BETWEEN MONARCHY AND DICTATORSHIP
RADICAL NATIONALISM AND SOCIAL MOBILIZATION OF THE
PAN-GERMAN LEAGUE, 1914-1939

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ABSTRACT

The Pan-German League (1891-1939) has been at the center of research on German nationalism as a vanguard of the radical Right during the era between Imperial Germany and the Third Reich. It mobilized members of the Bildungsbürgertum and the broader middle classes in the service of a class-based vision of Volksgemeinschaft, territorial expansion, and cultural homogeneity in Germany. This dissertation focuses on the neglected second half of the League´s history, the period from 1914 to 1939. It analyses how the Pan-Germans reacted to fundamental political and cultural change, as they struggled to meet the challenges of mass politics. Between 1914 and 1939, the Pan-German League competed with new organizations on Germany´s radical Right, which pursued strategies of paramilitary violence, populism, and mass mobilization. The dissertation emphasizes the League´s changing political alignments, the social complexity of its membership, and the cultural dimensions of its mobilization. It shows that the Pan-Germans were overwhelmed by the need to combine mass mobilization with their own exclusive claims to political power. The Pan-Germans faced the limits of their ability to mobilize support, as the League increasingly turned into the preserve of Honoratioren of the Right after 1914.

This study also challenges the assumption that there was a continuous development from Germany´s “old” political elites before the war to the “new” movements of the radical Right after 1918. It argues that the realignment of the radical Right after the war and the resulting competition over leadership led to fragmentation and helped the NSDAP to seize power in 1933.
By examining the history of the Pan-German League, it offers a case study of how ideological proximity and organizational cooperation developed between the “old” and “new” radical nationalists. It will also emphasize, however, the ideological, social, and cultural limitations of the Pan-German milieu, as the League struggled to adapt to the challenges of mass politics in war, revolution, the Weimar Republic, and the National Socialist dictatorship. Instead of producing a coherent *Sammlung* of Conservative, National Liberal, and anti-Semitic constituencies, the Pan-German League remained a fragile “*Milieuverband*” between 1914 and 1939.
Dedicated to my parents
Werner and Brigitte Hofmeister
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Introduction

“What surprised us – in comparison to the certainty of the downfall, which is almost certain under these circumstances – or certainly hit us most, maybe even broke us, is ‘how’ the collapse happened, ‘how’ it expanded into all directions. [...] Given the events of the last weeks, together with millions of German Volksgenossen the Pan-German League stands at the grave of its proudest hopes.”

Leadership of the Pan-German League to its Members, 15 November 1918

“The Pan-Germans also hold their national convention in Bayreuth these days. [...] Justizrat Claß gives a speech at Richard Wagner’s grave. Twenty deutsche men with long beards stand around him. It is devastating to see: so much intellect but no action.”

Joseph Goebbels, 8 September 1926

“Long and interesting talks with Claß: actually a very tragic figure. For thirty years or more, he played the role of the choir in an ancient tragedy: realizing, warning, without being able to act independently of others – hated likewise by the Left, the Wilhelmine power elites, and the political system of today.”

Reinhold Quaatz, 22 June 1931

The Pan-German League (1891-1939) was the vanguard of the radical Right in Imperial Germany and it aspired to influence right-wing politics as a vanguard in Weimar Germany. It challenged the government, as it competed to mobilize public opinion. The history of radical nationalism in Imperial Germany has traditionally been analyzed in light of its influence on the National Socialist movement. In this view, Pan-German ideology helped radicalize nationalist and völkisch associations at the turn of the century. Thereafter, during the First World War, the November Revolution, and the Weimar Republic, this ideology energized the rise of National Socialism.

1 „Aufruf des Alldeutschen Verbandes an seine Mitglieder;“ 15 November 1918, BA-Berlin (henceforth BA-B), R 8048, vol. 601, 46.
While historians have long believed that the Pan-Germans had a continuous influence on Weimar’s Right, Pan-German contemporaries took a more critical view of the power of the League and its leaders. Shortly after the collapse of Imperial Germany in November 1918, the leaders of the Pan-German League admitted that the First World War had robbed the League of almost all its ideological resources, after their vision of a homogeneous *Volksgemeinschaft* proved illusory. By the mid-1920s, leading National Socialists such as Joseph Goebbels wondered from a distance how the Pan-German League avoided the challenges of modern mass propaganda and failed to translate the ideology of radical nationalism into action. In 1931, Reinhold Quaatz, a member of the Pan-German caucus in Germany’s most important right-wing party, the German National People’s Party (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei/DNVP*), complained about the demise of the Pan-German League, after he had for years cooperated with the League’s chairman, Heinrich Claß. After Quaatz returned from visiting Claß at a sanatorium in Bad Kissingen in the summer of 1931, he reflected in his diary on the limited appeal of the Pan-German League to the masses and on Claß’s lack of leadership in the radical Right. Quaatz believed that the League’s failure to appeal to the masses was due to the League’s elitist conception of politics, according to which Germany’s *Bildungsbürgertum* was the only legitimate ruling class, a new political aristocracy of educated elite experts.

The League’s calls to limit the parliamentary representation of the masses, as well as to prohibit political Catholicism, and Social Democracy, had already attracted public attention before the First World War. Especially after he attacked the Imperial government in a speech at the League’s national convention in Plauen in 1903, Claß became known as one of the most radical activists in the League.\(^4\) Once he offered his services as a successor to Ernst Hasse in 1908, Claß turned the League into the most ambitious association of Germany’s radical Right. By

1908, the Pan-Germans had already embraced a self-image as the leaders of the so-called “national opposition” as they played a vanguard role in promoting a comprehensive reform program for German society, which was to be carried out by educated experts in alliance with the monarchy (reduced to symbolic power), the army, and mostly the Conservative and National Liberal forces in the parliament. At the center of this program stood the unification of all Germans throughout the world, the cultural suppression of ethnic minorities in Germany, and the political suppression of Social Democracy, pacifism, liberalism, and the Catholic Center Party.

These demands reflected broader issues of the development of German nationalism after 1871, which was characterized by three questions. The first was the question of which territories in central Europe should a unified German nation-state include. The second was the question of which culture, language, and other ethnic features constituted the essential markers of being “German.” The third question was the extent to which German nation-building should comprehend democratic representation. The new nation-state created significant divisions. It excluded Austria and brought to an end German expansion into central Europe, as Bismarck proclaimed Germany’s Imperial ambitions “satiated.” After 1871, however, an alternative ideology took shape in extra-parliamentary nationalist associations like the Pan-German League, which shifted from limited state nationalism to a more expansive and ethnically exclusive völkisch nationalism. From 1890 onwards, large segments of the middle classes were attracted to radical nationalism like the Pan-Germans’, as new forms of popular politics evolved in a “political mass market.”

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6 Hans Rosenberg, Große Depression und Bismarckzeit (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967), 123.
The Pan-Germans occupied a significant place in this mass market. Their radical demands for political and cultural homogeneity, as well as territorial expansion, enjoyed immense public appeal. The League developed into the loudest opponent of the government’s foreign and domestic policies. During the First World War, however, its concepts came under severe pressure. The “political mass market” was contested during the radicalization of other political forces, as fragmentation increased on the political Right. In Weimar Germany the Right realigned, as violent paramilitary movements, most prominently the National Socialist Party (Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei/NSDAP), placed the League into a highly competitive field. The Pan-Germans tried to meet this competition, but they failed to mobilize the masses. Other movements, especially the NSDAP, profited from the inability of nationalist movements from the Imperial era to embrace the populism and violence that characterized Weimar’s radicalized “political mass market” on both the Right and Left. The most troubling question for the Pan-Germans after the war, therefore, was how to explain the Pan-German League’s transformation from a vanguard of the radical Right to an antiquated association of right-wing Honoratioren.

This study is devoted to the League’s attempt to devise new strategies in meeting the challenges of political, social, and cultural change between 1914 and 1939. Democratization, competition from other right-wing organizations, and the decline of bourgeois political power all compelled the Pan-German League to redefine itself, its modes of mobilization, and its political strategies. I shall analyze the processes of adaptation to new political strategies and the transformation of collective behavior - or the lack thereof – within this organization. This study analyzes both the success and failure of the Pan-German League in achieving its objectives. It contributes to discussions of the continuity and discontinuity in radical nationalism between

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Imperial Germany and the Third Reich and it examines the Pan-Germans´ inability and unwillingness to reconcile the demands of including the German masses into the nation and their own exclusive claims to power.

Historians have not yet posed these systematic questions about success and failure of the Pan-German League. Nor have they analyzed the League´s loss of influence on the Right after the outbreak of the First World War. Studies of the Pan-German League do exist in large numbers. In particular, the relationship among the Pan-German League, the state, and the public in Imperial Germany has been widely studied. Most of these studies have focused on the League´s role as a pressure group and the impact of its ideology on völkisch and other right-wing discourses of authoritarian politics, racism, imperialism, and territorial expansion. Especially between the 1950s and the 1970s, debates over these issues were part of broader political discussions of the legitimacy of Germany´s postwar order and the competition between East and West Germany. Some of these studies deserve special attention, for they not only reflected the contested nature of the League´s historiography, but also laid the groundwork for continuing debates about the role of the League in shaping Germany´s radical Right in the late 19th and early 20th century.

In his short study of 1954, Alfred Kruck was the first historian to analyze the League´s entire history, from its foundation to its dissolution. He followed a broad consensus in West German historiography that the Third Reich resisted comparison to earlier eras of German

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history. He portrayed the League as a small group of skilled propagandists, who worked as an alien force in the history of German nationalism. The Pan-Germans appeared to be a minor group of misled nationalists, who had no useful place in long-term German history. Kruck’s view was consistent with early West German arguments that the Third Reich was a unique historical disaster, which needed to be separated from long-term continuities in German history from the 19th to the 20th century. Such a view became highly contested as concerns about continuities in the history of German nationalism shaped new methodological approaches and historical interpretations.

