

Sander A. Diamond's Surrealistic Portrait of Research Done in the Third Reich on German Americans

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Abbreviations

1. "Amerikadenkschrift"-- Denkschrift "Die Amerikaarbeit (i.e. the U.S. oriented activities) des DAI im dritten Reich" (c.1966) -- The America Memorandum
2. DAI -- the Deutsche Auslandinstitut -- Institute for German Culture Abroad

1.

Twice in the last twelve years, internationally reputable publishers have issued books by American authors which have dealt with the propoganda efforts of the Third Reich among the German Americans. In both instances there are gross deficiencies which are damaging to the reputations of these publishers.

Arthur L. Smith, *The Deutschtum of Nazi Germany and the United States* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965) -- International Scholars Forum Vol. 15 -- appeared in 1965. According to the second sentence, Smith's book is a history of the attempts of the Deutsches Auslandinstitut (DAI) in Stuttgart to promote the objectives of national socialism among the German Americans. Regrettably superficial, the book was written with an adequate knowledge of neither the German language nor of the basic facts. As a former staff member of the DAI, I composed a 17-page type-written manuscript, titled it "Die Amerikaarbeit des DAI im Dritten Reich: Ein Stück fahrlässiger Geschichtsschreibung" henceforth called the America Memorandum), duplicated it, and mailed it to interested persons. The memorandum sets forth the weaknesses of the Smith book and amplifies on my review of Smith's book in the *Historische Zeitschrift*, 203 (1966), 710-713. The

salient point made in my review is that two-thirds of the book concerned subject matter which had nothing to do with the DAI, namely the national socialist "American-German **Volksbund**" and its predecessors.

2.

Sander A. Diamond's book, *The Nazi Movement in the U.S. 1925-1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974) suffers from similar confusion. The introductory section is dedicated principally to the DAI (pp. 33-81), a line of thought that has practically nothing to do with the theme formulated in the book's title. From a scholarly point of view, Diamond is scarcely less superficial than Smith. (Regrettably, Diamond's book did not come to my attention until March, 1976.) Diamond's book purports to present the history of four successively interrelated Nazi organizations, namely the *Teutonia* organization (1924-1932), the *USA Gau of the Nazi Party* (1931-1933), the *Society of the Friends of the New Germany* (1933-1936), and the *American-German Bund* (1936-1941) as well as several splinter groups which were in close touch with these four. Following page 85, Diamond's book is essentially concerned with these matters (a total of 270 pages = Parts II-IV, Chapters 3-13). This main body of the book is preceded by Part I, (Chapters 1 & 2) called "Penetrating the German-American Community" which forms the basic thesis to which I shall address the bulk of my comments.

As far as the main body is concerned, the book presents much detailed information. Exactly how strong were the Nazi activists, or Bundists', as Americans have come to refer collectively to members of all four organizations mentioned above? In 1932 they amounted to about 700 (500 in the *Teutonia* and 200 in the *Gau*. See Diamond p. 95). From 1933-1936 when the Bundists enjoyed Nazi German's support, they were so factional that their influence was confined to at best the limits of membership of from five to six thousand. (Diamond, p. 146) in 1936, however, when the Bundists gained strength and reached a maximum membership of 25,000 (Diamond, p. 222), the organization rejected the support of the Reich government and the Nazi Party. Beginning in mid-1937 (Diamond, p. 281) and especially after the sentencing of Kuhn for embezzlement in New York in December, 1939, the organization declined precipitously.

Given these circumstances, one wonders whether Diamond could have been fully aware of his distorted perspectives when he included a full page picture of Kuhn as a first lieutenant in the First World War, a documentary touch that might be fitting for a Manstein or a Montgomery but hardly for this mini-Führer. In this instance, indeed, less would have been more. The eleven chapters which treat the Bundists depend for their information largely on the impounded files (Diamond, pp. 364-367), with some amplification from secondary literature. Just how dependable Diamond was in evaluating his primary information is difficult to determine. However, some conclusions can be drawn from the manner in which he performed elsewhere as will be shown in my next section.

3.

The title as well as the book jacket report solely about the Nazi movement in the United States. In the main text of his work, Diamond points out in detail that the tiny Nazi movement among the German Americans was almost completely of domestic origin and that contacts with and influences from Reich German organizations, with the exception of the *Auslandsorganisation* (AO) of the Nazi Party between the years 1931-1935, had remained minimal. On page 31 of his introduction, however, Diamond declares that he will, in addition to providing a history of the movement, furnish "a study of the ideas that prompted Germany to embark on its ill-fated adventure in the U.S." In Part I, therefore, he investigates how it resulted in an "adventure" which, according to Parts II-IV, had never happened.

In Part I, Diamond deals with matter which is completely separate from the theme suggested by his title. Perhaps he should have formulated his thesis like this: "In the Third Reich, there was a specific ideology and there was research concerning German stock populations living abroad (Auslanddeutschtum). What were the total effects of these efforts between 1933 and 1941 on the German American community?" In answering this question, of course, Diamond would not have been able to limit himself to the Bundists but would have had to investigate the influences which emanated directly from the Reich to those Americans whose mother tongue was German.

Just how totally Diamond missed this target in his Part I

can be appreciated if we consider the pathway of research he ought to have taken, namely:

- a) Which sources should have been consulted, and
- b) What specific questions should he have raised as he approached them?

