

*Chapter 2*

## AMERICANIZATION BEFORE 1941



The early years of the refugees' emigration experience were very much shaped by their memories of life prior to the Nazi onslaught, and they carried the memories of persecution and leaving Germany, family, and friends behind. In addition, they were acutely aware of the Nazi state's actions after they had arrived in the United States in the late 1930s and early 1940s. For the vast majority of the refugees, then, these later experiences resulted in a very strong notion that a return to Germany could not be in their future. Building new lives in the United States became their most important concern.

The refugees had to balance individual and communal efforts to construct themselves as "valuable Americans" with their German Jewish identities. Negotiations about what their Americanization should entail, and especially how much attachment to Germany they should keep, both as Jews from Germany and as new Americans, were shaped by the larger political situation in the United States and Europe. For many German Jewish refugees, Americanization involved not only a pragmatic effort to function in American society but also a desire to symbolically detach themselves from Germany. Almost all pragmatic decisions made to Americanize were entangled in symbolic meanings surrounding Germany and were scrutinized by the refugees themselves, particularly the organized Jewish refugee community. In some sense, the refugee community hoped that Americanization could lift the burden of their difficult German Jewish past and serve as a panacea to the problems of being German Jewish refugees.

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Notes from this chapter begin on page 46.

## The Political Climate in the United States

In 1938–1939, at the height of the influx of German Jewish refugees to the United States, there was considerable anti-immigration and anti-Semitic sentiment. When it seemed apparent that Roosevelt’s New Deal programs had failed to bring the nation out of the depression, propaganda by anti-immigration and anti-Semitic groups (there were over one hundred operating in the United States, the most influential ones led by fundamentalist Christian leaders) blamed Jews for the economic problems and agitated against the arrival of Jewish immigrants.<sup>1</sup> For example, the Catholic priest Charles E. Coughlin, who led the “National Union for Social Justice and the Christian Front,” declared that “Communist Jews” were responsible for the economic problems. An influx of Jewish immigrants, many of whom were professionals and skilled workers, would thus worsen the situation in an already distressed job market.<sup>2</sup> Beginning in November 1938, Coughlin’s speeches were regularly broadcast on forty-seven radio stations and reached more than three and a half million listeners. He also published the magazine *Social Justice*, with a circulation of one million copies sold in every major U.S. city—evidence that anti-Semitism increasingly found adherents in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

American Jews responded to this anti-immigrant incitement in a variety of ways, from open protest to reservation and accommodation. The American Jewish Committee, whose members and followers were mostly Jews of German extraction who had been in the country since before the 1880s, had historically taken a position of accommodation within American society. In response to the refugee crisis, the committee focused its efforts on working behind the scenes, trying to convince important individuals in political office to improve immigration policies for Jewish refugees from Europe. Open protest and agitation on behalf of Jews in Europe, they believed, would only worsen U.S. anti-Semitism. The American Jewish Congress, on the other hand, dominated by more recent eastern European immigrants, did not shy away from open protest to reach the same goal. One measure intended to weaken the German state was the Congress’s participation in organizing and coordinating a boycott movement targeting German products and services.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, the American Jewish community’s efforts to influence government policy with a view to Germany’s and Europe’s Jews and refugees were unsuccessful. The division of the community has often been cited as a reason for this failure, but American Jews accounted for only about 3 percent of American voters, so their influence was naturally limited. However, different U.S. organizations assisted Jews from Germany who had made it into the country, such as the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the National Council of Jewish Women.

Non-Jewish organizations also supported the new arrivals and worked against nativist, anti-Semitic, and anti-immigrant groups. Organizations like

the Coordinating Committee for Aid to Refugees, the Committee for Catholic Refugees, and even Chambers of Commerce or Better Business Bureaus in various cities published statistical information about the refugees to rebut the notions of anti-immigrant agitators and to appease public opinion.<sup>5</sup> The American Friends Service Committee, for example, a Quaker organization, printed 250 thousand copies of a pamphlet entitled *Refugee Facts*, which were widely circulated. Protestant clergy received a hundred thousand of these, and the rest went to writers, editors, congressmen, and public officials. In addition, more than a hundred newspapers covered the publication in one way or another.<sup>6</sup>

Besides addressing concerns over the sheer number of immigrants, the writers of the *Refugee Facts* also commented on refugees' ethnic and religious identity. Utilizing the fact that certain Americans viewed Germans historically as more desirable immigrants than Jews, they presented the refugees as Germans, playing down their Jewishness while stressing their German, and even Christian, identity. Explaining that Nazi racial laws defined anybody who "has even as little as 25 percent Jewish blood in his veins" as a Jew, regardless of his or her professed religion, the pamphlet stressed that many had been "Christian for generations."<sup>7</sup> By downplaying the religiosity of the refugees and highlighting their high skill and educational level, the pamphlet's creators aimed to differentiate these Jewish refugees from Jewish immigrants who had arrived in previous immigration waves from the shtetls and towns of eastern Europe—popular targets of anti-foreigner agitation portraying them as poor, unskilled, and deeply (and mysteriously) religious. Whereas the pamphlet had been written to fight negative perceptions of the refugees, its content was not only exaggerated but also at least passively anti-Semitic in its pandering to the anti-Semitism of its audience. Even so, the German Jewish *Aufbau* ignored its implied distaste for Jews, welcoming the pamphlet without any objection to its approach. Under the headline "Spread the Truth!" it published a small article recommending that refugees be informed about it and distribute it.<sup>8</sup>

This is somewhat surprising, considering that the refugees had experienced years of anti-Semitism, deprivation of German citizenship rights, and exclusion from non-Jewish German society. However, the brochure's focus on their Germanness might not have seemed that offensive to the refugees. The majority of Germany's Jews had understood themselves to be Germans first until the Nazis denied them that identity. On the other hand, it might have seemed wise, given the anti-Semitism in the United States, for anybody who wanted to advocate for them, or they for themselves, to emphasize their Germanness over their Jewishness, even though this disregarded their complicated relationship to this part of their identity.

## Americanization in Theory and Practice

Acutely aware that they were not “especially welcome,” as one refugee put it, the refugees also tried to craft an image of themselves in the United States.<sup>9</sup> Instead of focusing on their German identity, however, they focused on Americanization, the process of becoming adjusted and able to function in American life. For the majority of refugees, this was the most important goal, and the term Americanization appeared in virtually all contexts related to them.

The concept of Americanization dates back to about 1880, when some native-born Americans became alarmed by and responded to a great influx of immigrants. Americanization initiatives were generally geared to transforming immigrants into “good Americans” by teaching them English and educating them about the country’s history, politics, economy, laws, customs, and ways of life. Organized Americanization efforts remained particularly strong until the passage of the National Origins Act of 1924, which restricted the immigration of eastern and southern Europeans and essentially stopped that of Asians.<sup>10</sup> Americanization was inseparable from discriminatory nativist views about cultural and racial superiority. For American Jews during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sponsoring Americanization programs for new Jewish immigrants was a response to such views in the hope such programs would take away the “ammunition the critics of the Jews could use against them.”<sup>11</sup> In the 1930s and 1940s, the concept and educational practice of Americanization was transformed to reflect a more culturally broad and pluralistic understanding of America. Instead of asking immigrants to completely abandon their culture and traditions, intellectuals and educators then emphasized the diversity of cultures in the United States and the idea that some immigrants’ traits could contribute positively to the country.<sup>12</sup>

German Jewish refugees promoted and discussed Americanization in their own organizations. Some of these had been founded by previous German Jewish immigrants for social and cultural purposes; however, when refugees from Nazi Germany began arriving, these older organizations shifted their attention to helping the newcomers get by without any public support.<sup>13</sup> This was the case with the New York German Jewish Club, which Jewish veterans who had fought for Germany in World War I founded in 1924 after emigrating to the United States. They intended for the club to be a “confession of faith in German culture.”<sup>14</sup> Yet as more and more German Jewish refugees entered New York in the 1930s and 1940s, many of whom joined the German Jewish Club, it changed its primary mission because members realized that its typical social and cultural activities would not serve the newcomers’ needs effectively.

To help refugees become socially and culturally integrated into American life, the club began publishing a monthly bulletin called *Aufbau* (Reconstruction) in 1934, soon the most important refugee newspaper in the United States and

everywhere else Jews from German-speaking Europe had taken refuge. The newspaper included advice on adjusting to the United States—from learning English and finding employment and accommodation to becoming familiar with American politics and culture. Simultaneously, it served as a forum that helped recreate a social and cultural environment close to what refugees had known in their home country. It became an important outlet for exiled, German-speaking writers and intellectuals publishing on matters of current debate and from their newly emerging works. The club itself also offered a cultural program of theater performances, literature readings, and music recitals that catered to its largely middle-class members. While *Aufbau* became an essential medium of Americanization throughout the United States, German Jewish refugee organizations across the country modeled much of their programs on the New York club.

The Los Angeles German Jewish Club became the country's second largest. Three German Jews who had come to the city in the 1920s founded the organization in 1934 because they wanted to help newly arriving refugees. Refugees themselves soon joined, quickly occupying leadership or coordinating positions. The club's primary goal, stated in its Articles of Incorporation, was to promote "a complete program of Americanization."<sup>15</sup> This included club assistance "in learning about the United States, its principles of government, its laws, its institutions, and its customs," as well as "in vocational guidance . . . [and] cultural and social activities" to assist members "in becoming valuable American citizens."<sup>16</sup>

The club publicized this goal within the refugee community and also to the broader public to forestall negative reactions toward their group in their publications, such as in the five-year anniversary edition of *Neue Welt* (New World), the club's press organ. The club sent the special edition to its more than 850 members, and also to at least 400 nonmembers and organizations, including nonimmigrants, and non-Jews.<sup>17</sup> The idea conveyed in the newsletter's first few pages was that the refugees were sincerely grateful for having been allowed into the country and wished to become good American citizens. While most of the publication was in German, the first pages were in English and contained articles with which refugees presented themselves as one group among many in a country built by immigrants. By calling themselves immigrants without drawing attention to their specific background and refugee experience, and likening their story to that of many others who had found a haven in United States from "persecution, humiliation and demoralization" before them, they sought to remind native-born Americans of their own roots.<sup>18</sup> Restrictive U.S. immigration policies and negative sentiments about refugees went unmentioned. Rather, a notion of gratitude prevailed, with the refugees portraying Americanization as their duty, so that they would "leave no stone unturned in accomplishing this goal."<sup>19</sup> One article proclaimed, "If we succeed then we have only paid a small debt of gratitude toward the country which has always given refuge and protection to the

persecuted and oppressed.”<sup>20</sup> This sort of public image-making was most characteristic of the refugees’ public representation at this time.