The so-called Fischer controversy of the 1960s, which was sparked by Fritz Fischer’s publications on Germany’s role in the outbreak of the First World War, challenged Kruck’s picture. Fischer argued for a continuity of elites, parties, associations, and ideologies, which both caused the war in 1914 and Hitler’s seizure of power in 1933. He and his students challenged the idea that the Third Reich represented a disastrous anomaly in German history. Analyzing public opinion, decision-makers, and German political culture, Fischer and his students argued that the war aims of the German government and the public were congruent with those of the Pan-Germans (and the Nazis). The Pan-Germans featured prominently in Fischer’s account as representatives of an authoritarian consensus among the nationalist elites, whose

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10 See also Christoph Cornelißen, „Der wiederentstandene Historismus: Nationalgeschichte in der Bundesrepublik der fünfziger Jahre,“ in Konrad Jarausch and Martin Sabrow (eds.), Die historische Meistererzählung: Deutungslinien der deutschen Nationalgeschichte nach 1945 (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2002), 78-108.


desire to go to war was a constant in their calculations. The radicalism of Pan-German war aims was first highlighted by Fischer’s students Imanuel Geiss and Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann.\(^{13}\) Other students of the Fischer school wrote follow-up studies, in which they propagated the concept of social imperialism, which subscribed to the interconnection between interest politics of the industrial and agrarian elites and nationalist mobilization as a substitute for parliamentary rule.\(^{14}\) Extra-parliamentary associations and their influence on party politics represented the central theme of studies by Dirk Stegmann and Hans-Jürgen Puhle in the late 1960s and early 1970s.\(^{15}\) The war-aims of the Pan-German League and other nationalist associations were portrayed as the strategy of heavy industrialists and Junkers, both of which pursued their economic interests and sought to block domestic political reform by means of territorial annexations. In reference to Friedrich Meinecke, Stegmann pointed to the continuation of this program among ruling elites from the “cartel of the productive estates” (*Kartell der schaffenden Stände*) in 1913 to the foundation of the German Fatherland Party in 1917.\(^{16}\) The Fischer controversy cast the Pan-Germans as a leading example of how Germany’s educated elites propagated war before 1914, in order to divert domestic class conflict, shield the social and political status quo from democratic reform, and to expand the German Empire. After Fischer had

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\(^{16}\) See also Friedrich Meinecke, *Die deutsche Katastrophe* (Wiesbaden: Brockhaus, 1946).
sharpened his arguments in the heated debates that followed a consensus thus held that the Pan-Germans were “irrepressible” in their manipulation of public opinion and the government in Imperial Germany.  

The work of the Fischer school was welcomed by the GDR and it was occasionally marked by cooperation with Eastern German historians and archivists as several important holdings from Imperial Germany survived in the archives of Potsdam and Merseburg. Fischer’s work also sparked interest among East German historians in the role of public opinion and social and political interests in Imperial Germany. Although the archive of the Pan-German League survived the Second World War and was housed in the Zentralarchiv in Potsdam, the League had not been of significant interest to GDR historians. Until the early 1970s, GDR historiography was charged with crafting an East German historical identity, which was free of the old elites and political traditions that had made National Socialism possible. Even the Weimar Republic appeared in this picture as a transitory system of demagoguery and political violence, which the bourgeoisie created against the working classes only to pass power on to the Nazi dictatorship.

Germany’s Bürgertum was still regarded in East Germany as a class formation that was determined to suppress the demands of the working classes for political reform by means of popular nationalism and, ultimately, Fascism. The Pan-German League was to play a key role in such an interpretation.

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19 See also Gerhard Lozek, „Die deutsche Geschichte 1917(18 bis 1945 in der Forschung der DDR (1945 bis Ende der sechziger Jahre),“ in Ernst Schulin (ed.), *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg 1945-1965* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1989), 199-211.
Edgar Hartwig emphasized this new importance of the Pan-Germans in his 1966 dissertation on the League’s activities before 1914. His study was especially important because it laid the foundation for the GDR’s interpretation of the League’s politics of social imperialism. It was based on extensive use of the League’s archival holdings. Working under Dietrich Fricke at the University of Jena, Hartwig prepared his dissertation as part of a seminal handbook that Fricke edited on bourgeois political associations and parties. Fricke’s group signaled that by the late 1960s GDR historiography had cautiously embraced the study of social classes other than the working class. To boost these studies, several GDR Leit institute were set up in the 1950s and 1960s with Fricke’s working group playing a major role in shaping GDR research on the historical bourgeois “enemies” of the German working classes. In 1964, there were 43 research projects concluded under Fricke’s leadership and 20 further dissertations and Habilitationen in preparation. Hartwig’s dissertation showed the Pan-German League as a reactionary pressure group representing the militarist and authoritarian interests of the ruling classes. For Hartwig, the Pan-Germans only tried to secure with their rhetoric of Weltpolitik and cultural homogenization a political and social status quo, which was to be shielded from revolutionary aspirations of the masses by offering the vision of Imperial grandeur of the German Empire as a strategy to divert domestic class conflict and political tensions. After 1989, Fricke had to admit that the entire Jena project had severe methodological shortcomings. By focusing on the demagogic role of bourgeois

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parties and associations in manipulating the working classes in their power to drive history through revolutionary change the nature of the Volk masses themselves had been entirely neglected. Instead of ascribing the people the role of subjects of history they had turned them into objects and mere victims of the ruling classes.\textsuperscript{23}

Young historians of the new and aspiring Western German “Bielefeld school” of critical social history, particularly Jürgen Kocka and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, were concerned in the 1970s with similar questions, but they broadened the Marxist perspective by adding Max Weber’s sociology of power. They focused on the techniques used by the government and the ruling classes to stabilize the political system and to defend it against the social change propagated by the Left.\textsuperscript{24} The extent to which the Pan-Germans helped mobilize the bourgeoisie for nationalist expansion was one of the central issues, which Eckart Kehr had tried in 1930 to subsume under the concept of social imperialism.\textsuperscript{25} These German debates about social imperialism and the manipulation of the masses were revisited by English and American historians. In 1980, Geoff Eley’s study of the German Navy League and the mobilization of nationalist associations in Imperial Germany questioned Wehler’s assumptions. He described these associations in light of the self-mobilization of the petite bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{26} According to Eley, the lower middle classes were frustrated by the \textit{Honorationenpolitik} of the National Liberals and the Conservatives, who allowed no access to political resources to the lower strata of national-minded German society. As a result, these social classes organized from the bottom-up, seeking cooperation with the

\textsuperscript{23} See Hahn and Kaiser, „Die Arbeitsgruppe zur Geschichte der bürgerlichen Parteien."
\textsuperscript{25} Eckart Kehr, \textit{Schlachtflottenbau und Parteipolitik 1894-1901: Versuch eines Querschnitts durch die innenpolitischen, sozialen und ideologischen Voraussetzungen des deutschen Imperialismus} (Berlin: Ebering, 1930).
establishment but stressing their political independence. However, Eley underestimated the personal connections among the political elites, the members of nationalist extra-parliamentary associations, and the conservative parties.

This connection was explored in 1984 in more detail by Roger Chickering in his social and cultural study of the Pan-German League before 1914. It focused on the social preconditions of Pan-German ideology, practices of cultural Vergemeinschaftung, and the shared anxieties about Germany’s role as a world power and paranoia about the lack of order and homogeneity in German society. Chickering pointed to the fact that the Pan-Germans were concerned with all issues of nation-building and territorial expansion, because they dealt with the design of political and social power themselves by virtue of their occupations as teachers, pastors, university professors, public administrators, and, increasingly, as members of the so-called free professions, such as lawyers, doctors, and pharmacists. According to Chickering, because of their fears for their own social and cultural status in an increasingly complex German society, these sectors embraced an ideology of preserving the socio-political status quo. Nationalist mobilization was a reaction to rapid social change and the political rise of the Left, as well as the Pan-Germans’ desire to gain access to power for Germany’s rising elites from the middle-classes and the Bildungsbürgertum. Chickering was one of the few to acknowledge that the Pan-Germans’ fears, hopes, and desires survived the war, but that they faced difficulties in adapting to the political requirements of Weimar Germany and soon became a museum piece. In this regard,

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28 See also Martina Walther, *Ärzte und Zahnärzte im Alledeutschen Verband und in dessen Tochterorganisationen 1890-1939*, (Diss., Mainz, 1988).
30 Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 299-305.
the Pan-Germans and the National Socialists represented different generations and the National Socialists owed rather little to the Pan-Germans but were instead a unique product of the war.\textsuperscript{31}

Concerns about the fragmentation of the Right and the loss of power of Germany’s conservative and radical right-wing elites were analyzed by Heinz Hagenlücke, who published his dissertation on the Fatherland Party in 1997. He characterized this organization as the most significant attempt of the Right to mobilize popular support for a victorious peace.\textsuperscript{32} Hagenlücke emphasized the competition within the Right to organize a coherent \textit{Sammlungsbewegung}. More importantly, he stressed that the war represented a watershed in the rise of new nationalist movements. Generational differences were evident in a new political style, mobilization strategy, a preference for violence, and social composition. Hagenlücke argued that although important personal connections survived between the Fatherland Party and nationalist organizations of the early Weimar Republic, the dissolution of the Fatherland Party in December 1918 represented the end of traditional \textit{Honoratiorenpolitik}, of which the Pan-German League had been an exponent. Hagenlücke thus concluded that the Pan-German League itself fell victim to the new era of mass mobilization.\textsuperscript{33}

The most thorough scholarship on the Pan-German League had dealt with the Imperial period. The historiography on the Pan-German League in the Weimar era, however, had not applied the tools of social, intellectual, and cultural history that had marked the earlier scholarship. Kruck had offered but a cursory view on the League in his study. More serious research on the League’s Weimar years began only in the 1970s, when it reflected debates over the political continuity of German history from Imperial to Nazi Germany but ignored the

\textsuperscript{31} See also Lothar Werner, \textit{Der Alldeutsche Verband 1890-1918: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der öffentlichen Meinung in Deutschland in den Jahren vor und während des Ersten Weltkrieges} (Berlin: Ebering, 1935).


\textsuperscript{33} Hagenlücke, \textit{Deutsche Vaterlandspartei}, 39.
League’s internal workings and resources, as well as its failure to respond to the challenges of mass politics after the war. GDR historians had become interested in the League’s Weimar activities first in order to show how the League served the interests of the industrial and agrarian elites, who facilitated the rise of the NSDAP in hopes of manipulating the masses. Willi Krebs´ dissertation in 1970 at Humboldt University was the first East German study of the League’s Weimar years, and it represented the companion to Hartwig’s study. Krebs assumed that there were political and ideological continuities between Imperial Germany and the Nazi regime (which he, as East German historiography in general, claimed to reach into West German society after 1945). The Pan-Germans were exponents of subservient authoritarianism, so the old Pan-Germans turned into the early Nazis. Krebs highlighted the League’s anti-Semitism, its attempts to establish a military dictatorship during the first years of the Weimar Republic, and its early cooperation with the NSDAP. Together, Hartwig and Krebs provided the East German master narrative of the League’s role. The Pan-German League was, as the East German historian Herbert Gottwald wrote in 1977, the “leading political association of the most aggressive representatives of German monopoly-capitalists.” In their history of the NSDAP, Kurt Pätzold and Manfred Weissbecker called the Pan-German League an “adventurous militaristic group of Germany’s monopoly-capitalism and the Junkers.” Joachim Petzold, who was the first historian to study the relationship between Claß and Adolf Hitler in detail, labeled the NSDAP an ideological, organizational, and political “initiative” that was set up almost entirely by the Pan-

German League.\textsuperscript{37} All these ambitious interpretations had their critical methodological limitations. As Fricke before, Petzold admitted his doubts in his memoirs, which were published posthumously in 2000, whether the relationship between the NSDAP and the Pan-German League was as cooperative and mutually beneficial as he had claimed, for he had neglected the rivalries and competition within the radical Right.\textsuperscript{38} It was precisely this issue which proved to be critical in either backing or rejecting assumptions about continuities of the radical Right that went beyond ideology into the realms of politics and social mobilization.