The sources which were available to Diamond were of varying kinds: the unpublished records, the published primary source material, the secondary literature, and the living eye witnesses. He made no use at all of the latter. This is a serious gap but an understandable one. There is the fetish of the printed word which affects many students of contemporary history; there is also their ambition to be recognized on equal footing with historians of the more distant past, which has compelled them to rely exclusively on the written word and to disdain oral and even written communication with contemporaries. It is, however, difficult to comprehend why a letter written in 1970 by a surviving staff worker of the DAI should be considered a less reliable source than one which can be found in the DAI files.

Be that as it may, Diamond is not alone in his practice of scholarly abstinence. Margarete Boveri poses the question in her review of the *Biography of Goebbels*² by Helmut Heiber (a man who, like Diamond, was afraid of interviewing the survivors) "Why is the major portion of our historical writing about the Third Reich pursued as if it were ancient rather than contemporary history?" To be sure, the historian must skeptically check each and every oral statement of a contemporary -- but does he not have exactly the same obligation in approaching written sources, in particular those which were produced under a totalitarian regime? For, as Boveri has remarked, "it is slowly coming to people's attention that, especially under a dictatorship, a great discrepancy exists between what was written down and what actually happened."

Even more difficult to understand, however, is the fact that, just like Arthur L. Smith, and in contrast to Heiber and all the contemporary historians who deserve to be taken seriously, Diamond scarcely even tapped the wealth of available printed primary source materials. If it turns out that an organization active in the Third Reich ever did have extensive ideological influence in America, then, at the absolute least, the most important source material until 1939 would have been the

publications which it sent to America. But even on the level of secondary literature, Diamond did not make use of what is certainly the most significant book, Klaus Kipphan, *Deutsche Propaganda in den Vereinigten Staaten 1933-1941* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag, 1971).

So much for Diamond's regrettable neglect of the sources. Now let us turn to the questions which he ought to have answered at the hand of his sources:

First Question: What organizations or individuals were active among the German-Americans between 1933 and 1941, and who would qualify as supporters of a specific ethnic ideology (*Volkstumsideologie*)?

Second Question: How did these organizations differ from each other?

Third Question: With which publications was an attempt made on the part of the Reich to influence the German Americans?

The first question can be answered simply. There were primarily three:

- 1) *Der Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland* (VDA) League for Germans Living Abroad.
- 2) *Die Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* (VoMi) Liaison Office for Ethnic Germans.
- 3) *Das Deutsche Auslandinstitut* (DAI) The Institute for German Culture Abroad.

Besides these organizations, two personalities need to be mentioned:

- 4) An associate in the DAI, the city councillor and poet, Karl Götz, and...
- 5) A world traveler and writer, Colin Ross, although in the area of moral integrity, Götz differs from Ross.

The second question requires a more detailed response. Planning and administrative functions were reserved principally to the VDA. Under Dr. Hans Steinacher, the VDA sought to carry on an independent ethnic policy which, although loosely coordinated with Reich policy, was essentially independent of it. By contrast, the VoMi, a department of the SS, struggled since its inception in 1936 to gain primary responsibility for ethnic German matters. This led to Steinacher's fall from office in 1938 and eventually to subordination of the VDA and the DAI to the VoMi. Basically this meant that from that time onward the VDA

had responsibility only for practical implementation and no longer for basic policy development. In practice, however, the weight of the consolidated administrative structure of the VDA was so great that it never totally lost its independence. This was especially true as far as the U.S.A. was concerned. The overseas specialist in the VoMi at the time, a young man named Dr. Heinrich Georg Stahmer, was lacking in detailed knowledge of German America. The VDA before 1933 had collected money from the German Americans in the U.S.A., money which was to be used for German ethnic groups in Europe, but never bothered with maintaining the German language in the United States.

By the end of 1933, Steinacher had organized an office of the VDA in the United States on Staten Island. Headed by Carl-Günther Orgell, it did no more (to the best of my knowledge) than support language schools and other organizations that were trying to preserve the German language among German Americans. A modest but knowledgeable individual, Orgell held his position even after 1938. By that token he was living proof that activity of this kind by the VDA was well-known to American officials and that these activities did not serve politically and ideologically subversive goals. The appointment of a full-time professional representative in the U.S. was the most significant institutional innovation which had been made by the Reich in the United States since the inception of Nazi-supervised activities among German ethnic groups (Deutschtumsarbeit).

The VDA and the VoMi -- plus at times the AO -- were the real support organizations for genuine "Amerikaarbeit" in the Reich. But their archives and files were destroyed in the war while those of the DAI have survived. Consequently the latter now possess a source value that far exceeds the relative significance of the Institute back then.

Diamond knew of the existence of Orgell's office (see especially p. 248, also pp. 194 & 220). To determine whether and what kind of connections existed between it and the Bundists belonged at the top of his list of objectives. But what can we expect from a researcher whose knowledge of German would permit an English rendition of "Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland" as "League of (sic) Germans Abroad". And what can we expect of one who, having one-sidedly singled out, as his object of study, the DAI, has investigated it in such a

cavalier manner that he cannot even explain its juridical status as an "Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechtes" (an institution of public legitimacy) and refers to it instead as a "Verein", a club. (pp. 59-60).

And how could Diamond fail to observe that as early as 1971 Kipphan had already provided several paragraphs about the VDA as well as the "Deutsche Tafelrunde" (the German roundtable) in Cleveland, which from time to time had cooperated with it. If Diamond was of the opinion that Kipphan's exposition rendered additional investigation needless, why did he not refer his readers to it and why did he not offer a brief English summary of Kipphan's information? There can be but two answers: Either Diamond's German language ability was inadequate to decode Kipphan's book or, to be quite candid, his enormous laziness made reading the book seem superfluous.

