

INGS TO QUIT
ST IN CABINET,
ELT REVEALS
General Wants to
Private Practice,
sident States
CLASH RUMORED
Reported in Line—
osevelt Resigns as
er's Secretary

First Freezing Weather
Is Due Here Tonight
Automobile owners who still
have no anti-freeze solution in the
radiators of their cars and pedestri-
ans who have not yet got out their
overcoats are directed to the fore-
cast of the Weather Bureau, which
warns that temperatures will prob-
ably be down to freezing tonight.

LEHMAN ORDERS
INQUIRY BY COURT
INTO ALBANY VOTE
Designates Justice M'Crate for
Special Session to Sift
Fraud Allegations
CHARGES MADE BY DEWEY
Governor's Grand Jury Call for
Dec. 12 Covers Election
Cases of the County

CROP ACREAGE CUT
FOR 1939 AAA PLAN;
WHEAT TOTAL LOW
Wallace Sets 275,000,000
Out of 365,000,000 as
Limit for Benefits
\$712,000,000 IS AVAILABLE
Wheat Goal Off 15,000,000
Acres Because of Surplus—
Payment Rates Fixed

ROOSEVELT CONDEMNS NAZI OUTBREAK;
'COULD SCARCELY BELIEVE' IT, HE SAYS;
LONDON STUDIES JEWISH COLONIZATION
WOULD AID 700,000
France and Reich Near an Accord;
Nazis Would Get Free Hand in East
Paris in Exchange Would Receive Guarantee
of Rhineland Border—Basis Reached for
Joint Renunciation of Resort to War
KENNEDY SHARES IN TALKS
Plan Before Chamberlain
Calls for Removing All
Jews From Reich
STATEMENT SHAR
Language Is as Strong
a President Ever Use
to a Friendly Nation
OPINION 'DEEPLY SHOCKE
President Stresses the Wo
Technically' in Termin
Wilson's Return No Recall

CLASH RUMORED
Reported in Line—
osevelt Resigns as
er's Secretary
The New York Times
TON, Nov. 15.—Presi-
dent announced today
that he would resign
of Attorney General
His statement, made
conference, was not
reports that Mr. Cum-
leave the Cabinet have
many times in the last
and they have been ac-
cident days.

MILK FIRM
ON TRUST
Chicago Health
Union Named on
—Ice Cream
Special to The New York Times
CHICAGO, Nov. 15.—
corporations, scattered
to consist, and situa-
als, including busi-
labor leaders and in-
officials, were nam-
eral indictments, to-
day, on charges of
anti-trust laws in the
cream industries.

Special to The New York Times.
ALBANY, N. Y., Nov. 15.—Gov-
ernor Lehman directed the appoint-
ment today of a special term of the
Supreme Court and a special grand
jury.

By The Associated Press.
WASHINGTON, Nov. 15.—Ameri-
can farmers must plant no more
than 275,000,000 of their 365,000,000
cultivated acres to cotton, corn,

By The Associated Press.
PARIS, Nov. 15.—France pre-
pared today to arrange a bargain
with Chancellor Hitler that would,
in effect, give Germany a free hand
in the East.
Informed sources said negotia-
tions for such a post-Munich agree-
ment were spurring when Herr Hit-
ler shelved at least temporarily the
idea of a joint renunciation of resort to war.

What Could They Have Known?

The New York Times on Nazi Germany between 1933-1938:
the Nuremberg Laws, the 1936 Olympic Games and the Kristallnacht

reference to the new
uniform rules for Fed-
courts which now has
into actuality by Mr.
id is regarded by law-
portant reform.
elt said that, growing
demands to cope with
and interstate crime,
now has a system of
d apprehension prob-
as any in the world.
ings made no state-
honda, however, said
nation was not forced,
own volition.

Continued on Page Two
The companies and individuals
will be prosecuted under Section 1
of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. If
convicted, the defendants would be
liable to prison terms up to five
years and fines up to \$1,000 each.
However, it has been indicated that
the government might be satisfied
with only fines or even with a con-

Continued on Page Fourteen
The minimums for soil conservation
payment rates will be as follows:
Cotton, 2 cents a pound; corn, 9
cents a bushel; wheat, 17 cents a
bushel; rice, 10 cents a hundred-
weight; flue-cured and burley to-
bacco, 10 cents a hundredweight.

Lindbergh Said to Plan to Move to Berlin
Because of Reich's Aviation Research Fame
BERLIN, Nov. 15.—According to
information from German aviation
and American diplomatic quarters,
Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh is
contemplating transferring his resi-
dence from his French island—Ille,
off the coast of Brittany—to Ger-

More Proposals Are Made
Meanwhile, British opinion con-
tinued to move with Mr. Cham-
berlain along the lines of "deeds, not
words," in dealing with the German
Jewish tragedy.

President Names No Aggressors
No nation or group of nations
was referred to in his discussion of
defense plans. In answer to direct
questions as to possible sources of
aggression, he told the correspond-
ents to read the newspapers of the
last five years, thereby leaving the
impression that he was thinking of
Germany and the ascendancy of

By OTTO D. TOLISCHUS
BERLIN, Nov. 15.—As a result of
Secretary of State Cordell Hull's
published instructions to Hugh R.
Wilson, the United States Ambas-
sador, to go to Washington for re-
minders to expand its defenses to
the extent required to repel any
threat of invasion from any coun-
try beyond the seas.

Weighted Attack Thoroughly
The denunciation of German
was uttered only after thorough
consideration. The more than 2
correspondents who crowded it
President's office knew it was
be made, for they had had advan-
notice that he would speak his
mind on the subject.
As they entered his office, the
found Mr. Roosevelt in high go-

Marlies Verschoor 3281051
MA Thesis, American Studies Program, Utrecht University
16 October 2015

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## Introduction

“Every weekday, the *Times* reached 485,000 people, carried 37,000 lines of advertising, and printed more than 100,000 words in news copy. On Sundays, those numbers nearly doubled.” (Leff, *Buried* 19) Laurel Leff reports these facts about the *New York Times* in the 1930s in her book *Buried by the Times: The Holocaust and America’s Most Important Newspaper*. As it was the largest and most influential newspaper in the country, many Americans read the *New York Times* (*NYT*) on a daily basis. This means that we may assume that the paper had a considerable influence on American public opinion. On the other hand its readership exerted substantial influence on the editorial decisions of the *NYT* as well. This is especially relevant for the coverage of the great challenges during that period such as the rise of Nazi Germany and the persecution of the Jews in Europe. The aim of this thesis therefore is to research how and what the *NYT* reported about the Nazi regime in Germany between 1933 and 1938, by looking at what information it provided its readers with.

During the 1930s the *New York Times* had a large and devoted Jewish audience and it also had a Jewish publisher (Leff, *Buried* 20). In 1935 Arthur Hay Sulzberger succeeded his father-in-law Adolph Ochs. They were both of Jewish ancestry and their family had owned the *NYT* since Ochs bought it in 1891 (Talese 160). Sulzberger was anti-Zionist and urged American Jews not to “agitate for a Jewish Palestinian state”, as he was afraid this would encourage more anti-Semitism (Talese 91). He was sensitive to all news related to Jews and Jewish causes and did not wish “to be thought of as a ‘Jewish newspaper.’” (Talese 93) The Sulzberger family had quite some experience with anti-Semitism and tried to keep the *NYT* away from prejudice (Talese 93). This naturally influenced the *New York Times* reports on anti-Semitism and Nazi Germany during the 1930s and 1940s. Journalists and editors

had to run stories that were related to Jews past Sulzberger first (Leff, *Buried* 20). At the same time he also wanted to keep his large Jewish audience satisfied. These two goals caused friction, something to keep in mind while analyzing articles for this thesis.

In 1933 Hitler came to power in Germany. From the moment he seized power, he started to enforce anti-Semitic laws and propagandize against the Jews (Dawidowicz 48). This obviously did not remain unnoticed in the United States. Newspapers published articles about Hitler's anti-Semitism and the new Nazi regime. As Deborah Lipstadt explains in her book *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust 1933-1945*, "[t]he press may not determine what the public thinks, but it does influence what it thinks *about*." (3) It is therefore plausible that the *NYT* had a significant influence on the opinions and thoughts of its readers regarding the developments in Nazi Germany and Hitler's anti-Semitic measures.

This thesis will examine how the *New York Times* reported on three historical events in Germany that affected the position of the Jews and had international dimensions. The most influential anti-Jewish legal changes Hitler made in Germany were the Nuremberg Laws. These laws divided the people into two classes, namely "citizens of the Reich" and "subjects", the latter being the Jews (Friedländer 44-45). These laws, issued in September 1935, had significant consequences for Jews in Germany. As of November that year, their civil rights were canceled and their voting rights abolished. Jewish civil servants who still had their positions at that time were forced into retirement (Friedländer 49). From December onward Jewish professors, lawyers, notaries, physicians, and teachers were dismissed as well (Friedländer 50). Lipstadt argues that the American press often did not understand the true significance of these laws and the impact it had on the German population (57-58). However,

many American newspapers were shocked and condemned them as “bigotry of the Middle Ages.” (Lipstadt 58)

Standing at the center of the world for the first time, holding himself erect, Hitler spoke the famous words “I hereby proclaim open the Olympic Games of Berlin celebrating the Eleventh Olympiad of the modern era.” (Hilton 14) Christopher Hilton, author of *Hitler’s Olympics: The 1936 Berlin Olympic Games*, states that with this short announcement “[t]he most controversial sporting event in history had begun.” (14) In 1936 the Olympic games took place in Berlin, a decision that was made by the International Olympic Committee (I.O.C.) in 1931 before Hitler became chancellor. For the Nazis the Games were an ideal opportunity to enhance Germany’s international image and convince visitors that the horrible things reported in the press about anti-Semitism were just “figments of correspondents’ imaginations.” (Lipstadt 63) Foreigners who visited Germany for the Games discovered “a Reich that looked powerful, orderly, and content.” (Friedländer 64) Signs that forbade Jews access to certain Olympic areas and other places that tourists were likely to visit were removed and all anti-Jewish actions were prohibited for the time being (Friedländer 65). As it turned out, the Games were “the ultimate propaganda triumph” for Hitler, a triumph that, according to Lipstadt, was facilitated by the international press (63). The Olympic games were used to cover up the real situation in Germany. This plan worked, as many journalists and tourists were convinced that Jews were not being persecuted or mistreated in Germany at all.

On the night of November 9 to November 10, 1938, many Jewish homes, synagogues, and homes were vandalized. That night later came to be known as the *Kristallnacht*, because of all the glass that was broken. Even though in November 1938 this term was not used yet, in this thesis the events surrounding that night will be

referred to as the *Kristallnacht*. This pogrom was a major turning point in the course of prewar anti-Jewish persecutions (Friedländer 112). Besides glass, this event also shattered America's hope to achieve any kind of stability for Jews under Nazi rule. Even though the *Kristallnacht* had taken place in full public view on a national scale, the Nazis still claimed that foreign press reports were unreliable or based on lies (Lipstadt 98). What took place during that night provoked the first real straightforward criticism from both American press and President Roosevelt on Hitler and the Nazi regime, which was an important turn in America's attitude toward Germany.

The implementation of the Nuremberg Laws was the first major legal step Hitler took against German Jews and it is therefore a suitable first focus. The Olympic games in 1936 were debated intensively before they started and the international press closely monitored the event itself. It is thus the second occasion this thesis will zoom in on. Finally, the *Kristallnacht* in 1938 was, according to many historians, the beginning of the Holocaust. Therefore it will be the third and final affair this thesis will pay close attention to.

### Academic Discussion

The large historical question that drives this thesis is what the average citizen knew about the fate of the Jews during the Holocaust. This question has been discussed intensively among scholars all over the world over the past few decades. Could 'normal' people, who were not politicians but just average *New York Times*' readers, have known what was going on?

Important works that were published on this subject are *Bearing Witness: How America and Its Jews Responded to the Holocaust* by Henry L. Feingold (1995),

Jeffrey Gurock's collection of twenty essays called *America, American Jews, and the Holocaust: American Jewish History*, and Richard Breitman's *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (1998). Breitman claims that the Roosevelt administration knew almost everything that was going on in Germany, but did very little to help. Feingold zooms in on American Jewry, claiming that the government did not want to help the refugees and that American Jews lacked the cohesiveness and influence to help their European brethren. Both authors clearly feel that lack of knowledge was not the reason America did so little to help European Jews. The collection by Gurock includes many interesting essays, in which most of the authors also argue that key decision makers in America did almost nothing to save Jewish lives.

A relatively recent book on America's reaction to the Holocaust is *Why We Watched: Europe, America and the Holocaust*. Author Theodore Hamerow is of the opinion that the Holocaust is finally receiving the attention it deserves. He provides his readers with an extensive overview of European and American attitudes towards Jewish refugees in the 1930s and stresses that the American public opinion in the 1930s remained firmly opposed to lifting immigration quotas. In the conclusion of his book he states that Western democracies did nothing to save the European Jews, because America saw the Jews as a "question" and shared the same fundamental assumptions and prejudices towards them as the Nazis.