In his Hamburg dissertation in 1970, Uwe Lohalm acknowledged Fischer’s continuity thesis, but he moved beyond it, arguing that the radical Right was indeed highly fragmented after the war. The subject of his dissertation was the anti-Semitic German-Völkisch Protection League (\textit{Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund/DSTB}), which the Pan-German League helped to found in 1919 in hopes of promoting \textit{Sammlungspolitik} and mass mobilization on the Right.\textsuperscript{39} Lohalm made clear the internal feuds that marked the history of this organization and its relations with the Pan-German League during its short history between 1919 and 1923. However, the Protection League’s history also demonstrated that anti-Semitism was an effective mobilizing strategy, as well as a potential solution to the political crises of the radical Right.

In 1972, Brewster Chamberlain offered the first detailed look at the Pan-German League’s involvement in the “national opposition” of the radical Right between 1918 and 1926.\textsuperscript{40} He traced the League’s connections to leaders of the free corps and nationalist associations, including the


\textsuperscript{39} Uwe Lohalm, \textit{Völkischer Radikalismus: Der Deutschvölkische Schutz- und Trutzbund 1919-1923} (Lübeck: Leibnitz, 1970).

early NSDAP. He also revealed the early alienation between Claß and Hitler, as well as the differences in political style and mobilization that subsequently came to the forefront.

Chamberlain, however, stressed the power of the League in Weimar politics, although it decreased after the war, and he overestimated the League´s mobilizational and financial resources in his attempt to emphasize the League´s remaining importance in shaping Weimar´s Right.

Ending the narrative in 1926 left a misleading impression, as did his failure to engage in the League´s broader history before 1918. Barry Jackisch´s dissertation, which he completed in 2000, offered more detail about the League´s involvement in the political party system, particularly in the DNVP, the German Volk Party (Deutsche Volkspartei/DVP), and the German Völkisch Freedom Party (Deutschvölkische Freiheitspartei/DVFP). Like Chamberlain´s dissertation, his study primarily covered the period from 1918 to 1926, and it emphasized the importance of the League in shaping the radical Right. Drawing overwhelmingly from the archive of the League and the unpublished memoirs of Claß (1915-1933/36), Jackisch argued that the League helped to fragment the Right with its elitist politics of radical opposition.

Rainer Hering pointed again to the influential political legacy of the Pan-German League in his study of 2003, which represented his Habilitationschrift at the Hamburg University. Hering´s book presented an overview of the League´s entire history, although it focused primarily on the years 1891-1918. Having himself studied in Hamburg, Hering was influenced by the writings of the Fischer school. He, too, stressed the disastrous role of the League as a precursor of the Third Reich, although he did not offer a narrative to carry the vanguard theme beyond the First World War. Such limitations of providing a thorough analysis, which deals with the

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41 Chamberlain, The Enemy on the Right, II.
43 See Heinrich Claß, Wider den Strom II [Politische Erinnerungen 1915-1933/36], formerly at the Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Teilnachlaß Claß, F 499 and now housed at the Geheime Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz.
League’s ideological, political, cultural, and social realms of activism during the entire period in question, represent a larger problem of Weimar historiography. Several Conservative and right-wing organizations remain under-studied such as the DNVP, which came under the spell of Pan-German party activists in 1928. Michel Korinman was more convincing in his exhaustive study on Le Pangermanisme 1890-1945, which had appeared four years earlier. Korinman, however, again mostly focused on the League’s world view and its ideological impact on the radical Right.

Few of these works provided detailed studies of the League’s activities in the local chapters. Instead, they analyzed the experience of change among the League’s leadership. Concise microhistorical analyses of Pan-German activities in local chapters exist only for Dresden, Brunswick, and Hamburg, and these focus on the Imperial era. One of the problems has been the lack of extensive archival material on local chapters. The same applies to the Austrian chapters of the German Pan-German League between 1919 and 1935. Most of the microstudies of Pan-German activism have been biographical. Earlier studies had featured the

leading Pan-Germans Ernst Graf von Reventlow and Alfred Hugenberg.⁴⁹ More recently, two Pan-Germans – Theodor Reismann-Grone and Heinrich Claß—have found biographers in Stefan Frech and Johannes Leicht.⁵⁰ Both authors showed that both Reismann-Grone and Claß remained tied to their bourgeois views and prejudices as leading members of Germany’s Bildungsbürgertum. Both studies emphasize that as much as the NSDAP built upon the ideology of the Pan-Germans, the League and the NSDAP remained different movements with distinct objectives and strategies.

Therefore, the focus on the ideological radicalism and political rhetoric of the Pan-Germans has left the question of the League’s mobilization, political resources, generational structure, and resistance to masses politics unanswered. So do questions about the practice of political culture of the League—its day-to-day activities, patterns of sociability, the internal dynamics of its power structure, the regional diversity of its activities, and conflicts and compromises over political strategies. As the Fischer controversy and the GDR historiography showed, the emphasis has fallen on drawing a direct line from the radical rhetoric of the Pan-Germans and their involvement in right-wing Sammlungspolitik to the rise of the NS-movement. It is necessary, however, to take the Pan-Germans’ experience seriously, not only as a vanguard of the radical Right, which sought to design a right-wing Sammlungsbewegung that was not responsible to the masses, but also as a movement that had initially borrowed from 19th century German liberalism and was itself exposed to fundamental political challenges. James Retallack

has reminded us of the conflicted history of the Conservative Party in Imperial Germany, which represented a model of long-term developments in right-wing organizations from the 19th century onwards. These developments were significantly determined by compromise, dilemmas and internal debates, ambivalences, a lack of resources, political miscalculation, regional diversity, and the conflict of abstract ideals and political interests.  

Retallack noted that challenges of mass politics were often unmet by the Conservatives before the war, but he also showed that the Conservatives tried to meet them. So did the Pan-German League. They tried persistently to respond to the challenges of mass politics by means of social imperialism, war, and civil-military dictatorship. The Pan-Germans´ dilemma, however, was how to reconcile popular demands and mass politics with the League´s claims to exclusive representation. This dilemma was apparent throughout the political Right in the Weimar era.

The decline of the “old” associations on Germany´s Right after the war has been neglected in explaining the rise of “new” movements such as National Socialism. The sociologist Stefan Breuer has devoted several works to this problem, which emphasize the need to differentiate between at least two generations of right-wing activists, to analyze not only the ideological legacies, but also the fundamental differences in political style and mobilization techniques between the generations.  

Uwe Puschner had also warned recently that identifying

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the complex völkisch movement of Imperial Germany as the predecessor of the NS-movement overlooks the uniqueness of both the völkisch and the National Socialist movements, which nevertheless borrowed elements of a Weltanschauung from one another.\(^{53}\) Moreover, the proliferation of political movements, organizations, and parties on the radical Right between 1871 and 1945 warns against imprecise narratives of continuity in German radical nationalism.\(^{54}\)

The Pan-German League offers the most significant case in point, as an “old” right-wing movement which did attempt to play a significant role after 1918. However, existing studies have done little to emphasize the conflicted experience of the Pan-German League. Instead, the Pan-German League has been depicted as the most important pressure group in influencing public opinion, crafting networks among right-wing organizations, and shaping völkisch debates about territorial expansion, cultural homogeneity, and dictatorship. This study offers a more complex view as it examines the limits of the League’s symbolic and ideological power, as it failed to meet the challenges of mass politics after the war. It analyzes how the Pan-Germans responded to fundamental change, and how their thinking and acting were shaped by new political challenges between 1914 and 1939. It suggests that the League’s actions, strategies, and programs reflected dynamic learning processes regarding the challenges of leadership competition and mass mobilization.\(^{55}\)

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54 See also Uwe Puschner and Walter Schmitz and Justus H. Ulbricht, “Vorwort,” in Idem (eds.), *Handbuch zur ‚Völkischen Bewegung‘ 1871-1918* (Munich: Saur, 1998) IX-XXIII.

Three major themes marked the League’s history between 1914 and 1939. First, the Pan-German League failed to become a mass movement. Therefore, organizations other than the League profited from the radicalization of the Right after the war. Second, cooperation among the elements of the radical Right in Imperial and Weimar Germany must be reconsidered in light of the fragmentation that frustrated attempts to create a *Sammlungsbewegung* and helped Hitler to seize power. Third, the League itself was rooted in a fragmented milieu of radical *Bildungsbürger* and other mostly Protestant and central German middle-class constituencies, which continued to operate mostly with an old-fashioned “Borussian” worldview. The reluctance of the Pan-German leadership, as well as the rank and file, to broaden the League’s appeal in the post-war period begs larger questions about the League as a political movement and about its ability to modernize its ideology and political strategy.

The title of this study, “Between Monarchy and Dictatorship,” has a twofold meaning. It describes the period under consideration, the transformation of the League between the last four years of the *Kaiserreich* and its own dissolution in 1939. The title also points to political discussions within the League about how to reconcile the demands of mass mobilization and elitist political leadership. Between 1914 and 1939, the Pan-Germans had to revisit their utopia of *völkisch* leadership exercised by educated experts. They now faced both mass democratization and mass mobilization in competing right-wing movements. The Pan-Germans, however, never abandoned the idea of elite governance, and they cherished the idea of monarchy until the League’s dissolution in 1939. The first chapter of the dissertation introduces the key elements of Pan-German activities, as well as the ideological elements that shaped their politics during the Imperial era. It analyzes how the Pan-Germans were exposed to a changing mass market of mobilization and how they radicalized their ideology and political strategies as a result of increasing political conflict in the parliament, limitations of Germany’s expansion into the
colonial periphery, and the inability of the government to meet the League’s radical demands for political homogeneity and expansion abroad.

Chapter two is devoted to the practical unfolding of the Pan-Germans’ ideology and their programmatic claims during the First World War. The war was perceived as an opportunity for domestic as well as foreign gains, the appeasement of political conflict within German society and territorial expansion of the German Empire. For the Pan-Germans the initial military successes of the war seemed to set a new framework for German power politics on the European continent, which included a large-scale reshuffling of populations in eastern European, settlement utopias for German peasants after the war, and forced foreign labor for the German industrial and agricultural labor market. As the Burgfrieden eroded and another Sammlungsbewegung collapsed with failure of the Fatherland Party, the Pan-Germans turned to radical anti-Semitism in 1917/18. These political and ideological challenges were accompanied by the war’s immense impact on the composition of the League’s rank and file. The deaths of existing members and the failure to recruit new members at the local and national levels, the frailty of the League’s leadership, and the collapse of several chapters showed that the war’s impact on the League was as fundamental as its effect on German society as a whole.

The breakdown of the monarchical order in 1918 left the Pan-German League in shambles. Chapter three focuses on the League’s responses to revolution and democratization, which fundamentally reframed the problem of access to power. The crisis of political leadership in Germany and the fragmentation of order during the revolution led to significant changes in the League’s mobilizational strategies. An increasing number of members aspired new forms of mobilization, especially in Austria, where the Austrian Pan-German League was founded in 1919 and soon attracted more members than in Germany (compared to the size of Austria’s population). Chapter four focuses on the efforts of the League during the first four years of the
The League organized military putsches, new forms of mass mobilization in the anti-Semitic Protection League, elitist youth movements, and contacts with the early National Socialist movement. All of these efforts to appeal to new social constituencies, however, had severe limitations and already suggested that the Pan-German League was turning into an ageing association of Honoratioren. The same conclusion was suggested in the League’s declining membership after 1923. Agitation and propaganda techniques that the League had applied successfully in the past were adopted and expanded by other mass movements after the war, and, if it had not done so earlier, the League’s most powerful ideological asset - the mobilization of anti-Semitism - now became an essential element of almost every competing right-wing organization.