To be sure, Kipphan's book is not without omissions, which, however, are less serious because of his much more abbreviated presentation than is the case with Diamond. Thus he missed the fact that a special booklet describing a convention on **Heimatkunde** (homeland history and topography) which had been held in Cleveland in March, 1937, and which had been co-sponsored by the VDA in cooperation with the Roundtable, was printed by the VDA publishers in Berlin. (See below). He also failed to note that the America specialist of the VDA, a former member of the German American Bund named Vennekohn (for a time in the state of Oregon), published his own press information called "Amerikadienst" for the purpose of keeping the German American press informed about the Third Reich as well as for inducing the German Americans to make efforts at maintenance of the German Language. His publisher, however, was not the VDA but a private printing press. In Germany in 1938, Vennekohn also trained a number of school teachers and young people, some of whom had been born in the United States. Nothing comparable could ever have been said about the DAI.

4.

Diamond's expose of the DAI is totally useless. The DAI served primarily as an agency for the gathering of materials and information. It scarcely ever played a role in planning, and

did even less in the area of research. Totally false is the assertion by Diamond that the DAI ever enjoyed great prestige as a research center (p. 47) and that since 1934 it functioned as a kind of "think tank" (p. 65) Virtually all of the scholarly books which the DAI published before 1936 were *not* written by its staff workers; most of them were dissertations commissioned by members of the Wissenschaftlicher Beirat (Advisory Council on Research).

Advancing to the top in the DAI immediately after the Nazi overthrow of the government, were its honorary president (chairman of the board), the Lord High Mayor of Stuttgart, Dr. Karl Strölin, and its executive director ("Leiter"), Dr. Richard Csaki, a Siebenbürger Saxon. Since Hitler had proclaimed Stuttgart the "city of the foreign Germans", Strölin, had a dual interest in the activities of the foreign Germans: as Lord Mayor of Stuttgart and as president of the Institute. The men specifically involved in performing special functions for the city of Stuttgart were the city councillor and writer, Karl Götz, and the associate city director (Beigeordneter), Heinz Könekamp, whose domain it was to handle all matters of the Germans abroad, including those of the DAI. The fact that the staff of the DAI increased rapidly to approximately 130 by 1938 was due largely to the expansion of the museum department which contributed to the overall prestige of Stuttgart. Small before 1933, it was set up in the Wilhelm's Palace as a "Memorial to the contributions made by Germans abroad".

Among the departments and sections (Referate) that came about after 1933 were a radio program which since 1937 was directed overseas by short wave reporting, and an overseas section (Überseereferat) which, however, concentrated entirely on the countries (known today as the developing countries) in full accordance with the inclinations of its director, Dr. W. Drascher. It hardly ever dealt with North America. The most noteworthy new establishment initiated in those years was the Central Office for Kinship Studies (Hauptstelle für Sippenkunde) which was under Rev. Manfred Grisebach. In the years 1937-1938, about 24 of the research centers for Kinship Studies in all parts of the Reich were now assigned to this central office. Formerly they had been maintained by the state governments and were originally sponsored by the VDA. The vast majority of these centers

were regional in nature, as can readily be recognized from their titles, such as "The Swabians Abroad" (Stuttgart, Dr. G. Späth), "Lower Saxons Abroad" (Hannover, Dr. Zimmer), "Silesians Abroad" (Breslau), etc. However, there were also some with other objectives, such as the "Research Center for the Germans Overseas" (Forschungstelle für das Überseedeschtum) (Hamburg, 1934, Dr. König) and the "Research Center for the Russian Germans" (Forschungstelle des Russlanddeutschtums) (Stuttgart, 1938, Dr. Stumpp). Nearly all of these centers were only organizationally attached and subordinated to the DAI. Their financial support came mostly from the states in which they had their centers. This enormously comprehensive undertaking followed two prongs: (1) historical research and (b) contact with those emigrants who were still living. The latter of these efforts which were well served by numerous printed "Letters from back home" (Heimatbriefe), quite naturally gave primary emphasis to the United States where, after all, a vast majority of the emigrants had gone.

For the same reasons two of the departments which had been initiated before 1933 dealt mostly with the U.S.A., namely the "Emigrant Advisory Office" under Rev. Grisebach and the "Employment Office" under Moshack. Contrary to what has been claimed, there never was such a thing as a special America Department (Amerikaabteilung).

Of course the DAI was managed nominally according to the Führerprinzip (leader principle) like every other public institution in Germany at that time. In the face of this principle, the spirit of collegueship established before 1933 under Executive Director F. Wertheimer faded from existence. It was no longer a board of departmental directors but Dr. Csaki alone who decided matters. Dr. Csaki was a highly talented, extremely knowledgeable and at the same time an unusually adroit social person. Organizationally, however, he was decidedly ungifted and also weak-willed with the result that he gave in to each and every effort of a subordinate who tried energetically to talk him into or out of anything. In a dictatorial state, this vacuum of will power could not be replaced by the collective decisions of a board of department heads. As a consequence, the departments worked almost entirely independently of each other and without knowledge of the specific plans and intentions of the other depart-

ments. Efforts to cope with the organizational confusion resulting from this lack of central planning took three forms: 1) First, the Lord Mayor's office immersed itself through its officer Könekamp into the affairs of the DAI than would normally have been the case. However, this was limited essentially to such matters as were dictated by common goals: the museum, homes for the Foreign Germans, etc.

2) Secondly, in 1938 the many departments of the Institute were consolidated into four major departments (Hauptabteilungen).