Another recent example of research on what people outside Germany really knew about the Holocaust is *We know nothing of their fate*, a book on Dutch citizens and their knowledge of the Holocaust. In this book author Bart Van der Boom tries to show how much of what was happening reached people in the Netherlands during the occupation. By analyzing 164 diaries he reconstructed what people heard, thought and

knew at the time. His conclusion is that many Dutch people were not indifferent to the fate of the Jews, but that they were unknowing and it therefore seemed that they averted their eyes.

Peter Novick wrote a controversial book on this subject called *The Holocaust in American Life*. He provides a historical review of American attitudes towards the Holocaust from the Second World War until today. Novick claims that contemplating the Holocaust in America merely provides “a few cheap tears” and argues that Americans did not abandon the Jews at all. He feels that Americans misuse the Holocaust and overrate the impact of it on American life today. Novick’s book goes directly against the research and opinions of authors such as Hamerow and Feingold. Novick and Van der Boom’s books are important because they show that there still is a lively debate going on about the way in which the rest of the world reacted to Nazi Germany and its policy against Jews.

The most important work on the American press during Hitler’s regime is Lipstadt’s book, *Beyond Belief*. She covers the American press during the entire Nazi regime from 1933 to 1945. According to her, the press “had access to a critically important and unprecedented story. Yet it reacted with equanimity and dispassion.” (Lipstadt 278) She attributes part of the press’ indifference and skepticism to “a failure of the imagination.” (Lipstadt 274) In other words, everything that was happening in Europe appeared simply too horrific to comprehend or even believe. Lipstadt ends her book by saying that there is simply no satisfactory explanation why people who had access to the news could treat this information with such apathy and just stand by and do nothing during the Final Solution (278).

Most academic research on the American response regarding the developments in Germany during the Nazi regime focuses on the period between



1939-1945. Significantly less research has been done on the Nazi-period that preceded the Holocaust, namely 1933-1938. Lipstadt covers twelve years and she discusses a great deal of national newspapers. Although she pays attention to the period between 1933 and 1938, a great part of her book focuses on the Second World War years. As she discusses so many different papers, the *New York Times* receives relatively little attention. This thesis aims to research those first five years of Hitler's reign more intensively since we may assume that the formation of public opinion and public prejudices can be best understood by adopting a larger time frame. This thesis will focus on the *NYT*, because this was - and still is - a very influential newspaper in the United States.

The only book dedicated to the *New York Times* during this period in history is Leff's *Buried by the Times*. Her main focus is on the Holocaust and she only briefly covers the period before the actual war started. Leff also wrote an article on this subject called "When the Facts Didn't Speak for Themselves: The Holocaust in the New York Times, 1939-1945." Although, like the book, it only covers the period after the one discussed in this thesis, the article helps its readers to understand the way in which the *NYT* covered news from Germany during the years 1939-1945.

In both her book and the article Leff argues that the placement of the news about the Holocaust in the *New York Times* was almost always on inside pages. She also claims that it was rarely highlighted in editorials or in summaries of important events (Leff, "When the Facts" 52). Her conclusion is that it was because of this that most Americans failed to understand the importance of the facts published about the Holocaust (Leff, "When the Facts" 52). The aim of this thesis is to analyze if Leff's findings also apply to articles published in the *NYT* between 1933-1938 by analyzing the specific historical context, concentrating on three historical moments.

### Research Question

The research question of this thesis is in what way the *New York Times* reported the anti-Semitic developments of Hitler's Nazi Germany between 1933-1938. In order to answer this question, this thesis focuses on the Nuremberg Laws, the Olympic games, and the *Kristallnacht*. The aim of this research is to show how readers of the *New York Times* were informed on what was happening in Germany during that period. This helps us understand what the American public could have known about Nazi Germany and its treatment of Jews.

After the War many Americans claimed that they were not informed on all the terrible things that were happening in Europe, because not all the information was readily available to them. The post-war generation also had difficulty imagining that their parents and grandparents could have read about all of it in their daily papers (Lipstadt ix). The goal of this thesis is to research which information on the developments in Germany between 1933 and 1938 the *New York Times* provided its readership with. Did the way the *NYT* report on the situation in Germany change during those years? Were articles about the treatment of Jews placed prominently in the paper? And how much influence on the contents of the articles did the publisher, journalists and foreign correspondents of the *NYT* have? These are some of the questions that this thesis aims to answer.

### Methodology

The focus of this thesis will be on the Nuremberg Laws implemented in 1935, the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin, and the *Kristallnacht* in November 1938. Apart from selected articles published in the *New York Times* during this period, the background of the paper and its employees at the time will be examined. Who was its publisher?

Who were its editors, journalists and, most importantly, its foreign correspondents in Berlin? This information is important when analyzing the way in which the paper reported the developments in Germany at the time, because the backgrounds of these people notably influenced their work.

The most important source for this thesis is the *New York Times* archive, the *Times Machine*. All papers between 1851 and 1980 are accessible online, which made it easy to access these primary sources. As it was impossible to analyze all articles that are published on the subject between 1933-1938, this thesis contains a selection. For the first two chapters key words were used for archive search. For chapter three editions of the paper published the week after the *Kristallnacht* were analyzed. Although we cannot know how readers interpreted, selected or resisted information, it is important to know how this information was presented in the context of other news in order to understand what readers could have known.

The articles on the Nuremberg Laws analyzed in chapter one were found in the *Times Machine* using the keywords “Nuremberg Laws,” demarcating the period from the first of July, 1935, until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, 1938. On the search of “Nuremberg Laws” between those two dates, 160 results came up and 34 articles were selected. For chapter two the keywords “Hitler,” “Olympic Games,” and “Jews” were used between the first of January 1933 and the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1938. This resulted in a selection of 71 out of 154 articles. As the *Kristallnacht* did not become a common term until later on, the selected articles for chapter three were found by scanning the index of editions of the *New York Times* published in the period between the 11<sup>th</sup> of November and the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1938. This way 35 articles were selected, all headed in the index under “Jews” or “Germany.”

## Chapter One: The Nuremberg Laws

The most important legal changes concerning the position of Jews that Hitler made in Germany in the 1930s are the Nuremberg Laws. These laws, presented in September 1935 and implemented during the months that followed, are the main focus of this first chapter. The central question of this chapter is how the *New York Times* reported on the Nuremberg Laws. What could its readers have known about it?

First a few *New York Times* foreign correspondents who were on site during this period will be discussed, as they were important links between what was happening in Germany and what was available for readers in America. Then the publishers of the *NYT* in the 1930s will be discussed, as they had a considerable influence over the contents of the paper. Lastly, after a short explanation of what the Nuremberg Laws were, an analysis follows of 34 articles from the *New York Times* between September 1935 and February 1936. How did the *NYT* report the Nuremberg Laws? Were the articles placed prominently in the paper? Who reported about the developments surrounding the implementation of these laws? This will give a good idea of the information on Nazi Germany and the Nuremberg Laws that was available for *NYT* readers during this period.

### Foreign Correspondents

“Even before the war, foreign correspondents faced hostile governments, particularly in Germany and Russia, brutal working conditions and transmission methods that were expensive and erratic. Yet enough information reached Allied and exile governments, that the punctilious wartime reader of the *New York Times* would have a good idea of what was happening to Europe’s Jews as it was happening.” (Leff, *Buried* 17) Leff’s statement in her book *Buried by the Times* is quite clear. She feels that *New York Times* readers who read the paper carefully during the war received enough information on what was happening to Jews in Europe. If Leff’s statement is true, the question arises whether this was also the case before the war, during the 1930s. Most of the information acquired by the *NYT* before the war came from its correspondents on the scene (Leff, *Buried* 345). Foreign correspondents played an important role as links between governments and people of other countries and the events in Germany and therefore had quite a big responsibility.

One of the best-known *New York Times* correspondents in Berlin in the 1930s was Frederick Birchall. He was head of the *NYT* European service from 1932 until 1941 and he wrote several Pulitzer Prize-winning articles, for example on the *Reichstag* election in 1933 and the anti-Semitism campaign and book burnings in March and May 1933 (Fischer 70). Birchall was skeptical about the severity of the situation for German Jews at first and thought that people who said that another European war was imminent were exaggerating. In March 1933, in his capacity as the chief of the *NYT* Berlin bureau, he assured Americans who listened to a radio talk on CBS that Germany had no plans to kill any of its enemies and that it was only interested in peace. He even predicted “prosperity and happiness” for Germany and thought that German violence was “spent.” (Lipstadt 16-17)

Later Birchall's view on the matter changed and his doubts were totally erased when the situation worsened over the period that followed (Lipstadt 17). In a dispatch from Berlin in May 1935, he reported that "[s]o long as National Socialism lasts, there will be no future for German-born or alien-born Jews in Germany." (Leff, *Buried* 44) With this, Birchall correctly predicted the consequences of the upcoming Nuremberg Laws.

Another important foreign correspondent for the *NYT* was Otto Tolischus. Birchall asked Sulzberger for a "younger, more enterprising and picturesque man [...] just below him" and Tolischus came to fulfill this role (Leff, *Buried* 69). He wrote from Berlin between 1933 and 1940, until he was deported from Germany ("Otto D. Tolischus of Times"). Until then he wrote "detailed, disquieting stories" about the treatment of Jews (Leff, *Buried* 75). Many of the articles analyzed in this thesis are written by Tolischus.

Tolischus also wrote *They Wanted War* in 1940, a book on Germany's rise to power until the war started and its implications for America. He won a Pulitzer Prize for his foreign correspondence, especially for the articles in which he explained "the economic and ideological background of Nazi Germany." ("Otto D. Tolischus of Times") Tolischus was famous for his insightful articles on Hitler's rise to power. His obituary in 1967 states: "Day after day Mr. Tolischus' stories detailed events on the economic, labor, diplomatic, cultural and war fronts." ("Otto D. Tolischus of Times")

A third important man was Guido Enderis, the Berlin bureau chief during the 1930s. He joined the *NYT* in 1928 and he had been living in Berlin since before the First World War (Leff, *Buried* 55). Where Birchall and Tolischus fulfilled the role of "bad cop" in the eyes of the Nazis, Enderis fulfilled that of "good cop." (Leff, *Buried* 70) His main job was to make sure that the *New York Times* did not anger the Nazi

government too much and he performed this task well. He was sympathetic towards the Nazi ideology and adhered to a kind of appeasement strategy in order to keep his colleagues out of too much trouble (Leff, *Buried* 65). The trio of Birchall, Tolischus and Enderis provided the greater part of the news coming from Germany for the *New York Times*. By telephoning their stories from Berlin to London or Paris, they were able to escape most censorship until the Nazis expelled them from Germany.

#### The Family Behind the *New York Times*

“Although the newspaper was the product of a complex interaction between reporters, editors, and the business staff, the owners set the tone. Their concerns about how Jews were depicted led ‘within the institution to a sensitivity to Semitism.’” (Leff, *Buried* 27) Leff clearly feels that the *New York Times*’ publisher had the final say in what was printed in the paper. Like its foreign correspondents, the publisher was an important link between events and the way in which they were reported in the *NYT*.

In 1896 Adolph Ochs, son of German Jewish immigrants, purchased *The New York Times* (Tifft and Jones xiv). He was barely educated, but under his guidance the paper gained an international scope, circulation and reputation. Ochs was of the opinion that there is no such thing as a Jewish people or race, just Judaism as a religion like Christianity and the Islam. People therefore called him a “non-Jewish Jew.” (Tifft and Jones 93) When Hitler became chancellor in 1933, Ochs was afraid that the Nazi’s brand of anti-Semitism would also take root in America and influence his position (Tifft and Jones 5). He perceived Hitler as a threat to international peace and his existence as a Jew. His daughter Iphigene even recalled him predicting that a second world war was coming (Tifft and Jones 155).

However, in the *New York Times* Ochs struck a more cautious note. It assured its readers that there was no cause for immediate alarm, even though within weeks of Hitler's appointment as chancellor the first concentration camps had appeared in Germany (Tifft and Jones 155). Ochs also made the unusual decision to ban all letters to the editor that concerned Hitler, because he wanted to prevent the publication of anti-Semitic letters in support of Hitler. This was the first time since he took over in 1896 that the *NYT* was no longer an open forum for all its readers' opinions (Tifft and Jones 155-156). This changed after Ochs's son-in-law had taken over as publisher, when the *New York Times* started printing letters from readers on the situation in Germany again.

In 1935 Ochs' son-in-law, Arthur Hays Sulzberger, took over. He became the publisher of the *New York Times* at a critical moment in history. During this period the *American Newspaper Guild* and isolationists challenged the *NYT*. In 1937 Sulzberger traveled to Europe and after that he was convinced that Germany was a source of constant danger and that Hitler was not to be trusted (Tifft and Jones 177). After returning home he firmly believed that a war in Europe was imminent and that it could also become an American war. He felt that Americans needed to be persuaded that the rumblings of a distant conflict also threatened their own interests (Tifft and Jones 177).