Chapter five examines the League’s learning processes after its failure to mobilize the masses and after the NSDAP attempted to overthrow the Weimar Republic in 1923. The chapter also analyzes the League’s reaction to the evolution of party politics during the “stable years” of the Weimar Republic. It culminates in the takeover of the DNVP in 1928 by Alfred Hugenberg and the Pan-German caucus within this party. While the Pan-Germans now could employ the DNVP as their parliamentary placeholder in the Reichstag, the League’s role changed significantly, as it became dependent on the DNVP’s performance. So the Pan-Germans rethought their strategy of mobilization and shaped plans to work in closer cooperation with right-wing parties, in order to legalize their anti-democratic politics and to open new avenues of political action. The year 1928 marked an important turning point, as the Pan-Germans changed their attitude toward party politics, aligning themselves with a single party. However, as much as the DNVP claimed to be a Volkspartei (people’s party), it never represented social constituencies large enough to justify the label. The purge of the party under Hugenberg, which the League supported, reduced the League’s constituencies still further, leaving the DNVP a splinter-party
with a radical core. This development emphasized that neither the DNVP nor the Pan-Germans could lead the radical Right in Weimar Germany.

The extent to which the League was overwhelmed in competition within the radical Right is examined in chapter six, which analyzes the League’s social and cultural workings. It treats the Pan-Germans as contested organizers of festivities and nostalgic Bismarck celebrations, which carried immense symbolic meanings for Weimar’s “old” and the “new” Right. Public rallies in remembrance of Bismarck became highly contested as stages for competing right-wing movements to lay claim on the former founder of the German Empire who functioned as an alternative symbolic power center to the government in the service of many nationalist movements in Imperial Germany and, to this effect, had also become an honorary member of the Pan-German League three years before his death in 1895. This chapter emphasizes how the Pan-Germans lost ground in their cultural activities to new radical mass movements which borrowed heavily from the Pan-German repertoire but develop their elitist forms of mobilizations to new forms of pompous choreography and mass participation in these events. Meanwhile the Pan-Germans also faced the limits of their appeal to crucial social constituencies, such as young people, women, and nationalists outside central Germany (particularly central Prussia). The retreat of the Pan-Germans into traditional realms of sociability laid bare the continuities in their cultural behavior, as well as the stability of their norms, values, and modes of communication. Unlike the new paramilitary mass organizations of Weimar Germany, the Pan-German League remained tied to its traditional concepts of leadership, which became increasingly centralized around an aging chairman Claß, who represented the generational cohort of those radical nationalist “1868ers” that now dominated the League’s leading bodies, while the “new” radical Right mobilized new social and cultural constituencies.
The retreat of the League into elitist forms of sociability and politics left the Pan-Germans unprepared for the final struggle of the DNVP for leadership against the NSDAP between 1928 and 1933. Chapter seven is devoted to this fateful conflict, which, finally, brought the NSDAP finally to power at the expense of the DNVP’s and the League’s claims to shape right-wing politics. The rise of the NSDAP after 1928 did not bring the results that the Pan-Germans hoped for. Instead, the fundamental regrouping of power relations within the radical Right pushed the Pan-German League, together with the DNVP, to the margins of right-wing politics. The complicated cooperation between the DNVP and the League in facilitating Hitler’s seizure of power showed that this story was full of difficult compromises, loss of influence, and illusions. That no significant group of Pan-Germans cheered for Hitler’s seizure of power reflected the ambivalences in the League’s position. How the Pan-German League redefined its role after the seizure of power in 1933 will be discussed in the concluding chapter. In 1933 the Pan-Germans became victims of their own political and ideological radicalism, as Hitler attempted to stifle class conflict, crushing all competing ideologies and political movements, including Conservative organizations and the residues of the radical Right. Pressure from the regime forced the League fully into a bildungsbürgerlich associational subculture, a development that had been anticipated long before 1933. The regime left the Pan-Germans wondering about their long path into political insignificance, before it dissolved the League in 1939.
I. German Pan-Nationalism and Social Mobilization in Imperial Germany, 1891-1914

The Pan-German League and the German State

The Pan-German League occupies an important place in the history of German radical nationalism. For its own members it provided a specific transitional experience of radical-nationalist mobilization between Imperial Germany and the Third Reich. Between the foundation of the Pan-German League in 1891 and its dissolution in 1939, the Pan-Germans believed that they were experiencing a vital transition in Germany’s political and socio-economic development. Their consciousness of a fundamental transition following the foundation of the German Empire shaped their self-perception in an era of rapid socio-economic change and national consolidation. Albeit with much variation, their sense of the German Empire’s historical significance was shared by many contemporaries, particularly among those who were actively engaged in discussions about the future of the German polity.¹ These discourses often featured euphoric visions of Germany’s potential, be they oriented toward colonial expansion, social reform, or the awakening of a new sense of community like socialism, liberalism radical nationalism, and distinct religious varieties of a Christian social order. Recent cultural history has stressed that the decades around a long fin de siècle (1880-1939) were marked by class conflict and unsettled cultural meanings, as well as by challenges to the established territorial order in Europe and abroad.² Debates over the future shape of the German nation-state touched on


alternative visions of domestic government and the management of foreign affairs. These debates—and the utopian visions that accompanied them—took place among the political movements and parties that divided Imperial Germany’s political landscape into Social Democrats, Catholics, Left-Liberals, National Liberals, and Conservatives, as well as anti-Semitic and ethnic minority parties.3

Although the Pan-Germans came primarily from the Protestant liberal nationalist milieu, they made their own characteristic contribution to these debates over Germany’s future and to the sense of both ideological optimism and political crisis. The Pan-Germans embraced a brand of nationalism that called for the uncompromising unification of all Germans into an ethnically and politically homogeneous German Empire. The Pan-Germans’ concerns over the limitations of the German nation-state of 1871—the fact that it did not represent such a homogeneous unit—reflected the anxieties of the social group from which the Pan-German League drew most of its membership, the educated bourgeoisie (Bildungsbürgertum), which defined culture (Kultur) as the determinant of ethnic, political, and territorial belonging. In addition, the prevalence of civil servants and middle-class businessmen in its membership significantly shaped discussions in the League about political power, social order, and economic efficiency. The Pan-Germans regarded themselves as political and ideological “pioneers.” They believed that they themselves embodied the moral essence of “Germandom.” To mobilize support for their cultural aspirations, they cast themselves as a vanguard, which was charged with educating the German people and government about the political steps necessary to realize this national project. To this end, they formulated ideas about a wide range of matters, such as cultural homogenization and the reform of domestic

governance. Their agenda included a new definition of the German nation-state’s territorial boundaries, its role among the world powers, its colonial possessions, the status of ethnic minorities within it, and the role of ethnic Germans abroad, as well as ways of dealing with religious minorities within the Empire (Catholics and Jews) and the rising Social Democratic movement.

At the center of Pan-German demands stood the utopia of an ethnic and cultural homogenization of German society. This demand reflected their fundamental dissatisfaction with Germany’s political pluralism and cultural varieties as embodied in different ethnic identities, as well as the territorial extent of the German Empire. The foundation of the German nation state in 1871 represented but the beginning of German nation-building for the Pan-Germans, not the “saturated” endpoint as Bismarck had proclaimed. For Claß, the chairman of the Pan-German League from 1908 until 1939, unification in 1871 was just the introductory step for the “further unification of all Germans in Central Europe in one single state unit.” This claim had broad diplomatic and cultural implications. Prior to the wars of German unification, the nationalist and anti-Semitic historian Heinrich von Treitschke, who served as an intellectual source for many leading Pan-Germans, had believed it impossible that regions such as Alsace and Lorraine, for instance, would ever be part of Germany. In 1870, with the Franco-German war still underway, he demanded that France be weakened territorially through annexations that Germany should have made in 1815. Treitschke’s annexationist claims were founded on a Franco-German political border that would correspond to the linguistic border. He believed that these cultural frontiers constituted the limited extent of the state’s political power, because the state had no control over the territorial distribution of different language communities.

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4 *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 18 October 1913.
The Pan-Germans, however, demanded that cultural frontiers be ethnically homogenized after Germany had expanded into the territories in question. The Pan-German belief that the territorial limitations of the German nation-state should conform to the principles of cultural nationalism represented a powerful challenge to domestic integration in the German Empire as it was constituted by the boundaries of 1871. The ideological basis of Pan-German cultural nationalism was that all German-speakers in Central Europe should be included in a comprehensive, homogeneous German nation-state that was yet to be created. The claim that German language was the chief determinant of ethnic belonging was the basis on which radical German nationalism mobilized. The existence of several language communities within the German Empire itself prompted the nationalist Right to insist on the separation of different cultural communities or on state-enforced assimilation of ethnic minorities. The presence of 600,000 Danes in Northern Prussia, 3½ million Poles in eastern Prussia and the industrialized Ruhr area, as well as the French population of Alsace Lorraine thus offered powerful potential for cultural and ethnic conflict within the German Empire. Who belonged within a homogeneous German nation-state, whether and how to include other ethnic communities in it, and the territorial extent of the German Empire became political issues that were increasingly shaped by the mobilization of nationalist associations.

The founding of extraparliamentary associations, which were concerned with domestic and foreign nation-state building between the late 1870s and the turn of the century, resulted from a powerful shift in the German political landscape. It came in the course of the state’s campaign against elements whom Bismarck labeled as “enemies of the Reich.” The Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands) and the Catholic Church were both harassed by the state during the Kulturkampf (1871-1887) and the period of anti-Socialist laws (1878-1890). The ideological battle against Socialism and political Catholicism gave hope among large parts of
the liberal middle classes that Germans might be unified in a campaign to strengthen the state´s authority again the transnational influence of the Vatican and to shield German society from Socialist revolution. The National Liberals voted for both the anti-Socialist laws and the Kulturkampf, abandoning their many of their beliefs on matters of domestic reform. Bismarck´s turn to protectionism pushed them further toward nationalism and away from their belief in free trade. The tariffs of 1879 signaled the so-called “conservative turn” in German politics, a move toward nationalist protectionism and increased state intervention to the benefit of the economy. It also set a precedent for granting state protection to private entrepreneurs and trading firms in colonial areas.