3) And finally, during the war when the notion of a weak director had become intolerable, Dr. Csaki was demoted and replaced on July 14, 1941, by Dr. Hermann Rüdiger.

This survey shows that the operations which were conducted from 1933-1941 by one department of the DAI can neither be understood as the implementation of a master plan nor as the approach to an objective by one department with knowledge of the other departments.

Incidentally, there was only one staff member of the DAI who had been a member of the old guard, that is, a party member from the pre-1933 days. He was the former janitor, Adolf Platten, who after 1933 initially became a so-called Betriebszellenobmann, i.e. the party representative responsible for the social and political problems of the whole staff, but later a department head (Personalchef). In 1933, and naturally in subsequent years, most of the department heads joined the party. Nevertheless, Platten was so unorthodox that as late as 1940 a man by the name of Dr. Eppelsheimer, who was married to a non-Aryan woman, and who later became the founder and director of the Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt, was still able to continue as a department head (librarian). It should also be mentioned that Adolf Platten deserves the credit for removing the archives of the DAI while there was yet time in 1943 to the Black Forest, an action which Dr. Rüdiger, the director who had entered the party in 1933, considered to be an act of defeatism.

Of the five men who according to Diamond (p. 48) joined the DAI between 1923 and 1932 and supposedly wrote many racially-oriented reports, there was one (Moshack) who had a pragmatic, but not a research-oriented mind; another (Lohr) did not join the DAI until 1936 and neither Lohr, Moshack, nor Rüdiger had anything to do with the removal of the Jewish executive director,

F. Wertheimer, as Diamond alleges (pp. 48, 65). As had already happened in the case of A.K. Smith, Diamond also failed to bother investigating the reorganization of the DAI into departments.³ Otherwise he would have noted that the DAI did not get its own research department until 1936. Its influential head at the time, J.J. Beyer, who soon thereafter served a stint as chief ideologist of the DAI, is not even mentioned by Diamond. On pages 50-51, Diamond reports that the new president of the DAI, the Lord High Mayor Strölin, had fired Wertheimer in 1934, in other words one year after the Nazi takeover, and then appointed a string of Nazis to the DAI. Wertheimer was removed already at the beginning of 1933 by storm troopers. Before 1936, not a single new department head had been appointed.

And now to the third question, which concerns publications. Archives and files have been preserved only from the DAI, not from the VDA and VoMi. A historian cannot be faulted if he makes extensive use of materials which have by chance survived. But only if 1) he conscientiously admonishes his readers at the outset that the DAI materials appear disproportionately important because they alone escaped destruction in the bombings and 2) only if he conscientiously studies as his first order of business the printed documents and then also the files. Diamond is guilty of neglect on both counts. He rummaged about industriously in the files and quoted archive numbers of twelve digits thereby suggesting thoroughness. But the real medium by which public opinion among the Germans in America could have been influenced at that time, namely the publications, were left almost entirely untouched. The most significant publications for disseminating ideology to influence the "Germans Abroad" were the "Amerikadienst" (America Service) of the VDA and the booklet *Deutsche Heimat in Amerika*, a report concerning the first German-American Homeland Convention of March 6-7, 1937 in Cleveland, Ohio.⁴ As its subtitle suggests, this booklet resulted from a convention which occurred in Cleveland in 1937. The local sponsoring organization was the German Roundtable while the personality behind it was Dr. Norbert Zimmer, a geographer and journalist from Hannover who was still assigned to the VDA as director of the regional research center "Lower Saxons Abroad". Later he joined the DAI. Among those present was Fritz Kuhn. Steinacher sent his voice greetings on a phonograph

record and later the VDA published the lectures of the convention in book form, among them those by N. Zimmer and Heinz Kloss. This booklet as well as all the magazines and press information releases which were issued by the VDA at that time have remained unused, nay, not even mentioned.

But this is not the only scholarly omission of the kind made by Sander Diamond. Two important books by Karl Götz, *Brüder über dem Meer* (1938), which was relatively widely read among the German Americans, and his *Deutsche Leistung in Amerika* (1940) are mentioned by Diamond only in a footnote on page 196 obviously without his ever having made any effort to read them. The writings of Colin Ross who was no less well-known, in particular his *Unser Amerika* (1936), are likewise but curtly mentioned without any attempt at analysis (Diamond, pp. 66, 224). Here again I am convinced he never had them in his hands. His single quote from a Ross book (pp. 224-225) was taken from the congressional Hearings.

Certainly Diamond's most relevant items concerning the DAI would have been its periodicals, especially:

- a) *Der Auslandsdeutsche* (1918 ff., bi-monthly, since 1939 title changed to *Deutschtum im Ausland*), contained among its regional columns (Länderberichte) one concerning the United States, reports of the annual conventions of the DAI,⁵ and several special issues as well as numerous individual articles which dealt with the United States.
- b) *Auslandsdeutsche Volksforschung* (1937 ff., since 1939 title is simply *Volksforschung*), a quarterly with many U.S.A. articles.
- c) *Jahrbuch für auslandsdeutsche Sippenkunde* (1936 ff.)
- d) *Pressekorrespondenz, (PK)*, 1919 ff. The mailing list included among others the entire German-language press in America. Therefore a very thorough investigation of how this instrument served the purposes of the DAI was indeed called for.⁶

Beyond these, the ADI published other special items, such as the bibliography of the DAI's publications on the 25th anniversary of its inception,⁷ as well as an anonymous pamphlet entitled "Vorschläge für die sippenkundliche Erfassung der reichsdeutschen Amerikawanderer des 19. Jahrhunderts" (1939) which would have been of particular interest to Sander Diamond.