Back home in America the editorial staff and board of the *NYT* agreed with Sulzberger's ideas, and the result was an editorial published on June 15, 1938, called "A Way of Life." Charles Merz, who was editor at the time, wrote it. In this article, which took up almost the entire editorial page, the *NYT* predicted that war was coming and claimed that the United States should be prepared to defend "a way of life which is our way of life and the only way of life which Americans believe to be worth



living.” (Tifft and Jones 177) Under Ochs’ rule this article would never have been published and it clearly marked the start of a new era (Tifft and Jones 177).

Despite all of this, there are some remarkable things about the way in which the *New York Times* reported the Jewish persecution in Germany. First of all, Sulzberger – like his father-in-law – rejected the idea of Jews as a race, so he wanted phrases like “the Jewish people” substituted by expressions such as “people of the Jewish faith” or simply “Jews.” (Tifft and Jones 215) He was also afraid of too many Jews in prominent positions in politics or business (Tifft and Jones 216). This was probably because Sulzberger himself had encountered nasty cases of anti-Semitism during his time at Columbia University and he wanted to avoid the impression that he or his paper represented “Jewish interests.” (Tifft and Jones 215-217). He felt that the *NYT* had to “lean over backwards” and try to be objective and balanced when reporting stories about Jews (Tifft and Jones 217).

Despite Sulzberger’s caution, the *New York Times* reported the Jewish persecution very thoroughly. However, crucial stories were often buried inside the paper and not highlighted on page one (Tifft and Jones 217). This sends a message to its readers, as stories published on page eight, twenty, or even thirty-two may not seem as important as stories published on the front page. On top of that the *New York Times* had much power to set the agenda for other journals, which often took their cue from their front page (Tifft and Jones 218). Tifft and Jones therefore feel that “had the *Times* highlighted Nazi atrocities against Jews or simply not buried certain stories, the nation might have awakened to the horror far sooner than it did.” (218)

### The Nuremberg Laws

In September 1935 the Nazi party established new laws in Germany during their annual conference in Nuremberg. These laws, consisting of three separate laws, had significant political, social, and economical consequences for German Jews. Amongst other things their voting rights were abolished and they no longer had civil rights. Many of them lost their jobs, as they were dismissed or forced into early retirement (Friedländer 49-50).

The first law adopted at Nuremberg, and called the Reich Flag Law, made the Nazi flag the national flag and at the same time forbade Jews to display it (Friedländer 44). The second one was the Citizenship Law, which meant that Jews were no longer “citizens of the Reich,” but “subjects.” (Friedländer 44-45) The third was called the Law for the Defense of German Blood and Honor. Its most notable consequence was that female Aryan servants under the age of thirty-five were prohibited to work for Jews (Friedländer 44).

The Nuremberg Laws obviously did not go unnoticed in the American press. In her book, however, Lipstadt argues that the press often misunderstood the true significance of these laws and the impact they had on the German population (57-58).

### The Nuremberg Laws in the *New York Times*

The analysis of the *New York Times* articles in this chapter consists of three parts. The first part contains the discussion on the economic consequences of the Nuremberg Laws, both for Jews and for Germany. The second one covers the articles that were written by the most important foreign correspondent in Berlin during that time, Otto Tolischus. Even though the section on the economic consequences also contains many article by Tolischus, a separate part is dedicated to this important journalist,

highlighting his importance for the *NYT* in the 1930s. The third section deals with the international response on the Nuremberg Laws as reported by the *New York Times* in the demarcated period. These three themes are featured most clearly in the selected articles.

### Economic Consequences

*The New York Times* published many articles concerning the Nuremberg Laws, even when they were not yet enforced but merely announced. The greater part of these articles focus on the economic consequences for Jews and a few also explain the consequences for the German economy. It was clear even before 15 September 1935 that the German government was going to make economic life very hard for Jews. In the selected articles for this chapter, the economic situation and consequences for Jews after the Nuremberg Laws are analyzed quite thoroughly.

Two weeks before the presentation of the laws in Nuremberg, the *New York Times* started to report their announcement. On the first of September Tolischus wrote in an article on page twelve that the “Jews will be subjected to certain restrictions and relations concerning their business activities and relations with the rest of the population generally.” (1 Sept. 1935) Further on in the article he explains that this particular part of the Nuremberg Laws will make it very hard for Jews to make “any kind of living in Germany.” (1 Sept. 1935) This shows that Tolischus understood the contents of the upcoming Nuremberg Laws pretty well and that he knew that the economic consequences for Jews would be major.

In another article that Tolischus wrote on the Nuremberg Laws and their economic consequences, he explains that the Nazis saw the economic “liquidation” of the Jews as a “racial necessity.” (8 Oct. 1935) Citing the business manager of the

German Advertising Council, Professor Heinrich Hunke, Tolischus explains that in order to prevent the Germans to be “led and dominated by members of an alien people,” they felt they had to eliminate any “economic basis of power from which attempts may be made to win influence over the life of our people.” As explained further on in the article, Hunke claims that the Nazis do not want “the removal of Jews from business [for] economic or egoistic reasons.” Tolischus adds ironically that “not all Nazis are as altruistic or as legal-minded as Professor Hunke.” By reading this in-depth article, published on page thirteen, *New York Times*’ readers could get a pretty good idea of the economic situation of Jews in Germany only a few weeks after the announcement of the Nuremberg Laws.

If *New York Times*’ readers read the article by Tolischus that appeared a few days after the announcement of the Nuremberg Laws, they could have been pretty well informed on the Nazis’ intention to liquidate the Jews economically. “NAZIS RAISE FUNDS TO BUY OUT JEWS” is the headline of this article and it was placed on page nine. In it Tolischus writes that a campaign had started to “Eliminate Jews From Trade With the General Public.” (19 Sept. 1935) The Nuremberg Laws made the buying of several big Jewish stores in Berlin by the National Socialist Shop Union legal and basically gave Germans the power to force Jews to sell, something which of course “threw further consternation into the ranks of the Jews.” (19 Sept. 1935) Tolischus explains that this initiative to buy Jewish businesses seems to represent “a new drive by National Socialist elements to eliminate Jews from business as well as other fields.” (19 Sept. 1935) He also explains that one of the goals of the Nuremberg Laws is ultimately confining Jews to trade with one another and to make “the ghetto [...] a physical as well as a legal reality.” (19 Sept. 1935)

The *New York Times* published articles that made it clear that the hope of Jews in Germany was dimmed by the announcement of the Nuremberg Laws. After the implementation of the laws, it was expected that the Jews could only earn the bare minimum that was needed to live. On the 22nd of September an article appeared with the caption “Interpretation of Nazi Laws Is to Determine Rights That Are Left To Gain a Mere Livelihood.” (22 Sept. 1935) The author of the review explains that Jews have been “eliminated from politics and from most professions and have been deprived of opportunities of acquiring higher education.” (22 Sept. 1935) All this had enormous economic consequences, as without an education many jobs were out of reach. Even if they did have the proper diploma, Jews were not allowed to practice most professions by the time the Nuremberg Laws became effective. The writer of this article calls it an “economic blockade,” which describes the situation the Jews faced pretty accurately.

The Nuremberg Laws also had repercussions for Jewish trade. In an article on the 8th of October, Tolischus observes that after legal, social and professional ostracism, “the National Socialist regime is undertaking the final step in its solution of the Jewish question – namely, economic ‘liquidation’ of the Jews.” (8 Oct. 1935) The quotation marks around the word ‘liquidation’ suggest that even though Tolischus had a remarkably predicting eye, at that time he still thought that economic liquidation was the worst and final blow the Nazis could inflict on German Jews. He explains that almost every day brings a new restriction to the Jews, chasing them from what he calls their “last economic safety zones.” (08 Oct. 1935)

The economic liquidation of the Jews became part of the German Government’s official policy. In an article, published on the 15th of October on page twelve, Tolischus discusses a speech by Dr. Wilhem Frick, who was Minister of the

Interior at the time. In his speech, Frick announced new laws to limit Jewish economic activity even further. He claims that the Nazis do not want to exterminate the Jews by violence, but that they want “a clean separation” between Germans and Jews and thereby stop any individual actions against the Jewish population (15 Oct. 1935). Tolischus writes that business was the last preserve on which Jews had been maintaining “a precarious hold.” (15 Oct. 1935) He explains that with Frick’s speech, the last hope Jews had to keep their businesses and maintain financial independence in Germany was dashed.

All these economical measures against Jews also had major consequences for the German economy. In an article published on page eighteen on the 5th of November, Tolischus explains that whole industries were damaged when Jews were forced to leave. An example of such an industry is the textile industry, in which Jews were very influential. (5 Nov. 1935) There was also a loss of German exports, because Germany lost many foreign connections when certain Jewish enterprises were liquidated. Many Jews with capital fled the country, which also had a “serious effect on Germany’s balance of payments.” (5 Nov. 1935) With this article Tolischus shows *New York Times*’ readers that the consequences of the Nuremberg Laws did not only affect German Jews, but also German economy in general. This explains why some of the economic implications of the Nuremberg Laws were heavily debated within the Nazi party and why some of the measures were less radical than suggested at the Nuremberg Rally in September 1935. Some of them were simply too disadvantageous for the German economy, so the Nazis chose carefully which ones to implement.

An article published on the 21st of November with the headline “NEW JEWISH LAWS READY IN GERMANY” also discusses the Nuremberg Laws’

economic consequences for Germany. In this article, Tolischus explains that one of the factors that forced the Nazis to moderate the original drafts of the laws is the “growing economic distress and the rising unemployment.” (21 Nov. 1935) One of the concessions that radical Nazis had to make was to permit Jewish households to keep female domestic help above the age of thirty-five instead of forty-five. (21 Nov. 1935) This prevented many women from losing their jobs, which would have been very disadvantageous for German economy. Or as Tolischus puts it quite cynically, “economic necessity supposedly has won over dogma.” (21 Nov. 1935)

All these articles about the economic consequences of the Nuremberg Laws show that the *New York Times* paid quite some attention to them. Even though the articles were almost never prominently placed in the paper and almost all the articles not written by Tolischus are more neutral, *NYT* readers who paid close attention and carefully read all the articles analyzed in this chapter, could have had a good idea of what was happening in Germany and how big the economical consequences for Jews were.

#### Otto D. Tolischus

Thirteen of the selected articles for this chapter were written by Otto D. Tolischus. He was the most important journalist on scene in Germany during the period in which the Nuremberg Laws were announced and implemented. He wrote articles that contained his viewpoint on matters, unlike most of the other selected articles, which remain neutral. He was very good at explaining the situation in Germany and the way things worked differently under the Nazi regime, so that *New York Times*'s readers could understand.

In an article from the 8th of October 1935 Tolischus wrote that “National Socialist spokesmen openly boast that in five years there will be no Jews left in Germany” and that Jews who were returning to Germany after having been abroad were put into concentration camps (08 Oct. 1935). This shows readers of the *New York Times* that Nazi measures went beyond legal, social, professional, and economical liquidation. Tolischus even wrote that in his view “the Jews are doomed.” (01 Sept. 1935)

Repeatedly Tolischus shows that he understands the ways in which the Nazis plan and operate. In an article published on the 1st of September on page twelve he explains to *New York Times*’ readers that individual action against Jews was only prohibited because of “Germany’s damaged prestige abroad.” (01 Sept. 1935)

Another article covers this as well, with one of the captions stating “‘INDIVIDUAL ACTION’ BARRED.” (04 Sept. 1935) Especially with the upcoming Olympic Games in 1936, the Nazis wanted to improve their image abroad and therefore so-called individual actions were forbidden during the Nuremberg conference in 1935. In this same article Tolischus also points out that the announcement of the Nuremberg Laws on the 15th of September was “largely academic, for the campaign against Jews is in such an advanced stage that little remains to be done except to legalize what is already accomplished.” (01 Sept. 1935) Tolischus understood the way things worked and was not afraid to write about the true situation.

In an article published on page fourteen on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, Tolischus predicts the upcoming Nuremberg Laws pretty accurately. In this piece with the headline “STORM TROOPERS PUSH WAR ON JEWS,” he discusses a Storm Troop rally that was held in the Sport-Palast and during which, among others, Berlin Storm Troop commander Dietrich von Jagow addressed the Storm Troopers. Von



Jagow claimed to want to fight the Jews with idealism and he explained that “in race lies the evil.” (04 Sept. 1935) After reporting this, Tolischus writes he thought the speech by Von Jagow sounded almost moderate compared to the other two speeches by the Storm Troops’ racial expert Dr. Buettner and their chief physician Dr. Blome. He even calls Buettner’s language “unprintable”. This is pretty astonishing, considering the statements by Von Jagow that Tolischus does print. This sort of article by Tolischus informed the *New York Times*’ readers on how Jews were treated as non-humans and that the situation was becoming increasingly unpleasant, to say the least.