Nevertheless, Americanization was, above all, a practical necessity, as life in the United States depended on one’s ability to function in the American environment. Unlike some famous intellectual or political exiles, most refugees could not foresee returning to Germany, even if some may have wished to. Their experiences of gradual and violent exclusion from all areas of life in Germany, which they had truly considered their home, made it difficult for them to imagine that they ever would or could return. Thus, the majority, having overcome the various immigration hurdles, saw life in the United States as their most feasible future option. This made Americanization primarily a strongly desired pragmatic goal.

Learning English was their most immediate need. While some cities had enough German infrastructure for refugees to get by using German, some segments of the German-American community embraced Hitler’s ideology. One refugee remarked that when he arrived in Los Angeles in 1940, “every German, former German, who was [t]here, was more or less a Nazi” and that the relationship between the “old German Americans” and the refugees was troublesome.<sup>21</sup> Other refugees recalled positive encounters with German Americans since they “felt much more familiar with them than . . . with strange Americans!”<sup>22</sup> In any case, existing German-language infrastructures were not very extensive in the United States because German immigrants tended to adapt and blend in quickly, and refugees often wished to avoid Germans anyway.

Some refugees had learned basic English in high school or had taken intensive courses in preparation for emigration. Nevertheless, most of them did not know English well enough to work in more than menial jobs.<sup>23</sup> The refugee clubs frequently helped refugees learn English, sometimes via affiliated teachers and commonly via their publications, which included vocabulary for everyday situations, such as shopping, and quizzes allowing readers to test their skills.<sup>24</sup> Younger refugees, in particular, were generally successful at improving quickly, and some even strove to eliminate their foreign accents.<sup>25</sup> Language courses were also offered through municipal adult education programs, some of which were specifically geared to their needs. One administrator in New York City described these refugees as possessing “rather high educational and cultural attainments,” so lessons treated topics like “art, music, literature, government, and sociological problems,” and still other courses catered to the needs of professional groups “of physicians . . . lawyers, musicians, journalists, engineers, and dentists.”<sup>26</sup>

Securing employment was, of course, a clear priority for the refugees, preferably in the profession they had practiced in Germany. Because Nazi legislation had barred many Jews from working in their original professions and emigration was often a lengthy process, some refugees had not had a regular work life for many months. Importantly, most refugees did not have considerable financial resources. They were largely a middle-class group of professionals, businesspeople,

and skilled artisans. Data from the Immigration and Naturalization Service reveals that the majority of immigrants (including non-German and non-Jewish) who arrived between 1933 and 1944 were merchants, physicians, professors and teachers, technical engineers, clergy, lawyers, scientists, musicians, and other professionals.<sup>27</sup> However, immigrants' relatively high qualifications and specializations made it harder for them to obtain employment in their *métier*, and many never did.

Expertise in English and specialized English terminology was just one variable in their attempt to reconstruct their professional lives. Many U.S. states had legal and licensing restrictions and also required U.S. citizenship or at least a declaration of intention to become a citizen for several professions. California required U.S. citizenship for attorneys, for example. To work as an accountant (C.P.A.), registered nurse, or teacher in California, one had to present a declaration of intention or application for citizenship.<sup>28</sup> Thus, once they had acquired the necessary English proficiency, many immigrants still initially had to work in menial jobs, becoming gardeners, dishwashers, or factory workers, to begin anew in the United States.<sup>29</sup>

One great concern Americans had about the refugees was that they would take away jobs in a depressed job market. Thus, the refugee community and national American immigrant aid organizations undertook concerted efforts to help the newcomers secure employment. Chief employment agencies for refugees were associated with the National Refugee Service and such organizations as the American Friends Service Committee and the American Committee for Christian Refugees.<sup>30</sup> In addition, other organizations assisted specific professional groups.<sup>31</sup> Intellectuals and scholars could seek help from the American Committee for Émigré Scholars, for example, while physicians could turn to the National Committee for Resettlement of Foreign Physicians. Lawyers were in the most difficult position when seeking to continue working in the legal profession, but they received assistance from the American Committee for the Guidance of Professional Personnel. In certain cases, the local immigrant and refugee organizations set up employment services themselves and worked closely with local agencies, such as the Jewish Employment Bureau or the National Council for Jewish Women.<sup>32</sup> Also, refugees' needs created jobs for others. In Los Angeles, for example, club members ran several driving schools since the city's large size made it necessary for most people to own a car.<sup>33</sup> In many other destinations with greater numbers of refugees, people became landlords, renting out rooms in their apartments to the new arrivals, sometimes even including "German" or kosher meal service.

Women typically found employment before their husbands, usually in domestic service as maids, janitors, chefs, tailors, or nurses. Ann Ikenberg, for example, immediately got a job through the Beverly Hills Opportunity Placement Office upon arriving in Los Angeles in 1939. She had been a medical student in Berlin

and started working in Los Angeles as a private home nurse for the mother of a Superior Court judge. She had taken that particular job hoping the judge could help secure work for her husband Fred, who had been a judge in Berlin. Nothing came of it though, and it took another nine months before Fred found a steady job.<sup>34</sup> Unlike Ann Ikenberg, many of the women in this immigrant group had never worked before and became wage earners for the first time in America. While this shift may have been hard for some of them, most seemed to have adapted quickly.<sup>35</sup>

The refugee press contained many stories about refugees' hardship in their first years in the United States and difficulties making a living, but also some about refugees' success. While most refugees could not return to their former professions, often because they were too old and could not afford to study for required exams, many succeeded in transitioning to other types of employment. Many former lawyers and judges, for example, became successful accountants. Lothar Rosenthal from the Los Angeles Club said that most people climbed the career ladder quickly, even if they started in menial jobs. For example, he remembered a man who started working at a large manufacturing firm as a janitor but eventually became its vice president.<sup>36</sup> Such success stories were not only important for the refugees personally, especially in motivating those who were struggling, but also to demonstrate to the American public that their group was "not a liability, but actually an asset to the American labor market"<sup>37</sup>

Refugees who apparently lacked motivation to Americanize drew criticism from others in the community, who felt that such behavior compromised the group's image and fed anti-immigrant sentiment. Whereas learning English and learning about the United States were obvious pragmatic tasks, there was much discussion among the refugees about the degree to which Americanization was to be realized, especially in relation to language and culture more generally. These debates were intrinsically connected to questions of how much "Germanness" it was acceptable for them to retain—both as Jews from Germany and as prospective, or new, Americans. Thus, the refugees debated whether and when it was adequate to still use the German language, enjoy German culture, and communicate with people—Jews and non-Jews—still in Germany. These questions were important for refugees for individual moral and emotional reasons and vis-à-vis a Jewish community and American society.

## German Language

A refugee's relationship to the German language and German literature, theater, and art differed individually, depending on factors such as age, social class—prior to and after one's arrival in the United States—and experiences in Germany. Some refugees decided they no longer wanted to use German, making quick



mastery of English essential. For example, Max Bodenheimer recalled, “My mother, in particular, wanted to put the past behind her . . . . There was a rule in our house: we were not permitted to talk any German.”<sup>38</sup> Other refugees also abstained from reading publications in German. A woman who settled in Cincinnati recounted this in an interview: “My husband and I spoke English to each other. We had such [negative] feelings against Germany, against German culture, against German literature. I never even wanted to read German books, German newspapers. Many German Jews, of course, kept on reading the *Aufbau* and so on. I never wanted any part of it.”<sup>39</sup> Those who made that cut were much less likely to join one of the refugee organizations, which, while promoting the use of English, still ran cultural programs predominantly based on German.

Whether to speak German in the home was a personal, private decision, but it was frowned upon to speak the language in public, as several articles and letters to *Aufbau* document. One concerned refugee wrote in his (German) letter, for instance, that it was “completely absurd and not justifiable” for refugees who knew English to use German in public. He found it “truly shameful how much people sin in this regard.” He believed it was a matter of “tactfulness” to use the “language of the country,” at least in public. Most important, he warned that speaking German was a “sign of lacking the will to integrate” and that it would “put in jeopardy the friendly attitude that is being shown to us.”<sup>40</sup> Such concern over the use of German in public grew more serious when the crisis in Europe developed into war in September 1939.