Although Diamond determined on page 66 that the DAI was never assigned affairs of the Reich's cultural policy abroad

and never realized such objectives, he nevertheless ascribed to it comprehensive plans (pages 195-196) for unifying the German element in the United States. About 1937, according to Diamond, the America specialists-- Kloss, Lohr, and Moshack -- decided that they would no longer pursue their efforts at unification directly, but would work through a) the Steuben Society and b) the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation. Every single word in that statement is totally false. I spent the fall of 1936 and the whole year of 1937 in the United States at the invitation of the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation. Lohr did not join the DAI until 1936, and then only as my deputy in the library. After I returned, this led to a painful breach between Lohr and me. Moshack was from 1924-1929 head of the Employment Office (Auskunfts-und Vermittlungsstelle) of the DAI and departed thereafter.

Any cooperation between the writer Lohr and the quite non-literary Moshack was unthinkable because of their very different personalities. My contacts with the Schurz Foundation dated from my stay in America in 1930-1931. Neither Lohr nor I ever had anything to do with the Steuben Society. Of course, Sander Diamond makes his fantasy credible by the trick of citing not only an address by Moshack to the Steuben Society but also my "America Memorandum" so that the reader is led to believe that Diamond's allegations came from me. There exists in that memorandum none of what Diamond reports.

5.

That Sander Diamond ascribes to me the role of a key person in that period of time for the DAI (pp. 68-73) can perhaps be explained on the one hand by the suggestiveness of the title of my book *Um die Einigung des Deutschamerikanertums: Die Geschichte einer unvollendeten Volksgruppe* (1937) (About the Unification of the German Americans: The History of an Unfinished Ethnic Group). Perhaps also by the fact that he found such an allegation in A.L. Smith (1965, p. 52), whose lack of scholarly reliability he did not perceive (See, for instance, Diamond, pp. 22, 65, 73). Diamond has a lot to say about my *Einigung* and about my *Volksgruppenrecht in den Vereinigten Staaten*, I (1940) and II (1942). In the event that he really has read them, then he reports imprecisely because what he writes about their content is often fanciful. However, there is one thing he could

never have done: reproach them as the products of Nazi ideology. Nevertheless, he dredges up a charge that I was too slick to drop Nazism in my readers' laps but that I discretely sluiced it into my books (Diamond, pp. 70-71). Apparently I concealed my true intentions so completely that I was charged publicly in the DAI journal, **Auslanddeutsche Volksforschung**, for not having investigated in my book **Um die Einigung** the Jewish and Free Mason influences on the German Americans.⁸ Furthermore, Professor W.J. Cahnman, writing in a 1948 issue of the **American Journal of Sociology**, issued a challenge that "a commission consisting of a historian, a sociologist, and an expert in public administration... be formed to produce an American version of Kloss's book." H.L. Mencken wrote to me concerning the book that "at all events" it must be translated. For Sander Diamond (p. 69), however, my work illuminated "the deterioration of German historical empiricism under the N. S. regime."

If Diamond's energy and/or his language ability had served him well enough to really study the book **Einigung**, he would have observed what was the central thread running through my material: that efforts at unity among the German Americans, then as previously, were meaningful only if they could set as their goal the incorporation of all the various philosophical viewpoints of the different groups, and that the objective of unity would be hopeless if it had to be achieved under the banner of just one philosophical viewpoint, be that a liberal one (such as the National Alliance) or a national socialist one. Diamond could also have found this point of view in two articles which I published in those years, both of which are listed in my autobiography which appeared in **Europa Ethnica, Vierteljahresschrift für Nationalitäten fragen**, 28 (1971), p. 60 (nos. 132 & 134):

1. "Überlegungen zum zweiten Deutschamerikanischen Kongress in Philadelphia am 6. Oktober, 1933," **Volk und Reich**, Berlin, 1 (1934), 67-70.
2. "Deutschamerikanischer Querschnitt. Vereinsdeutsche, Nationalsozialisten, Kirchendeutsche," **Die Evangelische Diaspora**, Leipzig, 16 (Jan., 1935), 166-174.

Except for the above-mentioned two books, Sander Diamond has read none of my publications, neither the two items just cited, nor any of the many others which are available to any

scholar, for example:

1. "Die Volkszählungslisten der Vereinigten Staaten and ihre Bedeutung für die deutsche Sippenkunde," *Jahrbuch für Sippenkunde des Deutschtums im Ausland*, Stuttgart, 3 (1938), 136-142.
2. "Gegenwart und Zukunft des Deutschtums der Vereinigten Staaten," *Deutschtum im Ausland*, Zeitschrift des DAI, Stuttgart, 21 (August, 1938), 486-496.
3. "Die Unberührten, die Verlorenen, die Ringended," (Beitrag zum Sonderheft "Stufenjahre in der Entwicklung des Deutschtums der Vereinigten Staaten"), *Deutschtum im Ausland*, Stuttgart, 21 (April, 1938), 19-24.
4. "Über die mittelbare karthographische Erfassung der jüngeren deutschen Volksinseln in den Vereinigten Staaten," *Deutsches Archiv für Landes- und Volksforschung*, Leipzig, 3 (1939), 453-474.
5. "Ausgewählte Kapitel zur Geschichte der deutschen Aufbauarbeit in den Vereinigten Staaten," *Deutsche Kultur im Leben der Völker, Mitteilungen der Akademie zur wissenschaftlichen Erforschung und zur Pflege des Deutschtums*, Munich, Heft 3 (1940), 334-370.