It is clear that Tolischus was not afraid to give his opinion on what was happening in Germany. After witnessing the announcement of the Nuremberg Laws in a speech by Hitler at the Nuremberg conference on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 1935, he reports the day after that he thought that “Hitler’s speech, revised at the last minute, was remarkably short and was delivered in a rather weakened voice.” (16 Sept. 1935) Tolischus’ article, published on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September, is quite long and starts on page one, is followed by the entire speech that Hitler made to the Reichstag. This shows that the *NYT* thought that the events surrounding the Nuremberg conference and the laws that were announced were important enough to pay extensive attention to.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> Tolischus writes an article with the heading “REICH’S NEW ARMY SHOWS ITS POWER TO NAZI LEADERS” in which he calls the Nazi leaders “war lords” and says that the closing rally was “a fitting close to a full week of marching, singing, shouting and beating of drums which numbed all thought and pressed everybody into the automatic rhythm that is the secret of National Socialist success.” (17 Sept. 1935) He also feels that the Nuremberg Laws were “the result of quick improvisation and were therefore hastily and loosely drawn,” which is why

amendments were announced only two days after. All this shows that Tolischus knew much of what was going on during and surrounding the Nuremberg conference and that he was not afraid to tell *New York Times*' readers what his opinion on everything was.

It is remarkable that sometimes articles on the same subject are published very close to one another, often one of them written by Tolischus and the other by an anonymous journalist. The latter is always less opinionated and less pronounced. An example is an article published on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October versus an article published on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1935. The first article does not have the mention of an author, while Tolischus wrote the second. Both articles discuss the speech made by Minister of the Interior, Dr. Wilhelm Frick. Tolischus reports on the speech by Frick, explaining that the Nazis want to halt "what are euphemistically termed 'individual actions' against Jews." (15 Oct. 1935) It is clear that Tolischus disapproves of this. In the article by the unknown author, the language is less strong, the author mentioning "so-called independent action and unauthorized interference with Jewish-owned and operated businesses." (14 Oct. 1935) It is also striking that sometimes articles appear that repeat what Tolischus has already reported. An example is a piece published on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October, in which an anonymous journalist reports only things that Tolischus has already written (30 Oct. 1935).

If *New York Times* readers read all of Tolischus' articles written on the Nuremberg Laws between September 1935 and January 1936, they could have been well informed on the developments in Nazi Germany and on how life was becoming increasingly difficult for Jews in Germany. He was not afraid to give an opinion and share his views on what was happening in Nazi Germany. This made him a very

valuable foreign correspondent and useful source of information for the *New York Times*.

### International Responses and Consequences

The Nuremberg Laws provoked international responses from both the Jewish and the non-Jewish community. Faced with an increasingly difficult living situation in Germany, many German Jews wanted to leave the country and settle elsewhere. Some sought help from Jews in other European countries and the United States. Others wanted to settle in Palestine or elsewhere. A few of the articles on the Nuremberg Laws pay attention to their international response and consequences.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September an article with the title “JEWS OFFER REICH EMIGRATION PLAN” appeared in the *New York Times*, on page eleven. It discusses the plan of several thousand Jews to migrate to Ecuador. Because they were “faced with the impossibility of making a living in Germany and threatened by further plans for the liquidation of Jewish businesses in the country,” these Jews wanted to leave Germany and build a life somewhere else. The author of the article states that “many Jews have evidently come to the conclusion [...] that the Nazi government intends to drive them out of every means of employment and that accordingly, they have no choice except that of emigration with whatever they can rescue from the wreck of their fortunes.” (25 Sept. 1935) This shows *New York Times*’ readers that the situation was pretty hopeless for German Jews, at least economically.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of October the *NYT* printed an article on Morris Rothenberg, the president of the Zionist Organization of America. After returning from a tour of Europe and Palestine, Rothenberg reports to Americans that Jewish people in Europe were “facing new discriminations and increasing trouble.” (18 Oct. 1935) He states

that “[t]he recent Nuremberg laws depriving Jews of their German citizenship dealt the final blow in the complete liquidation of the Jewish community in Germany and hurled it back many centuries to the ghettos of the Middle Ages.” He reports on the situation in Palestine, claiming that since March 1933 more than 30,000 German Jews have settled there. This article shows that the consequences of the Nuremberg Laws reached further than just Germany and Europe.

German Jews turned to other Jews around the world for help. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 1936 the *NYT* publishes an article with the headline “WORLD JEWRY TO BE ASKED TO FINANCE GREAT EXODUS OF GERMAN CO-RELIGIONISTS.” This rather large article, which starts on page one and continues on page eight, discusses the problem Great Britain and America faced. These countries needed to decide how they were going to respond to “the desperate plight of Jews in Germany,” which according to this author was well known. He states that this plight seemed to have “reached a climax in the adoption of the recent Nuremberg laws, [...] which deny citizenship to the Jews and relegate them permanently to an inferior social status.” (6 Jan. 1936) This article depicts how this plan treats Jews as export products, something from which Germany could benefit economically. It also shows that helping German Jews was not self-evident to powerful countries such as England and the United States.

“DIPLOMATS EXEMPT IN NUREMBERG LAWS” is the headline of an article published on 1<sup>st</sup> of December on page thirty-five. The article discusses that foreigners with diplomatic privileges will not be affected by the third paragraph of the Nuremberg Laws on female domestic help under the age of thirty-five. According to the author “[i]t seems probable that the Olympic Games, Nazi Germany’s greatest propaganda undertaking to date” are the reason that the Nazis did not immediately

apply the Nuremberg Laws and are lenient towards diplomats regarding the third part of said laws (1 Dec. 1935). This demonstrates that there were international consequences to the Nuremberg Laws and that the Nazis had to be careful to maintain international goodwill, especially with the upcoming Olympic Games.

A few days later, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, the *New York Times* reports on page fifteen that the newspaper *Der Angriff*, published by Hitler's own publishing house, threatens that "Germany will have to reopen the question of treatment of its Jews unless anti-German agitation by international Jewry ceases." (6 Dec. 1935) According to the article this is a reaction to anti-German plays and speeches in other countries, amongst others the United States. The reporter also says that "it is difficult to imagine much more that could be done to the Jews in Germany than has been done already, except further physical violence." (6 Dec. 1935) These reactions show that there definitely were international responses to the implementation of the Nuremberg Laws.

Another article, published on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December on page fourteen, bears the headline "JEWS URGE WORLD TO RESTRAIN NAZIS." In this article, the Synagogue Council of America, which represented "practically all shades of Jewish religious thought" of the United States, urges "the moral forces of the world to defend the rights of religious minorities in Germany against the forces that seek to destroy them." (7 Dec. 1935) The council calls the Nuremberg convention of September a disaster and feels that the world has not voiced "a sufficiently impressive cry of horror at what has taken place in Germany." This illustrates that the official representatives of Jews in America were speaking up and coming to the aid of European Jews.

The Nazis were not pleased with criticism from other countries. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1936, the *New York Times* published an article bearing the headline “Germany Scorns Inquiry on Jews, Bidding League Mind its Business.” This article, published partly on page one and partly on page eleven, explains that according to the Nazis the Nuremberg Laws were “drawn up with the intention of placing the relationship between Jews and non-Jews on a legal basis.” German newspapers feel that reports on the subject coming from other countries are “prejudiced and one-sided.” (3 Jan. 1936) Germany warns the League of Nations, an international organization created after World War I to prevent further conflicts, that they are “a sovereign State like other powers and will not endure interference with her internal problems.” Two days later Tolischus discusses the League of Nations as well in the review of the week editorials. Discussing the resignation of James G. McDonald as the “League of Nation’s High Commissioner for refugees (Jewish and other) coming from Germany,” Tolischus explains that McDonald resigned because he felt the world did not do enough to intervene in Germany (5 Jan. 1936). As a response to McDonald’s letter the official German news agency made a “semi-official comment” in which they told the League they were “to get off.” (5 Jan. 1936) These two articles demonstrate that the Nazis did not tolerate international criticism of the Nuremberg Laws and their consequences.

It is clear from these articles published by the *New York Times* that the Nuremberg Laws provoked international responses and had consequences that stretched beyond German borders. Even though there were not a great number of articles on the international reactions on the Nuremberg Laws, if readers read these selected articles carefully they could be well informed on the subject.

### Conclusion

After analyzing the articles in this chapter it has become clear that *New York Times*' readers had access to a substantial amount of information on the Nuremberg laws and their consequences. Foreign correspondents such as Birchall and Tolischus gave in-depth reports on the situation in Germany before and after September 1935.

It is hard to find out how much influence *New York Times*' publisher Sulzberger had on the articles concerning the Jewish situation in Germany. It can be said however that crucial stories were often buried inside the paper, as explained by Tiff and Jones. With the Nuremberg laws this was the case as well, which means that readers had to read the paper thoroughly in order to find articles on the subject. This did not give the impression that news on the Nuremberg laws was important enough to give it a prominent place.

Between September 1935 and January 1936 *NYT* subscribers had access to a vast number of articles that contained information on the Nuremberg laws and its consequences. Especially the ones written by Tolischus contained detailed information on what was really happening in Nazi Germany. The fact that Tolischus was a reporter on the scene increased the credibility of his articles. *New York Times*' subscribers could also read that the Nuremberg laws provoked quite some international response, which informed them that this subject did not only concern Jews in Germany but Jews and non-Jews from all over the world.

Many of the articles in the *New York Times* focus on the economic consequences. This might give readers the idea that the Nazis were only making life difficult for Jews on the economic level. The Nuremberg laws did of course have major economical consequences for German Jews, but the political and social consequences turned out to be more significant. The Citizenship Law was a harbinger

of the ultimate goal the Nazis had, namely ridding Germany of all its Jews. After reading all the articles analyzed in this chapter it is understandable that the average *New York Times*' reader had the impression that the Jews were not in any immediate physical danger, which might explain why so many Americans underestimated the seriousness of the situation.

It is also noteworthy that only a few articles on the Nuremberg Laws were published on page one, and in those instances only partly. Most of the articles were printed on pages eleven to fifteen, and a few even on twenty-four or thirty-five. This is where Leff's title *Buried by the Times* comes from, as she feels that the *New York Times* buried the news about how German Jews were treated during the Nazi regime deep inside the paper. With the Nuremberg Laws this was also the case, apart from the fact that there are not that many articles to be found on the subject if you compare it to the Olympic Games and the *Kristallnacht*.

Leff and Lipstadt argue that during the period surrounding the implementation of the Nuremberg laws many Americans underestimated the severity of the situation for Jews in Germany. Analysis of the articles in the *NYT* shows that a lack of reliable information could not have been the cause. A *New York Times*' subscriber who read the paper carefully would have been well informed on Germany's new racial laws and the plight of the Jews. The next chapter will cover the debate surrounding the Olympic Games. The 1936 Games were debated intensively between 1933 and 1936 and the decision whether or not to send an American team was of international significance.



## Chapter Two: The 1936 Olympic Games

“The press was impressed. Visitors were beguiled. The world was becalmed. And Hitler’s conviction that the other nations of the world, America in particular, would adhere to their noninterventionist behavior was strengthened.” (Lipstadt 84) This is how Lipstadt describes the fruits of the 1936 Olympic Games for Nazi Germany. American reporters, tourists and dignitaries had fallen prey to German propaganda (Lipstadt 85). These people were all convinced that Germany was a peaceful, prospering country. Stories about Jewish persecution under the Nazis were dismissed as propaganda and “beyond belief.” (Lipstadt 85) In later years, these same Americans did not believe stories about gas chambers, death camps and mass executions either. It is important to know how the *New York Times* reported on the 1936 Olympic Games, as the disbelief of many Americans who read stories during the Holocaust started in the 1930s.

Between 1933 and 1936 a heated debate was held in the United States on the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. The Games became “the prize in a tug of war for control between the German National Socialist regime, the International Olympic Committee, and anti-Nazi supporters of an Olympic boycott.” (Marvin 82) This chapter focuses on what the *New York Times* published on the Olympic Games during this period. How much and what kind of information did *New York Times* readers receive on the controversy surrounding the Olympic Games in Berlin? What could readers have know about the debate within the International Olympic Committee (I.O.C.) and the American Olympic Committee (A.O.C.)?

First the chapter provides some background information on the Olympic Games in Berlin, the President of the American Olympic Committee and some other important people involved in the debate. This is followed by an analysis of the 71

selected articles published between April 1933 and December 1936. The first part consists of articles written in 1933, the second of those written in 1934, the third discusses the articles published in 1935 and the last part deals with the articles from 1936. These parts provide an analysis of the discussion in the *New York Times* on anti-Semitism and the treatment of Jews in Germany in relation to the Olympic Games. Together the articles published over four years running up to the Olympic Games will give a good overview of the information that was available for readers of the *NYT* on this controversial topic. This discussion on the Olympic Games did not only influence Germany and Jewish athletes, but people from all over the world, including Americans.

