³³ Jesse H. Stiller, *George S. Messersmith: Diplomat of Democracy* (Chapel Hill, London, 1987), 34–40, 50–1; Moss, “George S. Messersmith and Nazi Germany,” 113–26; Kenneth Moss, “George S. Messersmith: An American Diplomat and Nazi Germany,” *Delaware History* 17 (1976–77): 236–49; Shlomo Shafir, “George S. Messersmith: An Anti-Nazi Diplomat’s View of the German-Jewish Crisis,” *Jewish Social Studies* 35 (1973): 32–41. See also Kenneth B. Moss, *Bureaucrat as Diplomat: George S. Messersmith and the State Department’s Approach to War, 1933–1941* (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1978) (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1986). Some of Messersmith’s letters to the State Department from 1933 are included in *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941* (Washington, DC, 1943), 191–5.

³⁴ On the American response to the *Machtergreifung*, see also Sirois, *Zwischen Illusion und Krieg*, 38–41. At that time, American consuls tried but were often not fully able to protect at least those Jews who were American citizens: Bat-Ami Zucker, *In Search of Refuge: Jews and U.S. Consuls in Nazi Germany, 1933–1941* (London, Portland, OR, 2001), 72–8.

³⁵ Breitman, “American Diplomatic Records,” 501–10. See also Richard Breitman, *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (New York, 1998), 20–23; Richard Breitman, Alan M. Kraut, *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry, 1933–1945* (Bloomington, IN, 1987), 39–44.

³⁶ On U.S. visa policy in general, the key players, and their motives, see also the well-balanced analysis by Breitman and Kraut, *American Refugee Policy*, 11–39. See further the older studies by David S. Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis, 1938–1941* (Amherst, MA, 1968); Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938–1945* (New York, 1970), 141; David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941–1945* (New York, 1984), 134–6, 189–91.

³⁷ Zucker, *In Search of Refuge*, 5.

³⁸ Zucker, *In Search of Refuge*, 136. As limited as they were anyway, the immigration quota for Germans (25,557 per year) and Austrians (1,413) were only fully filled in 1939 (Zucker, *In Search of Refuge*, 60).

³⁹ Zucker, *In Search of Refuge*, 66–71, 174–7; Stiller, *George S. Messersmith*, 50–1; more nuanced Breitman and Kraut, *American Refugee Policy*, 43–51, 57–62.

⁴⁰ Zucker, *In Search of Refuge*, ch. 3. Other historians are more ambiguous about the role of American antisemitism. See Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews*, 190–1; Breitman and Kraut, *American Refugee Policy*, 9, 36. See also the new book by Bryan Mark Rigg, *Rabbi Schneerson und Major Bloch: Eine ungläubliche Geschichte aus dem ersten Jahr des Krieges* (Munich, 2006).

⁴¹ Zucker, *In Search of Refuge*, 40–4, 86–97.

⁴² See, for example, Charles Will Wright, The German Mining Industries under the Nazi Government, August 17, 1936, to which the consulates in Frankfurt, Cologne, Breslau, and Stuttgart had contributed memoranda (NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.63/54); Charles W. Thayer, Outline of the German Economic Organization, December 3, 1937, a document of more than thirty pages on a system that according to Thayer had “developed in an atmosphere of constantly conflicting theories” (*ibid.*, 862.50/1008).

⁴³ Raymond H. Geist, The German Economic Situation with Particular Reference to the Political Outlook, Berlin, November 18, 1935, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.50/913.

⁴⁴ Geist, German Economic Situation. On the burden of the “voluntary” contributions to public collections organized by the party, see also in detail Henry P. Leverich, Announcement of a New Scale of Contributions for the Winter Relief Fund in Germany—The Adolf Hitler Donation of Industry and Business, October 4, 1935, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.50/904.

⁴⁵ Douglas Jenkins, Operation of Plan for Subsidizing German Exports, July 8, 1935, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.50/886.

⁴⁶ Alfred W. Klieforth, An Emergency Meeting of Rhineland Business-Men Called to Discuss "Depressed State of Business," January 10, 1936, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.50/920.

⁴⁷ In the first half of 1933, the Berlin Consulate General alone sent three reports (April 15, May 10, July 10—NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.404/12, 14, 22).

⁴⁸ Raymond H. Geist, Establishment of a United German Protestant Church and Promulgation of the Constitution of this New Church, August 31, 1933, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.404/30.