Then, the U.S. government, which had watched European developments initially with distant concern, realized the danger Hitler’s regime could pose to the free world. Fears of fifth columnists, spies, and saboteurs for the Nazis (and for the Communists, for that matter) abounded.<sup>41</sup> The State Department, the White House, and many Americans believed that such persons could have entered the country in the recent wave of immigrants.<sup>42</sup> Thus, using German in public could have potentially led to refugees being mistakenly identified as Nazis or Nazi sympathizers.<sup>43</sup> Consequently, the refugee press advised newcomers to refrain from speaking German in public. The 17 May 1940 issue of *Aufbau* includes this urgent call:

Do not speak German on the street, and if you cannot speak enough English, speak quietly at least! Avoid loud acclamations, building of crowds when leaving eateries, standing about in front of entries! Behave as unobtrusively as it is customary in this country! It is sad that this still has to be said but there are still people who do not want to listen. Do help to bring such people to reason, in the interest of all new immigrants!<sup>44</sup>

Avoiding the use of German in public was here construed as demonstrating loyalty, but the language issue was, in fact, more complex. *Aufbau*’s appeal received both applause and criticism from the readership. A regular *Aufbau* contributor

highlighted that many refugees had lost everything: their health, families, profession, homes, and worldly possessions.<sup>45</sup> In his view, these people—often elderly but also younger ones who had experienced much tragedy in their lives—had no hope for a better future, and some even thought of suicide. After all they had gone through, the author wrote, they lacked the strength, energy, and capacity to learn and engage in new things. He continued:

In many cases, these people have their only real existing relationships with the past. They lost everything but their five senses! Do we have, does anybody have, the right to rob them of three of these senses, to leave them blind, deaf, and mute, by prohibiting them from using the only language they know, from using the only means they have that connects them to the outer world?<sup>46</sup>

How much refugees used German in everyday life also depended heavily on emotional factors, something community spokespeople understood and frequently addressed. In this context, the journalist and editor of *Aufbau*, Manfred Georg, himself a Jewish refugee, warned against the “tendency to ban the German language completely from one’s consciousness and to treat it, as it were, for all intents and purposes as an enemy language [*Feindessprache*].”<sup>47</sup> He understood the motivation behind the warnings—the hatred toward Germans who had so terribly mistreated Jews and the resulting feeling of revenge refugees might have felt—but he believed one should not equate the Nazis with German: “Hitler’s language is not the German language, as little as the German people are synonymous with the clique of murderers that is dwelling in Wilhelmstrasse right now.”<sup>48</sup>

Georg was not alone in distinguishing between the German people and Nazis. Many non-Jewish German émigrés shared this opinion of the Nazis, with Thomas Mann perhaps being the most famous and outspoken of them.<sup>49</sup> Jewish refugees—frequently people who had been politically active in Germany and had fought together with non-Jewish Germans against the Nazis—also drew this distinction. Appealing to this spirit of the fight against the Nazis, Georg wrote that abandoning the German language would mean giving up “the most effective tool in this fight. It would also mean committing treason against all of our German friends who, in their fight against Hitler, have already paid with their lives and their health, and against the hundreds of thousands of determined fighters who will yet bleed on the altar of the true Germany.”<sup>50</sup>

The depiction of the German language—and culture—as a bond between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans engaged in a common fight against the Nazis was not unusual. It was, for example, frequently evoked by the German American Cultural Association (Deutsch Amerikanischer Kultur Verband, DAKV), one of the few German American organizations outspokenly opposed to Nazism and anti-Semitism.<sup>51</sup>

Some German Jews seem to have even viewed knowledge of German language and culture as something that distinguished them from German Americans who adhered to Nazi ideology. Two small examples from the New York community in the mid-1930s demonstrate this: *Aufbau* journalists were closely monitoring the reporting of the *New York Staatszeitung* and the activities of German-American organizations in New York City, both of which increasingly developed Nazi tendencies. A review of a German play published in the *Staatszeitung* received much criticism from an *Aufbau* reporter who believed the bad review resulted from the *Staatszeitung* journalist's—likely an admirer of the New Germany—misunderstanding the play because he lacked knowledge of German culture.<sup>52</sup> Another article denouncing the Nazi efforts of New York City's German Americans mocked them for their poor German language skills in a telegram they had sent to Hitler.<sup>53</sup> At least in 1936, then, some refugees were clearly proud of their German cultural knowledge and determined not to leave the representation of German culture to Nazis. The differentiation between pre-Nazi German culture and the Third Reich made it possible for German Jews to keep practicing German culture.

The arguments for why it was necessary and useful to continue to use German certainly made sense to some refugees. But how could using German be compatible with Americanization, which the refugee organizations emphatically propagated? Georg understood the role that using German played in discussions about Americanization, but he did not believe Americanization should mean giving up German entirely. In fact, he criticized this particular understanding of Americanization by referring to the experience of German Jews highly integrated in German society who were then violently cast out within just a few years. Those refugees who thought it necessary to completely negate and abandon everything German to become American citizens, he argued, should know from experience that “arrogant ingratiating at all cost” or “hyper-assimilation” could have detrimental consequences. Who could guarantee that this would not repeat itself in the United States?<sup>54</sup>

This broader issue about Jews living in a majority non-Jewish society and debates about assimilation and Jewish nationalism preoccupied many at the time. Other articles and readers' opinion pieces in the refugee press echoed Georg's preference for gradual and selective Americanization.

## Culture

The preference for selective and gradual Americanization was particularly widespread among refugees concerned about whether it was still acceptable to feel attached to and practice German culture. This accorded with the general opinion of contemporary American immigration theorists and practitioners, who

viewed immigrants' native culture as valuable. Instead of promoting "mechanical uniformity,"<sup>55</sup> institutional Americanization programs were modified in the 1920s and directed toward educating immigrants about American life and institutions by using the immigrants' knowledge and experiences from their home countries. Immigrants were encouraged to retain their own traditions and customs—for example, celebrating their own native holidays as well as American ones.<sup>56</sup> Instead of abandoning native music, literature, philosophy, and art, one sociologist argued for "the conservation of these creative instincts as a means of accelerating progress and increasing the variability and creative powers of the nation."<sup>57</sup> In this sense, Leopold Jessner, a famous theater producer and director from Berlin who was president of the German Jewish Club in Los Angeles in 1940, communicated to his refugee readership that "America does not expect uncurbed assimilation of her citizens" but rather finds the new and "different souls" to be an "enrichment."<sup>58</sup>

Refugee organizations, which regarded understanding American culture as a vital precondition for celebrating German culture and also as a necessity for refugees to make a cultural contribution to the new country, assisted newcomers in becoming familiar with American life and culture. They published articles on American history, particularly on local city histories, offered trips and walking tours to familiarize refugees with their new environment and "the American Way," and hosted lectures on the country's political system, and even how to dress and cook "like an American."<sup>59</sup>

The Los Angeles Club publication praised the quality and importance of such lectures but also regretted that audience size was very small.<sup>60</sup> While poor attendance could have resulted from lack of interest, it seems more likely that many club members were unable to participate because they were busy making a living.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, in Los Angeles, events with more of an entertainment character, often featuring concerts, plays, or literary readings—programs more akin to what members were used to in Germany—seemed better attended. Club member John Baer recalled that the Los Angeles Club aimed to complement members' integration into American life with this kind of cultural program that "lifted their spirits."<sup>62</sup> Similarly, the gist of several different *Aufbau* articles was that practicing and enjoying German culture was valuable and benefited refugees in America because it made them feel less alienated than they might have in their new environment, providing them with a certain security and thus supporting their wellbeing.<sup>63</sup>

While most refugees believed that practicing German culture was acceptable from the perspective of becoming a good American, another discussion addressed the question of whether it was still acceptable—and why it was still enjoyable—from the perspective of being a good Jew. A letter to the editor that appeared in *Aufbau* in early 1940 declared German culture to be "as dead as that of the old Greeks and Romans." The author believed that making this clear to the world should be the task of every cultured human being [*Kulturmensch*] and

“certainly every Jew who escaped German barbarism . . . tirelessly and until the last breath.”<sup>64</sup>

While many Jewish refugees understandably aimed to abandon German language and culture after escaping Germany, it was very difficult, in reality, for them to give up what they had known all their lives. Moreover, many refugees, as noted above, felt that the culture of American society was lacking compared to Germany, particularly concerning fine arts and music.<sup>65</sup> Besides matters of familiarity and taste, a notion of a certain universal superiority of German culture also accounted for the topic’s importance. Conceding this, *Aufbau* reporter and president of the New York German Jewish Club Wilfred Hülse believed it was not necessary for Jews to give up their attachment to German culture because German culture could not simply be identified with what the Nazis were doing. Rather, he explained, “the German language and German culture have produced timeless and supranational [*übernational*] values, which no people on earth can live without, and which are not the possession of a single people’s community [*Volksgemeinschaft*], but of the human community of cultures [*Kulturgemeinschaft*].” For this reason, he said, “we as Jews have full rights to participate in German culture [*Kulturgut*].”<sup>66</sup>

It is interesting that Hülse believed there was a distinct German culture that Jews participated in; it seemed to have existed separate from a specific German Jewish culture. In these discussions, the refugee press rarely differentiated between German and German Jewish culture. When refugees spoke about German culture in the 1930s and 1940s, they generally meant all the cultural elements they grew up with and experienced in Germany, which included more specifically Jewish elements for some people than for others.

Hülse’s pieces expressed his personal opinion, as he repeatedly emphasized, but as a regular *Aufbau* columnist and president of the New York New World Club, he was a leading figure with many connections in the refugee community and extensive firsthand knowledge of it. His views on German culture represent an apparent consensus reached in the early 1940s within large circles of the organized refugee community. While discussions about the role of German culture in Americanization were frequent among refugees in the 1930s, they trailed off in the 1940s. Even as refugees made ever greater efforts to disassociate themselves from Germany after the war began—such as the organizations’ name changes (discussed below) and more English-language articles in the refugee press—refugee organizations continued to devote a lot of energy to activities for the practice of German culture. While some refugees certainly did not approve of this and let go of their attachments to German culture, such refugees were not likely to join these organizations.<sup>67</sup>

Within these organizations, German cultural events frequently took on a dimension that was indeed antithetical to Nazi culture. Los Angeles was unique in this regard because of the great number of famous German-speaking artists

and intellectuals who found refuge there—more than thirty well-known writers alone—and also a welcoming audience of other refugees.<sup>68</sup> Weimar culture continued to flourish and develop there; Thomas Mann, Bruno Frank, and Lion Feuchtwanger were among the writers frequently appearing at the local German Jewish Club to read from their works.<sup>69</sup> Annelise Bunzel lists the Schoenfeld Trio, Andre Previn, Jakob Gimpel, Victor and Frederick Hollander, and Ernst Toch among the famous musicians who played for the Jewish Club.<sup>70</sup> One famous cabaret artist from Berlin was Eric Lowinsky, known as Elow. After the Nazis closed his *Kabarett der Namenlosen* (Cabaret of the Nameless) and barred him from performing and writing, he left Germany in 1939 and came to Los Angeles.<sup>71</sup> There, he became a member of the Jewish Club and was involved in organizing cultural events, especially cabaret-type programs. Other members, such as Reinhard A. Braun, who founded the *Berlin Kabarett am Abend* (Cabaret at Night), also successfully staged theater productions in Los Angeles. As head of the Cultural Committee of the German Jewish Club in 1939, he supported the establishment of the Theatre of the Refugees, also called *Tribüne* (or the *Tribune*).<sup>72</sup> The clubs' press outlets also significantly contributed to the immigrants' cultural and intellectual life. Besides reviews of concerts and lectures, the *Neue Welt/New World* and later the *Westküste*, the West Coast edition of *Aufbau*, featured book reviews, poems, and contemplations by intellectuals and writers such as Berthold Viertel and Ludwig Marcuse.<sup>73</sup> The richness and quality of cultural events in Los Angeles was rivaled only by what was happening in the German Jewish Club in New York City. However, reviews of such events and also publications by many of the famous exiled authors in *Aufbau* reached interested readers all over the United States, connecting the community.