### The Olympic Games of 1936

The IOC took to decision to hold the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1931, before Hitler had come to power. The winter Games were to be held at Garmisch-Partenkirchen and the summer Games in Berlin (Lipstadt 63). After the Nazis seized power and started to implement anti-Semitic policies, more and more criticism from outside Germany was voiced, also in the United States. At first the question was whether to relocate the Games to either Rome or Tokyo. After a while it was too late to hold them somewhere else, so the discussion shifted. The question then became whether or not to withhold an American team from Berlin as a protest to how badly German Jews were treated by the Nazis (Marvin 82).

At the heart of this discussion was the policy of the Olympic Games not to engage in political arguments, but to rise above them (Marvin 87). The IOC did not involve itself with the domestic laws of a country, unless they had an impact on the Games (Hilton 26). Some Americans thought that Hitler's regime did interfere with that elementary principle, especially since rumors emerged in 1933 that he wanted to exclude German Jews from his Olympic Team. These critics therefore felt that the IOC had to intervene. At a certain point the debate about the Games moved from the sports pages to the editorial pages. As Hilton explains in his book *Hitler's Olympics: The 1936 Berlin Olympic Games*, "the presence of an American team at the 1936 Olympic Games became a matter of national significance and remained so until the day the team set sail for Germany." (50)

There were other factors that influenced the debate. One of them was America's treatment of African Americans. The Nazis felt the United States had no right to criticize their treatment of Jews, when there was still a "color line" in the South and American segregation laws were still in effect (Marvin 86). On top of this,

Brundage and Sherrill both argued that boycotting the Games on behalf of the Jews would excite “dangerous, possibly uncontrollable anti-Semitic sympathies in America.” (Marvin 89) Brundage also felt that American Jews were over-reacting (Marvin 86). All this complicated the debate, both in America and internationally.

#### Avery Brundage and Others

The most important and influential man in this discussion on America’s participation in the Games was Avery Brundage, who was president of the American Olympic Committee from 1929 to 1953 (Marvin 81). According to Carolyn Marvin, author of “Avery Brundage and the American Participation in the 1936 Olympic Games,” Brundage considered himself “the last true defender of the strict separation of sports and politics.” (82). She also explains that he was both anti-Semitic and extremely anti-Communist. His aversion to communism made him feel that America should thank this new Germany for stopping the communists from gaining more ground in Western Europe (Marvin 83). As Marvin explains, “[t]he foundation of Brundage’s political world view was the proposition that communism was an evil before which all other evils were insignificant.” (99)

There were two groups of challengers that questioned America’s Olympic policy towards Germany between 1933 and 1936 according to Marvin, namely legalists and moralists (84). She explains that legalists contested the assurances of the International Olympic Committee that Germany had abided by the Olympic protocol, which forbade racial or religious discrimination against athletes (83-84). The moralists, on the other hand, were opposed to legitimizing the Nazi regime internationally by allotting it “the world’s most prestigious festival of sportsmanship.”

(Marvin 84) Brundage was of the opinion that the legalists' claims were false and refused to enter a debate with the moralists altogether (Marvin 84).

In 1933 Brundage assured the American public that the International Olympic Committee would not allow the Games to be held in a place that interfered with "the fundamental Olympic theory of equality of races." (Marvin 84) In September 1934 he went to Germany where he toured the sites of both the winter and the summer Games by Nazi sports officials (19 Sept. 1934). After his return to America the A.O.C. had to vote on whether to send an American team to the Games or not. The choices Brundage presented the committee with were to either take "a stand on German policies within the narrow circumference of sport, or taking a stand on German policies in general." (Marvin 87) Unanimously the A.O.C. voted to confine itself to German sport policies and they were satisfied that the Nazis would keep their promises (Marvin 86-87). The committee trusted Brundage's report and accepted Germany's invitation to participate in the Olympic Games.

A few other important figures in this debate were Comte Henri de Baillet-Latour in his function as President of the International Olympic Committee, Charles H. Sherrill as an important member of that committee, Dr. Karl Diem as secretary of the German Athletic Federation, Judge Jeremiah T. Mahoney and Olympic Committee treasurer Gustavus Kirby. They are mentioned regularly in the articles in which the *NYT* discussed the '936 Olympic games. Dr. Lewald, president of the German Olympic organizing committee, and Hans von Tschammer und Osten as German sports commissar are also discussed multiple times.

### The 1936 Olympic Games in the *New York Times*

Both Tolischus and Birchall wrote a few of the selected articles for this chapter. The foreign correspondent that wrote the most articles, however, is Arthur J. Daley. Having joined the *New York Times* in 1926, Daley was the paper's first reporter to go abroad on a sports assignment (4 Jan. 1974). After reporting on the 1928 Games in Los Angeles, he then used his expertise to report on the upcoming Games in 1936 and eventually also reported live from Berlin in August 1936.

### German Jews and the 1936 Olympic Games - 1933

The first issue surrounding the Olympic Games in Berlin that sparked an international debate and was discussed in the *New York Times* was the removal of Dr. Lewald as president of the German Olympic organizing committee. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1933 the *NYT* published a special cable from Berlin on page 14 with the headline "NAZIS SEEK TO OUST 1936 OLYMPIC HEAD." Lewald's father was of Jewish descent, a reason for the Nazis to remove him from his post. After the International Olympic Committee threatened to remove the Games from Berlin, Lewald was able to retain his position as president of the special Organizing Committee that was in charge of the organization of the Olympic Games (Rabinach and Gilman 702).

At the beginning of the discussion surrounding the 1936 Games, the issue of moving them to another country was raised. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1933 Arthur J. Daley wrote an article titled "BERLIN FACES LOSS OF OLYMPIC GAMES." In this piece he explains that the anti-Semitic attitude of the Hitler government might cause the location to be changed from Berlin to Rome or Tokyo. He writes that "as far as is known, no definite word had been received that Hitler proposes to bar Jews from athletics other than in Germany." (18 Apr. 1933) As the Olympic Committee's

protocol specifically states that “there shall be no restriction of competition because of class, color or creed,” Daley explains that an anti-Semitic ban would violate that code and that the I.O.C. would then have “ample reason for switching the site from Berlin to some other city.” (18 Apr. 1933) He also discusses Brundage’s claim that if Jews were barred from American Olympic teams, the United States would not be represented in Berlin in 1936. Brundage points out that at least a year and half is necessary to properly prepare for the Olympics, so that if a racial ban is put into effect by Germany after 1934, there is “hardly any recourse except cancellation.” These statements reassured both American and German Jews, but Brundage did not maintain this position.

The day after the article on Brundage’s assurances that no American Olympic team would be sent to Germany if Jews were banned from competing, the *New York Times* published an article on Germany’s reaction to this statement. The subtitles of this article were “Olympic Official Says Athletes Will Be Welcomed Regardless of Race” and “Warning That Nation Faces Loss of Games Because of Anti-Semitism Causes Stir.” (19 Apr. 1933) This article, published on page 21, gives a statement by Dr. Karl Diem. As secretary of the German Athletic Federation and member of the Olympic organizing committee, he states that “[t]here can be no question of any attempt at discrimination.” (19 Apr. 1933) Diem reassures people that Germany will receive all athletes with open arms, irrespective of nationality or race. The question arises whether *New York Times* readers believed this statement. Did they have reason at that point to doubt Diem’s sincerity?

The *NYT* made clear that the German press also reacted in large numbers. As reported in an article on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, “American’s opinion on Olympics and Anti-Semitism Draw Sharp Comment.” Newspapers such as the *Morgenpost*, the

*Lokalanzeiger*, the *Zwoelf-Uhr Blatt*, the *Kreuz-Zeitung* and the *Boersen-Zeitung* commented on Brundage's statement: "malicious rumors" and "the anti-German campaign" are examples of opinions expressed by these papers (20 Apr. 1933). These reactions show that Germany, or at least the German press, was very offended by Brundage's "vague threats" and does not leave these accusations by "Germany's enemies" go unchallenged (20 Apr. 1933).

In May 1933 the *New York Times* reported that Hans von Tschammer-Osten had become the new "Commisar of Sports." (1 May 1933) In an article published on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May on page 12, Von Tschammer-Osten is called the "New German Sports Dictator." (1 May 1933) Only a few days later the *NYT* reported that Von Tschammer-Osten stated that "German sports are for Aryans" and "German youth leadership is only for Aryans and not for Jews." (9 May 1933) This is very strong language and Von Tschammer-Osten's message is clear-cut. If *New York Times'* subscribers read these articles, they could have had a good idea of Germany's attitude towards Jews and that the Nazis' pledges not to discriminate against any race in the upcoming Olympics probably were not worth much.

A week after Von Tschammer-Osten's statements the *New York Times* reported that Dr. Lewald, president of the German committee, wrote Brundage a letter in which he promised that "all athletes would receive a hearty, courteous welcome." (17 May 1933) The letter was dated on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April and is a response to Brundage's statements that America will not send a team to a country that discriminates athletes based on race. Lewald writes that Brundage's letter "regarding the Olympic Games of Berlin in 1936 had been given wide publicity in the German press" but that there is no reason to worry, because "[t]here will not be the slightest discrimination made in the Berlin Games because of religion or race." (17 May 1933)



This is another reassurance by a German official meant to convince Americans that Nazi Germany was abiding by I.O.C. rules and that accusations concerning anti-Semitism in sports were false. Did the *NYT* and its readers believe this?

Even though Lewald had reassured Brundage that there would be no discrimination against Jews in the upcoming Olympics, an article was published on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May with the title “Reich Now Says Status of German Jews In Next Olympics Has Not Been Settled.” This article, sent wireless to the *New York Times* from Kiel in Germany and published on page eleven, repeats Von Tschammer-Osten’s statement that German sports was only for Aryans and that German youth leadership was not for Jews (29 May 1933). This article shows *NYT* readers that Nazi Germany sent conflicting messages on the participation and treatment of Jews in the upcoming Olympics.

These conflicting messages from Germany caused the discussion about shifting the Olympics somewhere else to flare up even stronger. In June 1933 of the International Olympic Committee gathered in Vienna. During this gathering “there was a distinct movement afoot to cancel the award of the 1936 Games to Berlin because of the anti-Semitic movement here.” (4 June 1933) The American Jewish Congress urged the American delegates of the International Olympic Committee, General Sherrill, William May Garland and Ernest Lee Jahncke, to “throw their weight against the holding of the next Olympics in Berlin as scheduled.” (4 June 1933) They argued that the discrimination against the Jews in Germany was in contrast with all the principles that sportsmanship was built on. During the gathering Sherrill argued that the treatment of Jews in Germany is not just an internal German question. He felt that Jews ought to be free to represent Germany and that the entertaining nation cannot violate the rules of the Olympic Games and its core

principles (5 June 1933). This article, published on page one and continued on page eight, concludes that even though officially the status of Jews has not been settled, Germany's leading tennis player, Dr. Daniel Prenn, was barred from the Davis Cup because he is a Jew (5 June 1933). This is a clear indication for *New York Times*' readers that the German government said one thing but did another.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June an article was sent wireless from Vienna with the title "YIELDING BY NAZIS ON OLYMPICS LIKELY." The condemnation of the anti-Semitic attitude in Germany by Sherrill and the two other American delegates at the International Olympic Committee meeting caused a stir in Berlin. Fear that the Olympics would be moved somewhere else became an important factor in the Nazis' attitude. As explained in this article, "Germany does not wish to lose the Games, which are expected to furnish Hitlerism with an excellent opportunity for propaganda." (7 June 1933) This is why on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June an article was published with the title "REICH KEEPS GAMES, GIVING WAY ON JEWS." The German government guaranteed that "as a principle" German Jews would not be excluded from German Olympic teams (8 June 1933). The International Olympic Committee therefore decided to allow the 1936 Games to be held in Berlin.

After a few months the discussion flared up again. The president of the American Jewish Congress, Bernard S. Deutsch, sent a letter to Brundage. This letter is discussed in an article on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 1933, titled "OLYMPIC UNIT HERE REOPENS NAZI ROW." In theory the doors were open to Jewish athletes, but as explained in an article on 27<sup>th</sup> August of that year, "[m]any, if not most, of the German athletic associations have either excluded Jews or have barred them from any position on their boards, thereby depriving them of the necessary training facilities." (27 Aug. 1933) In his letter, Deutsch argues that Germany has failed "to fulfill the

pledges it had made to the International Olympic Committee five months ago.” (9 Oct. 1933) Brundage said that the Germans probably had their fingers crossed when making the pledge, even though the Nazis kept promising that there would be no discrimination against Jewish athletes in the Berlin Games. The question here arises whether it was ever anyone’s intention to stop Germany from discriminating against Jews outside of the area of sports.