⁴⁹ Geist, Establishment. Geist continued his reporting with a seventeen-page memorandum on the massive conflicts in the Protestant church that arose in the fall of 1933: Raymond H. Geist, With Regard to Recent Developments in the "German Christians" Movement, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.404/42. See also Lowell C. Green, *Church Leaders in the Third Reich: Confessional Lutherans against Nazism* (New York, 2002); Doris L. Bergen, *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996).

⁵⁰ Samuel W. Honaker, Aspects of the Evangelical Church Situation and Its Relationships to Internal Politics, Stuttgart, April 5, 1935, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.404/116.

⁵¹ "U.S. Watchful of Nazis' War Upon Catholics," *Washington Post*, July 20, 1935.

⁵² J. Webb Benton, The Church Question in Bremen and Oldenburg, Bremen, April 14, 1937, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.404/209. On the tensions between the Catholic church and the Nazi regime, see most recently Thomas Brechenmacher, "Teufelspakt, Selbsterhaltung, universale Mission: Leitlinien und Spielräume der Diplomatie des Heiligen Stuhls gegenüber dem nationalsozialistischen Deutschland (1933–1939) im Lichte neu zugänglicher vatikanischer Akten," *Historische Zeitschrift* 280 (2005): 591–645; Thomas Brechenmacher, "Pope Pius XI, Eugenio Pacelli, and the Persecution of the Jews in Nazi Germany, 1933–1939: New Sources from the Vatican Archives," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute London* 27 (2005): 17–44.

⁵³ Paul M. Dutko, Mysterious Deaths of Mental Patients from Leipzig Consular District and the Connection therewith of the Black Guard (SS), October 16, 1940, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.143/12. On the details of the "euthanasia" program and its consequences, see Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of the Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996); Ernst Klee, "Euthanasie" im NS-Staat: Die "Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens" (Frankfurt am Main, 1986).

⁵⁴ Samuel W. Honaker, Alleged Liquidation of Inmates of Insane Asylums, November 16, 1940, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.12/ Report 369; Samuel W. Honaker, Protest by the Head of the Evangelical Church in Württemberg Against the Liquidation of the Inmates of Insane Asylums, February 7, 1941, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.12/33. On March 13, 1941, the embassy summarized the information it had received from various sources and forwarded a letter that the consulate in Munich had received from an anonymous German nurse. Its author claimed that thousands of people had been killed "in experimental stations with poison gas." (Leland Morris, Supplementary Information in Respect of the Killing of Mentally Diseased Persons by the State, March 13, 1941, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.1241/15).

⁵⁵ Malcolm C. Burke, Sterilization of the Unfit in Hamburg, October 13, 1934, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.124/6. On the reality of the program in Hamburg, see Christiane Rothmalter, *Sterilisationen nach dem "Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses" vom 14. Juli 1933: Eine Untersuchung zur Tätigkeit des Erbgesundheitsgerichtes und zur Durchführung des Gesetzes in Hamburg in der Zeit zwischen 1934 und 1944* (Husum, 1991); Elisabeth Fenner, *Zwangsterilisation im Nationalsozialismus: Zur Rolle der Hamburger Sozialverwaltung* (Ammersbek, 1990). See also Stefan Kühl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism* (New York, 2002).

⁵⁶ W. Ware Adams, Ems Moorland Penal Colony and the Land Reclamation Work Being Carried on by it, October 14, 1935, NA, RG 59, Central Decimal File, 862.6112/5. The tour

had been arranged at the end of the International Penal and Penitentiary Congress in Germany and included Adams and an American, Dutch, Portuguese, and Swiss delegate. On the Emsland camps, see Bruno Brückner, *Die Geschichte der Emslandlager und das Dokumentations- und Informationszentrum Emslandlager in Papenburg* (Papenburg, 1993); Hanne Weissmann, *Auf der Suche nach den Moorsoldaten: Emslandlager, 1933–1945, und die historischen Orte heute* (Papenburg, 4th ed., 2003).

⁵⁷ Manfred Weber, *Carl von Ossietzky und die Nationalsozialisten* (Berlin, 1999). A few months earlier, in June 1935, Ambassador Dodd had learned of Ossietzky's fate and the attempts to secure the Nobel Peace Prize for him from Gilbert L. McMaster, a well-connected Quaker representative in Berlin (Dodd Jr., Dodd, eds., *Ambassador Dodd's Diary*, 251).