

Harriet Scharnberg

## THE A AND P OF PROPAGANDA

### Associated Press and Nazi Photojournalism

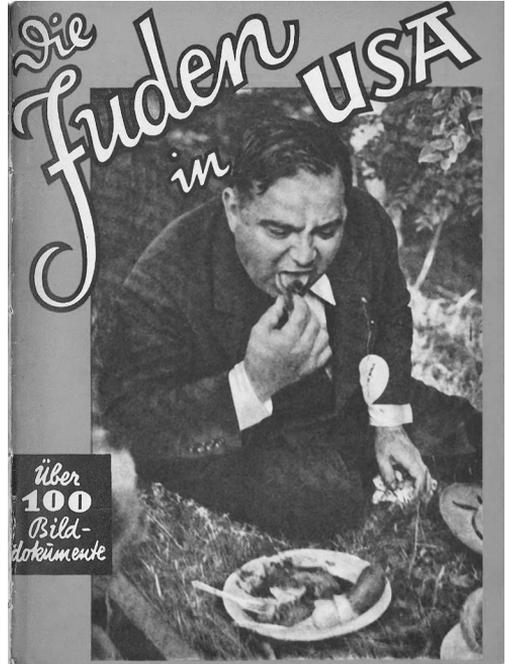
Close scrutiny of the inflammatory Nazi pamphlet ›The Jews in the USA. More than 100 pictures‹ from 1939 reveals a startling finding: According to the copyright note in small print on the inside cover, over half of the 105 photographs come from the American news and picture agency Associated Press (AP). And this was by no means an isolated case.

This article investigates the role and position of the Associated Press in the system of Nazi photojournalism.<sup>1</sup> Previous research on the subject is negligible. While there is occasional mention of a Berlin subsidiary of the AP picture service until around the middle of the 1930s, after this the trail goes cold.<sup>2</sup> And the situation during the war is

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1 I am greatly obliged to Cornelia Brink and Michael Wildt from the academic advisory board of this journal and Annette Vowinckel from the Centre for Contemporary History for their extremely fruitful advice and suggestions over the course of the peer review process.

2 The terms ›photo agency‹, ›picture service‹ and ›(news) picture agency/bureau‹ are used here synonymously. On contemporary German terminology: Willy Stiewe, Bildvertrieb und Weltpresse, in: *Gebrauchsfotografie* 51 (1944) issue 3/4, pp. 21-25. On photo agencies in Germany in the first half of the 20th century in general: Diethart Kerbs, Die Epoche der Bildagenturen. Zur Geschichte der Pressefotografie in Berlin von 1900 bis 1933, in: Diethart Kerbs/Walter Uka/Brigitte Walz-Richter (eds), *Die Gleichschaltung der Bilder. Pressefotografie 1930–1936*, Berlin 1983, pp. 32-73; Bernd Weise, Zur Geschichte der Bildagenturen in Deutschland, in: Wolfgang Streubel (ed.), *Fotovisionen 2000. Neue Bildtechnologien – Neue Perspektiven der Kommunikation zwischen Bildanbieter und Bildnutzer*, Berlin 1995, pp. 8-13; Anja Fechter/Jürgen Wilke, Produktion von Nachrichtenbildern. Eine Untersuchung der Bilderdienste der Nachrichtenagenturen, in: Jürgen Wilke (ed.), *Nachrichtenproduktion im Mediensystem. Von den Sport- und Bilderdiensten bis zum Internet*, Cologne 1998, pp. 55-119; Matthias Bruhn, Tarife für das Sichtbare. Eine kurze Geschichte der Bildagenturen, in: *Fotogeschichte* 105 (2007), pp. 12-25; Malte Zierenberg, Die Ordnung der Agenturen. Zur Verfertigung massenmedialer Sichtbarkeit im Pressewesen 1900–1940, in: Annelie Ramsbrock/Annette Vowinckel/Malte Zierenberg (eds), *Fotografien im 20. Jahrhundert. Verbreitung und Vermittlung*, Göttingen 2013, pp. 44-65.



Hans Diebow (ed.), *Die Juden in USA. Über 100 Bilddokumente* [The Jews in the USA. More than 100 Pictures], Berlin 1939

suspect through and through. Rumours that the AP photographers working on the German side of the front had been ›American war correspondents in German uniform‹ even found their way into works of scholarship, though this remarkable state of affairs was neither questioned nor explained.<sup>3</sup> No studies to date have been able to explain the disturbing connection – sometimes, as I shall demonstrate, in one and the same person – between the American picture agency and Nazi visual propaganda.

I will presently provide this very explanation, drawing on a wide range of sources – newspapers, press photos, published and unpublished sources concerning Nazi control of the illustrated press, and interviews, letters and biographies of historical actors. First, however, I will examine the agency's part in the Nazi visual propaganda machine, looking at a number of examples that illustrate the various functions the agency fulfilled. AP not only supplied American pictures for Nazi visual propaganda, as in the instance mentioned above (1.). It also had photographers working in the German Reich and dispatched their images around the world via its head office: the agency

3 Arthur von Brietzke, *Vor die Linse mußten sie alle...*, in: Kerbs/Uka/Walz-Richter, *Gleichschaltung der Bilder* (fn. 2), pp. 18-31, here p. 30. Von Brietzke was in charge of the laboratory at AP's Berlin bureau from 1932 to 1941. Texts based on unverified passages from this interview include the unreliable entry on AP in: Miriam Y. Arani, *Fotografische Selbst- und Fremdbilder von Deutschen und Polen im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–45. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Region Wielkopolska*, vol. 2, Hamburg 2008, pp. 824-825.

worked as a foreign correspondence news photo bureau (2.). AP pictures taken under German rule also figured in the illustrated press of the Nazi regime. Here they served among other things to illustrate the ›solution to the Jewish question‹ in the General Government. Other photos became veritable icons of National Socialist visual propaganda (3.). In order to understand this practice, we must first consider the legal basis on which AP's activities in the Reich were founded: to avert the closure of the picture service, the agency was obliged to adhere to the *Schriftleitergesetz* (Editors' Law) from 1935 onwards. In practice this meant that it was subject to the same *Gleichschaltung* (forcible coordination) as the German news picture agencies (4.).

New research raises new questions. Did AP achieve the objectives it was pursuing in producing pictures in the National Socialist press system and supplying these regulated images to the German and international press? This question, which could suggest an alternative perspective, could only be answered with the help of the agency's archive. It is not the subject of the present article, but could be a starting point for future research.

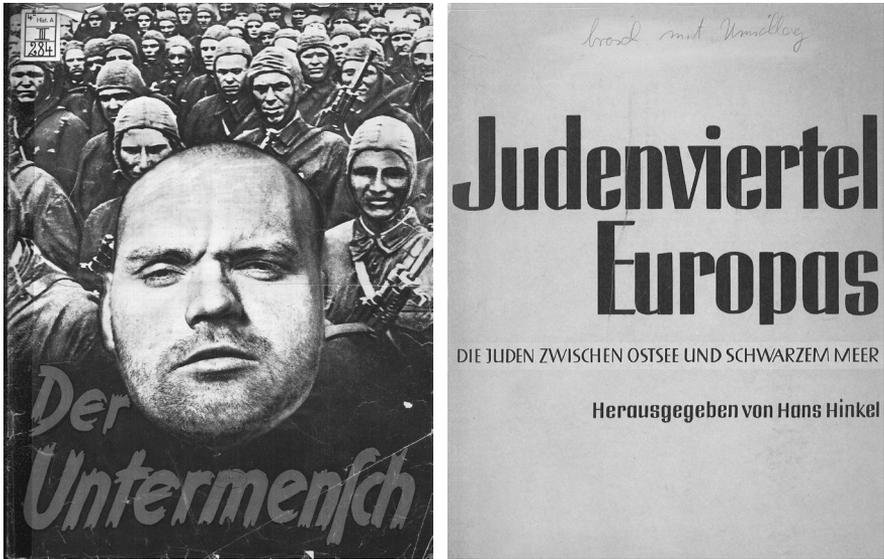
## 1. American Pictures for the Nazi Press

Pictures supplied by AP are to be found in inflammatory National Socialist pamphlets as well as in the Nazi illustrated daily press. From 1935, German editors were obliged to name the authors of the published photographs, making it easy to identify AP pictures.<sup>4</sup> In *The Jews in the USA*, AP was the leading supplier. In the SS training brochure *The Subhuman* (1942) AP came third, and in Hans Hinkel's *Jewish Quarters in Europe* (1939) it was in second place. None of these were obscure publications. *The Jews in the USA* went through multiple editions, with almost 500,000 copies printed by the mid-1940s. Its publisher, Hans Diebow, was one of the central figures of Nazi photojournalism. As photo editor at the NSDAP-owned publishing house Eher, he was in charge of the picture material for the papers *Der Angriff*, *Völkischer Beobachter* (VB) and *Illustrierter Beobachter* (IB). From the end of 1934 to 1938 he also led the Commission of Photojournalists in the Reich Association of the German Press (*Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse*, RDP). This placed him at the head of the professional organisation to which anyone wanting to work as a photojournalist in Nazi Germany had to be admitted.