Refugees could enjoy the cultural productions of anti-Nazi, German-speaking exiles as a form of German culture they had consumed before emigration that did not oppose their own identity as Jewish refugees. In fact, Siegfried Bernstein, one of the first presidents of the Los Angeles organization, observed in this regard that “holding on to German-Jewishness does not separate us from what connects us with other Jews in America.”<sup>74</sup> While offering German cultural events, most of the refugee clubs also aimed to include Jewish culture in their cultural program and to raise interest in specifically Jewish issues among their members.<sup>75</sup> They organized events to educate newcomers on the history of American Jewry, for instance. Rabbis, whether refugees themselves, like Joachim Prinz in New Jersey, or earlier immigrants, like Jacob Sonderling in Los Angeles, frequently wrote on religious topics for refugee publications.<sup>76</sup> Many newcomers joined the Reform or Conservative synagogues formed by earlier German immigrants, especially in places with fewer refugees. In New York City, Chicago, Cincinnati, and San Francisco, there were enough refugees so they could start their own congregations, eventually also holding services in English while continuing some of the social activities in German.<sup>77</sup>

Overall, most of the events German Jewish refugee clubs offered then were more specifically German than Jewish. The importance of the New York and Los Angeles Clubs as major centers of German émigré culture has been noted by numerous scholars, a focus which makes these organizations look like rather isolated islands of German culture in an American setting.<sup>78</sup> This notion is deceiving, however, as the clubs were active participants in the landscape of American organizational life.

### **Refugee Organizations within the American Jewish Organizational Landscape**

Historian Steven Lowenstein argued that the organizations German Jewish refugees founded after arriving in the United States were “profoundly conservative” and that those who joined them preferred familiar things rather than venturing out into the American world of social organizations.<sup>79</sup> This was the image some refugees had of these organizations as well. Edward Newman, who left the New York German Jewish Club after a few years, explains:

I had so many friends that I didn't feel the need to seek companionship in the Club. And then very quickly those of us who became assimilated more easily for one reason or another, and now I speak for myself, didn't want to be identified as foreigners or immigrants or Germans, because some people still looked at us as Germans rather than German Jews; and being a member of a German-Jewish club would very much identify us. I, for one, wanted to get away from this. I wanted to be an American.<sup>80</sup>

Considering the significance these organizations put on the Americanization of their members, Newman's attitude may be somewhat surprising. However, Americanization meant different things to different people and was made to fit different needs and interests. Club members who only went to the German cultural events found themselves in an atmosphere that was like being back in Germany. While this made some feel very good, others felt less comfortable.<sup>81</sup> People who participated in the administration of the refugee organizations, however, cooperated with American community, social, and cultural organizations, and frequently even became representatives in them, thus becoming familiar with new realms of American life. By organizing their own specific interest groups, refugees were able to participate in institutional American life, just like other American groups. Consequently, refugee organizations were not insular with a singular focus on the old country; rather, they were important in giving the newcomers' community a strong and active voice in American society they would not otherwise have had.<sup>82</sup>

Selected editions of *Neue Welt/New World* reveal the extent to which the Jewish Club in Los Angeles was connected to different local community organizations in

the late 1930s and early 1940s. The club's employment office, the *Beratungsstelle*, closely cooperated with the Jewish Employment Bureau, subsequently even moving its office to the bureau's Los Angeles location.<sup>83</sup> The club cooperated with numerous other Jewish and non-Jewish social service organizations such as the Federated Employment Bureau of Los Angeles, the Jewish Community Council, the Los Angeles chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women, the Jewish Family Service, the Jewish Vocational Service,<sup>84</sup> and the Coordinating Committee for Aid to Jewish Refugees.<sup>85</sup> The cooperation between the Jewish Club and these Los Angeles community organizations seems to have been successful and very friendly. In letters on the occasion of the club's five-year anniversary, various representatives of local organizations stressed not only the fine work the club had been doing but also the "splendid character attributes of its members."<sup>86</sup> The General Secretary of the Los Angeles Coordinating Committee for Aid to Jewish Refugees particularly emphasized his appreciation for the club's efforts to integrate its program with those of the other existing organizations.<sup>87</sup> The Director of the Federated Employment Bureau even noted that "constructive suggestions" on how his agency could help more efficiently would be welcome.<sup>88</sup>

The refugees presented themselves as very grateful for the assistance American organizations provided them.<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, some refugees warned that they should not let the American organizations dominate them but should always strive to become more independent and capable of providing the necessary assistance themselves.<sup>90</sup> For this purpose, they founded bigger supralocal organizations like the American Federation of Jews from Central Germany—an umbrella organization and coordinating council for most of the German refugee organizations—and the mutual aid and welfare organizations *Selfhelp* of *Émigrés* from Central Europe and *Blue Card*.<sup>91</sup> All of these organizations were modeled on ones that had existed in Germany, and some refugees joined them to continue familiar activities in the new country.<sup>92</sup>

Besides taking care of their own needs, some refugees also focused on understanding American organizational life.<sup>93</sup> One important aspect of American Jewish community life was the fundraising activities of organizations such as the United Jewish Welfare Fund and the United Jewish Appeal. The organized refugee community viewed refugees' contributions as major responsibilities to demonstrate that they were becoming valuable members of American Jewry. In May 1940, the Jewish Club in Los Angeles urged its members to "give not only what we can spare but to dig deeper into our pockets," to exceed the amount collected the previous year because "we owe this to our reputation to make this drive a success."<sup>94</sup> These fundraising drives largely sought to help European Jewry and Jews in Palestine. Consequently, *Aufbau* and the leadership of the New York and Los Angeles Clubs presented their appeals frequently as a task that should be particularly dear and important to the refugees. Nevertheless, German Jewish refugees did not give as much as the leaders expected them to, which



some established American organizations also noted with disdain.<sup>95</sup> This failure, however, did not single the refugees out but made them one Jewish group among many in the United States, considering the different ideological and political factions within American Jewry.

As a result, some German refugees, beyond their efforts to blend in with the American Jewish community, did not shy away from voicing concerns they felt particularly strongly about—issues related to Nazism and anti-Semitism in Germany and in the United States. The refugees believed their special background and knowledge enabled them to better understand these problems so they could help Americans address them more efficiently. In the mid-1930s, several *Aufbau* articles criticized the way American Jewish organizations were dealing with the threat of anti-Semitism and Nazism. Despite differences among the spectrum of American Jewish organizations, they all had traditionally reacted to anti-Jewish sentiments and actions with a strategy of nonconfrontation. They believed that calling attention to their special problems might aggravate issues and threaten their situation in American society, which they perceived as fragile.<sup>96</sup> To some German Jewish refugees, this method did not seem wise.

One *Aufbau* contributor called on his fellow German Jews to take action because he found the American Jewish “neglect” of these issues irresponsible and unjustifiable, considering the efficient agitation work of anti-Semites in New York.<sup>97</sup> Another *Aufbau* appeal to German Jews concerned the work of American Jewish organizations in regard to Nazi Germany. The author, Dr. Hans Martin Meyer, called on *Aufbau* readers to influence the American Jewish Committee, which, he believed, even though “it ha[d] been occupied with the fight against National Socialism for years, completely misjudge[d] the psychology of the Nazi government and the German people.”<sup>98</sup> He maintained that German Jews had firsthand knowledge and experience, which, if they were heard, could “prevent useless waste of energies” in the future and lead to more efficient and practical activities. Such criticism of American Jewish organizations was not always well received. One person warned that it would surely not help the refugees advance in the United States. Rather, he wrote, the refugees should take action first before offering criticism that would only engender intra-Jewish trouble. Such discussions continued in *Aufbau*, and Dr. Meyer consequently called for the establishment of a working group to fight Nazism.<sup>99</sup>

Many refugees saw the scrutiny and monitoring of German American organizations as their main task in this regard. Again, they believed that their German background and their experiences as Jews in Nazi Germany gave them knowledge that was beneficial for analyzing the situation in America. As mentioned before, refugees closely monitored the German-language press, such as the *New York* and *California Staatszeitung*, and *Aufbau* dedicated a lot of space to discussing how these publications reported news related to Germany, National Socialism, and the situation of the Jews in Europe and America. The refugee press also frequently

included articles about the political orientation of the German American community at large<sup>100</sup> and the circulation of Nazi propaganda in these circles.<sup>101</sup> At times, refugees were indeed successful in these monitoring activities, taking pride when they identified Nazi activities in America. This was especially important during this period, when their loyalty to the United States was in question and some in the American public and government believed there might be a fifth column among the refugees. Early in 1940, an *Aufbau* journalist exposed the newspaper *Today's Challenge*, published by a certain Friedrich E. Auhagen, as spreading Nazi propaganda in disguise. The *Aufbau* article initially only made Auhagen and other people affiliated with the newspaper indignant. Half a year later, however, a *New York World Telegram* journalist confirmed the American Nazi connections of the paper and its publisher. *Aufbau* commented on this confirmation of its investigative work as follows: "This is a small example of the fact that the immigrants who fled Hitler for the most part have sharper ears for the whisperings of the real fifth columnists than the residents of the countries, which, because of their lack of knowledge of the tactics, have long been misled."<sup>102</sup>