Instead of these publications, Diamond quotes (pp. 69, 71) from my treatise entitled "Volkstums- und Rassenfragen" which has remained unpublished in the files. An author has the right to be judged by historians primarily on the basis of his published works, especially if that judgment concerns his participation in propaganda efforts abroad. Obviously foreigners could not have read his unpublished texts. Nevertheless, in 1943 I did publish an article concerning the situation of the blacks in the United States.⁹ Its hypothesis was that a viable, academically well-educated upper class was emerging among the blacks, a development that ran totally contrary to the prevailing prejudices of the Third Reich. In that same article I also offered the viewpoint that among the German Americans, it was by no means the nordic element that dominated but that an "ostisch" (i.e. an alpine) element was of equal importance. Here again, as so often Diamond seems to engage in his flightly collage-like patchwork, skipping over what does not fit into his theme, and in this instance even inventing things such as that the DAI glorified the German Americans as Viking types & Diamond, 00. 72-73).

A lack of precision seems to be an ubiquitous characteristic of Diamond's method. Thus he quotes the title of my Pennsylvania German anthology of 1936 incorrectly (p. 69) and maintains that my book *Das Nationalitätenrecht in den Vereinigten Staaten* (1963) was a new edition of my books on *Volksgruppenrecht* (1940-1942). Although Carl Wittke was absolutely positive about my book *Einigung* (1937), Diamond approaches Wittke's review in such a way (p. 70) as to compel the reader to think that he had been derogatory about it. Carl Wittke was so positive toward me that he sent me a personal evaluation of my Atlas project which was to be used as a preface. Unfortunately, however, it was never published.

Diamond likes contradictions no less than inexactness. At one point he elucidates that the staff workers of the DAI never shared the naive opinion of Colin Ross that the German element in the United States was as large and as important as the Anglo-Saxon element. At another point, he charges them with this very accusation, notably in connection with the Atlas project. Diamond allows himself to cast some particularly dark shadows on the staff workers of the DAI who were then collaborating on what turned out to be my 1974 publication, *Atlas der im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert entstandenen deutschen Siedlungen in den USA* (Marburg: Elwert, 1974). In this instance he turns into a fantasy-ridden journalist who on pages 72-73 alone makes some fifteen false charges. According to Diamond, I was directing a staff whose task it was to reinterpret American history. For example, I was making American war heroes out of obscure privates¹⁰ and I was having racial maps made of cities like St. Louis, New York, Chicago, and of towns like Salem (sic) and Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, of Dresden, Hanover, and Berlin in Ohio, of Herman and Hamburg in Missouri, etc. He claimed that numerous excerpts (I assume he means partial maps) were at the time being published in journals.

Answer: I detailed the scholarly objectives and methodology of the Atlas project in an article published in 1939¹¹ and any impartial individual could look it up and see that the Atlas of 1974 executes precisely the program plans of research that were developed in 1939, and that the Atlas has nothing to do with Diamond's wild allegations.

Except for the maps of the Middle West and of Texas which

were produced with strict scholarly controls in 1939, not a single map ("excerpts") had ever been published. The suggestion that an atlas, which had to portray between five and six thousand entries, could have been improved by rewriting the histories of many small towns is just as supercilious as the false statement that the Atlas was supposed to become a "Nazi History of German-America." Moreover, plans for the Atlas never called for a series of many volumes as Diamond claims (p. 72). Actually I did lay plans for one or more volumes to show the non-German ethnic groups -- maps depicting the Czechs, the Mexicans and other groups and which may be still available in Stuttgart. We also considered publishing a special volume of maps of the Pennsylvania Germans which had been prepared by Professor Emil Meynen in 1931-33 with the help of a Rockefeller grant, but these were later bombed. The only co-workers who were at my disposal in the DAI after 1941 were the staff members of the "Publication Center Stuttgart-Hamburg" (Publikationsstelle Stuttgart-Hamburg, about which see above) and they were more than overburdened with editing and checking the more than thirty booklets of the Publikationsstelle.

In connection with his attacks on the Atlas, Diamond betrays, moreover, his lack of knowledge concerning basic German American facts. For example (p. 72) he lumps together all of the Pennsylvania Germans with those 10-20% who are members of pacifist sects and have more or less preserved their peasant way of life.

At this juncture I want to explain why in 1938-1939 I was able to volunteer for a proposal which called for an overseas office of the DAI in the United States, a proposal which Diamond never heard of even though Kipphan mentions it. Since 1932 I had been directing the library of the DAI. In 1935, the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, whose leaders I had met on my trip to America in 1930-31, invited me to spend a year in their service to develop a program for an institute planned by the Foundation for research on German America. In September of 1936 my wife and I landed in the United States where I remained until December of 1937. Colleagues later told me that they were surprised that I did not stay there but instead returned to the Reich. However, the Foundation was not in a position to offer me any real, permanent job possibilities. Executive Secretary

Wilbur K. Thomas who after World War I had performed great service for the sake of Germany as director of the Quaker food program, was a stranger to all scholarly activity. Shortly before my arrival, therefore, Thomas tried to withdraw his invitation and left no doubts during my stay in the United States that he had no intention of making any practical applications of the results of my investigations.¹² On the other side of the coin, my position in the DAI worsened decisively during my stay in America. My book *Wort und Zahl* was seized by the Gestapo and burned. My book *Um die Einigung des Deutschamerikanertums* was severely criticized in a DAI journal for my failure to investigate the Jewish and Free Mason influences on German Americana.¹³ In August of 1937, I was informed that someone else had taken over the directorship of the library and that I was being reassigned to other endeavors. Shortly thereafter, a handwritten letter from Director Csaki, dated August 30, 1937, admitted that this humiliation "also" had political implications.¹⁴

After my return I was appointed a consultant on America without a single one of the other staff members concerned with the United States being assigned to work under me. When the DAI decentralized into departments, my position was subordinated to the department for *Sippenkunde* (kinship studies).