Heinrich Himmler's heavy involvement in editorial matters gives some indication of the significance attached to the SS training brochure *The Subhuman*.<sup>5</sup> First printed in German in March 1942, by mid-1943 there were already 3.8 million copies of the

4 Urhebervermerk unter Bildern und Zeichnungen [Copyright Notice under Pictures and Drawings], in: *Deutsche Presse*, 9 February 1935, p. 69.

5 Details here and in the following taken from: Josef Ackermann, *Heinrich Himmler als Ideologe*, Göttingen 1970, p. 212; Peter Witte et al. (eds), *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42*, Hamburg 1999, pp. 345, 381, 393, 437; Psychagogik, in: *Mittelweg* 36 15 (2006) issue 2, pp. 2-7.



Der Untermensch [The Subhuman], ed. by Reichsführer SS/SS Head Office, Berlin n.d. [1942]  
 Hans Hinkel (ed.), *Judenviertel Europas. Die Juden zwischen Ostsee und Schwarzem Meer*  
 [Jewish Quarters in Europe. The Jews between the Baltic and the Black Sea], Berlin 1939

propaganda brochure in circulation. Some 650,000 more were produced in 15 other languages – the brochure was also intended for the training of the ›foreign volunteers and conscripts‹ in the *Waffen SS*. The photography in Hans Hinkel's *Judenviertel Europas* occupies considerably less space than the text.<sup>6</sup> In terms of conceptual reach, however, the narrative of the illustrations extends well beyond the geographical area proclaimed in the title. Hinkel also highlighted ›Weltjudentum‹ (›world Jewry‹) in the US by augmenting his visual narrative with photographs of Fiorello LaGuardia, Albert Einstein and Jackie Coogan – and this is where AP came in, as we shall presently see.

German propaganda invariably issued a diagnosis of ›world Jewry‹ activities in those places where there was political or journalistic opposition to the domestic and foreign policy of the regime. ›World Jewry‹ propaganda against the US peaked in 1938/39 and again from the spring of 1941. From at least the beginning of 1942, the Nazis viewed ›world Jewry‹ as the connecting link behind all allied nations with whom the Reich was at war. But to visually construct and exhibit (›expose‹) this purported ›world Jewry‹, Nazi photojournalism was reliant on pictures it could not readily produce

6 On Hinkel, cf. Alan Steinweis, Hans Hinkel and German Jewry, 1933–1941, in: *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 38 (1993), pp. 209–219. On the significance of the volume and its photographs, cf. also the assessment by Dan Michman, *The Emergence of Jewish Ghettos during the Holocaust*, Cambridge 2011, p. 63.

itself. German photojournalists did still go on reportage trips in the 1930s. But their pictures did not suffice to satisfy the constant demand, and nor were the photographers able to develop the kind of rapport with their protagonists that anti-Semitic investigative ›behind-the-scenes‹ pictures required. Instead, Nazi photojournalism availed itself above all of two channels to access up-to-date images from the West: British and American newspapers, whose pictures it copied, and British and American agencies, to whose pictures it subscribed.

The British-American company Keystone View, Wide World Photo, founded by the *New York Times* (NYT), and Pacific & Atlantic Photos, run by the *Chicago Tribune* in cooperation with the *New York Daily News*, had founded Berlin subsidiaries of their picture services in the 1920s.<sup>7</sup> In 1927 the cooperative news agency AP began establishing a ›News Photo Service‹ at its central New York bureau.<sup>8</sup> The creation of this service also proved to be a launching pad for the agency's European business, where the written news sector was controlled by cartel agreements which permitted little more than the presence of foreign correspondents.<sup>9</sup> AP was prohibited from offering the agency's written news services to German newspapers, but this ban did not apply to news photos. To expand these new prospects of supplying pictures across the Atlantic, AP founded limited liability subsidiaries in Germany and Great Britain.<sup>10</sup> By taking over the European branches of Pacific & Atlantic Photos, the European AP companies were able to build on existing infrastructures.<sup>11</sup> AP also procured skills and expertise by taking on some of the staff. This is why (freelance) employees of the Berlin AP subsidiary, registered as a GmbH (a form of limited liability company) in 1931, included Alfred Eisenstaedt, who subsequently achieved international fame as a photojournalist, and Leon Daniel, who ran the picture service business.<sup>12</sup> But Louis P. Lochner, longstanding European correspondent and director of the Berlin AP bureau from 1928, was not involved in the daily business of the picture department of the German AP GmbH; he was its director in name only.<sup>13</sup> He nevertheless intervened vigorously when his Jewish colleagues came under threat after 1933 (cf. chapter 4 below).

7 Weise, *Geschichte der Bildagenturen* (fn. 2), p. 9; Fechter/Wilke, *Produktion von Nachrichtenbildern* (fn. 2), p. 59.

8 Oliver Gramling, *AP. The Story of News*, New York 1940, pp. 328-335; Kent Cooper, *Kent Cooper and The Associated Press. An Autobiography*, New York 1959, pp. 128-140.

9 Martina Schumacher, *Ausländische Nachrichtenagenturen in Deutschland vor und nach 1945*, Cologne 1998, p. 68; Heidi Mühlenberg, *Die Berichterstattung der AP und UP aus dem faschistischen Deutschland bis 1941*, in: *Theorie und Praxis des sozialistischen Journalismus* 14 (1986), pp. 400-411, here pp. 404-405.

10 Cooper, *Kent Cooper* (fn. 8), p. 140; Joachim Rings, *Amerikanische Nachrichtenagenturen*, Limburg 1936, p. 30.

11 Cooper, *Kent Cooper* (fn. 8), p. 139.

12 Weise, *Geschichte der Bildagenturen* (fn. 2), p. 9; Lochner to daughter Betty, 30 April 1933, quoted in Louis P. Lochner, *Round Robins from Berlin*. Louis P. Lochner's Letters to His Children, 1932-1941, in: *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50 (1967), pp. 291-336, here p. 296.

13 Lochner to daughter Betty, 30 April 1933, quoted in Lochner, *Round Robins* (fn. 12), p. 296.

In the early 1930s, internationally operating Anglo-American agencies began supplying newsrooms with a fixed number of pictures per subscription each day.<sup>14</sup> To make this service as attractive as possible, the agencies distributed the daily selection of photographs in regional, supraregional, national and international batches, depending on the significance of the photographed events.<sup>15</sup> Substantial volumes were involved. Wide World Photo's Berlin bureau, for example, received some 2,000 prints per month in the mid-1930s, half of them from the United States.<sup>16</sup> On the whole, the pictures distributed globally were primarily of internationally significant political events – where ›political event‹ meant ›crisis management or agenda-setting by important statesmen‹.<sup>17</sup> Pictures of stars from the American entertainment industry also found a ready market, especially when the political agenda offered little in the way of visual interest.<sup>18</sup> To a lesser extent, the agencies also distributed socially critical pictures. Neither the National Socialist takeover nor the outbreak of World War II affected this transatlantic trade. Up until the German declaration of war in December 1941, ›the AP picture service supplied numerous German newspapers and magazines‹.<sup>19</sup>

The impression should not be given that these photographs immigrating to German photojournalism were invested solely with anti-American or even anti-Semitic connotations. But as it became clearer over the course of the 1930s that the US saw itself on the side of the British in the constellation of the European conflict, the pictures were increasingly interpreted in an anti-American way. The preferred pictures for this in German photojournalism were those that provided the maximum contrast to the carefully regulated images of the German *Volksgemeinschaft*, or racially homogeneous national community. The petit-bourgeois, egalitarian idyll of the *Volksgemeinschaft* was contrasted with the US as an extremely stratified, brutal society with antisocial tendencies, whose failure to reconcile interests erupted in violent clashes among its citizens.<sup>20</sup>