The refugees' demonstration of loyalty to the United States and of the benefit of their German background to the new country became ever more important as the situation in Europe worsened. Under these circumstances, the U.S. government emphasized the common German background of the refugees and German Americans. In many ways, German Jews were perceived as having more connections with Germans than other American Jews. While this was somewhat true about refugees' self-perception, too, once the war in Europe began, accompanied by changes in U.S. policy, discussions among German Jewish refugees increasingly focused on their Jewish identity. This is evident, for example, in *Aufbau's* declaration that it was a specifically Jewish and American newspaper, dedicated to Jewish traditions and themes,<sup>103</sup> as well as in several contributions reflecting these issues. The newspaper undertook a survey of personal positions on the "Jewish question" among several "leading personalities" of the refugee and émigré community, asserting that the upheavals of the last years must have affected their Jewish identity and that of most refugees. In such difficult times, the paper stated, Jewish artists and intellectuals had a responsibility to guide their fellow Jews. Writer Bruno Frank responded, stating, for example, "Even if one has felt like a German, Czech, Dutchman, or Frenchman all of one's life, knowing about the diluted drop of Jewish blood in one's veins, one must avow oneself as a Jew, wherever one can, and as loud as one can."<sup>104</sup> To the question of whether one's Jewish consciousness had become stronger since being ousted from Germany, other respondents answered in the negative or even stated that being Jewish had never mattered very much to them anyway, pointing to the great heterogeneity of the community of German Jewish refugees in America. The discussion of Jewish identity aroused the interest of many readers, as evident from the follow-up discussions in later *Aufbau* issues.<sup>105</sup> In 1940 and 1941, refugees'

occupation with their Jewish identity was connected to their need to distance themselves from their Germanness not only because of the war in Europe but also because the situation in Europe held personal meaning for them as Jews.<sup>106</sup>

## War

The beginning of the war in Europe affected refugees in the United States on both psychological and practical levels—particularly concerning their Americanization efforts and their relationship to Germany. Jewish refugees from Germany had been among the first to experience the power and brutality of the Nazis and considered themselves fortunate to have escaped Europe in time. Still, the refugees did not publically engage in debates over American “isolationism” or “interventionism” in regard to the war in Europe. Rather, they were careful to present themselves as loyal to the American government, whatever decisions it made. They focused their actions on helping Jewish refugees enter the country, just as American Jewish organizations did. When the war began in Europe, President Roosevelt had called for the neutrality of the American people toward the fighting parties in Europe, and *Aufbau* had declared early on that refugees must act in accordance with this neutrality legislation. However, the editors also prominently reprinted the following *New York Times* editorial. Despite the *Aufbau* editors’ neutrality promises to the American government, the editorial stated that

it must also be said, in justice to its facts and to the record, that no scruples of strict neutrality can conscript the underlying sympathies of the American people. We know where responsibility lies for this reckless act that has plunged Europe into war. . . . Hitler has said that this is victory or death for him. It is also victory or death for decent standards of international conduct and the democratic way of life.<sup>107</sup>

The refugees were in a difficult position, caught between loyalty to their new country and efforts to publicize that loyalty to the wider public and their knowledge of the real danger of the Nazis and the desire that something be done about it. The *New York Times* editorial captured this sentiment somewhat and was reassuring in that it showed there were Americans who felt similarly. What made the refugees’ situation more difficult, however, was the rumor that there could be Nazi spies among them. President Roosevelt fueled this suspicion in a press conference of June 1940:

Now, of course, the refugee has got to be checked because, unfortunately, among the refugees there are some spies, as has been found in other countries. And not all of them are voluntary spies—it is rather a horrible story but in some of the other countries that refugees out of Germany have gone to, especially Jewish refugees, they have found a number of definitely proven spies.<sup>108</sup>

Roosevelt explained that Nazis must have forced such refugees acting as spies to do so with the threat that “your father and mother will be taken out and shot.” He added that such cases were very rare but it was nevertheless “something we have got to watch.”<sup>109</sup>

Concerns over fifth columnists in the United States prompted the passing of the Alien Registration Act of June 1940. This legislation reminded refugees that even with all their efforts to Americanize they were still legally aliens in the United States. Title III of the Act required all aliens residing in the United States for thirty days or more to be registered and fingerprinted.<sup>110</sup> The instructions on the registration form stated that registration was compulsory and was done “so that the United States could determine exactly how many aliens there are, who they are, and where they are.”<sup>111</sup> However, the questions on the registration form implied that the Justice Department was really looking for subversive elements among the alien population.<sup>112</sup> While some refugees warned against an exaggerated fear of fifth columnists and rejected the idea that there could be any spies among the Jewish refugees, they generally had a positive response to the legislation.<sup>113</sup> *Aufbau* repeatedly appealed to refugees to register and included numerous articles explaining the necessity of the legislation, characterizing it as a democratic act and a protective measure for U.S. security.<sup>114</sup>

Refugees viewed the Alien Registration Act as a bureaucratic measure with which they were eager to comply, also because it gave them another opportunity to show their loyalty to the United States. Yet it did increase their concern over unwanted identification with Germany. As a consequence, the two largest refugee organizations in the United States erased the word “German” from their name. Many immigrants no longer wished to have anything to do with Germany, and they worried that the word German would arouse hostility among the American public if the United States joined the war.<sup>115</sup> While the members of the German Jewish Club in Los Angeles had already discussed the name change in spring 1940, the decision was finalized in late June after the Alien Registration Act was passed. In September 1940, members unanimously voted to change the name of the German Jewish Club to Jewish Club of 1933, Inc., stressing the Jewish character of the organization.<sup>116</sup> In October of the same year, the Jewish Club in Los Angeles also “Americanized” the title of its press organ by translating it to *New World* and began publishing a greater number of articles in English. Similarly, the German Jewish Club in New York changed its name to New World Club the same year. In a September issue of *Aufbau*, club members were called on to decide on the new name quickly: “Time is short. The term ‘German Jewish’ has become obsolete. The connection with the past has been broken. And this must be emphasized. One looks to the future, believes in the New World and the building of a new life in it.”<sup>117</sup>

While this statement about the broken connection to the past was far from the lived realities of the vast majority of German Jewish refugees—because it was

somewhat forced on them by the political situation—we have seen that their desire to create a new future was real. Intending to make the United States their permanent home, many refugees had applied for their first citizenship papers soon after their arrival. In November of 1938, the New York Jewish Club even made membership in the organization contingent on American citizenship or the filing of the first application for citizenship.<sup>118</sup> This, once again, shows that the focus of the organized refugee community was on Americanization.

The political situation and general fear of subversive aliens in the United States after the outbreak of war in Europe made it imperative for refugees to embark on the year-long citizenship application process. *Aufbau* urged those who had not done so to immediately pursue it, as possessing first papers might soon become legally necessary and would again demonstrate refugees' loyalty.<sup>119</sup> Beginning in fall 1940, possessing first papers also meant that refugees had to register for military service. The U.S. government passed a law requiring all male American citizens and first-paper holders of a certain age to register. Most refugees welcomed this opportunity to make themselves useful and also perhaps to contribute to a future fight against Hitler's forces.<sup>120</sup> Officers at one military camp articulated their surprise at the great number of refugees among the enlisted.<sup>121</sup> One refugee captured his enthusiasm, which he was convinced was the sentiment of many in his position, in a poem:

Equal in duty and equal in right  
The not-yet citizen is ready to fight,  
and I raise my heart and I raise my voice  
For the U.S.A. the land of my choice.<sup>122</sup>

The organized refugee community believed newcomers could also engage in other important efforts to help the United States prepare for a possible war. *Aufbau* articles encouraged readers to buy U.S. savings bonds and consider working in industries vital for the country's defense.<sup>123</sup> The refugee press clearly presented refugees' desire not only to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States but also to engage in activities that strengthened war preparations. After all, it was their hope that the United States could affect the outcome of the European conflict. While these examples show that the outbreak of war strengthened refugees' Americanization efforts in some respects, they also show that the war nevertheless complicated their relationship with the United States, especially considering the American response to the European crisis. The beginning of the war prompted refugees to direct their attention more frequently toward Germany and the European continent than they had earlier.

## The Situation of Jews in Europe

Many refugees still had relatives in Germany or Europe and were concerned about their fate. After the war began, it became more difficult to maintain contact with those who remained behind. Refugees were anxious to hear about the European situation, and *Aufbau* strove to complement American newspapers' reporting through its—as it stated—connections with Jews, including German Jewish refugees who were scattered around the world, to inform readers about what was happening in other parts of the globe.<sup>124</sup> During the war, *Aufbau* continuously reported on incidents concerning Jews in Europe, often through eyewitness accounts and analyses of local European newspapers.<sup>125</sup> The press organ of the Jewish Club of Los Angeles also published such articles under the title “Kurzberichte aus aller Welt” (Brief reports from around the world). These short accounts included letters from Shanghai,<sup>126</sup> reports about the expulsion of the Jews of Gdansk,<sup>127</sup> and descriptions of the harsh winter's effects on everyday life in Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia in 1940. These reports focused on the conditions of Jews in these areas but also included comments on the circumstances of Polish people and native Germans resettled in the eastern regions of the Reich, whose situation was not much better.<sup>128</sup>

Beyond worsening communication with friends and family, the prospect of bringing them to the United States grew less promising. Getting relatives or friends over had been an ongoing concern for many refugees. Most nationwide refugee agencies, especially the National Refugee Service, provided aid for such migration issues, and the German Jewish Club in Los Angeles, too, aimed to provide assistance in these matters. In his personal account about the early years of the club, Lothar Rosenthal reported that its members went to remote communities to tell them about the situation of Jews in Germany and to call attention to the importance of providing affidavits.<sup>129</sup> The club also established an office offering advice and assistance in the search for relatives in Europe as well as in efforts to get them out.<sup>130</sup> Nevertheless, American immigration policies, which grew progressively more restrictive, made such efforts more difficult and eventually impossible.<sup>131</sup>

In July 1941, the U.S. State Department passed visa regulations stipulating that visa applicants with relatives in Germany or any of the territories occupied by Germany were no longer eligible to receive visas. Further, the State Department became more involved in checking and verifying visa approvals, which meant that even people who had gone through the screening proceedings once, but whose visa application was still pending, were put under review again.<sup>132</sup> The new legislation reduced Jews' chances of leaving Europe almost to nil and caused great concern among refugees in the United States. Refugees had continuously acknowledged U.S. security interests and that the country had to keep potentially harmful people out. Even now, one community representative stated in