The “conservative turn” also signaled a crisis of liberalism, as liberal forces split over the tariffs.⁶ A fundamental ideological realignment ensued among the liberals, a split between universalism, free trade, and democratic beliefs, on the one hand, and radical nationalism—a commitment to a homogeneous German society and world empire—on the other.⁷ The Left-Liberal Parties and the National Liberal Party, respectively, embodied these tendencies. Nationalism and liberalism merged during Bismarck´s chancellorship. The National Liberals became intertwined with the new nationalist and colonial associations, whose programs were devoted to colonial expansion, concern for ethnic Germans abroad, and a strong German navy, as well anti-Socialism. International tensions, the persistence of military antagonism toward France and growing competition with Great Britain over world power status, added to the fears of nationalist activists that Germany’s rising power would be threatened.⁸ These fears were

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⁸ See also McGowan, Radical Right, 29-30 and Stegmann, Erben Bismarcks, 59-113.
widespread among the propertied and educated middle classes, especially in the industrialized Ruhr valley, Saxony, the port cities, and the administrative centers of Prussia. These political concerns underlay new attempts to mobilize the masses in the interests of industrial concerns as well as land-holding elites. The expansion of political participation, as institutionalized in universal manhood suffrage, generated organizational activism on the local and national levels. The Conservatives and the National Liberals both tried to reconcile the demands of mass participation with their own sense of elitism by working through the new extraparliamentary movements. The two parties shared fears of Socialism and political Catholicism, but the agrarian Conservatives and urban National Liberals had conflicting interests as well. Although the Conservatives supported Bismarck’s tariff politics and anti-Socialist laws, they opposed the Kulturkampf because they promoted the strengthening of religion in general.

For the Pan-Germans and the other nationalist associations, however, Bismarck became the symbol of integrative nationalism, the German nation-state, and the German colonial Empire, particularly after his retirement in 1890. He also represented a pole around which a “national opposition” could take shape against the policies of the new emperor, Wilhelm II, who seemed to have abandoned the principles of Bismarck’s power politics after he became Kaiser in 1888. However, the seeds of a “national opposition” had been sowed earlier, with the very foundation of the Empire in 1871. Bismarck himself had set the limits of the new nation-state, which the Pan-Germans criticized for its political and territorial shortcomings. The old chancellor elevated the ideology of a Staatsnation into an official creed. He opposed the cultural nationalism that the Pan-Germans propagated, with its claim to unite all Germans according to language and

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9 See Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 133-151.
ethnicity. Official nationalism was fixed instead to the frontiers of 1871, the Imperial monarchy, the common war efforts against France, the army, and a flag. These offers of national identity and Imperial aspirations were not enough for the “national opposition.”

Contextualizing the Pan-German League as a Social and Political Movement

Nationalist organizations, therefore, mobilized around political issues that the government did not seem to support sufficiently. Other than the Pan-German League, the most prominent among the new nationalist groups were the General German School Association (after 1908 the Association for Germandom Abroad (Allgemeiner Deutscher Schulverein/Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland), the Society for German Colonization (Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kolonisation), founded in 1884 and then merged in 1887 into the German Colonial Society (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft), the Agrarian League (Bund der Landwirte), the German Society of the Eastern Marches (Deutscher Ostmarkenverein), the German Navy League (Deutscher Flottenverein), the Imperial Association Against Social Democracy Reichsverband gegen die Sozialdemokratie), and the German Defense League (Deutscher Wehrverein).¹¹ Taken together, these organizations counted almost one million members on the eve of the First World War.

Adding the organizations that were corporate members of the Navy League and the Army League doubled the numbers to more than two million.¹² If one includes the veterans associations and the

¹¹ See also Elfi Bendikat, Organisierte Kolonialbewegung in der Bismarck-Ära (Heidelberg: Kivouvou 1984); Adam Galos and Felix-Heinrich Gentzen and Witold Jakoczyk, Die Hakatisten: Der Deutsche Ostmarkenverein 1894-1934 (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1966); Sabine Grabowski, Deutscher und polnischer Nationalismus: Der Deutsche Ostmarkenverein und die polnische Stratz 1894-1914 (Marburg: Herder Institut, 1998); Griesmer, Massenverbände und Massenparteien, Marilyn Coetzee, The German Army League: Popular Nationalism in Wilhelmine Germany (Oxford: OUP, 1990); Roger Chickering, „Der Deutsche Wehrverein und die Reform der deutschen Armee 1912-1914,“ in Idem, Krieg, Frieden und Geschichte (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2007 [1979]), 31-64; Eley, Reshaping the German Right; and Puhle, Agrarische Interessenpolitik.

special nationalist organizations for women, close to five million men and women were organized in these nationalist movements. This figure represented twice the membership of the labor unions and five times the individual members of the Social Democratic Party in the spring of 1914 (1,085,905).\textsuperscript{13}

These nationalist associations represented a remarkable surge of nationalist mobilization in Imperial Germany. Like other social movements, these nationalists challenged the power monopoly of the state through their mobilization of members, resources, and public support, their use of the media for their ideological ends, and their networking with other associations, elites, media, and political parties.\textsuperscript{14} The upsurge of nationalist mobilization created an organizational network whose legitimacy rested on sources other than votes and parliamentary power. Even though many nationalists were close to the Liberal and Conservative parties, their self-proclaimed independence of party affiliations fostered the impression that these new associations had no established political partners. Still, their opposition to the government and parliament did not mean complete independence from party influences. The Agrarian League was effectively an arm of the Conservative Party. The Pan-German League counted in its ranks more than 100 members of parliament between 1891 and 1914.\textsuperscript{15} Most of them were National Liberals. Between 1898 and 1903, twenty-six of the forty-five Pan-German members of the Reichstag were National Liberals, while only fourteen were Conservatives.\textsuperscript{16} In any case, the claim to be above traditional party

\footnotesize{\textit{des Deutschen Flottenvereins 1915}, 16; \textit{Jahresbericht des Deutschen Flottenvereins 1916}, 13; and Coetzee, \textit{German Army League}.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{13} See Weichlein, \textit{Nationalbewegungen und Nationalismus in Europa}, 109 and Hagenlücke, \textit{Deutsche Vaterlandspartei}, 185.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{14} See also Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans, “The Politics of Social Protest,” in Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans (eds.), \textit{The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements}, (London 1995), 5.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{15} Hasse to Niemann, 19 November 1903, Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde (henceforth BA-B) R 8048, vol. 187, 333-335. See also Wertheimer, \textit{The Pan-German League}, 134-135; Griesmer, \textit{Parteien und Massenverbände}, 103-139; and Konrad Schilling, „Beiträge zu einer Geschichte des radikalen Nationalismus der wilhelminischen Ära 1890-1914“ (Diss., Cologne, 1968), 519-523.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{16} See Schilling, \textit{Radikaler Nationalismus}, 534 and Hering, \textit{Konstruierte Nation}, 460 and 467.}
divisions, to employ new methods of propaganda, and to represent an alternative to existing political elites characterized the approach of these nationalists to politics.

Their relationship to agencies of the government was likewise strained. Some nationalist associations cooperated with state ministries, such as the Foreign Office. The Navy League and the Colonial Society worked together within the state bureaucracy, and their leading members often held high offices. The Pan-German League enjoyed less state support. Especially after the turn of the century, the Pan-Germans criticized the government with much less caution than the Navy League or Colonial Society, and this contrast could create its own internal strains. The Pan-German League stood in sharp opposition to the government’s colonial policy, while the Colonial Society, despite reservations, tended to side with the government. In cases of severe opposition to the government, radicals in the Colonial Society joined the Pan-German League or otherwise used the Pan-Germans to mobilize anti-governmental protest without identifying with the Colonial Society.\(^{17}\) The creation of extraparliamentary nationalist associations, therefore, worked as a “secondary system of representation” in Imperial Germany, an additional system of mediation between citizens and the state.\(^{19}\) These associations counterbalanced Bismarck’s constitutional system, which severely limited the power of the parliament. In this respect, nationalist associations joined other kinds of organizations, such as corporations, economic associations, and nationalist labor unions. The nationalist associations, however, claimed to transcend economic, social, and cultural interests as they mobilized public opinion for a broad range of nationalist

\(^{17}\) See Roger Chickering, “Patriotic Societies and German Foreign Policy 1890-1914,” in International History Review 1 (1979): 470-489.

\(^{18}\) See also Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, Imperialismus vom Grünen Tisch: Deutsche Kolonialpolitik zwischen wirtschaftlicher Ausbeutung und „zivilisatorischen“ Bemühungen (Berlin: Links, 2009), 63-64.

issues and activities. The Pan-German League served as a unique component within the web of nationalist organizations. Eckart Kehr called it an ideological “holding company.” Thomas Nipperdey has described the League as the “core organization” of the radical Right; Hans-Ulrich Wehler has labeled it an “uproarious mouthpiece of radical nationalism”, while Louis Snyder in a classical study of pan-nationalist movements observed that the League was the “father” of German nationalist organizations, “watching over, stimulating, advising, and publicizing them.”

While all the new nationalist associations were linked through cross-memberships and other networks, the wide range of issues, both domestic and foreign, that occupied the Pan-German League made this organization particularly attractive to members who were concerned with larger questions of Germany world power status and domestic homogenization. In 1906, 101 associations with 130,000 members were corporately affiliated with it. These numbers, however, were not comparable to the millions of individual and corporate followers of the Navy League, who were organized in more than 3,000 branches with the aid of nearly 3,000 local agents. The Pan-German League failed to attract the numbers it hoped to. The broadness of its program tended instead to attract those who were interested in more abstract ideological issues of colonialism, political and cultural homogenization, and economic efficiency. The Navy League had a simpler message to convey: the expansion and modernization of the navy, as well as propagating colonial expansion and world politics.

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23 *Aldeutsche Blätter*, 30 June 1906.
24 Eley, *Reshaping the German Right*, 102.
Yet no less than in the Navy League, Pan-German mobilization depended on the activism of individual agents who, thanks to their social status, political connections, or charisma, attracted members to Pan-German chapters in big cities as well as towns and villages. They included Gustav Pezoldt in Plauen, Max von Gruber and Julius F. Lehmann in Munich, Theodor von Reismann-Grone and Karl Klingemann in Essen, Karl Lohmann and Carl Gottfried Gok in Hamburg, August Gebhard in Friedberg, Ernst Joerges in Rostock, Landgerichstrat Konrad Pogge in Prenzlau, Georg Beutel in Dresden, Hasse in Leipzig, and Claß in Mainz. These men often emphasized local issues, so mobilization focused on the concerns of particular regions. Colonialism, naval armament, and Anglo-German rivalries were prominent in Hamburg, ethnic struggles within the Habsburg monarchy were featured in borderland cities with significant transnational migration and seasonal labor such as Dresden and Pirna, agrarian issues and trade tariffs in rural outposts such as Neubrandenburg and Neustettin, and ethnic minorities in Posen and Danzig, where German-Polish relations were often shaped by nationalist conflict. Local issues were particularly important as the Pan-German League sought to recruit members and supporters in areas where Conservatism was strong, especially east of the Elbe.

The Pan-German membership and regional strongholds, however, corresponded primarily to the Central German constituencies of the National Liberals. These represented the least coherent and stable political milieu in Imperial Germany, and the vacillating membership figures of the Pan-German League were in part a reflection of this fact. Soon after its foundation in 1891, the League grew to 21,000 members, but by 1893 it had shrunk to 5,000. Membership then increased slowly to a more stable level of some 22,000 in 1900. These fluctuations troubled the executive committee (Geschäftsführender Ausschuss) to the extent that the League’s chairman

25 See Mitteilungen des Allgemeinen Deutschen Verbandes, 21 May 1892; Alldutsche Blätter, 1 January 1894; Circular Vertriebsleitung Alldeutsche Blätter, December 1893, BA-B, R 8084, vol. 3, 76; Alldutsche Blätter, 20 July 1901; and Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 1/2 February 1902, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 32, 3.
and banker and Mannesmann steel works manager, Karl von der Heydt, considered the foundation of a Bismarck Party in 1893 as an alternative party to the Conservative Party.