The brochure *USA – Naked! Pictures from God's Own Country* (1943) presents this image of America in a condensed form. It contrasts the lavish lifestyles of high-society politicians with poverty and violence in the cities and the countryside. Dilapidated houses sprawl in the shadow of modern skyscrapers. The image of American streets is dominated by homelessness on a massive scale (›Their bed. The New York Times‹), endless queues of the unemployed, protests, strikes, and above all massive violence, presented with cynical captions like ›Social peace‹ or ›What Americans do best‹. Public executions,

14 Kerbs, *Epoche der Bildagenturen* (fn. 2), p. 62.

15 AP's Wirephoto service, launched in 1935, operated similarly: Zierenberg, *Ordnung der Agenturen* (fn. 2), p. 61.

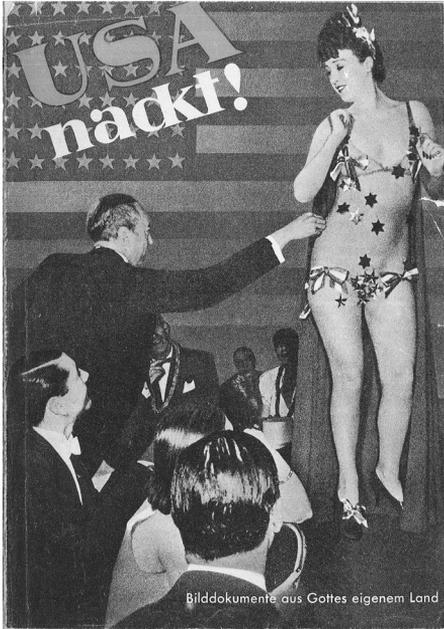
16 Willy Stiewe, *Das Pressephoto als publizistisches Mittel*, Leipzig 1936, p. 102.

17 Zierenberg, *Ordnung der Agenturen* (fn. 2), p. 62.

18 Kerbs, *Epoche der Bildagenturen* (fn. 2), p. 63.

19 Schumacher, *Ausländische Nachrichtenagenturen* (fn. 9), p. 69.

20 Similarly: Louis P. Lochner, *What about Germany?*, New York 1942, p. 148.



Erwin Berghaus (ed.), USA – nackt! Bilddokumente aus Gottes eigenem Land [USA – Naked! Pictures from God's Own Country], Berlin 1943

blamed on the Weimar Republic and their rectification credited to the National Socialist regime. Nazi visual propaganda depicted ›the Jew‹ in the US as being at the other end of the social scale, drawing on pictures of – supposed or actual – prominent Jewish figures, which American photo agencies were of course also able to provide. The cause of the social ills was Jewish ›infiltration‹, the pictures of public figures denounced as Jewish implied. Nazi journalism was thus able to obtain the pictures it needed from the material supplied by the agencies.

That which applied to the orchestrated contrast between German *Gemeinschaft* or ›community‹ and American ›society‹ as a whole was also evident in the images of their representatives. The Ministry of Propaganda had implemented strict regulations governing photographs of its own leadership from an early stage. In January 1934, taking pictures of members of the government and political figures at banquets or social events had been banned ›for obvious reasons‹.<sup>21</sup> In April 1935, it was noted at the press conference that: ›The reproduction of pictures showing members of the government of the Reich at tables decked with food, behind rows of bottles, etc., is in future

a double-page spread featuring scenes of lynchings, and the AP picture of a burning African American in chains, rounded out the chamber of American horrors presented by Nazi propaganda.

The producers of this propaganda do not seem to have cared about the origin of these pictures or any socially critical intention they may originally have had (the brochure also contains a version of Dorothea Lange's ›Migrant Mother‹). Photographs like this could be contrasted particularly well with the *Volksgemeinschaft's* image of itself, because the representation of Nazi Germany had, by decree, been purged of any socially critical images: ›Reports on impoverished and deprived districts, in particular photographs of wretched dwellings, shall only be published if they are accompanied by an announcement of remedial measures, construction work, etc.‹<sup>21</sup> – i.e. essentially only if the problems could be

21 Press directive, 20 September 1935, quoted in *NS-Pressanweisungen der Vorkriegszeit. Edition und Dokumentation*, 7 vols, Munich 1984–2001 (hereinafter: NSPV), vol. 3/II, Munich 1987, p. 601.

22 Press directive, 12 January 1934, quoted in NSPV, vol. 2, Munich 1985, p. 18.

to be avoided [...]. The ministers attend social events for reasons of international courtesy or on strictly official business, and view these events solely as a duty[,] not as pleasure. In recent times, countless pictures have given the public the completely absurd impression that the members of the government are living extravagantly. Photojournalism must consequently change in this regard.<sup>23</sup> Thus while the state and Party elite in the Reich could not be shown eating and drinking, Hans Diebow chose a photo depicting Fiorello LaGuardia eating with his hands for the cover of the propaganda brochure *The Jews in the USA* (see above, at the beginning of this article). The popular Mayor of New York City and declared opponent of the Nazis was a frequent target of National Socialist propaganda, whose aim it was to discredit him as Jewish, decadent and dissolute.

## 2. Dispatching Pictures from the Reich

As well as importing pictures from across the Atlantic, AP also exported photos taken in the German Reich around the world. This is why there were AP photographers working in the Reich. Like other foreign correspondents, the agency staff conveyed news from Berlin abroad, the only distinction being that it was news in pictures. The few surviving sources that shed light on the working practice of the AP photojournalists, however, show that it did *not* match that of the foreign correspondents. The latter were at risk above all of losing their accreditation or being expelled, but were not subject to any prior censorship until 1939, and then only sporadically until the autumn of 1942.<sup>24</sup> Instead, there is little to distinguish it from that of the German photo agencies, whose staff and content were strictly regulated.

Günther Beukert was the director of AP's picture service in Berlin in 1938. In an interview conducted in 1983, he talks about AP photojournalism during the November pogrom.<sup>25</sup> To protect the photographers, he had obtained permission for the events of the pogrom to be photographed. Nevertheless, a number of AP photojournalists were arrested, some even more than once. In the morning, Beukert went through the photographic pickings of the night and selected particularly ›harmless‹ pictures of the events to be cleared by the Ministry of Propaganda. Without official clearance, he could not dispatch any pictures out of Germany through the Berlin telegraph office. He succeeded in obtaining verbal clearance and was ready to send the pictures on their way. When

23 Press directive, 27 April 1935, quoted in NSPV, vol. 3/1, Munich 1987, p. 244.

24 Martin Herzer, *Auslandskorrespondenten und auswärtige Pressepolitik im Dritten Reich*, Cologne 2012, pp. 60-61, 183-209; Christoph Kreuzmüller, Britische und amerikanische Zeitungsberichte über die Judenverfolgung in Berlin 1918–1938, in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 62 (2014), pp. 25-48, here pp. 26-30.

25 Günther Beukert, Als Bildjournalist in der ›Reichskristallnacht‹, in: Kerbs/Uka/Walz-Richter, *Gleichschaltung der Bilder* (fn. 2), pp. 191-193.

word got around in the industry that AP was offering its subscribers photos of the ›Reichspogrom‹, Beukert received a phone call from the head of the illustrated press division in the Ministry of Propaganda: ›He really chewed my ear off. A ban from the profession was the least of it. He threatened me with concentration camp and I don't know what else, a court case, but nothing came of any of it.‹<sup>26</sup> On the contrary – half a year later, Beukert was not only ›editor-in-chief‹ in the agency of the self-styled ›Reich photojournalist‹ Heinrich Hoffmann; the illustrated press division itself even expressed special confidence in him barely a year later, at the outbreak of the war, by appointing the former head of the AP picture service to the position of war photo censor.<sup>27</sup>

As the incident recounted by Beukert shows, the Ministry of Propaganda's dealings with AP employees were characterised by a mixture of confidence and threats. This also corresponded to its attitude towards the other, German news picture agencies. Another indication of this confidence is that AP was allowed to attend the German autumn military exercises in 1937. The accredited agencies were meant to submit their photos for censorship themselves and ensure that no uncensored material was published.<sup>28</sup> Even in this extremely sensitive area of photographic practice, confidence in the agency evidently outweighed any concern about possible military espionage – confidence, however, that was extended to the AP photographers and others only under the Damocles sword of the Editors' Law.