Arthur Daley wrote an article that was published on the 21<sup>th</sup> of November and placed on page one and twenty-five. The title of the article is “A.A.U. Boycotts 1936 Olympics Because of the Nazi Ban on Jews.” The Amateur Athletic Union, which was the largest sports-governing body in the world at that time, “voted almost unanimously today to boycott the 1936 Olympic Games at Berlin unless there is a change in the attitude of the Hitler government toward Jews in sport.” (21 Nov. 1933) Gustavus Kirby presented the resolution and almost no one voted against. The discussion on the 1936 Games ended for the time being, but in 1934 it would be reopened again.

#### German Jews and the 1936 Olympic Games – 1934

In 1934 the *New York Times* did not discuss the Olympic Games thoroughly. In May the discussion surrounding the Olympic Games started to get some attention again. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May an article by Herbert L. Matthews was sent wireless from Brussels, titled “Reich Keeping Faith on Olympics, Says Official, Denying Bar to Jews.” He wrote that there had been much discussion on Germany’s pledge to not exclude Jews from sports “in principle.” (9 May 1934) Some critics claimed that the Nazi government is “trying to evade her commitment by stretching the meaning of that phrase.” (9 May 1934) Officially Jews were allowed to compete in the Games, but it

was made impossible for them to qualify. However, Matthews also writes that Dr. Lewald promised that Germany would abide by her promise not to discriminate against Jews. This article shows *New York Times* readers that the discussion surrounding the Olympic Games had not stopped and that some critics doubted if Germany would keep the pledges it made concerning the discrimination of Jews.

In September 1934 Brundage went to Germany, where sports officials gave him a tour of the Winter Olympics site in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and the Summer Olympics site in Berlin. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of September the *New York Times* published an article titled “Still Non-Committal Regarding the U.S. Entry in Olympics.” This rather short article, published on page 26, reports that Brundage inspected the Olympic sites “under the guidance of Nazi sport leaders.” (19 Sept. 1934) The article also covers the fact that Brundage was especially interested in the order issued by Rudolf Hess, Minister without portfolio in the Hitler Cabinet, in which it was stated that Germans were forbidden to fraternize with Jews (19 Sept. 1934). After reading this article it becomes clear to *New York Times*’ readers that Brundage had still officially not taken a decision about American participation in the Games and that the people who had to convince him to send a U.S. team were Nazis.

A week later, after Brundage’s return from Germany, Arthur Daley wrote an article in which he explained that now that Brundage was back with a report on how Jewish athletes were treated in Germany, the A.O.C. had to take a decision whether or not to send an American team to the 1936 Games. Seven months after Germany’s official invitation, Brundage presented his findings to the executive committee. In his speech he explained that the first question that they had to consider was whether the A.O.C. “should concern [itself] with German treatment of Jews in other than sports.” (26 Sept. 1934) Daley then writes that “[r]eading between the lines, this writer gets

the impression that the A.O.C. will be satisfied with the Reich sports attitude when this is divorced from the other point. At that rate the invitation will be accepted.” (26 Sept. 1934) In other words, Daley correctly predicted that Brundage’s report would be enough to satisfy the A.O.C.

The day after Daley’s prediction, the *NYT* prints another article by him. This long article, published on page twenty-eight and headed “U.S. WILL COMPETE IN 1936 OLYMPICS,” debates the A.O.C. meeting the previous night, during which the committee “unanimously agreed to divorce entirely from its discussion anything pertaining to the anti-Semitic situation in Germany in other than sports” and “pledged its entry into the games.” (27 Sept. 1934) In this article, Daley voices several opinions, amongst others of people against American participation in the Games. Examples are Charles Ornstein, who claimed that “the A.O.C. could not put sports on a pedestal and ignore everything else” and a man called Untermeyer, who was of the opinion that “it will be impossible for any self-respecting Jew from any part of the world to enter Germany or to subject himself to the degradation that would be involved in his participating in the Olympiad of 1936 in that country, either as a contestant or an observer.” (27 Sept. 1934) Other opinions were printed as well, for example that of Mr. Kirby who claimed that he honestly believed that “Germany will live up to her pledges.” (27 Sept. 1934) This last article from 1934 voices different opinions, which gave *NYT* readers the opportunity to be well informed on both sides of the story.

### German Jews and the 1936 Olympic Games – 1935

After a few months of silence, the discussion on the Olympic Games reappears in the *New York Times*, especially in July and September.

In July 1935 there was a renewal of anti-Semitic outbreaks in Berlin that “revived uneasiness in national Olympic committees in regard to the status of Jewish athletes at the Olympic games in Berlin next year.” (26 July 1935) Several countries voiced their doubts whether Germany would keep the pledge it made in Vienna the previous year. According to an article in the *NYT* titled “MAY ASK NEW PLEDGES”, “a move will be made shortly to obtain from Chancellor Hitler a renewal of his assurances on this matter.” (26 July 1935) If the assurances are not satisfactory, the article continues, the different national committees will then have to decide whether they want to participate in the Berlin games or not.

The outbursts against Jews in Berlin reopened the discussion surrounding the Olympic Games in Berlin again and the *New York Times* kept their readers well informed on the subject. In an article published on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July the president of the Amateur Athletic Union (A.A.U.), Jeremiah Mahoney, states that it was his personal opinion that “[t]here is no room for discrimination on grounds of race, color or creed in the Olympics” and that he would vote against American participation in the 1936 games if rumors of “German discrimination against Jewish athletes were substantiated.” (26 July 1935)

The promise Brundage made in 1933 that the United States would not send a team to a country in which any race or religion was discriminated, was reconsidered. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of July an article was printed titled “BRUNDAGE FAVORS BERLIN OLYMPICS.” The subtitles explain that Brundage claims he knows of no reason to boycott Germany and that he has faith in the Nazi pledge. He also adds that it is too

late to find a new location for the Games, even if the I.O.C. wanted to. Brundage's statement was issued as a response to Mahoney's remarks the day before. According to Brundage there is nothing to "indicate discrimination against athletes of any race or religion since last year, when there were reports that Jewish athletes might not be permitted to represent Germany in the games." (27 July 1935) His main argument is that "[t]he strength and importance of organized amateur sport come from its independence" and that the I.O.C. can therefore not "with good grace or propriety, interfere in the internal political, religious or racial affairs of any country or group." (27 July 1935) Here Brundage repeats the main argument used by advocates of an American Olympic team to Berlin, namely that the I.O.C. should only concern itself with sports and not politics.

Concerns that Germany would make it impossible for German Jews to actually qualify, turned out to be justified. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of August the *NYT* published an article on page eight discussing a Jewish girl who was excluded from German field sports championships, "one of the most important contests in preparation for the Olympics." (8 Aug. 1935) In this article the *New York Times* reprints a report by the Daily Post, which is a minor Jewish London publication. They report that Goebbels, the German Propaganda Minister, "had sent out a circular letter to Jewish athletic associations in Germany warning them not to allow their members to train for the Olympics and further warning them not to talk about his warning." (8 Aug. 1935) The *New York Times* stresses that this is "devoid of truth so far as careful investigations here can determine," but nevertheless publishes the accusations. This is another good example of how the *NYT* almost never directly criticized the Nazis, but cited other sources to inform its readers on the critique that was circulating.

A few days after this last article, Birchall explains the issue further by writing a piece named “NAZI VOW KEPT TECHNICALLY.” (12 Aug. 1935) Officially the pledge Germany made was being observed, but Jews are only included in theory. Birchall calls everybody who is not a Nazi “handicapped” and claims that it is obvious that the German team will be “essentially, and in all probability wholly, Nazi.” (12 Aug. 1935) This critical article by Birchall, published on page one and six, clearly informs *New York Times*’ readers of the empty promises and pledges made by Nazis.

In September 1935 the *New York Times* published some more articles in which critics of America’s participation in the Olympic Games in Berlin receive a platform. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of September an article titled “GOV. EARLE URGES BAN ON OLYMPICS” is published, in which governor George H. Earle, former Minister to Austria, reports on his trip to Germany. “I have seen at first hand in Germany the things which I condemn.” (7 Sept. 1935) He then calls upon the A.O.C. to withdraw the American Olympic team from the 1936 Games unless “the Hitler government substitutes fair play for persecution and freedom for despotism.” (7 Sept. 1935)

The last selected article of 1935 is a letter by Reverend Dr. S. McC. Cavert, the general secretary of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, in which he recounts his trip to Germany in August that year. He criticizes the American tourists who go to Germany for a short period and then report that they have seen no anti-Semitism during their stay. He claims that on the surface everything looks fine, which he feels is “doubtless the opinion which most Summer [*sic*] visitors carried home from Germany.” The average tourist does not see all the “deliberate policy of segregation” which is being forced upon Jews, explains Cavert (22 Sept. 1935). This



letter is another good example of how the *New York Times* gave critics of the Nazi regime a platform, while avoiding criticizing Hitler directly.

#### German Jews and the 1936 Olympic Games – 1936

“Of course there will be complete freedom of press.” This was the assurance Nazi Germany gave the rest of the world regarding the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin (19 Apr. 1933). The last section of this chapter discusses the articles published three years after this reassurance, the year the Games took place.

The first article selected for this year is written by Tolischus and has the title “NAZIS CLOAK ANTI-SEMITISM.” The subtitle, “For the Olympics the War Against Jews Is To Be Waged With Less Publicity,” already reflects Tolischus’ view on the matter. In this particular piece he calls Germany’s policy towards Jews “the war against the Jews” and “the cold pogrom.” (12 Jan. 1936) He explains that in order to “spare foreign visitors to the Olympic Games their sight,” Hitler has ordered his party to temporarily remove all anti-Jewish boycott posters and anti-Jewish banners (12 Jan. 1936). Once again Tolischus is not afraid to give his opinion in his writing, stating that “the anti-Jewish drive still continues with the old force though perhaps with changing methods [...] indicated by the new handicaps put on Jews in round-about ways as the Nazi ingenuity discovers new devices.” (12 Jan. 1936) This is very clear language and if *New York Times*’ readers read this article, which was published on page 71, they would have been well informed on the Nazis’ intentions to hide their anti-Semitic campaign from foreign visitors for the duration of the Games. Tolischus writes that “the hope for any other solution of the Jewish question except the ultimate elimination of Jews from Germany has disappeared.” (12 Jan. 1936) Did he foresee

the grim future that the Nazis had in store for the Jews or did he still feel they just wanted them out of the country?

The Nazis saw sports as an essentially political affair, which is why all the individual sports associations in Germany were united under National Socialist rules in the Reich League of Athletics (22 Apr. 1936). The *NYT* published an article on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April on page ten which explains that it had become “a criminal offense to express in Germany opposition to this regimentation of sport, since it forms part of the Nazi program.” (22 Apr. 1936) A week later an article was printed on page twenty-three titled “REICH TAKES OVER CONTROL OF SPORT.” This article discusses that Hans von Tschammer und Osten had become a civil servant in the Reich Ministry of the interior, under orders of Dr. Wilhelm Frick, hereby establishing “[d]irect, uncamouflaged State control of all German sport.” (29 Apr. 1936) With sports regarded as a political activity in the Third Reich, by implementing this decree sports has now been “definitely absorbed into the totalitarian system of government and social control.” (29 Apr. 1936) This decree is a good example of how the Nazis proceeded to take control over all aspects of life in Germany, something that *New York Times*’ readers were informed of quite thoroughly.

Even though total freedom of press during the Olympic Games was promised, on April 26<sup>th</sup> the *NYT* published an article with a byline saying “Only German Photographers and Film Camera Men Will Be Permitted at Contests.” It was clear that Germany would not miss any opportunity for political propaganda and that “the world at large is to see the Olympics through exclusively German lenses.” (26 Apr. 1936)

The last selected article that was written before the Games started in August is a letter to the sports editor, published on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July and written by a man named Richard Wingate. He is extremely critical of American participation in the Olympic

Games and of Avery Brundage. Wingate claims that “Mr. Brundage has reached his destination, the Utopia of sportsmanship and good-will, where Nazi beer and Jewish blood flow freely - where Hitler-made robots torment and persecute the living dead.” (25 July 1936) He uses very colorful language to describe what he saw when he visited Germany, for example calling German Jews “the living dead” and claiming “their hearts beat with a rhythm that vibrates back through two thousand years of suffering and persecutions.” He also explains that “[f]or two months there will be no visible Jews or any Jewish question in Germany. Already all signs reading ‘Jews not wanted’ have been removed. *Der Steurmer* [*sic*] is strangely silent.” (25 July 1936) He predicts that as soon as the Olympic Games are done, the anti-Semitic signs will be replaced and *Der Stuermer* will once again “storm across the German nation.” (25 July 1936) This letter is yet another good example of the *New York Times* giving critics of the Nazi regime and American participation in the 1936 Games a platform, without getting their own hands dirty.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1936 the official opening ceremony for the Olympic Games was held. The day after that the *New York Times* published a very long article sent wireless from Berlin and written by Birchall, which started on page one and continued on page thirty-three. Birchall describes the ceremony elaborately, discussing how various nations were dressed and greeted Hitler when they passed by him. In the entire article there is no mention of Jews or anti-Semitism. The same is the case in an article written by Daley a few days later. He also discusses the opening ceremony, saying that it was “an opening even beyond expectations, high as these were.” (4 Aug. 1936) Between the opening and closing of the Games there are no more articles published in the *New York Times* that discuss the Jewish issue, which is

remarkable after the extensive coverage of the debate that was held right up until the start of the Games.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, the last day of the Olympics, an article by Birchall was published on page sixty-five titled “OLYMPICS LEAVE GLOW OF PRIDE IN THE REICH.” In it Birchall has nothing but praise for the Olympic Games, the positive impact he feels they have had on the Nazis and “the undoubted improvement of world relations and general amiability.” (4 Aug. 1936) He claims that “this contact with many nationalities and races has made the Germans more human again” and he claims “[i]t might even be said that this experiences has deflated the German ego a bit. They have seen for themselves that all races are good.” (16 Aug. 1936) He adds that foreigners who return home after the Games will feel that Germany is “a nation happy and prosperous almost beyond belief; that Hitler is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, political leaders in the world today, and that Germans themselves are a much maligned, hospitable, wholly peaceful people who deserve the best the world can give them.” (16 Aug. 1936) All this gives the impression Birchall has been convinced by Nazi propaganda, where it not that he also writes that during these two weeks “all the black spots have been covered.” (16 Aug. 1936) Still, the overall tone of the article is very positive and optimistic, which comes across as slightly naive after everything else that has been written in the *New York Times* during the previous years. Did readers form a different opinion of the situation in Germany because of the positive articles on the Olympic Games?