My goal of establishing a research office for German American studies within the framework of the Schurz Foundation seemed to me hopeless. Therefore, it now had to be founded from within the Reich and that meant I had to get myself an assignment to be sent over there. Obviously such a project had to be approved by the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (the Liaison Office for Ethnic Germans). The research program which I proposed was of a very modest nature: publication of statistics, bibliographies and maps, in short, the elementary ground-laying work on which subsequent research could have been undertaken along the lines of my published¹⁵ as well as my unpublished proposals. Sent abroad for such non-party work, I hoped then soon to be able to burn the bridges to the Reich and to stay over there for good. As my assistant co-worker I had selected a teacher and genealogist, Gotthilf Ackermann.¹⁶

Naturally I never mentioned my secret aspirations in the DAI and asked myself the question when the book by Arthur Smith appeared (1965) whether or not I had made my intentions clear

at that time to my friend Ackermann. In response to my written inquiry to Ackermann he wrote on September 15, 1965:

I remember well the plan which you mention in your postscript. That you intended, if the opportunity presented itself, to desert to the United States and cut off your associations with the Nazi state bothered me at first. But after several conversations in respect to our mutual attitude toward national socialism, it seemed perfectly logical. You made the observation at the time: "National Socialism is accomplished Bolshevism." Standing in the way of my joining you in your plan of action were some major obstacles. At the time I had a large family with only the modest income of a small town school teacher and I still had considerable debts. In the face of continued pressure from my colleagues to join the party, I "escaped" by taking up genealogy.

Around the beginning of 1939, the DAI applied for a currency export permit for me which, in spite of its approval by the VoMi, was never issued. Soon afterwards, war broke out. I was recalled from my position and up to the time I was drafted in February, 1943, I was assigned to a variety of tasks in the DAI, occasionally even as a deputy of the new director, Dr. Rüdiger. Nevertheless, reverses for me were not yet over. When I received a teaching appointment for nationality studies at the University of Tübingen, I had to cease lecturing after only a few months because of "political unreliability." Policies of the government on war and especially regarding the Jews had strengthened my commitment to the opposition.¹⁷ One of my poems from this period dated December 18, 1942, reads as follows:

**Höre die Töne, die röhrenden, gellenden Wahnsinns
Spüre die Leiden, die rührenden, fühlender Frauen.
Sinke im innersten Herzen zusammen gleich sterbendem
Kinde.**

**Täglich sollst du die fressenden höllischen Feuer
erschauen,
Stündlich durchspülen dich eisige Schauer der nassen-
den Winde.**

**Nie nie leid'st du genug. Ach ein Blinder
Fände vielleicht (im innersten Herzen) die Flügel,**

**Fortzufliegen zum fernen, von Morden gemarterten
Ort.**

**Sehend bin ich, ich weiss, weiss, dass es mich hinder'
An der Vereinung im Leid wie höhnisch gezogener
Zügel.**

**Aber in Trauer krümmt sich mein Geist und klagt
über Mord.**

**Deutscher so heiss ich, -- ich ward wohl ehrlos nicht
heillos.**

**Mörden schalten und ich darf selbst ein Scheltwort
nicht sagen.**

**Feige gemeucheltes Blut entweiht unsern heiligen
Schild.**

**Einmal fliege aus meiner Verzweiflung Willen ein
Pfeil los,**

**Treffe den Dämon, den Treiber, den Lenker auf
Luzifers Wagen:**

**Bitter erstrahlt in der Dämm' rung Germanias ent-
düstertes Bild.**

This poem is reproduced here only as documentation of a rent soul. Its literary value falls below that of other poems by me which have been published.¹⁸ The concluding turns of phrase with reference to an arrow were not intended only rhetorically. I had at the time in my desk the draft of a polemic "Back to national socialism" (Zurück zum nationalen Sozialismus) which called for toppling the government and hanging the leaders of the SS. Some months later I sent it to a number of individuals.¹⁹ It was certainly a quixotic but just as certainly a dangerous effort to interfere with developments. My plan of 1938/1939 for setting up an overseas office of the DAI in the United States provides an example of just how difficult and even impossible it is to judge on the basis of written documents alone the plans and proposals of a political nature which run their course under a totalitarian regime.

Earlier I said that Sander Diamond had not interviewed the living eye witnesses. Is this statement of mine not rendered false by his words of thanks in his foreword (p. 9) for the assistance I gave him as well as by his textual quotes from a letter of mine not to mention quotes from my appended 1965 memoran-

dum "Die Amerikaarbeit des DAI"? Sander Diamond wrote to me on December 17, 1971 that he had been working for three years on a history of the German-American Volksbund. In this connection he asked me a few questions, none of which had reference to my personal past. I thought his questions were best answered by sending the America Memorandum, to which I appended a few brief comments about the history of the DAI. (letter of February 2, 1972)

On the basis of my memorandum, Diamond honestly was obliged to rewrite the entire first part of his book or leave it out. Instead he was content with a few editorial and cosmetic alterations. One cannot eschew the suspicion that he was less concerned with telling the truth than with slandering the DAI. Thus, for example, at one obscure point (p. 183) he retreats cautiously from A.L. Smith. At another point (p. 61) he tries in part to mask the fact that like Smith he has not studied the publications of the DAI by listing titles lifted from my memorandum. Even when he does refer to my memorandum, he proceeds inaccurately, for example, when he quotes it as evidence that the employment of Gissibl in the DAI had never been considered (p.184). In fact, his appointment in the DAI was prevented only by the outbreak of the war.