The Ministry of Propaganda exercised prior censorship by accessing the picture agencies' archives. This made it possible to prevent unwelcome pictures making their way into photojournalism in the first place. In February 1938 it was announced that the photographs of the political personnel of the National Socialist state in the archives of the news picture agencies would now be censored. The ostensible aim was to separate out-of-date from new material. The source gives no indication of any exception for AP: ›The [pictures] have now been checked which show [Rudolf] Hess with the identification number 15 2 38[,] namely the pictures from Heinrich Hoffmann, Weltbild, Atlantik, Pressebildzentrale, Scherl, Schirner, Pressephoto, Associated Press and Deutscher Verlag.‹<sup>29</sup>

There was a third Nazi strategy to control the production and organisation of press photos, and it can also be found in the case of AP. The illustrated press division of the Ministry of Propaganda did not merely inform the news picture agencies of the political and cultural agenda. It also controlled the allocation, approval, coordination and sometimes even the logistical organisation of the photographers' operations. Once again, the sources indicate no exceptional position for AP – the illustrated press division made arrangements for the AP photographers just as it did for all the others.<sup>30</sup>

26 Ibid., p. 193.

27 Rudolf Herz, *Hoffmann & Hitler. Fotografie als Medium des Führer-Mythos*, Munich 1994, pp. 54-56; Hauptreferat Bildpresse an Abteilungsleiter Personal, 19 April 1940, Bundesarchiv (hereinafter: BArch), R 55/904, pp. 9-9v.

28 Press directive, 9 September 1937, quoted in NSPV, vol. 5/III, Munich 1998, p. 732.

29 Press directive, 21 February 1938, quoted in NSPV, vol. 6/I, Munich 1999, p. 187.

30 Bildpresse-Zensur-Dienstbuch, BArch, R 55/21777, passim.

Shortly after the war began there was talk of expanding this division to create a ›war photo office‹ which would replace the news picture agencies, which in any case now ›operated exclusively on behalf of the Ministry of Propaganda‹. From the point of view of the illustrated press division, one aspect above all spoke against this: increased suspicion on the part of those receiving the pictures if they obtained the photos of the war and occupation directly from official German agencies. Through the picture agencies, on the other hand, the German perspective could be both disguised and systematically propagated in the international press.<sup>31</sup> This German perspective was marketed on a grand scale: During the first months of the war, the agencies producing pictures in the Reich together sent an average of almost 90,000 images abroad – each month.<sup>32</sup>

At the outset of the war, everyone agreed that the German picture strategy abroad was a success.<sup>33</sup> Only the Germans were in a position to bring a functioning press apparatus close to the battlefield in 1939/40.<sup>34</sup> Restrictive British photo censorship contributed further to this success;<sup>35</sup> even the British press was dependant on German photographs.<sup>36</sup> In the American press, however, they had virtually no competition. Photographs from the sides of the victims of war and occupation – e.g. from the Polish resistance – did also, with some delay, make their way into the American press, where they were published with great fanfare. But until the United States entered the war, the photographic representation in the North American daily press of National Socialism and its wars of conquest was dominated by images from the immense flow of propagandistic, professionally produced and promptly distributed German photographs.<sup>37</sup> Cyril Radcliffe, Director-General of the British Ministry of Information, was therefore asked in 1941 ›to analyse why the American newspapers were generally filled with what he referred to as ›our enemies' photographs‹. His conclusion was clear: German

31 Hauptreferat Bildpresse, Zur Frage der Bezahlung des Kriegsbildmaterials, 24 September 1939, BArch, RW 4/288, pp. 74-76, here p. 75v.

32 Hauptreferat Bildpresse an Abteilungsleiter Haushalt, Abgaben aus dem Erlös von Kriegsbildberichten, 29 April 1940, BArch, R 55/904, pp. 4-7. The total volume of images sent abroad during the first seven months of the war is given here as 622,266.

33 War in Pictures. Germans beat British-French in First Week of Propaganda, in: *Life*, 18 September 1939, p. 15; Greatest War Pictures show German Bomb Raid on the Firth of Forth, in: *Life*, 27 November 1939, p. 21; England answers Great German War Photos with First Propaganda Film, in: *Life*, 11 December 1939, p. 69.

34 Jorge Lewinski, *The Camera at War. A History of War Photography from 1848 to the Present Day*, New York 1978, pp. 93-105.

35 Pictures We Should Like to Publish, in: *Picture Post*, 4 November 1939, pp. 14-15; Robert W. Desmond, *Tides of War. World News Reporting 1931-1945*, Iowa City 1984, p. 92.

36 British Papers Ask in Vain for Pictures of our own Troops or the French in Action... but the Ministry of Information Approves Hundreds of [German] Pictures such as these, in: *Picture Post*, 30 September 1939, pp. 16-17. Even the *Times* complained of the German lead in terms of images – and this was hailed in turn by the German military propaganda as a mark of success. Cf. OKW/WPr., Wehrmacht-Propaganda-Lagebericht für die Zeit vom 1.4. bis 15.4.1940, 20 April 1940, BArch, RW 4/245, pp. 263-266v, here p. 266v.

37 Similarly: Lewinski, *Camera at War* (fn. 34), p. 97.



After being approved by the High Command of the Wehrmacht and the Ministry of Propaganda's illustrated press division (stamp), pictures from the German propaganda apparatus – here, the reverse of a photograph taken by Propaganda Company 689 in Poland in September 1939 – were made available to agencies including the Berlin AP picture service (stamp and sticker) for onward distribution to the German and foreign press. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-2008-0415-507-RS)

documentary photographs were »immediate«, »alive« and depicted »vivid and exciting incidents«. He cited those from the eastern campaign which had flooded the New York press and which showed German soldiers in action.<sup>38</sup>

The German photographs to which Radcliffe was referring were largely pictures by the German Propaganda Companies (PK). These propaganda units consisted of recruited journalists and were initially set up by the High Command of the Wehrmacht and the Ministry of Propaganda to organise, monopolise and control German war reporting.<sup>39</sup> Their pictures, films and reports were frequently tailored to existing propaganda slogans and were collated and censored in Berlin, from where they were issued to the press. In the case of the PK pictures, picture agencies mostly still acted

38 Janina Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust. Interpretations of the Evidence*, London 2004, p. 30. Radcliffe's report entitled »Photographs as News« dates from July 1941.

39 Daniel Uziel, *The Propaganda Warriors. The Wehrmacht and the Consolidation of the German Home Front*, Oxford 2008.



The photograph itself presents the death of the German soldier as the fate of an individual in a dignified, ceremonial atmosphere, implying that such deaths were rare. Nazi news propaganda was designed to create this impression both domestically and abroad.

(Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-2008-0415-507, Photo: Heinz Boesig)

as intermediaries: ›Most of the war photo material from the Propaganda Companies is distributed evenly in terms of propaganda value for dissemination in Germany and abroad among the news picture agencies: Presse-Illustrationen Heinrich Hoffmann, Weltbild GmbH., Atlantic Photo-Verlag, Presse-Bild-Zentrale Bremer u. Güll, Scherl, Associated Press Bilddienst GmbH.‹<sup>40</sup> None of the German agencies come up as having supplied pictures to the American daily press,<sup>41</sup> but there are numerous photos sent from AP in Germany. Radcliffe evidently noticed this too: ›The Germans send a flood of their hot photographs by radio to the USA or provide the facilities for the American agencies to send them at special rates.‹<sup>42</sup>

40 As fn. 31, here pp. 74-74v.

41 This finding is based on an analysis of the following newspapers between 1933 and 1945: *Constitution* (Atlanta), *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*.

42 Quoted in Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust* (fn. 38), p. 30.

These sometimes exclusive, and invariably regulated, pictures from the German propaganda apparatus which AP supplied to the American press from the mid-1930s to the beginning of the 1940s met there with very varied assessments of the situation in Germany. While the American foreign correspondents warned of the dangers of the regime, there was some sympathy in the conservative press for Nazi Germany as an adversary of Roosevelt's execrated government and above all as a bastion against the ›Bolshevik threat‹.<sup>43</sup> Compared to the blanket demonisation of the Japanese in the American press, the depiction of the Nazi enemy was initially rather pallid.<sup>44</sup> Until the isolationist view fell out of favour during the course of 1940, the spectrum of ›conflicting interpretations [and] contested meanings‹ concerning National Socialism was wide.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, there was no standardised editorial procedure for dealing with press pictures in the news section. Decisions about how and which pictures were to be printed or not printed, to be contextualised and credited, were usually taken intuitively by the individual editors: ›[...] the press's standards for using photographs in news, uneven during World War II, were often informally adjusted to circumstances as they arose.‹<sup>46</sup> Against this backdrop, it is possible to identify two publication strategies employed by the American press in dealing with the German AP pictures. The pictures were used as news photos (by virtue of their distribution), or they were deciphered as propaganda photos (by virtue of their origin). The two strategies frequently merged into a nebulous melange.