Wilhelm Schroeder-Poggelaw and Heydt from the League’s national leadership, who were both members of the Free Conservative Party (Freikonservative Partei) and had been actively involved in the enforcement of German colonial policy in East Africa with their own financial assets, supported such plans as the Conservative party struggled with the “New Course” of the Emperor and his chancellor Leo von Caprivi, who pressed for further reductions of tariffs and, thereby, alienated large parts of the party’s constituencies. The economic crisis, which had hit Germany between 1891 and 1894, left the National Liberals and the Conservatives divided over the debate if protective tariffs or free trade would provide the solution to the current crisis.

Schroeder-Poggelaw and Heydt found support among their Free Conservative colleagues in the League Otto Arendt, Hermann Graf von Arnim-Muskau, and Siegfried von Kardorff.26 Both travelled to Bismarck’s estate in Friedrichsruh in February 1893 to consult with the chancellor on the matter and the discussion about the change from associational status to the role of a full-fledged national political party renewed the debate over the structure and purpose of the Pan-German League.27 Resistance to the foundation of a party competing with National Liberals, Free Liberals, and German Conservatives, however, ruled out the foundation of a National Party (Nationalpartei) and leading Pan-Germans such as Hasse, who was just elected National Liberal deputy to the Reichstag in May 1893, opposed such attempts because he saw this as a threat to the League’s power. Hasse also feared that if industrial interests, as represented by the National

Liberals, and agrarian interests, as represented by the Conservatives, could not be reconciled through a *Sammlungsbewegung* within the given framework of party politics, even the Pan-German propaganda for the introduction of a corporate voting system in Germany would not necessarily secure the power of the National Liberals and the Conservatives as established in Bismarck’s so-called *Kartell* of 1887. Emperor Wilhelm II was also against such a new party foundation and it never materialized before the war.\(^{28}\)

The growing importance of the pressure groups on the Right was another reason. While the Conservatives embarked on a radical and anti-Semitic course with their “Tivoli Programm” of 1892 and founded their own radical and populist propaganda association in February 1893, the Agrarian League, the Pan-Germans reorganized their League. One of the most drastic measures was that Hasse became Heydt’s successor in July 1893 to put the League’s workings on a stable footing by strengthening its position as an extraparliamentary association. These efforts did not, however, mark any major change in the social or regional composition of the Pan-German League. Regional strongholds remained in the administrative centers and Protestant regions of Northern and Central Germany with an apparent focus on Prussia.\(^{29}\) The social profile of the Pan-Germans was dominated by higher civil servants, university professors, secondary-school teachers, pastors, entrepreneurs, and members of the so-called free professions, such as lawyers, physicians, and journalists. All these occupations shared professional concerns about the distribution of political power in Germany, the design of the nation-state, and about economic problems that grew out of the globalization of world markets. In addition, the professional profile of the Pan-Germans reflected the belief that academic education, fluency in high culture, and economic independence were prerequisites of political leadership.

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\(^{29}\) See Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 133-145.
The attempt to exercise political influence led to the growing professionalization of management in the Pan-German League during the first decade of its existence. The number of chapters in Germany increased from 14 to 257 between 1893 and 1904. The chapters abroad increased from 16 in 1893 to 28 in 1900, before falling back to 13 in 1908 and 10 in 1914.\textsuperscript{30} During its first two years the League struggled to organize its membership. Hasse consolidated the League’s infrastructure since 1893. In 1894 he replaced the League’s newsletter with a new journal, the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, which had 12,500 subscribers by 1900 and although subscription dropped after the turn of the century, the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter} had a stable readership of 5,000 to 8,000 between 1900 and 1914 - including general readers, readers of free copies, and library subscriptions.\textsuperscript{31} These were respectable numbers given that before 1890 only a handful of nationwide papers had a readership of more than 10,000, like the free-conservative \textit{Post}. Even the conservative \textit{Kreuzzzeitung} had only 6,800 readers in 1888 and the national-liberal \textit{Nationalzeitung} distributed 5,800 copies.\textsuperscript{32}

The market for nationalist publications flourished in Imperial Germany. Books, pamphlets, \textit{völkisch} writings, maps of prospective colonial territory or European language frontiers, and literature critical of the government sold well. Pan-German publishers, such as Lehmann in Munich, profited from this trend, which increased once racism and eugenics became popular around the turn of the century. The Pan-Germans, however, were but one competitor in

\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 14 January 1894 and 16 September 1894; \textit{Der Alldeutsche Verband im Jahr 1901} (Berlin 1902), 30; and \textit{Alldeutsches Werbe- und Merkbüchlein}, Munich 1904, 24-36.


\textsuperscript{32} See Volker Stalmann, \textit{Die Partei Bismarcks: Die Deutsche Reichs- und Freikonservative Partei 1866-1890} (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2000), 257.
this rising mass market. The nationalist newspaper market, too, was contested. The German Defense League published a journal, *Die Wehr*, which had a readership of 90,000 in 1913.\(^{33}\) The *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*, the organ of the Colonial Society, had 45,000 readers 1900, the *Zeitschrift des Allgemeinen Deutschen Sprachvereins*, had 43,000 subscribers in 1915, while to subscriptions *Die Flotte*, the paper of the Navy League reached nearly 280,000 after 1900.\(^{34}\)

Following the professionalization of its media, by the turn of the century the Pan-German League had, like the Colonial Society, the German Language Association, and the Navy League, also introduced modern business practices. The headquarters was staffed by professional activists. The League employed professional speakers (*Wanderredner*) such as Alfred Geiser and Paul Samassa who were constantly on the road, presenting on average a hundred lectures a year in the Habsburg Empire alone.\(^{35}\) Adolf Lehr served as the executive secretary and deputy chairman of the League, which paid him a salary of 6,000 Mark, while he also served as a National Liberal member of parliament. Expenses paid out to the leading officials of the League increased from 6,703 Mark in 1894 to 24,542 Mark in 1900.\(^{36}\) These expenses represented a problem, however, for income from membership dues, donations from wealthy members and private individuals, as well as from special collections, rarely met the League´s needs. Financial problems were chronic throughout most of the League´s history. Members of the local chapters failed to pay their dues and the requirement that membership be annually renewed led to major turnovers of members.

The need to keep the finances in order was a constant problem, but it left room for creativity. The Pan-German League initiated a special fund (*Deutscher Wehrschatz*) in 1903 to

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\(^{33}\) See Coetzee, *German Army League*, 59 and 103.

\(^{34}\) See Eley, *Reshaping the German Right*, 102 and Allgemeiner Deutscher Sprachverein, *Jahresbericht vom Juli 1914 bis Juli 1915* (Sonderdruck der Zeitschrift des Allgemeinen Deutschen Sprachvereins).


\(^{36}\) „Denkschrift über die Gehälter im Alldeutschen Verband,“ 1901, Stadtarchiv Pirna, F V-XVII, vol. 1, 8.
support propaganda and agitation. It had raised 300,000 Mark by 1912, including the assets of the so-called “Hasse Foundation” (Hasse-Stiftung) of 100,000 Mark. An extraordinary Guarantee Fund (Garantiefond) was financed by leading Pan-Germans. It helped the League keep its books balanced during the early years, since annual membership fees in 1894/1895 totaling 3,900 Mark were only sufficient to meet the salary expenditures of some 3,800 Mark for the editors of the Alldeutsche Blätter. The “Diederichs Foundation” (Diederichsstiftung), which was set up by the nationalist patron Erich Diederichs on the eve of the war, funded free shipments of the Alldeutsche Blätter to public libraries, restaurants, pubs, schools, and recreational organizations. Most importantly, the League drew after 1910 on the financial support of Ruhr magnates such as Emil Kirdorf and Alfred Krupp. These and other funds, which were organized by individual Pan-Germans like Alfred Hugenberg, who became a member of the board of directors of Krupp AG in 1909, brought moderate surpluses to the budget. Nonetheless, the finances of the local chapters of the Pan-German League had to be kept under rigid control from headquarters. Detailed questionnaires about local membership, income and expenses had to be filled out. Still, resources were often insufficient to meet expenses, so the League was unable to support the causes it wished to, such as organizing a network of speakers to lecture in local chapters.

Despite its chronic financial problems, the Pan-Germans’ politics harbored enormous potential to mobilize a “national opposition” against the government, the Emperor, and the Reichstag. The League understood itself as the spearhead of this “national opposition.” In cooperation with other extraparliamentary organizations, it sought to bring grass-roots pressure to bear on the government. At the same time, the Pan-German League claimed a “national” mandate to engage in oppositional politics in matters of both domestic and foreign affairs. This self-appointed mandate grew out of the Pan-Germans´ conviction that the German Empire had not yet

38 Alldeutsche Blätter, 10 January 1914.
developed into nation-state or world power, that cultural nationalism had not assumed its
primacy. Cultural homogenization and territorial expansion were inseparable elements of a
comprehensive political program. The principle that culture meant ethnicity and that biological
descent was the marker of belonging to a Volk represented a radical counter-model to the
ideologies of western-European Liberalism. The Volk community, not the individual, was the
subject of history. The ideology of the Pan-German League was thus defined by dichotomies
between German and foreign cultural communities, whether the subject was neighboring
countries like France and Belgium, the French and Italian parts of Switzerland, or the Slavic
populations of the Russian and Habsburg Empires. German cultural uniqueness demanded as well
the union of splintered groups of German- speakers in Central Europe, as well as close cultural
ties to German emigrants abroad. The League’s utopian vision entailed the creation of a
homogeneous nation-state, in which territory of the German nation-state coincided with the
German language and ethnic Germans abroad, who were either to be resettled in Germany or to
be granted lasting German citizenship.

The Problem of Defining Germany: Territorial, Cultural, Social, and Political

The Pan-Germans did not constitute the first movement to embrace a cultural
understanding of the German nation or to privilege ethnic-cultural belonging over territoriality.
Cultural nationalism had a long history in Germany, and it had shaped debates about German
nation-state building since early modern times. Long before Johann Gottfried Herder, the most
prominent figure of German romanticism in the late 18th century, defined geography, culture,
language, and communal character as elements of pre-national uniqueness, the German tongue
had become the concern of language associations.\textsuperscript{39} For them, language was the chief determinant of a German community and the boundaries of a future German state. These groups called for the purity of the German language and its emancipation from the influence of classical Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. They wished to see it cherished as a language with its own laws, grammar, and distinctive meaning.\textsuperscript{40} In theory, a shared German language was to ensure the “moralization” and thus the unification of political elites. It would create access to a wider community, first among intellectuals (\textit{Gelehrte}), then among the lower strata of society.\textsuperscript{41} In practice, however, these associations mainly attracted nobles and representatives of the \textit{Bildungsbürgertum}.