Some criticism was expressed too, however, for example in an article on the 21<sup>th</sup> of August titled “Charge Code Was Violated.” In it, the author writes that “Germany succeeded in showing the world a well-trained army and a strictly disciplined people during the Olympic Games but did not hesitate to break most of the

Olympic commandments.” (21 Aug. 1936) Other examples of criticism on the Olympic Games are a letter to the sports editor printed with the title “An Observer at Berlin Sees Their Purpose Being Defeated” on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September and a letter by Sir Austen Chamberlain in which he asks “[h]as the world been reassured by events of the last six weeks? Is Europe more tranquil? Have fears been relieved and has anxiety been allayed?” (23 Sept. 1936)

The last article selected for this chapter was written by Birchall and published on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December on page sixty-five, titled “WAR OR PEACE IN EUROPE? A YEAR-END INVENTORY.” In this article Birchall makes inventory of the year 1936 and gives a summary of the situation in Europe at the time. The Olympic Games were done and the year 1937 was about to begin. Even though Birchall was hopeful and positive in August after the Games had ended, in December the same year he was less optimistic: “Democracy [...] lagged two years behind. It is still lagging.” (27 Dec. 1936)

### Conclusion

While analyzing the articles for this chapter, it becomes clear that the *New York Times* provided its readers with a large amount of information on the debate surrounding the Olympic Games of 1936. Between 1933 and 1936 the paper printed numerous articles on the subject. These articles were rarely published prominently in the paper though. As with the Nuremberg laws, the largest part of the articles was critical of the Nazi regime. Especially Birchall, Daley and Tolischus supplied *NYT* readers with ample criticism and eyewitness accounts up until the Games. After analyzing the selected articles it becomes very clear that readers were well informed on how the German government often did not keep its promises.

In 1933 the discussion on the Olympic games in the *New York Times* centered on whether or not the games should be moved to another country. In 1934 the central focus of the debate was Brundage's visit to Germany and the decision that the A.O.C. had to make on sending an American team or not. The bigger issue underlying this decision was whether the A.O.C. should concern itself with the treatment of Jews solely in sports or in other areas as well. In 1935 the discussion reappeared in the *New York Times* again after a few months of silence. From then on readers were kept well informed again on the subject, which centered on Brundage's statement that he knew of no reason to boycott Germany and that he had faith in the Nazi pledge that Jews would in principle not be banned from the Olympic games. The year 1936 brought with it many articles on the Olympic games, which at first were very critical. During and after the games, however, the articles in the *New York Times* hardly mention the Jewish issue, as reporters and eyewitnesses were awed by the way in which the games were organized.

Despite all the critical articles published in the years running up to August 1936, it is clear that the Olympic Games in Berlin impressed even reporters who were usually pretty critical of Germany and the Nazis, such as Tolischus and Daley. One wonders whether the positive reports during August 1936 were enough to make *New York Times*' readers forget all the critical articles published on the subject before then. If Hitler's propaganda triumph had fooled *NYT* readers into believing German Jews were not in any danger, an event that took place two years later was sure to wake them from this dream. The next chapter will cover the last main event of this thesis, namely the *Kristallnacht*, which took place in the night of November 9 to November 10, 1938.

### Chapter three: the *Kristallnacht*, November 1938

“There will be a martyr’s funeral tomorrow for Ernst vom Rath, secretary of the German Embassy in Paris, whose slaying by a young Jew touched off Germany’s most violent anti-Semitic campaign.” (“Vom Rath Funeral Today”) In the night of the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1938 innumerable Jewish homes, shops, and synagogues all over Germany were smashed and plundered. The German government claimed this night, which later became known as the *Kristallnacht* because of all the broken glass, had been a spontaneous event. According to many historians, it was the beginning of the Holocaust and therefore an important event to analyze. As it was the first anti-Semitic action that had taken place in full public view, it received a great deal of attention in the international press, amongst others in the *New York Times*. President Roosevelt also responded, harshly criticizing Hitler and his regime for the first time. As Lipstadt commented, American response after the *Kristallnacht* was “united as never before.” (104)

#### The *Kristallnacht* in the *New York Times*

This chapter consists of four parts. The first one covers the articles by Tolischus, which as usual are in-depth and clearly display his opinion on the *Kristallnacht*. The second part discusses letters sent by readers and articles written by other authors, such as Anne O’Hare McCormick and Bertram D. Hulen. The third and briefest section of this chapter will be on how the *New York Times* repeatedly voices other people’s opinions while avoiding criticizing the Nazis directly. The final part will deal with statements made by Goebbels following the *Kristallnacht* and the warnings that were given to Jews abroad about the consequences of their behavior for German Jews.



Otto D. Tolischus

The day after the *Kristallnacht* the *New York Times* published quite a few articles on the events surrounding that night. The first one bares the headline “BANDS ROVE CITIES” by Tolischus. In the article, published on page one and four, Tolischus reports that “[a] wave of destruction, looting and incendiarism unparalleled in Germany since the Thirty Years War and in Europe generally since the Bolshevist revolution” had taken place (11 Nov. 1938). He also reports that the events of that night began systematically and that “[h]uge but mostly silent crowds looked on and the police confined themselves to regulating traffic and making wholesale arrests of Jews ‘for their own protection.’” (11 Nov. 1938) Only a day after the events took place *New York Times*’ readers could read about it in a long report written by an eyewitness.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of November an article with the title “New Decrees Against Jews” was published in the *NYT* on page one and thirty-eight. In it Tolischus writes that a series of decrees have been issued that confiscate large parts of the remaining Jewish possessions in Germany. He states that these decrees “can no longer be measured by standards of Western bourgeois civilization.” (13 Nov. 1938) He also informs readers that more drastic measures will be issued that will eliminate Jews from economic life even further. Tolischus reports what happened right after the *Kristallnacht* in depth and *NYT* readers could be well informed about the situation in Germany if they read his articles carefully.

Tolischus further reports on the steps the Nazis took after the *Kristallnacht* in an article on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November, published on pages one and six titled “Threats of Further Steps.” He warns readers that “contrary to some assumptions the Nationalist Socialist revolution is still far from having ‘burned itself out.’” (14 Nov. 1938)

According to Tolischus the German press is asserting that all anti-Jewish measures so far were merely “warning signals” and that in case of another “Jewish provocation” more drastic steps would be taken (14 Nov. 1938). He writes that the *Lokal-Anzeiger* warns next time “Germany will not react as mildly as she did once more in this case,” indicating that in their eyes what happened during the *Kristallnacht* was mild.

Tolischus concludes the article by saying that “[i]nasmuch as everything has been done to the Jews in Germany that can be done to a people short of physical extermination, there are arising some obvious speculations as to what these continued warnings may imply.” (14 Nov. 1938) With the Holocaust in mind, this question again shows that Tolischus had a predicting eye. This article informed *NYT* readers of the increasingly dangerous situation for German Jews.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of November Tolischus wrote another article on the measures the German government was taking against the Jews after the *Kristallnacht*. He explains that the Nazis are demanding “money atonement” for the damages caused during that night. He also informs readers that Jews were arrested as so-called “hostages.” (15 Nov. 1938) Again he cites Goebbels, who issued a statement saying that “for the healthy instincts of the German people there is, of course, only one solution of the Jewish question in Germany – out with the Jews.” (15 Nov. 1938) Two or three years earlier, Goebbels would never have admitted this freely in a newspaper, especially not before the Olympic Games had taken place. This shows that the Nazis felt more and more at liberty to admit their ultimate goal, namely to get rid of Jews in Germany entirely.

In an article on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November with the title “Reich, Angered by Roosevelt, Waits for U.S. Reaction to Wilson Report,” Tolischus reports that Roosevelt's “condemnation of the anti-Jewish outbreak has raised official anger to

fever pitch.” (17 Nov. 1938) Enraged by Roosevelt’s statement, it was not published officially by the press in Germany. German newspapers respond to the criticism by using the same arguments against American criticism as they did before the Olympic Games, namely that the United States “must be reminded of the sins of their own country,” which of course refers to segregation and lynching (17 Nov. 1938). In another article published a day later, Tolischus reports that the *Tageblatt* writes that the U.S. should not talk about discrimination in Germany as it discriminates against blacks, Asians, and the Jews as well. According to the German newspaper, this discrimination is concealed because “Jews control all the organs of public opinion.” (18 Nov. 1938) Here the *Tageblatt* is most likely referring to the *New York Times* and its publisher Arthur Hays Sulzberger.

The final article by Tolischus selected for this chapter bears the title “NAZIS ARE DEFIANT AS RATH IS BURIED; HITLER IS SILENT,” prominently published on page one and two. In it, Tolischus shows that the Germans adopt the role of victims in the whole situation. He cites Von Ribbentrop, who had become minister of Foreign Affairs in April 1938, claiming that “new lies and slander against the German people” will lead to more resentment among Germans and will make them “harder and more determined.” (18 Nov. 1938) Then he cites the Storm Troop organization’s organ the *S.A. Mann*, whose answer to the question what will become of the Jews is that “[a]bout the result there can be no doubt. Our battle cry is a ‘Germany free of Jews.’ No one knows when we shall reach this goal, but that we shall reach it is as positive as that the German race is the deadly enemy of the Jews.” (18 Nov. 1938)

In addition to Von Ribbentrop’s and the *S.A. Mann*’s statements, Tolischus also reports in this article that several people who visited *Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen*,

a concentration camp near Berlin, had reported that “so many new barracks had been built that they had no doubt the Nazis would have made mass arrests of Jews even if the assassination of Herr vom Rath had not furnished the specific occasion.” This should have been more than enough to convince the *New York Times*’ readership of the seriousness of the situation and that whatever the Nazis claimed, the *Kristallnacht* had not been a spontaneous event.

#### Articles by Other Reporters and Letters From Readers

Apart from the very thorough reports by Tolischus the week after the *Kristallnacht*, more articles on the subject appeared in the *New York Times*. An example is an article published on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November that bears the title “Damage in the Millions.” The name of the writer is not given, but it contains some personal opinions on what happened in the night of the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of November. The first thing the journalist reports is that the people who participated in anti-Semitic actions “had a gay time.” (11 Nov. 1938) He also writes that “[t]he noise of breaking glass and cracking furniture accompanied loud anti-Jewish jeers,” colorfully describing what he saw. Another astonishing thing he shares in this article is that the official German News Bureau “expressed indignation that some Jewish proprietors had compelled ‘Aryan’ employees to clean up the debris,” which shows readers the absurdity of the whole situation (11 Nov. 1938).

Another big article on the *Kristallnacht* is written by Anne O’Hare McCormick, titled “Nazi Day of Terror a Threat to All Civilization.” She writes in a very personal style and shows McCormick’s opinions and even emotions. Opening the article with the words [i]t is difficult to write calmly about what has happened in Germany,” she continues that “organized gangs [...] systematically sacked the shops,

the homes and the altars of a helpless minority of German citizens.” (12 Nov. 1938) She explains that a “mob spirit” is purposely cultivated in Germany and that German people have lost the power to protest (12 Nov. 1938). She warns readers that this “orgy of sadism” is not only a threat to Germany and its Jews, but that “[i]t raises up in the heart of Europe [...] a threat to the civilization of the world.” (12 Nov. 1938) With her colorful language and extensive description of the *Kristallnacht*, it is an informative and important eyewitness that should have convinced *New York Times*’ readers of the seriousness of the situation in Germany even more.