The American press took pains to enable a critical reading of the AP pictures of German origin, especially at the beginning of the war in Europe. This intention is clear from the editorial captions, which regularly reminded readers of the German censors and quoted the legends they provided. By drawing attention in this way – often without any further comment – to the censors' intention, they questioned the validity of what were technically presented as news photos. In mid-May 1940, for example, the *Washington Post* captioned the AP picture of a group of soldiers hurrying at an angle past the photographer with the words ›Germans Say These Belgian Fighters Surrendered‹. The text underneath the picture read: ›Belgian soldiers are shown running toward the German lines after their surrender yesterday, according to Nazi censor-approved caption accompanying this picture. (Photo radioed from Berlin).‹<sup>47</sup> It was left to the reader whether to regard the picture as symbolic of the rapid German advance or to put it down to base Nazi propaganda, which might even use staged pictures of capitulating adversaries in an attempt to demoralise them. But the fact that the editorial team had opted for publication pointed implicitly to the former interpretation.

43 Michaela Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy. The American Debate on Nazism 1933–1945*, Cambridge 2010, pp. 41–77.

44 Susan D. Moeller, *Shooting War. Photography and the American Experience of Combat*, New York 1989, p. 159.

45 Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy* (fn. 43), p. 41; Christopher B. Daly, *Covering America. A Narrative History of a Nation's Journalism*, Amherst 2012, p. 249.

46 Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget. Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye*, Chicago 1998, pp. 16–30, here p. 29.

47 Germans Say These Belgian Fighters Surrendered, in: *Washington Post*, 15 May 1940, p. 9.



PK picture as AP Wirephoto. On the day of the capture of Kraków, the local Propaganda Company was charged with reporting the tribute at Piłsudski's grave [...] with all available means (text, picture, film, radio): and transmitting the material to Berlin as quickly as possible (telex OKW/WPr. Id to AOK 14, 6 September 1939, BArch, RW 4/185, p. 276). After the photo had been wired from Berlin to New York, AP added a caption on the basis of the German text and forwarded it through its own picture transmission network (Wirephoto), so that it arrived in the American newsrooms on the evening of 9 September. As the picture shows, this remote transmission was only possible at great detriment to the quality. (PK621: German guard of honour at Józef Piłsudski's grave, AP Wirephoto, Kraków c. 7 September 1939, author's private copy)

This widespread ›critical‹ captioning was of course only possible because AP provided the subscribers to its News Photo Service with the legends checked or authorised by the Ministry of Propaganda. The convention of distributing and publishing the German propaganda images as news pictures while at the same time casting doubt on their informative value by invoking their Berlin origins and hence possible political intentions may be seen as an attempt to find a democratic and transparent way of dealing with the propagandistic press materials of the belligerent states. In practice, however, agency and editors alike were evidently somewhat at a loss as to how these pictures, transmitted from one to the other and then on to the reader, were to be viewed.

The Germans were able to score points in the short term and credibility in the long term when they could quickly refute accusations or rumours from their opponents. AP's picture channel furthered this objective. Thanks to the agency's pictures from Berlin, American newspaper readers were soon satisfied that the Black Madonna of Częstochowa,<sup>48</sup> the Canadian war memorial at Vimy<sup>49</sup> and the grave of Polish national hero Józef Piłsudski in Krakow's Wawel Cathedral with its German guard of honour<sup>50</sup> were indeed intact. The German perspective on events gave prominence to pictures showing the Germans marching ›triumphantly‹ into Gdansk, Malmedy or Lwów. While the papers did mention that the pictures came from Berlin, they made no further reference to their propagandistic content.<sup>51</sup> The National Socialists clearly did not have to reckon with a centralised photo filter that would have excluded the established Nazi visual propaganda topoi from the American press photo discourse. The Bolshevik ›*Flintenweib*‹<sup>52</sup> (a derogatory term for a woman with a gun) or stereotyped images of Soviet soldiers that derived from the racist physiognomic visual discourse could also be found in the American press. AP transmitted them from Berlin to New York, New York sent them to the editorial departments, and the editorial departments printed these pictures as and when they desired.

48 *Washington Post*, 6 September 1939, front page; *Chicago Tribune*, 6 September 1939, p. 34.

49 *Washington Post*, 5 June 1940, front page.

50 *Washington Post*, 11 September 1939, p. 19.

51 Hitler's Arrival for Danzig Speech, in: *Washington Post*, 21 September 1939, p. 12; Nazis in Malmedy, in: *Washington Post*, 21 May 1940, p. 10; Nazis Welcomed in Captured Town, in: *Boston Globe*, 3 July 1941, p. 4.

52 Russian Amazons, in: *Los Angeles Times*, 20 July 1941, p. A5; Russian Women Captured, in: *Washington Post*, 23 July 1941, p. 4; Women War Prisoners, in: *Washington Post*, 6 August 1941, p. 2. On the enemy stereotype of the ›*Flintenweib*‹, cf. Peter Jahn (ed.), *Mascha + Nina + Katjuscha. Frauen in der Roten Armee 1941–1944*, Berlin 2002, pp. 50–65.

### 3. ›German‹ AP Pictures in Nazi Propaganda

The head of the laboratory at AP GmbH's Berlin bureau recalls that in the 1930s it produced more than 100 collections with 7 to 15 images each every day.<sup>53</sup> The photos were sent not only to London, New York and Paris, but also to Berlin clients: AP also supplied the German press with its own photos from the Reich. Two striking examples may illustrate this.

In the autumn of 1940, anti-Semitic films in German cinemas were very much the order of the day. The biggest German illustrated magazine, the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* (BIZ), presented a photo essay to coincide with the premiere of the film ›Jud Süß‹ in which the events of the film were interwoven with the current Jewish policies in the General Government.<sup>54</sup> The two stills from the feature film at the top of the page were matched with three real expulsion scenes at the bottom. The expulsion of the Jews from Kraków in the summer of 1940 was a ›prestige project‹ of the Governor-General Hans Frank, who resided in the town. It was given historical legitimacy by the Württemberg ban on Jews with which the film ›Jud Süß‹ ends. According to the logic of the photo story, both events were a response to the proven depravity of the Jews. While the two film stills were from the film production company Terra Filmkunst, the copyright note for the three photos depicting the expulsion of the Jews was for Associated Press.<sup>55</sup>

In the summer of 1941, the Nazi illustrated press undertook what was probably its biggest wave of propaganda with AP pictures. Two weeks after the invasion of the Soviet Union, the Ministry of Propaganda enrolled the German press in a gigantic campaign of horror. At the centre of the ›Lemberg campaign‹ were photos of the murdered Soviet civilians who had been discovered in their thousands, mainly in eastern Poland and Ukraine, by the invading Germans. The victims were mostly political prisoners of the Soviet secret police (NKVD), who, unable to evacuate them and not wanting them to fall into the hands of the advancing Germans, murdered them on the spot.<sup>56</sup> Hitler personally ordered that the photographs of the maltreated corpses from

53 Von Brietzke, *Vor die Linse* (fn. 3), p. 26.

54 Concerning the film, cf. Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg (ed.), ›Jud Süß‹ – Propagandafilm im NS-Staat, Stuttgart 2007; Alexandra Przyrembel/Jörg Schönered (ed.), ›Jud Süß‹. Hofjude, literarische Figur, antisemitisches Zerrbild, Frankfurt a.M. 2006.

55 The expulsion pictures had previously been published without a copyright notice in the German occupation newspaper of the General Government: Auszug der Juden aus der deutschen Stadt Krakau [Jews Leaving the German Town of Krakow], in: *Warschauer Zeitung*, 18/19 August 1940, n. pag. There was no evidence of the pictures in the analysed corpus of American newspapers (cf. fn. 41).

56 The discoveries of the bodies led here and elsewhere to pogroms, to which some 4,000 Jews in Lwów are believed to have fallen victim. Cf. Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (ed.), *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht. Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941–1944. Ausstellungskatalog*, Hamburg 2002, pp. 94–99; John-Paul Himka, The Lviv Pogrom of 1941. The Germans, Ukrainian Nationalists, and the Carnival Crowd, in: *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 53 (2011) issue 2–4, pp. 209–243; Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, Der Verlauf und die Täter des Lemberger Pogroms vom Sommer 1941. Zum aktuellen Stand der Forschung, in: *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 22 (2013), pp. 207–243.