The promotion of language and national belonging thus found its institutionalization in voluntary associations. Language associations were joined by others. Gymnastic associations (\textit{Turnvereine}), shooting clubs (\textit{Schützenvereine}), and student fraternities (\textit{Burschenschaften}) also claimed language as essential marker of national belonging for Germans in the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{42} The gymnastics associations and shooting clubs counted 134,000 members in the lands of the German Federation in 1862.\textsuperscript{43} Political mobilization and associational life went hand-in-hand. The early associations were joined by geographical associations, which aimed to preserve cultural identity among German diaspora groups. The rise of various geographical and cultural


\textsuperscript{43} Andreas Biefang, \textit{Politisches Bürgertum in Deutschland 1857-1868: Nationale Organisationen und Eliten} (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1994), 177.
associations, which were founded in the 1830s and 1840s, resulted from an increasing awareness of the existence of German emigrant communities. The *Siebenbürgen* Saxons in Romania, Volga Germans in Russia, Germans in Pennsylvania and Transylvania, Southern Brazil, and the Baltic regions attracted both the academic and the political interest of these organizations. The revolutions of 1830 and 1848/1849 brought the question of unification among ethnic Germans to the forefront of political debate. The integration of all ethnic Germans in Europe into a future German nation-state became a matter of negotiation among the members of the new parliament in Frankfurt and the separate German states.

The parliamentarians in Frankfurt, however, could not agree about the boundaries of a future German nation-state. The debates revolved around two options. The small-German (*kleindeutsch*) option excluded Austria-Hungary, while the great German (*großdeutsch*) option included all German speakers in Central Europe. The parliamentarians could reach no consensus. The failure to achieve a nation-state in 1848/49 and the renewed authority of the states of the German Federation after 1850 punctuated the parliamentary debates in Frankfurt, but the idea of a German nation-state did not disappear from political discussions. The principle of territoriality rather than national belonging, which determined the cooperation between the German states, resulted in the absence of unifying Imperial citizenship law that brought together individual citizens of disparate German states.


Patriotic societies and student associations continued to promote the großdeutsch nation-state. In the end, however, German unification was realized along the lines of the small-German solution. The foundation of the German Empire “from above” came with significant territorial and cultural limitations. Particularly in Austria-Hungary German minorities struggled to protect their ethnic identity, as they and other ethnic groups mobilized since the late 1870s. Like their counterparts among other groups, German protective associations (Schutzvereine) organized public opinion to promote the dominance and purity of the German language. The German School Association (Deutscher Schulverein), founded in Vienna in 1880, extended concern for the language into a national issue of cultural homogeneity and defense against foreign languages. Some 120,000 members were organized by 1887. By 1918, the School Association had financed 49 German schools, founded 29 private schools that later became German public schools, and started 121 German kindergartens in ethnically mixed areas of the Habsburg Empire. Georg Ritter von Schönerer, a former member of the left wing of the German Liberals (Deutschliberale), attended the founding meeting of the School Association, where he advocated the connection between culture and radical nationalism. His anti-Semitism and his call to unify German-speaking areas into a small-Austrian Empire, which would include Bohemia and Moravia but exclude Hungary, Galicia, and Dalmatia, made him the leading activist of the Austrian Pan-German movement. “Through purity to unity,” as Schönerer put it in 1892, was the

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49 See Walkenhorst, *Nation-Volk-Rasse*, 64.

rallying cry of radical nationalism in Austria, which called for ethnic homogeneity within the Habsburg Empire.\textsuperscript{51}

Spearheaded by the various protective societies, small-scale cultural wars had an immense impact on the social mobilization of nationalism on the ethnic frontiers of Central Europe. This was particularly the case once language laws of the Austrian Prime Minister Casimir Badeni of 1897 granted the Czech language equal status with Germany in Bohemia and Moravia. German nationalists became now an active element in the rise of nationalist competition and symbolic rivalry over culture and political power in these contested areas of the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire.\textsuperscript{52} By 1914, more than a half million Germans were organized in various Austrian protective societies. The militant German parliamentary group, the German National Association (\textit{Deutscher Nationalverband}), occupied almost half of the German seats in the Austrian Imperial Council (\textit{Reichsrat}).\textsuperscript{53}

Political mobilization of German nationalists in Austria-Hungary not only reflected cultural and ethnic conflicts to the south and east of the new Reich. It also fueled ethnic tensions within the German Empire itself. Ethnic minorities in Germany were not granted minority protection by the constitution. Their lack of constitutional guarantees made it possible for nationalist associations like the Pan-German League to demand restrictive legislation. The German School Association, which was founded in 1881 in Berlin, was dedicated both to the


cultural homogenization of the German Empire and to linking German emigrants to their fatherland. The mobilizing strategies of the School Association were similar to those of its Austrian counterpart. Both shared the goals of promoting German culture in the frontier regions. The German School Association spent nine million Mark by 1920 on study stipends for Germans outside the Empire and on books that it sent to German cultural and institutions and two thousand schools in Germany and abroad.\textsuperscript{54} By 1916, it had collected six million Mark to support German schools and kindergartens, especially in Austria-Hungary and Brazil.\textsuperscript{55}

The relationship between the two School Associations, the German and the Austrian, was more cordial than the one between the Pan-Germans in Germany and the Pan-German Schönerer movement in Austria. Even in this case, though, the goal of bringing together Germans from all over the world encouraged cooperation. Despite their organizational independence and suspicion toward one another, the Austrian Pan-Germans, led by Schönerer and the Viennese mayor Karl Lueger, were in contact with the German Pan-Germans. The two movements shared a vision of an economic and political union between Imperial Germany and German-Austria. However, they differed over how to approach this goal. The Austrians demanded a union with Germany and the division of the Habsburg Empire according to ethnic affiliation. In the same spirit, Schönerer and his followers called for a break with the papacy (“\textit{Los-von-Rom}”), hoping for a Protestant Reformation in German-Austria.\textsuperscript{56} The German Pan-Germans followed a more pragmatic approach. Fearing the multi-ethnic composition of the Habsburg Empire, they still viewed the Habsburg Empire as a necessary ally of Germany, and they refused to support the \textit{Los-von-Rom} movement. Although they, too, regarded the Habsburg Empire as a hodgepodge of nationalities, most of them never called its existence into question. Nevertheless, the Austrian question

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland: Jahrbuch für 1922} (Berlin: Selbstverlag VDA 1922), 198.
\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Das Deutschtum im Ausland: Vierteljahresschrift für den Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland I/1916}; 46.
\textsuperscript{56} See Eduard Pichl (Pseudonym Herwig), \textit{Georg Schönerer}, vol. 6: 1897-1921, 2nd ed. (Oldenburg: Stalling, 1938), 80.
featured prominently in debates within the League, especially at the local level. Issues of language, migration, and economic development all touched on German domination in Austria-Hungary. Given their proximity to Czech-speaking areas, local chapters in Saxony, for instance, propagated anti-Slavic resentment. Pan-Germans in Pirna, Chemnitz, and Dresden called for the strengthening of Germandom in Bohemia and Moravia against the Slavic movement.57

The Pan-Germans in Germany linked the concern over culture and language in Austria-Hungary to the problem of the German nation-state, its territorial extent and the place of democratic representation in it. The Pan-German League attempted to synthesize several meanings of culture, defining ethnicity, cultural habits, language, and political conviction as the markers of völkisch identity.58 Roger Chickering has argued that Kultur was for them a normative concept, which they used to organize social experience and that culture represented for the Pan-Germans a system of social relationships that was based on authority, order, discipline, and clear lines of subordination and leadership.59 Knowledge, personal moral cultivation, and education of advanced culture counted as the highest achievements of civilization, in the sense that education implied Kultur and order. German Kultur meant order in this concept; other ethnic cultural groups threatened Kultur and the “Germanness” with which it was associated. The rhetoric of conflict, cultural war, and images of floods of enemy aliens framed the Pan-German discourse of ethnic relations. Ethnic conflict ruled human affairs, but German order and cultural superiority made Germans superior to other nationalities. These Pan-German propositions underlay a comprehensive political utopia. It was a vision of a völkisch community of homogeneous

58 See also Sussan Milantchi Ameri, Die deutschnationale Sprachbewegung im Wilhelminischen Kaiserreich (New York et.al.: P. Lang, 1986), 183.
59 Chickering, We Men Who Feel Most German, 16. See for the following Ibidem, 79-133.
individuals unified by ethnic descent, whose relations with one another were governed by a hierarchy of social difference.\textsuperscript{60}

The challenges of transnational migration and ethnic complexity were to be solved by a comprehensive social rearrangement as 20 million ethnic Germans lived outside of Germany in other nation-states. In 1900, the Pan-German geographer Paul Langhans published calculations according to which 49 million ethnic Germans lived within the German Empire, while a total of 70.7 million lived elsewhere in Europe and another 10.9 million in Northern America, for instance.\textsuperscript{61} At the same time, transnational migration of 1.2 million foreign workers into Germany until 1914 left German society with the task of managing their integration.\textsuperscript{62} Workers crossing the German border (\textit{Grenzgänger}) were usually allocated to the agrarian sector in Prussia, which received 70 to 80 percent of seasonal workers and had established 39 border offices (\textit{Grenzämter}) to channel and manage seasonal labor migration from Austria-Hungary and the Russian Empire, as well as to control the ethnic “frontier” of the Empire by controlling Germany’s “periphery” of cultural hegemony.\textsuperscript{63} These institutional arrangements by the state served Pan-Germans interests.\textsuperscript{64} Members of different classes, political convictions, religious beliefs, and cultures were to adapt to a purified \textit{völkisch} polity in these border frontiers through marginalization.


\textsuperscript{61} Paul Langhans (ed.), \textit{Justus Perthes Allddeutscher Atlas} (Gotha: Perthes, 1900), 2.


\textsuperscript{64} See also Annemarie Sammartino, \textit{The Impossible Border: Germany and the East, 1914-1922}, (Ithaca, NY: Cornel UP, 2010), 18-44.
German Pan-Nationalism and the World: Weltpolitik and Colonialism

Because Bismarck had pursued a policy of “saturation” and only tepidly supported German colonial expansion, organizing colonialist propaganda also fell to extraparliamentary agents of mobilization. The close relationship between colonialism and ethnic conflict in Europe was evident in the prehistory of the Pan-German League. Early colonial activists were influential Pan-Germans of the first generation such as Carl Peters. He was both a founding member of the Pan-German League and one of the most prominent of these colonial activists embodying non-state, transnational expansion of German territory by private colonial entrepreneurs, before the first state protection for a German colony – Togo – was granted in 1884. Peters, together with Felix Wilhelm Leonhard Graf Behr-Bandelin, founded the “German East-Africa Company” (Deutsche Ost-Afrika-Gesellschaft) in the spring of 1884, which became known as the Society for German Colonization. The company was transformed into a business with limited partnership. Shared certificates (Anteilsscheine) were distributed to privileged members of the company to finance not only the promotion of colonial acquisitions for agricultural production and trade, but to acquire actual colonial land at the same time. After the government turned down demands to protect acquisitions in Angola, Peters actively negotiated treaties with local chiefs in African areas that constituted the future German colonies of German East-Africa. Settlement plans, economic interests regarding raw materials and additional markets were the main thrusts behind Peters´ founding of the Society for German Colonization, which in 1887 united with the German Colonial Association (Deutscher Kolonialverein, founded in 1882) and was thereafter renamed as the German Colonial Society (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft). The German Colonial Society increased its membership from around 15,000 in 1887 to more than 42,000 in 1914, while many of the Society´s members held administrative positions as bureaucrats in governmental

institutions. While the German Colonial Association concentrated on colonial propaganda, Peters and his Society for German Colonization actually acquired German colonial land for settlement and trade. By negotiating further treaties with tribal chieftains in Zanzibar in 1887, Peters personally brought additional parts of the area under control. Plans for acquisitions of land in Uganda in 1889/1890 now found the financial support of Bismarck, who had to endure the persistence of Peters, as well as the propaganda of the colonial movement in general. Peter´s compulsive self-confidence and persistence made Bismarck call him “incommensurable.”