My memorandum gave Diamond the opportunity to turn a clever trick. By quoting it and my letter repeatedly, as mentioned above, even on questions not at all touched upon, and then by publicly thanking me in his introduction for having "generously" helped him, he elicits from the reader the desired impression that I knew the contents of his book and that I had no objection to it. And when his book did appear, he sent me no announcement of publication which would have granted me the opportunity to order the book immediately.

What Diamond has accomplished in the formulation of his publication is too complex to be adequately rebutted in a few pages. I am neither able to mention each mistake which Diamond made nor am I able to check every printed or unpublished written comment which I am said to have made between 1933 and 1941. My situation at the time was that of a complicated young man with a complicated fate in a complicated period of time. I wish someone would give me the opportunity to write my autobiography which would make all the apparent or real

contradictions of my existence more comprehensible. In it I could explain my writings, the semantics of which are sometimes difficult for today's reader to comprehend. There would be an explanation of how in 1938-1939 I prepared for emigration to the United States and how during the war I tried to awaken resistance to the regime by means of a chain letter. These are facts which Sander Diamond learned in part from my America Memorandum but chose not to mention. Included in this self-portrait also would be the contents of an unpublished book manuscript *Volk im Raum* from the year 1930²⁰ which contains the true rationale and not just the generative seeds of my plan for an America atlas.

It happens every day that somebody risks doing a piece of research without command of the tools necessary for the undertaking. It is not an everyday matter, however, that a reputable publishing house would publish such manuscripts virtually unscrutinized. Referees for the publisher perhaps could not detect the human weaknesses of Sander Diamond; but there were ample scholarly weaknesses, some of them obvious; for example, there is the fact that the whole of Part I does not fit with the main text of the book, and that Diamond uses no primary sources for his Part I.

A publisher which feels any scholarly responsibility toward its audience can reach but one conclusion based on the above analysis which by no means brings forth *all* of the absurdities of Part I: And that is that it withdraw this book from the market.

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NOTES

1 The English term "Bundist" comes from "German-American Bund," a translation of "Amerikadeutscher Volksbund."

2 See *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Oct. 10, 1962), p. 9.

3 Concerning this, see Kloss's article "Deutsches Auslands Institut" *Handwörterbuch des Grenz-und Auslandsdeutschtums*, II (Breslau: Hirt, 1936), p. 242.

4 *Deutsche Heimat in Amerika* (Berlin: Grenze u. Ausland, 1937), 60 pp.

5 See especially the reports of the DAI conventions in *Der Auslandsdeutsche*, 21 (1938), 402-419 and 22 (1939), 423-462.

6 There was also an annual *Bildkalender* (1925 ff.) and an annual *Bibliographie des Deutschtums im Ausland* (1937 ff.).

7 *Verzeichnis der vom Deutschen Ausland-Institut Stuttgart, 1917-1941*, a publications list (Stuttgart: 1942), 21 pages (See *Bibliographie des Deutschtums im Ausland*. Beiheft 1).

8 Cf. footnote 12, below.

9 "Die Entstehung einer Oberschicht unter den Negern in den Vereinigten Staaten," *Volksforschung*, Stuttgart, 6 (1943), 102-123.

10 My true research method is illustrated by my article "Kapitel zur Geschichte der deutschen Aufbauarbeit in den Vereinigten Staaten" (1940), see above.

11 See my article "Über die mittelbare kartographische Erfassung der jüngeren deutschen Volksinseln in den Vereinigten Staaten" (1939).

12 On the day of my arrival in Philadelphia he told me he thought some brochures with themes such as "German Organ Building in America," or "German Bell Casting in America" might be appropriate. When I paid him a visit at the time of my departure, he repeated this view verbatim. He has never taken cognizance of the results of my research or my proposals.

13 See *Auslanddeutsche Volksforschung*, 1 (1937), p. 204. This passage is missing in the abbreviated reproduction of that review in *Bibliographie des Deutschtums im Ausland*, 2 (1937), p. 126.

14 "Developments of a political nature in the Institute also had something to do with how I reached my decision. I can only say this much to you, that I have allowed them to influence me out of a certain concern for you." Csaki.

15 Heinz Kloss, "Deutschamerikanische Geschichtsforschung," *Deutsche Heimat* (1937), pp. 46-54, footnote 3. The same appeared also in English in the *American German Review*.

16 Articles by Ackermann have appeared in the *Sippenkundliches Jahrbuch* of the DAI. See also his book, *Auswanderung aus Unterschlechtbach*.

17 As a staff worker of the DAI it was possible for me to read foreign newspapers, in particular, the *Bund* from Berne.

18 See my book *Wort und Zahl* (Stuttgart: 1929) and my contributions to the yearbooks *Brot und Wein*, Stuttgart, 7 (1959) and *Der Kranich*, Stuttgart, 6 (1964).

19 They were, among others, Rechtsanwalt Dr. Werner Hasselblatt, Professor Walter Kuhn, Alfred Petrau, Georg Schmidt-Rohr, Dr. Franz Thierfelder, A. Hillen-Ziegfeld and publisher Kurt O. Vowinckel.

20 See No. 77 b of my auto-bibliography in *Europa Ethnica*.

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