Anno 1738... Anno 1940,  
in: Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung,  
26 September 1940, p. 980

a prison in Lwów (Lviv, German historical name: Lemberg) taken by an AP photographer be published ›in all German newspapers.‹ Most of the foreign newspapers published them, too, noted photographer Franz Roth.<sup>57</sup>

The shocking pictures of the victims of the NKVD were often combined with pictures from a series of portraits of Soviet prisoners of war (as in this example from the *Völkischer Beobachter*) with an implied or explicit association between perpetrator and crime.<sup>58</sup> The ›Soviet types‹ presented as shifty and grim-looking were from the camera of the same AP photographer. These ›heads (from Roth AP) of Bolshevik prisoners‹<sup>59</sup> were, at Hitler’s direct behest, also to be printed by the newspapers. The illustrated press division ›informed all Berlin newspaper editors [...] of the telephone call from the [Führer’s] headquarters‹, unleashing a veritable flood of publications of mostly four to six photographs from the series. These pictures were perhaps the most frequently

57 Franz Roth, reporter, unpublished manuscript, ca. 1942/43, p. 34, estate of Franz Roth, Bad Münster-eifel. A copy of the manuscript is preserved in the Federal Archives-Military Archives (BArch, RS 16/16). I am very grateful to Dr. Tuya Roth (Bonn) for drawing my attention to this quotation.  
58 Cf. e.g. ›Das sind Churchills Bundesgenossen... und ihre Taten: [These are Churchill’s Allies... and their Crimes], in: *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, 17 July 1941, pp. 764-765.  
59 Entry in the illustrated press censorship log, 7 July 1941, BArch, R 55/21777, p. 161.



Völkischer Beobachter,  
9 July 1941, p. 3

printed propaganda photos in National Socialist Germany. They were published in local Berlin and national newspapers, in the provincial press and in the press of the occupying forces in the General Government and the annexed Warthegau,<sup>60</sup> in the illustrated weekly press<sup>61</sup> and in the party ›wall newspaper‹ *Parole der Woche*.<sup>62</sup> The pictures also appeared in the above-mentioned SS training brochure *Der Untermensch*.<sup>63</sup> The increasingly excessive presentation of these four to six portraits eventually even

60 *Berliner Morgenpost*, 8 July 1941, front page; *Berliner Illustrierte Nachtausgabe*, 8 July 1941, p. 8; *Völkischer Beobachter*, 9 July 1941, p. 3; *Das kleine Blatt* [Vienna], 9 July 1941, front page; *Tages-Post* [Linz], 9 July 1941, p. 2; *Rheinsberger Zeitung*, 9 July 1941, front page; *Krakauer Zeitung*, 10 July 1941, n. pag.; Das sind die Moskauer ›Kulturträger! [These are Moscow's ›Cultural Beacons!], in: *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, 10 July 1941, n. pag.

61 Kulturträger der Weltrevolution [Cultural Beacons of World Revolution], in: *Die Wochenschau*, 16 July 1941, p. 8; Das sind Churchills Bundesgenossen... und ihre Taten, in: *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, 17 July 1941, pp. 764-765; Stalins Elite, in: *Neue IZ*, 22 July 1941, p. 674; Wenn das nicht zieht... [If This Won't Help...], in: *Das Schwarze Korps*, 7 August 1941, p. 8; *Ilustrowany Kurjer Polski*, 21 June 1942, front page, URL: <<http://muzeum-zamojskie.pl/z/karta2/karta3.php?id=5988>>.

62 *Parole der Woche*, 17–23 September 1941, facsimile in: Franz-Josef Heyen (ed.), *Parole der Woche. Eine Wandzeitung im Dritten Reich 1936–1943*, Munich 1983, p. 93.

63 *Der Untermensch* [The Subhuman], ed. by Reichsführer SS/SS Head Office, Berlin n.d. [1942], n. pag.

attracted criticism from newspaper readers.<sup>64</sup> Many of these publications were also in keeping with another Ministry of Propaganda guideline regarding the form of the anti-Bolshevik campaign. This stipulated that the portraits of the Red Army soldiers were to be juxtaposed with the idealised national self-image, in this case that of the German warrior.<sup>65</sup> Their wide distribution and exemplary function made them ›negative icons‹ of Nazi propaganda.

The copyright notice for these portraits in the *Völkischer Beobachter* read ›SS-PK.-Roth-Associated-Preß‹. And this juxtaposition was no printing error. At the time of taking these photographs, Franz Roth was at one and the same time AP photographer, SS-Oberscharführer (senior squad leader) and photojournalist in the SS Propaganda Company (SS-PK).<sup>66</sup> Not seeing itself sufficiently glorified in print during the first weeks of the war, the SS followed the example of the Wehrmacht in establishing its own war reporting company.

Much like in the Reich, where the Ministry of Propaganda increasingly directed the operations of the news agencies, the ministry and the military were in charge of the deployment of photojournalists in the propaganda companies at the front. But although the war correspondents were integrated into the military hierarchy, those who had held a permanent position with a publisher or picture agency prior to their recruitment remained in this employment relationship. In addition to their soldier's pay they therefore also received wage payments from their employers while working in the field. In turn, the agency in question received photos from ›their‹ PK photojournalist immediately after censorship, with exclusive distribution rights. This model explicitly included the ›Associated Press Bilddienst GmbH.‹<sup>67</sup> SS-Oberscharführer and AP photographer Franz Roth, who had been recruited as a member of the SS-PK and assigned to the Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler (SS Bodyguard Regiment), was therefore receiving a good salary from AP in addition to his military pay when he photographed the portraits of Soviet prisoners of war that were also entitled ›Fratze des Bolschewismus‹ (›The grotesque face of Bolshevism.‹)<sup>68</sup> In return, AP received exclusive rights to the propaganda photos. Hitler's desire, made known by telephone and on the back of the photos, that precisely these pictures were to be published, will have brought the picture service rich winnings in July 1941.

64 Heinz Boberach (ed.), *Meldungen aus dem Reich 1938–1945. Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS*, vol. 7, Herrsching 1987, pp. 2546-2547 (21 July 1941).

65 Minutes of the ministerial conference, 5 July 1941, quoted in Willi A. Boelcke (ed.), *Wollt Ihr den totalen Krieg? Die geheimen Goebbels-Konferenzen*, Herrsching 1989, p. 183.

66 About Franz Roth cf. Rolf Sachsse, *Die Erziehung zum Wegsehen. Fotografie im NS-Staat*, Dresden 2003, pp. 294-295.

67 As fn. 31, here p. 74.

68 Personalabteilung an Ministerialdirektor Dr. Naumann, Parteigenosse Franz Roth, 2 April 1943, BArch, R 55/214, pp. 39-39v. Gerd Baatz and Eric Borchert, the other two German AP photographers, were also enlisted in the propaganda unit, at least temporarily. Cf. AP, Corporate Archives, Oral History Program, Interview Rudolph Josten, 4 December 2004, pp. 22-23; Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda (Wentscher) an OKW/WPr. (von Wedel): ›Zusätzlicher Berichterstattungseinsatz, 7 September 1939, BArch, RW 4/185, pp. 98-99.

But the agency evidently did not want to deprive American newspaper readers of these images either. The successful German propaganda pictures are another example of photos that AP also made available to the North American market. The New York bureau dispatched the Berlin pictures via Wirephoto to the approximately 125 newspapers connected to the service. Six of the portraits photographed by SS-Oberscharführer Roth appeared in the daily *Constitution* (Atlanta) on 24 July 1941, and four in the *Los Angeles Times* a day later.<sup>69</sup> When asked what they hoped to achieve by publishing these kinds of stereotyped images in America, images that spread fear and terror in Germany and were designed to strengthen the will to war, the *LA Times* had no convincing answer. The question mark in its caption ›Red Fighters? – Nazi sources released and identified these close-up photographs as those of types of Russian soldiers taken prisoner by Germans in battle of Lwow. (AP Wirephoto)‹ merely questioned the connection between the pictures and the legends, apparently suspecting propagandistic intentions. Purely visually, however, the four portraits formed a stark contrast to the happy faces in the American entertainment pictures presented on the same page.

The contrast to the cheerful images of the world of American advertising is also conspicuous in the presentation of the portraits in *Constitution*. The newspaper tried to counter the visual impression produced by the pictures with an interpretation of its own in a brief three lines: ›Mirroring Europe's Happy Life – These are closeup pictures of men described by German sources as Russians captured in the battle of Lwow. The German propaganda ministry is anxious to picture Russians as people not worth fighting for‹, read the caption underneath the six pictures. The first, ironic heading implied that the haggard faces in fact reflected the suffering that the Germans had brought upon Europe. But the real intention of the images, it was implied, was to confirm American readers in their isolationism. The newspaper had an idea of the propaganda purposes for which the photos had been sent across the Atlantic. But rather than refusing to print them, it trusted that the caption would suffice to turn their meaning around.