*Aufbau* that he understood the need for strict screenings. However, he could not comprehend the uniform exclusion of all people from Germany or German-occupied territories, as it ran counter to the emphasis on individual screenings the government had been following all along.<sup>133</sup> Refugees were not alone in their criticism: outrage over the regulation extended far beyond their circles.<sup>134</sup> An editorial from the *Nation*, for example, questioned the State Department's decision and demanded clarification of the facts behind it:

Until we hear of at least one, from the State Department or elsewhere, we shall continue to suspect that the ruling represents a ruthless determination to bar as many victims of Hitler's terror as can possibly be covered by the least plausible excuse. If only the department had thought of this earlier, it could have shut out Thomas Mann and Einstein.<sup>135</sup>

In their quest to become valuable U.S. citizens, refugees had refrained from voicing criticism of the government as a community, but they did now in response to this episode. They did so frequently by noting that the government's actions did not fit their expectations and image of the democratic country they had been glad to find a haven in. Leopold Jessner, president of the Los Angeles Jewish Club, reminded refugees, however, that their right to voice their conflict of opinion and disagreement with the government was part of the democratic experience and, thus, part of refugees' Americanization.<sup>136</sup> And while refugees never wavered in their public display of loyalty to the United States, many became less optimistic about life in the country as the situation in Europe worsened and U.S. policy failed to relieve Jews in Europe. At the same time, the refugees focused more attention on the continent they had left, which inevitably prompted discussions among them.

Since their arrival in the United States, many refugees had sent money and food parcels to family or friends in Europe to help alleviate their suffering.<sup>137</sup> Once the war began, this practice was widely criticized in the larger refugee community. One critic argued that sending food packages to Germany meant breaking the Allied blockade aimed at weakening the Germans. Those who sent packages were committing treason, he wrote, directing his anger at refugees who disregarded that they were in America now and ought to stand behind the new country's policies.<sup>138</sup> Critics of the food parcels generally believed they would not actually help the Jews but only benefit the Nazis. In March 1940, the Joint Boycott Council of the American Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Labor Committee, together with the Volunteer Committee to Boycott Germany, warned that goods sent to Germany would most likely be used to feed German soldiers.<sup>139</sup> *Aufbau* received several letters and contributions from readers concerned about this.<sup>140</sup> Such letters were often very emotional, with feelings running so high on both sides that participants accused each other of supporting the Nazis.

For example, people against sending packages were accused of accelerating Hitler's work of getting rid of the Jews by leaving them to starve to death. Those for sending parcels were accused of "playing directly into Hitler's hands" by allowing Nazis to use the resources for their purposes.<sup>141</sup> A further illustration of the debate over sending aid comes from another *Aufbau* article under the headline "Nazis will have to pay" and the responses to it.<sup>142</sup> The author, outraged by Nazi cruelties in Europe, particularly the latest violent deportations of Jews from several Baltic cities, announced that committees in Europe were planning the legal prosecution of the Nazis after the war. Joseph Loewenberg reacted to this report, writing that he and his friends believed that presenting such information prominently in a Jewish newspaper could have the "most terrible consequences" for Jews still in Germany or other Nazi-occupied territories in Europe. He sharply criticized the newspaper for being so "imprudent and irresponsible," as it had failed to consider that such threats could provoke Nazis to retaliate against Jews in Europe. *Aufbau* staff responded aggressively to this accusation:

We believe the attitude you and your friends have toward these things constitutes an unintentional encouragement of National Socialism, since the policies of the current German government aims at intimidating and muzzling its foreign enemies. They shall not and must not be successful in this with "Aufbau," however. The tragic fate of the Central and Eastern European Jews cannot be ameliorated by treating National Socialism lightly and by glossing over or covering up its crimes.<sup>143</sup>

The general disagreement over the way refugees ought to behave toward Germany, as visible in the refugee press, demonstrates the high level of angst and insecurity among them in light of the terrible news coming from Europe. While they were relatively secure in America—the country they had put so much faith in—the United States was actively impeding further immigration of Jews from Nazi-occupied Europe and had not entered the war. Consequently, refugees could do little to help those who remained, and the German Army's victories left many in somber moods. Reinhard A. Braun, a regular contributor to the magazine *New World* of the Los Angeles Jewish Club, attempted to counter the depression and hopelessness he observed among his fellow refugees.<sup>144</sup> In his articles, he used information from English military news sources and eyewitness accounts to show that the Germans were not doing as well as it appeared in the daily news. In his regular column, "Brief Reports from Around the World," Braun listed over 150 German cities that British bombs had rained on. Together with reports about anti-Nazi activities in German-occupied territories—Norwegians stealing German weapons and killing German soldiers, and Dutch church officials protesting anti-Semitic activities in the Netherlands, for example—Braun hoped to spur hope among fellow refugees.

Articles and letters to *Aufbau* also showed that depression, as well as anxiety and pathological distrust, were not uncommon among refugees and seemed to



have become more widespread in 1940 and 1941.<sup>145</sup> One letter published then by a twenty-one-year-old woman with the pen name Rose was representative of the story of many immigrants in this regard. She wrote that after Hitler had come to power when she was twelve, her life had been dominated by worries over emigration. Since her arrival in the United States, she had only known “hard work and worry about my parents, who are still in Germany.” Hinting at the new immigration restrictions, she continued: “The hope to see them again soon is now also gone.”<sup>146</sup> Rose did not want to be misunderstood, she wrote. She had learned to speak English well, had made American acquaintances, and had, “at least on the outside,” become Americanized. She stressed: “I like America, and I mean it.” Nevertheless, she explained, she was still depressed and was unable to find a goal that would make life worth living.<sup>147</sup>

These examples illustrate that Americanization was not, in fact, the panacea to all the problems of being a German Jewish refugee. As it turned out, Americanization and distancing oneself from Germany did not occur in a simple ratio in which more Americanization meant less German orientation. While German Jewish refugees had become ever more Americanized, they could not escape the trauma of their experience in Germany, of leaving a way of life and in many instances loved ones behind, nor could they ignore the ever-deteriorating situation of remaining European Jews; it shaped their experiences in America significantly. Even refugees who wished to leave their past behind and distance themselves from Germany found it impossible to do so because of political developments in Europe and the U.S. government’s reactions to these events. During this period, before the United States entered the war, some refugees felt helpless or forlorn, although they were closer to becoming American citizens. When the United States did enter the war, many refugees welcomed it, expecting it to help in the fight against Germany. At the same time, new U.S. legislation complicated their hopes of participating in this fight.

## Notes

1. The three most influential groups were the Protestant fundamentalist “Defenders of the Christian Faith,” the “Silver Shirt Legions” led by journalist William Dudley Pelley with a fundamentalist Methodist background, and the “National Union for Social Justice and the Christian Front.” Appelius, *Die schönste Stadt*, 31ff.
2. Ibid.; Wyman, *Abandonment of the Jews*, 5ff.
3. Appelius, *Die schönste Stadt*, 33. Breitman and Kraut, *American Refugee Policy*, 9. For a concise discussion of anti-Semitism during this time, see Diner, *Jews of the United States*, 207–15.
4. See Gottlieb, “The Anti-Nazi Boycott Movement.”

5. *American Jewish Year Book* 41 (1939–40):195–96.
6. Wyman, *Paper Walls*, 9.
7. American Friends Service Committee, *Refugee Facts*, 12–13.
8. “Verbreitet die Wahrheit!,” *Aufbau* 5 (1 September 1939).
9. Hella Weiner, “My Story of My Beginning and That of the Jewish Club of 1933,” Collection of the Benefactors of the Jewish Club of 1933.
10. For a recent account on this topic, see Mirel, *Patriotic Pluralism*.
11. Diner, *Jews of the United States*, 173.
12. Mirel, *Patriotic Pluralism*, 11.
13. Saenger, *Today’s Refugees*, 157.
14. Radkau, *Die deutsche Emigration in den USA*, 127.
15. “America,” *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 1.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Alfred Wildberg, “Secretariat,” *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 8; and Ernest Berg, “Presse,” *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 11.
18. “America,” *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 1.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. Interview with Heinz Pinner, conducted by Herbert A. Strauss, Los Angeles, CA, 1 January 1972, LBI New York, AR 25385, <http://www.lbi.org/digibaeck/results/?qtype=pid&term=1331811>.
22. Wolman, *Crossing Over*, 158. Of course, not all German Americans in Southern California believed in the “New Germany.” The Deutsch Amerikanischer Kultur Verband (DAKV, German American Cultural Association), which had a local branch in Los Angeles, sent its congratulations to the Jewish Club on its fifth anniversary. “Hans Schmitt (Deutscheramerikanischer Kulturverband),” *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 4.
23. See Grebler, *German-Jewish Immigrants*, 20.
24. See, e.g., *Neue Welt* (March 1940): 6; “Say it in English,” *Aufbau* 7 (5 January 1940).
25. Davie, *Refugees in America*, 175.
26. Report of WPA—Adult Education Program, Manhattan School of Automotive Trades, 20 December 1937. Quoted in Fields, *The Refugee in the United States*, 128–29.
27. See Davie, *Refugees in America*, 41.
28. Kent, *The Refugee Intellectual*, 75–76.
29. Heilbut, *Exiled in Paradise*, 69ff.
30. Saenger, *Today’s Refugees*, 202–3.
31. Davie, *Refugees in America*, 109ff.
32. See *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 2, 10; and *New World* (October 1940): 4; as well as interview with William Stagen, conducted by Herbert A. Strauss, Los Angeles, CA, 1 January 1972, LBI New York, AR 25385, <http://www.lbi.org/digibaeck/results/?qtype=pid&term=1337416>. Also see Bunzel, “Berufschancen der Immigration in Los Angeles,” and “Die Westküste,” *Aufbau* 7 (5 September 1941).
33. See, e.g., *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 10, 11; and “Die Westküste,” *Aufbau* 7 (3 October 1941).
34. Wolman, *Crossing Over*, 101–2.
35. Davie, *Refugees in America*, 124–25.
36. Lothar Rosenthal, “Early Days of the German Jewish Club,” 1976, Collection of the Benefactors of the Jewish Club of 1933.
37. William R. Malsh, “You and Your Job,” *Neue Welt* (May 1940): 1.
38. Weiner, Kassof, and Decter, eds, *Lives Lost, Lives Found*, 17.
39. Interview with Susan Freudenthal, Abraham J. Peck, and Uri D. Herscher, in Peck and Herscher, *Queen City Refuge*, 195.