Meanwhile in Washington, Bertram D. Hulen wrote an article on Roosevelt’s reaction to the *Kristallnacht*. He reports that the President’s statement is one of the most vigorous ones possible in light of the events surrounding November 9 and 10. He writes that “Mr. Roosevelt denounced the attacks in language as sharp as had ever been employed by a President in the course pursued by a foreign government with which the United States had friendly diplomatic relations.” (16 Nov. 1938) Astonishingly, Roosevelt, who said in his speech that he could scarcely believe that things such as happened during the *Kristallnacht* could occur in a twentieth-century civilization, still claimed that “the time was not ripe for an announcement” concerning the intake of more Jewish refugees from Europe (16 Nov. 1938). This article by Hulen gives a good overview of Roosevelt’s reaction, which despite his consequential lack of action was still a breakthrough in America’s attitude towards Nazi Germany.

On the same day as Hulen’s article a letter by a reader is published in the *New York Times*. The author agrees with Roosevelt’s statement and describes the victims of the *Kristallnacht* as “[u]nwanted in the countries of their origin, stripped of their goods and despoiled of the savings they have guarded, beaten into the earth by abuse and denied refuge in other countries.” (16 Nov. 1938) The writer does claim,

however, that even though “the recent terror in Europe has focused attention on the Jew, it is not essentially a Jewish problem.” (16 Nov. 1938) This opinion was printed in the *NYT* in later years as well, when the paper tried to avoid identifying the majority of victims during the Holocaust as Jewish. The letter ends with the author defending the unwillingness of the United States to take in more refugees, claiming that America “cannot be expected to perform today, with millions of its own people unemployed.” (16 Nov. 1938) Whether this is a valid argument remains to be seen, as one could argue that the desire to occupy the position of most powerful country in the world brings considerable responsibilities with it as well.

On November 12 the *New York Times* published editorial comments on the *Kristallnacht* from several American newspapers, bearing the title “American Press Comment on Nazi Riots”. Amongst others editorials from papers in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, and Boston are printed. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of November the *New York Times* also published an overview of editorial comment from U.S. newspapers on the *Kristallnacht* titled “U.S. NEWSPAPERS ASSAIL NAZI RAIDS.” This overview shows that the American press is finally giving a real response to the situation in Nazi Germany. Responses from newspapers in Portland, Philadelphia, Minneapolis and Boise are printed, informing *NYT* readers on the information other newspapers give their readers.

#### The Avoidance of Direct Criticism

One of the characteristics of articles in the *New York Times* during the 1930s is the avoidance of direct criticism on Hitler and his Nazi government. Articles that are not written by Tolischus, Birchall or other foreign correspondents in Germany often do

not display the author's opinion. This was not only the case with articles on the *Kristallnacht*, but on the Nuremberg Laws and the Olympic Games as well.

A good example is an article published on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November. It is printed on page one and six and bears the title "Dewey and Smith Lead Protest Here Against Anti-Semitic Riots in Reich" and subtitle "Prosecutor Scores 'Savagery of Barbarism' – Ex-Governor Sees Peril to Civilization – Rector Gives Warning." The article informs *New York Times*' readers of a radio protest against the anti-Semitic riots in Germany. District Attorney Thomas E.D. Dewey and former Governor Alfred E. Smith "appealed to world opinion to halt 'the savagery of barbarism' which he declared inspired 'the bloody pogrom.'" (12 Nov. 1938) The text of this radio address is printed, showing that it was deemed important enough to give *NYT* readers the whole text. In this article, however, the *Kristallnacht* and the Nazis are not directly criticized, only through the radio broadcast by Dewey and Smith.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of November an article with the title "PASTORS PROTEST NAZI PERSECUTION" appears. One of the subtitles is "Community Church [...] Condemns 'Crime' Against Jews." By citing this church and putting the word 'crime' in inverted commas, the *New York Times* discards the responsibility of directly criticizing the Nazis. The entire article consists of citations by pastors, ministers, and rabbis who criticize the Nazi regime and condemn the *Kristallnacht*.

#### Goebbels and the Behavior of Jews Abroad

In this chapter two articles on Goebbels and his reaction to the *Kristallnacht* have already been discussed. Goebbels' statement that how the Jews are treated in Germany depends on the good behavior of all Jews abroad is especially striking. It is blackmail, threatening Jews abroad that their behavior and especially criticism

towards Germany and its government will put their fellow Jews in danger. A few more articles that are selected for this chapter contain statements made by Goebbels and the behavior of Jews abroad.

An article from the 12<sup>th</sup> of November with the title “NO REGRET VOICED” and subtitle “Goebbels Declares That the Nation Followed Its ‘Healthy Instincts,’” reports that “warning was given that criticism abroad would react against Jews in Germany.” (12 Nov. 1938) Tolischus also reports on this, explaining that the Nazis moved to “silence all criticism abroad,” warning the foreign press that “lies and exaggerations” would be ineffective and that “Jews in Germany might have to pay for them.” (12 Nov. 1938)

Apart from warning foreign Jews to refrain from criticism, Goebbels also claimed that the so-called demonstrations were not organized and that no plundering had taken place. On top of that, he denied that “the police or fire brigades had failed to do their duty.” (12 Nov. 1938) Appealing to the foreign press to present the views of the German government as he expressed them, he stated that the *Kristallnacht* was “typically spontaneous and popular” and that it was a natural reaction of a nation after the murder on Vom Rath. Saying that “scarcely any Jews were hurt” and that “it was possible that here and there somebody had taken an overcoat and other things along as Christmas presents,” Goebbels added ironically that “[i]f there is any country that believes it has not enough Jews, I shall gladly turn over to it all our Jews.” (12 Nov. 1938) He concludes his speech by saying that if he were a Jew, he would remain silent. “There is only one thing the Jews can do – shut up and say nothing further about Germany.” (12 Nov. 1938)

In another article published on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November, bearing the title “U.S. Jews Are Warned,” the reporter writes that Goebbels called Jews a parasitic race. The



author adds that “[t]he Nazi view was that the action of the mobs was a ‘force majeure,’ an inevitable force not unlike the ‘act of God.’” (12 Nov. 1938) Goebbels claims that the fact that it has become so much harder for Jews to emigrate is not Germany’s fault, but “wholly of the countries that on the one hand intervene with resounding speeches for ‘the pitiable Jewish people’ and on the other hand, as the Evian conference so clearly proved, do not think at all to take in Jews themselves.” (15 Nov. 1938) Despite all the horrible things Goebbels claimed, he does have a point here. Although many other countries denounce what is happening to Jews in Germany, the United States among them, they do not directly do something to help out the German Jews.

The last selected article for this chapter appeared on November 18, bearing the title “Nazis Deride La Guardia For Jewish Police Guard,” It is clear that the Nazis are showing their true colors more and more. In the article Goebbels is quoted saying in the *Angriff* that the mayor of New York, Fiorello La Guardia, has a “fat Jewish face” and that a guard in New York should be exercised “against Jews, not by them.” (18 Nov. 1938) All these clear statements made by Goebbels should have been fair warning to *New York Times*’ readers that the *Kristallnacht* was the beginning of something bigger and that Jews in Germany had ample reason to fear for their lives.

### Conclusion

The 26 articles selected for this chapter were published between the 11th and 18th of November 1938, right after the *Kristallnacht*. During those days it was impossible for *New York Times*' readers not to read about what was going on in Germany. The articles on the *Kristallnacht* were placed more prominently in the paper than articles on the Nuremberg laws and the Olympic games and on average the articles were longer.

Above all else the articles by Tolischus provided *New York Times*' readers with detailed information on the *Kristallnacht*. If *NYT* subscribers read his articles carefully, they could have been well informed about what was happening in Germany. Whatever the Nazis claimed, Tolischus clearly shows that the *Kristallnacht* was not a spontaneous event and that the situation for German Jews was becoming increasingly dangerous. With all his in-depth articles Tolischus showed that he had a predicting eye and that he was one of the people who foresaw the grim future for Jews in Europe.

For the first time since Hitler's rise to power, President Roosevelt gave an official reaction to Hitler and his regime, a breakthrough that was discussed extensively in the *NYT*. The letters and overviews of responses other American newspapers gave after the *Kristallnacht* also showed *New York Times*' readers more attention was paid to the situation in Nazi Germany. Other journalists were critical of Hitler's regime as well. For the first time there was a nation-wide response, as Lipstadt also underlines in her book.

When analyzing the articles selected for this chapter it becomes more evident what the Nazi's ultimate goal was. They did not try to hide their true colors anymore the way they did before the Olympic games had taken place. The articles containing

Goebbels' statements showed that Hitler's intention was to get rid of the Jews in Germany entirely, something that should have been more than enough to convince readers of the *New York Times* that the Jews were in grave danger. After reading some of Goebbels' announcements, one wonders how so many Americans claimed they could not have seen the Holocaust coming.

## Conclusion

Between 1933 and 1938 the *New York Times* printed a large number of articles on Nazi Germany and Hitler's policy against the Jews. As the largest and most influential newspaper in the United States, many Americans read it on a daily basis. The question that drives this thesis is what the average reader of the *NYT* could have known about the discrimination, segregation, and persecution of the Jews in Germany by analyzing what information it provided to its readers.

Despite Sulzberger's caution regarding news coverage about Jews specifically, the *New York Times* covered the situation in Germany quite thoroughly. However, the location of articles in the paper stands out. The analysis of the articles in this thesis shows that the *NYT* published many articles on Nazi Germany inside its newspapers. This is most noticeable with the articles on the Nuremberg Laws. Almost no article appeared on the front page, and if it did only with the first few lines. The paper published more articles prominently on the Olympic Games. This was probably because the discussion about the Games affected the United States directly, whereas the Nuremberg Laws did not. Although the *NYT* published quite a few articles on the *Kristallnacht* on the front page as well, it buried the largest part inside the paper. *NYT* readers had access to a good deal of information, but as Lipstadt puts it, only the punctilious reader of the *New York Times* could have had a good idea of what was happening to Europe's Jews as it was happening.

The way in which the *New York Times* covered the situation in Germany changed between 1933 and 1938. Whereas in the beginning reporters such as Birchall still felt that Europe and America had nothing to worry about, their articles became more and more critical throughout the years. This is especially true for Tolischus' reporting. Even though he always offered a unequivocal opinion in his writing,

Tolischus was mostly concerned about the economic prospects for German Jews. As the years progress, however, he started to write articles in which he seemed to have had the gift of prediction. More and more Tolischus provides *New York Times*' readers with articles that forecast Hitler's plans with, in hindsight, almost uncanny accuracy. If *NYT* readers read his articles thoroughly, they would have been well informed about the fate of the Jews in Germany.

The question of how much influence the publisher and foreign correspondents had on the contents of articles on Nazi Germany in the 1930s is not an easy one to answer. Tiff and Jones argue that Sulzberger was cautious when it came to articles about Jews and that everything had to be run past him. However, it is impossible to know how and how much he influenced reporting on Hitler's regime. Sulzberger was extremely sensitive to anything concerning Jews and he was determined to prevent that the *New York Times* was perceived as a Jewish newspaper. Despite of this, the *NYT* offered a substantial amount of information on Nazi Germany and the Jews in the 1930s. Arguably, the stories were often buried inside the paper and the *NYT* not always mentioned that Hitler's victims were Jewish. Still it can be said that Sulzberger's caution did not stand in the way of a thorough coverage of the plight of the Jews in Germany.

A few foreign correspondents largely bore the responsibility for covering the 1930s in Germany. Tolischus, Birchall, and Daley wrote the majority of articles published in the *New York Times* during that period. All three of them were posted in Berlin and witnessed some of the biggest events in Germany during the twentieth century, such as the Olympic Games and the *Kristallnacht*. Although these correspondents were obviously not completely unbiased, one may assume that what they wrote was largely factually true. As with Sulzberger, it is hard to answer the

question of how much influence these foreign correspondents had on the information available for *NYT* readers, since we do not know if or how their articles were edited or even censored. However, it can be said that these foreign correspondents offered their readers ample information about Nazi Germany in the 1930s and therefore had a considerable influence.

This analysis of the *New York Times*' reporting on Nazi Germany in the 1930s contributes to the research already started by Lipstadt and Leff. It addresses the same question, namely how much and what kind of information on Nazi Germany was available for U.S. citizens. Where Lipstadt concentrates on many newspapers between 1933 and 1945, this research adds a more specific focus, namely only one paper and a smaller time frame. Leff zooms in on the *New York Times*, but only covers the period between 1939 and 1945. This thesis deals with the earlier period, in order to offer a comparative perspective to the reporting during the war-years.

Zooming out, the larger historical question that drives this thesis is what the average American citizen could have known about the Holocaust. Could they have known what was going on in Germany? This research provides the answer to a small segment of that question, namely what readers of the biggest and most influential newspaper in the United States could have known if they read the paper carefully. The conclusion is that a thorough reader would have been very well informed about the Nuremberg Laws, the 1936 Olympic Games, and the *Kristallnacht*. Information is not the same as interpretation, however, so even if readers read the articles we still do not know how they interpreted the information they received. This would be an interesting topic for further research.

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