*Constitution*, Atlanta, 24 July 1941, p. 4

69 *Constitution*, 24 July 1941, p. 4; *Los Angeles Times*, 25 July 1941, p. 1B.

#### 4. *Gleichschaltung*

Why were AP employees able to be conscripted into the Wehrmacht and SS propaganda companies, and why is there almost no discernible difference in the sources between the position of the American photo agency in the press control system and that of its German counterparts? The answer is simple: since the mid-1930s, there was in fact virtually no difference. The legal basis for this comprehensive *Gleichschaltung*, or forcible coordination, was the *Schriftleitergesetz* (Editors' Law), which came into effect at the beginning of 1934. It determined who was permitted to work regularly in a journalistic capacity for the German press. Photojournalists were also subject to this law. Authorisation was linked to citizenship of the Reich and, as in the Civil Service Law, to ›racial‹ background, so foreigners and Germans with Jewish ancestors or a Jewish spouse were excluded from their profession.<sup>70</sup> Another analogy between editors and civil servants drawn by the law pertained to the definition of journalism as a ›public function‹. Article 14 obliged editors to ›refrain from publishing anything that [...] tends to weaken the strength of the German Reich, domestically or internationally, to weaken the common will of the German *Volk*, the German defensive capabilities, its culture or economy‹. This meant that their loyalty to nation, state and Führer had to be greater than to their employer and enjoyed special legal ›protection‹.

To fully appreciate what this law meant for the foreign picture agencies, however, it is necessary to consult the legal commentary published by the Ministry of Propaganda. This text also explains the meaning of Article 4, which defined ›cooperation in the shaping of the intellectual content of German newspapers‹. The commentary reads: ›Article 4 has a special significance for the major **picture bureaus** [emphasis in the original], some of which are in foreign hands. They are subject to the law regardless of who owns them. The photojournalists working for these companies must therefore also be editors.‹<sup>71</sup> The photojournalists of the Berlin AP bureau, which was registered as a GmbH (a form of limited liability company), were therefore not American foreign correspondents taking photographs, but had to be Germans of ›Aryan‹ descent; their obligation to the German Reich was by law greater than to their employer. The Ministry of Propaganda was therefore not only able to intervene in AP's personnel policy, but also had a crucial basis from which to undermine the company's authority.

How did the foreign news agencies respond to the new rulers and their restrictions? Wide World Photo, which likewise existed as a GmbH and was the picture service of the *New York Times*, gave at least the appearance of being willing to make concessions. This included accepting a National Socialist ›cell‹ in the picture service. The agency tried to protect its Jewish staff. In order to continue the business in the

70 Hans Ernst Albert Schmidt-Leonhardt/Peter Gast, *Das Schriftleitergesetz vom 4. Oktober 1933 nebst einschlägigen Bestimmungen*, Berlin 1934, pp. 23-33.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

Seized from the darkroom by the SA – the arrest of photographer Willy Jacobson (rear left) in the Vienna AP bureau (1938) as represented by illustrator Henry C. Barrow, in: Oliver Gramling, AP. *The Story of News*, New York 1940, p. 463. AP correspondent Melvin Whiteleather was also present (seated at desk). Jacobson was later released and sent to Berlin. His further fate is unknown. Some photographs from the early GDR by a photographer of the same name in the collection of the German Historical Museum may indicate that Jacobson survived the war.



Reich with its established (Jewish) staff despite the Editors' Law, Wide World Photo made use of ›Aryan front men‹ as representatives: ›The »camouflages« assumed the titles and negotiated with the authorities, while the Jews did the work.‹ In terms of earnings, Wide World Photo received 1,000 marks each week for pictures supplied to the *Völkischer Beobachter* alone.<sup>72</sup>

Directly after the National Socialist takeover, the AP picture service in Berlin found itself under attack from German companies seeking to get rid of bothersome competition in the industry with German nationalist and anti-Semitic rhetoric.<sup>73</sup> As the nominal head of the picture service, Louis P. Lochner was also immediately faced with demands from the Ministry of Propaganda that he dismiss three Jewish AP employees. In 1933 he was able to stave this off: ›They are efficient, they are honest, they are splendid characters, they are well educated and speak three and four languages. There is no reason in the world outside of the accident of their having been born Jews why I should

72 Laurel Leff, *Buried by the Times. The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper*, Cambridge 2005, p. 53-54.

73 Letter from the Verband Deutscher Presse-Illustrationsfirmen e.V. (Association of German Press Illustration Companies) to the Reich President, 15 March 1933, printed in: Stiewe, *Pressephoto* (fn. 16), pp. 104-105; Lochner to daughter Betty, 30 April 1933, quoted in Lochner, *Round Robins* (fn. 12), p. 294; Kerbs, *Epoche der Bildagenturen* (fn. 2), p. 66.

fire them. Well, I've simply refused to do so.<sup>74</sup> Two years later, the consolidation of the National Socialist regime had already significantly limited Lochner's options. He was no longer able to reject the call to dismiss Jewish employees. However, he managed to get them jobs in other AP bureaus and to transfer them out of the country. Three years after that, the agency was essentially no longer able to protect its employees at all. Immediately following the annexation of Austria, the SA arrested AP photographer Willy Jacobson – one of those whom Lochner had provisionally protected in the Vienna AP bureau in 1935. The regime now no longer allowed Lochner to intervene on his behalf, even with the promise of transferring him out of the country.<sup>75</sup>

The year 1935 saw a number of developments with far-reaching implications for the operations of the illustrated press in Germany. At the beginning of the year, Hans Diebow, head of the Reich Commission of Photojournalists in the Reich Association of the German Press (*Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse*, RDP) had announced that the groundwork for the ›cleansing‹ and future control of the profession by the Editors' Law was almost completed.<sup>76</sup> Beginning in March 1935, the official journal of the RDP successively published the names and addresses of the photojournalists who had been vetted and approved. The newsrooms could acquire this list – ›indispensable for every editorial board‹ – from the RDP. The final gaps in this effective system of control were closed by the obligatory copyright notice introduced in February 1935, the ›identification tag for authorised and unauthorised individuals‹ (Diebow). The published occupational register and copyright notice made it possible to trace every published image and check the licensing of every photographer.

In 1935 the regime also annulled the existing arrangement with the foreign picture agencies – just as the much anticipated German world picture service was established. The German News Agency (*Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro*, DNB) had bought the Berlin subsidiary of Keystone View Inc. in early April and now ran it as *Weltbild GmbH*.<sup>77</sup> Just six weeks later, the regime expelled Julius Bolgar, the manager of the *New York Times* picture service, from the country. The official DNB account read: ›Bolgar, who is a Hungarian national and of Jewish descent, has repeatedly given expression to his

74 Lochner to daughter Betty, 30 April 1933, quoted in Lochner, *Round Robins* (fn. 12), p. 296.

75 Gramling, *AP* (fn. 8), p. 462; Lochner to daughter Betty and son Robert, 18 April 1938, quoted in Lochner, *Round Robins* (fn. 12), p. 322; Nazis in Vienna hold 3 Newspaper Men, in: *New York Times*, 17 March 1938, p. 8. Lochner himself remained in his position until the German declaration of war. After the closure of the AP bureau, he was detained with other Americans in Bad Nauheim. In May 1942 he was released as part of a prisoner exchange for German correspondents and diplomats held in the US. He had received the Pulitzer Prize in 1939 for his reporting from Germany.

76 Reichsausschuß der Bildberichterstatter [Reich Commission of Photojournalists], in: *Deutsche Presse*, 12 January 1935, p. 24.

77 *Weltbild-Anzeige*, in: *Deutsche Presse*, 27 April 1935, n. pag.; Stiewe, *Pressephoto* (fn. 16), p. 107. The DNB had been planning to establish a picture service since at least July 1934. Cf. Kurzbein an Herrn Staatssekretär [Walther Funk], *Propaganda durch Bilder*, 4 July 1934, BAArch, R 55/297, pp. 15-16. Looking back, the head of Keystone's European operations Bert Garai, a long-time acquaintance of Heinrich Hoffmann and by his own admission the first foreign member of the NSDAP, erroneously dates the sale to 1937. Cf. Bert Garai, *The Man from Keystone*, London 1965, pp. 88-90, 177.

spiteful and hostile attitude towards the new state and its leading men, making it completely impossible for Bolgar to remain in Germany.<sup>78</sup> At the illustrated press conference held by the Ministry of Propaganda to inform and manage the illustrated press, the speaker used the personnel issue as an opportunity to call on editors to be proactive in helping to implement the Editors' Law: ›Inform yourselves with regard to the companies with whom you work [...] whether these companies comply with the provisions of the Editors' Law.<sup>79</sup> Agencies that still employed Jews were to be boycotted with immediate effect.