40. Reinhold Herz, "Deutsch auf der Strasse?" *Aufbau* 5 (15 April 1939). See another such letter to the editor in *Aufbau* 5 (22 December 1939).
41. See Breitman and Kraut, *American Refugee Policy*, 113ff.
42. Kraut reported that a Roger survey, published in *Fortune* magazine in July 1940, showed that 71 percent of the respondents believed Germany had "already started to organize a 'Fifth Column' in this country." *Ibid.*, 117, 113.
43. Of course, this scenario is reminiscent of German Americans' experience during the First World War. See, e.g., Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*.
44. *Aufbau* 5 (17 May 1940). A similar letter to the editor was published in *Aufbau* 5 (22 December 1939).
45. W.C.H. (Wilfred C. Hulse), "An den Rand geschrieben: Nochmals, die deutsche Sprache," *Aufbau* 5 (7 June 1940).
46. *Ibid.*
47. Manfred Georg, "Eine ernste Frage," *Aufbau* 5 (January 1939). Georg (1893–1965) was born as Manfred Georg Cohn in Berlin. He first shortened his name to Manfred Georg and later Americanized it to Manfred George. In Berlin, he obtained a Ph.D. in Law and worked as a journalist for the *Berliner Morgenpost* and as editor in chief for the *Berliner Abendpost*. He was a politically active pacifist and Zionist and a founder of the leftist and short-lived Republikanische Partei. He left Germany in 1933 for Prague, where he continued his journalistic work, before escaping Europe via Hungary, Yugoslavia, Italy, Switzerland, and France in 1938. He served as editor in chief for *Aufbau* from April 1939 to his death in December 1965.
48. *Ibid.*
49. See, e.g., Thomas Mann, "Deutschland in seiner tiefsten Erniedrigung," *Aufbau* 5 (1 February 1939).
50. Manfred Georg, "Eine ernste Frage," *Aufbau* 5 (January 1939).
51. See, e.g., "Vortragsabende," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 16.
52. Alfred Eichenberg, "Deutsche Bühnenkunst im Rahmen der W.P.A.," *Aufbau* 2 (May 1936).
53. "Sturm im Wasserglas: Das vaterländisch gesinnte Deutschtum New Yorks regt sich auf," *Aufbau* 2 (June 1936).
54. Manfred Georg, "Eine ernste Frage," *Aufbau* 5 (January 1939).
55. Karpf, *Jewish Community Organization in the United States*, 39.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*, 710.
58. Leopold Jessner, "The Zion-Soul," *New World* (October 1940): 1.
59. Ruth Ephraim Rosenthal, "El Pueblo," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 7–8; "Vortragsabende," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 16; Ralph Nunberg, "Hollywood heute: Schattenseiten einer Expansion," "Westküste," *Aufbau* 7 (15 August 1941); Hans Meyerhoff, "Wo liegt Hollywood?: Hollywood gibt es gar nicht," and "This Is Your City," *Aufbau* 7 (15 August 1941); Saenger, *Today's Refugees*, 107.
60. "Vortragsabende," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 16.
61. L. Rosenthal, "Early Days of the German Jewish Club," 1976.
62. Baer, *Witness for a Generation*, 92.
63. Walter L., "Brief eines Neueinwanderers," *Aufbau* 1 (1 January 1935).
64. Alex Levy, "Deutsche Kultur ist tot," *Aufbau* 6 (9 February 1940).
65. Davie, *Refugees in America*, 49. This resulted partly from intellectual German discourses on the specificity of German culture as opposed to other Western nations that possessed only "civilization," as Thomas Mann had written in his influential essay "Gedanken im Kriege" at the beginning of World War I. On debates about American popular culture in Weimar Germany and German *Kultur*, see Peukert, *The Weimar Republic*; and Weitz, *Weimar Germany*.

66. W.C.H., "An den Rand geschrieben: Wir emigrierten Juden und die deutsche Kultur," *Aufbau* 6 (26 January 1940).
67. *Aufbau* and the Jewish Club in Los Angeles frequently criticized German Jewish refugees who did not join the organizations, arguing that it lessened the power and impact of their immigrant group.
68. Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific*.
69. Baer, *Witness for a Generation*, 92; Interview with William Stagen, conducted by Herbert A. Strauss, Los Angeles, CA, 1 January 1972, LBI New York, AR 25385, <http://www.lbi.org/digibaeck/results/?qtype=pid&term=1337416>, and Collection of the Benefactors of the Jewish Club of 1933; see also *Neue Welt* (March 1940): 3. Thomas Mann and Bruno Frank both became honorary members of the Jewish Club in 1942 after they appeared as spokesmen for the refugee community before the Tolson Committee, an episode discussed in chapter 3.
70. Bunzel, "The Jewish Club of 1933," 115.
71. *German Jewish Club of 1933, Los Angeles: Ein Vergessenes Kapitel der Emigration*, reconstructed by Marta Mierendorff, Radio-Essay, Süddeutscher Rundfunk, 9 January 1966, 15, Marta Mierendorff Collection, Max-Kade-Institute, University of Southern California. Since I accessed this document, the collection has been moved to the Feuchtwanger Memorial Library where it is held as Marta Mierendorff papers, Collection no. 0214, Feuchtwanger Memorial Library, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California. Attachment to letter from Elow to Professor Krakowsky, undated, Cornelius Schnauber Collection, Stiftung Archiv der Akademie der Künste, Berlin.
72. *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 9. The Tribune was managed by Braun and Alfred Pinkus and presented one of its first shows in April 1939 at the Hollytown Theatre. Program of "Panoptikum: The Show of 'The 39 Missteps,'" April 6th to 9th, 1939, Marta Mierendorff Collection, Box of German Jewish Club, Max-Kade-Institute, University of Southern California. For more, see Roden, "Der 'Jewish Club of 1933.'"
73. See, e.g., *Neue Welt* (March 1940). Ludwig Marcuse was a Berlin-born German Jewish writer and philosopher who lived in Los Angeles from 1940 to 1950. He was not related to the philosopher Herbert Marcuse.
74. Dr. Siegfried Bruno Bernstein, "Zusammenschluss," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 5.
75. "Programm-Erklärung," *Neue Welt* (March 1940): 1.
76. See, e.g., Jacob Sonderling, "Rosch Haschonoh," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 17; and Rabbi Magnin, "New Year's Greetings," *New World* (October 1940): 2.
77. "List of German-Jewish Refugee Congregations and Organizations," LBI New York, AR 6638, <http://www.lbi.org/digibaeck/results/?qtype=pid&term=1642195>.
78. See, e.g., Middell, *Exil in den USA*; Roden, "Der 'Jewish Club of 1933,'" 482–94; and the more general works on famous émigrés: Heilbut, *Exiled in Paradise*; Taylor, *Strangers in Paradise*; Gumprecht, "*New Weimar*" unter *Palmen*; Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific*.
79. Lowenstein, "Women's Role in the German-Jewish Immigrant Community," 171.
80. Edward Newman, interview by Michael Tietz, transcript, New York, NY, June 1972, in Strauss, Friedlander, and Siegel, eds, *Jewish Immigrants*, vol. 5, *The Individual and Collective Experience*, 29.
81. Also, Siegfried Bernstein from the Jewish Club in Los Angeles points out that many refugees felt the Jewish organizations in Germany had let them down or had not been able to help them when the Nazis came to power, which they found disappointing. Thus, they had lost their trust in organizations and preferred to fare for themselves. Dr. Siegfried Bruno Bernstein, "Zusammenschluss," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 5.
82. See also Weiner, Kassof, and Decker, eds, *Lives Lost, Lives Found*.
83. See *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 10; and *New World* (October 1940): 4.