Shortly thereafter, an investigative article in the SS newspaper *Das Schwarze Korps* drastically increased the pressure on everyone involved. The hate sheet named and pilloried German-Jewish employees of picture agencies and publishers in the Reich under the heading ›Off with the disguise‹ (*Jetzt aber herunter mit der Tarnkappe*).<sup>80</sup> There were detailed denunciations against the picture services of Wide World Photo and Associated Press. The *Schwarzes Korps* saw the illustrated press as an example of ›Jewish infiltration‹ which it claimed was merely suppressed, but not entirely eliminated. The article was published in the context of various other reports demanding legislative support to ›eliminate‹ the Jews. This support then came in September 1935 with the Nuremberg Laws.

In view of these attacks and the unofficial boycott, the *New York Times* decided to close its Berlin picture bureau in 1935. AP, however, gave way. Leon Daniel, Cecile Kutschuk and Alfred Eisenstaedt, AP employees of Jewish descent, had to go into American exile in 1935; Jacobson was relocated by Lochner to Vienna. In 1936, to replace the Jewish staff, AP summoned the SA man and AP photojournalist Franz Roth from Vienna to Berlin.<sup>81</sup> ›It was a case of conforming with the German laws or closing up shop‹,<sup>82</sup> was Lochner's assessment of the situation. In order to redeem itself, however, AP still had to publicly grovel. Two weeks after the attacks, the agency published a statement in the *Schwarzes Korps* saying ›that the editor-in-chief, all editors and the management of Associated Press G.m.b.H. are all Aryan and the Jewish employees named by us [i.e. by the *Schwarzes Korps*] have now been dismissed‹.<sup>83</sup> To actively demonstrate its compliance, AP even joined in the media propaganda war on the German side. Under the heading ›We demolish a lie!‹ (*Wir zerschlagen eine Lüge!*), the agency presented photographs in the *Schwarzes Korps* intended to prove that a Canadian press report on appalling conditions in a women's labour camp was untrue. The story sported a modern layout, experimenting with different picture formats, knockouts,

78 Ein ausländischer Bildberichterstatter ausgewiesen [A Foreign Photojournalist Expelled], in: *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro*, 15/16 May 1935 [late night edition], p. 3. Cf. also: *Völkischer Beobachter*, 17 May 1935, front page.

79 Minutes of the illustrated press conference, 20 May 1935, BArch, R 55/20969, p. 58.

80 Jetzt aber herunter mit der Tarnkappe, in: *Das Schwarze Korps*, 14 August 1935, p. 7.

81 Franz Roth, curriculum vitae [enclosed with his SS admission and obligation certificate], 25 September 1942, BArch, SSO Franz Roth.

82 Lochner, *What about Germany?* (fn. 20), p. 91.

83 Wir zerschlagen eine Lüge!, in: *Das Schwarze Korps*, 28 August 1935, pp. 10-11.



Wir zerschlagen eine Lüge! [We demolish a lie!], in: Das Schwarze Korps, 28 August 1935, pp. 10-11

and image/text dynamics. It was supplied by Eitel Lange, subsequently personal photographer to the Reichsmarschall (the highest rank in the German Wehrmacht) Hermann Göring, as »representative of the American picture company »Associated Press«.<sup>84</sup> The individual pictures were designed to rebut specific assertions made in the Canadian report. They are also examples of a National Socialist rhetoric of work in image and text, the core elements of which are *Arbeit* and *Gemeinschaft* (»work« and »community«).<sup>85</sup>

From 1935 onwards, the Ministry of Propaganda had the Berlin AP picture service as much under its control as the German picture bureaus. The agency had accepted the Editors' Law, so the Berlin AP photojournalists were equally at risk of facing occupational bans, disciplinary court proceedings and prison sentences should they fall out of favour with the Ministry of Propaganda. And unlike their American colleagues, the German editors at AP were of course not detained when Germany declared war on

84 Ibid.

85 Harriet Scharnberg, Arbeit und Gemeinschaft. Darstellungen »deutscher« und »jüdischer« Arbeit in der NS-Bildpropaganda, in: Marc Buggeln/Michael Wildt (eds), Arbeit im Nationalsozialismus, Munich 2014, pp. 165-186.

the USA and the Berlin AP bureau was closed. Regardless of who they worked for, the Editors' Law meant that they were in the service of Nazi propaganda – both before and after December 1941. To describe men like Franz Roth as American war correspondents in SS uniform would therefore be to completely disregard the facts. Roth essentially produced German propaganda pictures bankrolled by the Americans and also for the American newspaper market, if the pictures found favour with AP and the editorial boards.

## 5. Conclusion

In 1935 the ability of all Anglo-American picture agencies to report from and about Germany was drastically restricted. The *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro* purchased the Berlin branch of Keystone View Inc. in 1935, and Wide World Photo closed its Berlin GmbH, or limited liability company, in the same year. The third large news picture agency, Associated Press, chose not to close its Berlin subsidiary. Instead it accepted the Editors' Law, thus ceding considerable influence over the production of its news pictures to the Ministry of Propaganda both in terms of staff and the content of the images themselves.

The German agencies for (illustrated) press propaganda abroad were themselves unable to penetrate the North American market. At the same time, the Berlin branches of the Anglo-American picture agencies had all been closed or sold in 1935 – except AP.<sup>86</sup> For Nazi propaganda, this must have made AP the key channel for the exchange of photographs reflecting American and German national imagery. This channel proved to be open in both directions until December 1941: The agency supplied American pictures and had no influence on their further use, as was usual in the industry. These pictures were processed in the newsrooms of the Reich and integrated into the anti-Semitic and anti-American propaganda discourse, where they constituted an important component in its visualisation. AP was also a channel for getting desirable German propaganda images into the American papers. German bodies had no influence over whether they were presented there as ostensibly neutral news pictures or as examples of National Socialist propaganda, as shown in the above example. The interpretation pursued by the American newspapers depended on the particular moment in time, the subject of the picture, the orientation of the paper and the individual picture editor. There was generally no mention of the fact that a propagandistic intention was not only evident in the prior censorship and the censored captions of the

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86 The American Hearst Group, which operated the services International News Service (INS) and International News Photos (INP), had a photojournalist (Georg Pahl, registered as an editor) in Berlin until 1941. Cf. Kerbs/Uka/Walz-Richter, *Gleichschaltung der Bilder* (fn. 2), p. 124.

pictures, but underlay their very production. It is doubtful that AP revealed to its subscribers the fact, surely considered scandalous even then, that many of its German pictures were from the camera of an SS man.<sup>87</sup>

There were of course also quite different discursive contexts in the US into which editors and readers could incorporate the printed pictures.<sup>88</sup> We certainly cannot speak, therefore, of a blanket propaganda transfer with the persuasive consequences this would entail. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the intuitive sympathies and antipathies of American newspaper readers were not unaffected, at least in the short term, by pictures that usually depicted the Germans as triumphant blitzkrieg fighters and their opponents as sullen, sly military failures. Above all, however, this is a history (of photography) that challenges accepted lines of demarcation.

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87 A comparison of selected pictures in American newspapers (where the names of the photographers were not provided) and photographs credited to Roth from other sources shows that Roth's pictures of Russian ›types‹ were not an isolated case. Cf. e.g.: Germans Catch a Sniper, in: *Los Angeles Times*, 10 July 1941, p. 1B, and: Charles Trang, *Kriegsberichter Franz Roth*, Bayeux 2008, p. 51; Russian Tank Undergoes a German Inspection, in: *New York Times*, 3 July 1941, p. 3, as well as *Chicago Tribune*, 13 July 1941, p. G6, and: Trang, *Kriegsberichter*, p. 43; Nazis Welcomed in Captured Town, in: *Boston Globe*, 3 July 1941, p. 4, as well as *Chicago Tribune*, 3 July 1941, p. 32, and: Lemberg umjubelt die deutschen Truppen [Lemberg Hails the German Troops], in: *Illustrierter Beobachter*, 24 July 1941, n. pag.

88 Anna Banks, Images Trapped in Two Discourses: Photojournalism Codes And the International News Flow, in: *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 18 (1994) issue 1, pp. 118-134.