84. Interview with William Stagen, conducted by Herbert A. Strauss, Los Angeles, CA, 1 January 1972, LBI New York, AR 25385, <http://www.lbi.org/digibaeck/results/?qtype=pid&term=1337416>.
85. See *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 2. Besides these service organizations, there were several religious communities that sent greetings on the club's anniversary, such as different Christian and Jewish congregations. The governor and representatives of the B'nai B'rith sent congratulations as well. All of these messages convey a sense that refugees were welcome in Los Angeles and recognized as new and important members of a larger community. Reports from Baltimore give a less rosy picture of the cooperation between refugee newcomers and native Jewish organizations. Weiner speaks of Eastern Jewish–Western Jewish animosity there (Weiner, Kassof, and Decter, eds, *Lives Lost, Lives Found*). Refugees I interviewed in Los Angeles told me there was no such animosity in L.A. Rather, Eastern European Jews were now happy to be in an established position and able to help, in a sort of role reversal from their respective European positions.
86. The words of Joseph Bonapart, superintendent of the Jewish Orphans' Home of Southern California, *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 2.
87. The General Secretary's name is S. C. Kohs; *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 2.
88. The director's name is cited as Ed. Bastheim; *ibid*.
89. One example from Los Angeles: "Early Days of the German Jewish Club—Jewish Club of 1933 as remembered by Lothar Rosenthal," *Mitteilungsblatt* 30, no. 6 (June 1976).
90. See, e.g., Dr. Siegfried Bruno Bernstein, "Zusammenschluss," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 5; and Wilhelm Marcus, "Der neue Bund," *Aufbau* 5 (15 February 1939).
91. See numerous ads for Blue Card, or Blaue Beitragskarte, in *Aufbau*. An early ad can be found in *Aufbau* 6 (19 July 1940).
92. Strauss, *Jewish Immigrants of the Nazi Period in the U.S.A.*, vol. 6, 325–26.
93. See, e.g., Al H. Katzenstein, "Was die Amerikanischen Juden tun," *New World* (October 1940): 4.
94. "Appeal to the Members of the German Jewish Club," *Neue Welt* (May 1940): 1.
95. See, e.g., Dr. F. Grubel, "Was leisten die Einwanderer für den United Jewish Appeal," *Aufbau* 7 (27 June 1941); and response by W.C.H. and Julius Petzon, "Letters to the Editor: Der United Jewish Appeal und die Immigration," *Aufbau* 7 (4 July 1941); see also interview with Hugo Zivi, conducted by Herbert A. Strauss, Los Angeles, 4 January 1972, LBI New York, AR 25385, <http://www.lbi.org/digibaeck/results/?qtype=pid&term=1337675>.
96. Diner, *Jews of the United States*, 172.
97. "Nazismus in USA: Brauner Antisemitismus in New York," *Aufbau* 1 (April 1935).
98. Hans Martin Meyer, "Die Völkerbundaktion des American Jewish Committee," *Aufbau* 2 (September 1936).
99. See more articles on this in *Aufbau* 2 (November 1936). Hans Martin Meyer, "Aufruf! Schafft eine Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Bekämpfung des Nazismus in U.S.A.!" *Aufbau* 3 (December 1936).
100. See, e.g., "German-American Congress for Democracy," *Aufbau* 7 (4 July 1941). They also paid attention to the efforts of "Anti-Nazi Germans" in the United States. See, e.g., "Deutschamerikaner in der Antinazi-Front," *Aufbau* 7 (7 March 1941); and "Deutsch-Amerikaner im Zeichen der Nazi-Abwehr," *Aufbau* 7 (1 August 1941).
101. Concerned that many German-speaking Americans had practically no other German news sources available, either written or broadcast on radio, than those tainted by Nazi propaganda, one refugee proposed in *Neue Welt* that refugees could take on the task of establishing an alternative program. Martin Hall, "Hitler-Propaganda in U.S.A.," *Neue Welt* (March 1940): 1, 4. Later, Thomas Mann and *Aufbau* actually provided German-language broadcasts for that reason.

102. "Was der 'Aufbau' entdeckte . . ." *Aufbau* 6 (21 June 1940).
103. "Statement of Policy," *Aufbau* 6 (27 September 1940).
104. "Eine Umfrage des 'Aufbau': 'Meine Stellung zur jüdischen Frage,'" *Aufbau* 6 (27 December 1940).
105. See *Aufbau* 7 (7 February 1941).
106. For an example of an article on the refugees and the war at this time, see "Ein wichtiges jüdisches Kriegsziel," *Aufbau* 7 (7 February 1941); and in relation to their efforts at strengthening their American Jewish identity, "Our American Brethren and We," *Aufbau* 7 (7 February 1941). See also "Der Freiheitskampf gegen Hitler," *Aufbau* 8 (21 February 1941).
107. "Our Neutrality," *New York Times* editorial reprinted in prominent position in *Aufbau* 5 (15 September 1939).
108. This is from Roosevelt's response when asked what should be done to avoid imposing suffering on the refugees already in the United States who were unjustifiably perceived as potential spies. Breitmann and Kraut, *American Refugee Policy*, 212–13.
109. *Ibid.*
110. *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 76th Cong., 3rd Sess., 674.
111. AR-1, *The National Registration of Aliens: Instructions for Registration and Specimen Form*, 1.
112. Aliens had to provide personal information about their birthplace, birthdate, outward appearance, race, sex, and marital status on the registration form. Furthermore, there were questions about the date of entry, length of stay, and place of residence in the United States, occupation and employer facts, participation in military or naval services of any country, and the status of their citizenship application (AR-1, *The National Registration of Aliens: Instructions for Registration and Specimen Form*, 2ff.) Additionally, aliens had to report on their activities within the past five years relating to "memberships or activities in clubs, organizations, or societies." More specifically, they were required to state whether they had been affiliated with "organizations, devoted in whole or in part to influencing or furthering the political activities, public relations, or public policy of a foreign government," as well as whether they had ever been arrested. See *ibid.*, 4.
113. See, e.g., "Spies Among Refugees?," *Aufbau* 6 (6 September 1940).
114. See, e.g., "Achtung Nichtbürger: USA Registrierung!" *Aufbau* 6 (16 August 1940); "Akt der Demokratie: Thomas Mann über die Fremden-Registrierung," *Aufbau* 6 (20 September 1940); and "Eine notwendige Massnahme gegen die fünfte Kolonne," *Aufbau* 6 (31 May 1940). Francis Biddle, "No Discharging of Alien Employees," *Aufbau* 6 (18 October 1940).
115. "Namensaenderung (?)," *Neue Welt* (March 1940): 3.
116. Certificate of Amendment of Articles of Incorporation, 14 October 1941, Archive of Max Kade Institute, University of Southern California.
117. "G.J.C. Auf der Suche nach einem Namen," *Aufbau* 6 (27 September 1940).
118. "Der Clubvorstand gibt bekannt," *Aufbau* 4 (December 1938).
119. "Wer hat noch keine 'First Papers?'" *Aufbau* 6 (24 May 1940); see also W.C.H., "An den Rand geschrieben: Das erste Bürgerpapier," *Aufbau* 6 (8 March 1940).
120. "Wehrpflicht und First Papers," *Aufbau* 6 (20 September 1940).
121. "Refugees melden sich bei Uncle Sam," *Aufbau* 7 (2 May 1941).
122. Henry Serlin, "Declaration of Intention," *New World* (November 1940): 8.
123. "Auch Du musst helfen!," *Aufbau* 7 (9 May 1941).
124. "Unentbehrlich," *Aufbau* 5 (15 September 1939).
125. See, e.g., *Aufbau* 6 (5 January 1940), with articles such as "Deutsche Zeitung gibt Judenmassaker zu," which reports on an article in the Breslau *Schlesische Zeitung* (Silesian newspaper); or "Verstärkung der deutschen Judenhetze" reporting from Paris. Similar reports appeared in every issue of *Aufbau* during the war.
126. Al Katten, "Brief aus Shanghai," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 13.

127. *Ibid.*, 14.
128. See *Neue Welt* (March 1940), n.p.
129. L. Rosenthal, "Early Days of the German Jewish Club."
130. "Jahresbericht: Beratungsstelle," *New World* (October 1940): 4.
131. Although the German immigration quota was 95 percent filled in the fiscal year ending in June 1940, only approximately 10 percent of the people whose names were on the visa waiting lists in Germany were actually able to receive visas when their quota number came up. One reason for this was that the U.S. State Department issued stricter regulations on affidavits in the fall of 1939. Stating that it had discovered fraudulent affidavits, the State Department issued visas only to holders of affidavits provided by family members. See Wyman, *Abandonment of the Jews*, 169ff. In the summer of 1940, visa restrictions began to tighten. This time, it was fear of fifth columnists arriving as immigrants that prompted the State Department to reduce immigration to America. Officials were advised to examine visa applicants very carefully and to reject them if there was any hint of suspicion. Moreover, in April 1940, cases of visa fraud came to the attention of the State Department. Apparently, German officials had cleaned up criminal records of Jews who wanted to emigrate (Breitman and Kraut, *American Refugee Policy*, 120.) Hence, in addition to fears of Communist or Nazi fifth columnists, a possible influx of criminals became a concern.
132. "Der Schlag gegen die Einwanderung," *Aufbau* 7 (18 July 1941).
133. "Demokratie und Fremdenpolitik," and "Schlag gegen Unschuldige," *Aufbau* 7 (11 July 1941).
134. "Wir warten," *Aufbau* 7 (8 August 1941).
135. From an editorial in the *Nation* from 4 July 1941 reprinted in *Aufbau*, "Schlag gegen Unschuldige: Noch eine Stimme der Kritik," *Aufbau* 7 (11 July 1941); also Werner Guttman, "The Truth about Refugee Agents" *Aufbau* 7 (27 June 1941).
136. Leopold Jessner, "Amerikanisierung und demokratisches Gefühl," *New World* (July 1941), reprinted in *Aufbau* 7 (25 July 1941).
137. *Aufbau* also called on refugees in the United States to donate money to the Reichsvereinigung (Reich Association) of Jews in Germany. For more on this, see, e.g., "The Haavaramark Miracle," *Neue Welt* (September 1939): 15; "Du musst helfen," *Aufbau* 5 (15 November 1939).
138. Dr. H. H., "Lebensmittelpakete nach Deutschland? Ich klage an!," *Aufbau* 5 (15 October 1939). See also responses to his letter.
139. "Warum keine Lebensmittel nach Deutschland?" *Aufbau* 6 (15 March 1940).
140. "An den Rand geschrieben: Verwirrung der Gefühle," *Aufbau* 6 (22 November 1940); "Vitamin in Briefen" *Aufbau* 6 (6 December 1940).
141. "An den Rand geschrieben . . . Verwirrung der Gefühle," *Aufbau* 6 (22 November 1940).
142. "Nazis werden zahlen müssen—Nach Stettin und Königsberg: Gerichtliche Verfolgung von Naziverbrechern geplant," *Aufbau* 6 (23 February 1940).
143. "Ein Briefwechsel" between Joseph Loewenberg and Wilfred C. Hülse, chair of the *Aufbau*-Committee, *Aufbau* 6 (15 March 1940).
144. Reinhard A. Braun, "Kurzberichte aus aller Welt," *New World* (November 1940): 2, 3, 5.
145. Dr. Max Guenthal, "Seelische Anpassung in der Emigration," *Aufbau* 7 (8 August 1941). See also Hans Habe, "Warnung vor dem Detail: Optimistischer Brief eines deprimierten Menschen," *Aufbau* 7 (27 June 1941); Siegfried Peine, "Vom Seelischen Aufbau: Zur psychologischen Ueberwindung der Emigration," *Aufbau* 7 (21 November 1941).
146. "An den Rand geschrieben: Frage und Antwort," *Aufbau* 7 (22 August 1941). Interestingly, the letter was composed in German; only the words "I like America, and I mean it" were written in English.
147. "An den Rand geschrieben: Frage und Antwort," *Aufbau* 7 (22 August 1941).