Peters believed in imperial expansion as a means to overcome the limitations of the nation-state and to strengthen Germany´s position in the struggle with the other powers over territory, influence, and status. His thinking, too, was based on hierarchical distinctions among ethnic groups and his racist views were legendary. Peters organized the Society for German Colonization in 1884, which was a predecessor of the General German League for the Representation of German-National Interests (Allgemeiner Deutscher Verband zur Vertretung Deutsch-Nationaler Interessen).

The early activists of the colonial movements have been labelled as fanatics, renegades, conquistadores, and psychopaths. But it was precisely their often ruthless adventurous impetus that eventually allowed later members of the colonial movement to project themselves as pioneers labouring in the greater service to the nation. Such an attitude harboured enormous

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potential of conflict with the government. The motivations of these private organizations and extraparliamentary associations for colonial acquisitions went way beyond economic interests. The first colonial agitators highlighted the link to prestigious world politics, exporting economic overproduction, and redirecting overpopulation from Germany. Friedrich von Fabri and Peters were two proponents of these ideas. They founded the General German League on 9 April 1891, along with the lawyer Hugenberg, the Ruhr industrialist Kirdorf, the media entrepreneur and journalist Reismann-Grone, and the geographer Friedrich Ratzel. The event that provoked the founding was the Heligoland-Zanzibar treaty of 1 July 1890, the signing of which seemed to signal the German abandonment of a comprehensive plan for acquiring further colonies. The erratic “New Course” of the young Kaiser Wilhelm II, which was characterized by an immodest redefinition of Germany’s alliance systems that Bismarck had carefully crafted between 1871 and 1890, especially in regard to appeasing Russia, contributed to ongoing power struggles and the subsequent resignation of Bismarck as chancellor. These shifts in governmental power, with Leo von Caprivi becoming new chancellor at the devoted service of Wilhelm II, only added to the frustration of the early Pan-Germans about a lack of a clear vision for Germany’s Imperial future.

The founding declaration was signed by ten members of the Reichstag and seventeen members of the Prussian parliament.68 Most of these parliamentarians were National Liberals, but Conservatives and Free Conservatives were represented as well. The executive board of the League comprised leading representatives of the colonial movement, such as Graf Behr-Bandelin, Wilhelm Hübbe-Schleiden, Wilhelm von Kardorff, Ernst von Eynern, Heydt, and Alexander Lucas, the director of the German East-Africa Company.69 The Leagues program demanded: 1. furthering “patriotic consciousness” and the rejection of all anti-national tendencies; 2. support for German-national causes everywhere Germans resided and the unification of all Germans

68 List printed in Hartwig, Zur Politik und Entwicklung des Alldeutschen Verbandes, 238-239.
69 Perras, Carl Peters, 174.
around the world; and 3. a forceful German foreign policy not only in on the continent, but also in the service of the colonial movement.\textsuperscript{70}

After Hasse became chairman in 1893, the General German League, which was renamed the Pan-German League the next year, developed into a stable association and the attempts to professionalize the League’s business bore fruit. Hasse, who taught statistics at the University of Leipzig, embodied the political activism that had developed in the early nineteenth century, the political academic (\textit{Gelehrtenpolitiker}), who combined political activism, academic occupation, and expert knowledge. \textsuperscript{71} Following Bismarck’s dismissal in 1890, these professorial experts became politicized in the extraparliamentary associations, from the nationalist Right to the moderate Left.\textsuperscript{72} The public lecture became increasingly popular in these organizations, an important mode for transmitting opinions and ideas. Hasse himself had to downplay his academic training occasionally, in order to stress his political resolve, which was most important in mobilizing members in meetings, public speeches, and festive sociability. \textsuperscript{73} The Pan-German League mobilized academically trained nationalists as activists who, by virtue of their occupations as professors, teachers, or military officers, understood their social role as custodians of culture and authority. \textsuperscript{74} Hasse embodied their political style as he sought to mobilize political unrest outside parliament. In his publications he laid out his understanding of the limitations of the German Empire by claiming that the German nation-state required colonial Empire. The advanced economies of Europe and America had just claims to rule over colonies abroad. The

\textsuperscript{70} See Kruck, \textit{Geschichte des Alldeutschen Verbandes}, 10.
\textsuperscript{73} See Aldeutsche Blätter, 18 January 1908 and 25 January 1908. See also Chickering, \textit{We Men Who Feel Most German}, 152-167
\textsuperscript{74} Chickering, \textit{We Men Who Feel Most German}, 125-130.
influence of Social Darwinist thinking was apparent in his understanding of empire-building as a struggle for survival, which required political domination over other societies, polities, and territories.\textsuperscript{75}

Redirecting migration flows was another important concern that troubled the Pan-Germans. Between 1820 and 1870, almost 2.7 million Germans left the German territories, especially for North and South America. In total, between the foundation of the Northern German Confederation in 1867 and the outbreak of the war in 1914, some 3.3 million Germans found a new home outside of Germany.\textsuperscript{76} Like other Pan-Germans, Hasse wanted colonies for settling German emigrants who otherwise would settle outside of the German Empire. Local chapters of the Pan-German League abroad emphasized the connection between cultural nationalism and foreign settlement. Close to thirty local chapters were founded abroad in the first years of the League’s existence, and they served as a cultural and political link between Germans abroad and those at home. The activities of these chapters, like those in Germany, were designed to increase sociability (\textit{Geselligkeit}) and patriotism among their members by celebrating symbolic dates, such as Sedan Day and the birthdays of the Emperor and Bismarck.

The founding of local chapters in the colonies of the Marshall Islands and Samoa symbolized the combination of colonialism, world politics, and the spread of ethnic nationalism. More important practically, however, were the chapters in Switzerland, The Netherlands, the United States, Great Britain, Belgium, Paraguay, Brazil, Columbia, Chile, Guatemala, South Africa, Australia, Syria, and the Ottoman Empire. In 1893 1,440 out of 5,000 members of the League lived abroad, in places like Antwerp, London, Cape Town, and Sydney, where local


chapters gathered more active members than most of their counterparts in Germany. Pan-Germans abroad were themselves organized in networks of German nationalist associations. Some Pan-Germans joined organizations like the German Colonial Society, which, in 1901, counted 11 local chapters abroad. More commonly, Pan-Germans were members of the Navy League, which had chapters all over the world. The Association of the Navy League Abroad (Hauptverband der Flottenvereine im Ausland) had the Emperor Wilhelm II as its official patron. It counted 112 local chapters in 1904, including those in Rio de Janeiro, Coban, Casablanca, Cape Town, Damascus, Jaffa, and Caracas. The Pan-German League and the other nationalist associations constituted a milieu comparable to the nationalist networks in Germany, except that they were less driven by competition. Almost all the nationalist associations in Germany had an interest in ethnic Germans abroad. The Association for Germandom Abroad had 350 local chapters in South America alone by 1890, and the Colonial Society for Paraguay published a newsletter with a print run of ten thousand in 1891. The Colonial Society even organized the emigration of German women to the colonies in cooperation with shipping companies via its Women´s League (Frauenbund), which was founded in 1907. These efforts highlighted the attempts of nationalist associations to manage the affairs of overseas Germans by their own means.

77 See BA-B, R 8048, vol. 3, 26 and Alledeutsche Blätter, 6 February 1898 and 5 August 1894.
78 Die Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft: Zum Handgebrauch für die Vorstandsmitglieder der Abteilungen (1901), in BA-Freiburg (henceforth BA-F), RM 3, vol. 9906, 80-98.
79 Die Flotte, February 1913 and February 1915.
83 Walgenbach, Die weiße Frau als Trägerin deutscher Kultur, 90-100 and Pascal Grosse, Kolonialismus, Eugenik und bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland 1850 bis 1918 (Frankfurt Main/New York: campus, 2000), 153 and 168.
This interest in ethnic Germans held the seeds of conflict between organizations that espoused cultural nationalism, like the Pan-German League, and the German government. For example, the Pan-Germans felt an ethnic connection to the Boers in South Africa (the presence of the League’s chapters in Johannesburg and Cape Town emphasized such broader concerns and Hasse had repeatedly counted the Dutch as cultural members within the realm of Germanic languages). At the end of the century, British plans to create a united South Africa sparked an outcry in the German public. The Pan-German League presented itself as the defender of Boer interests against British imperialism. The League organized a wave of public meetings in 1901 in support of the Boers, which gathered crowds of hundreds; a rally at the Herman Memorial in Detmold brought 10,000 people together, which was organized by the local chapters of the Pan-German League in Bielefeld and in Detmold. Collections of money to support Boer fighters, families of victims of the Boer War, and the migration of displaced Boers had raised 500,000 Mark by 1902. This support demonstrated the Pan-German’s success in mobilizing opinion in colonial matters and its ability to influence debates over Germany’s status in world politics. These successes also brought a lasting break with the government of Bernhard von Bülow, which found the propaganda against British colonial expansion to be an embarrassment. The Pan-German League henceforward claimed the authority to speak about world politics and was not reluctant to oppose the government or figures with whom the Pan-Germans disagreed such as respected liberals like Theodor Mommsen, who had disparaged Pan-German propaganda against the British in South Africa as “foolishness.”

In December 1900, Bülow warned Hasse about the diplomatic danger of the League’s agitation on behalf of the Boers. Hasse responded that he was giving voice to the feelings of the

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84 *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 29 April 1894, 24 June 1894, and 6 January 1901.
85 *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 6 January 1901, 2 February 1901, 7 April 1901, and 8 June 1901.
German people and that Bülow’s duty was to ensure that diplomatic relations with Britain would not be harmed by the Pan-Germans. The League then challenged the government by organizing a reception for Paul Krüger in Cologne after Bülow had refused to meet with him in Berlin. Claß, Hasse, Lehr, Samassa, and Geiser then followed Krüger to The Hague. When Hasse and Bülow faced off in the Reichstag on 12 December 1900, the chancellor ridiculed Pan-German propaganda as “beer-hall politics” (Bierbankpolitik). Bülow’s dictum should have had immense symbolic power in shaping the public image of the League as irresponsible agitators of radical opposition politics; a view that was widely shared by Germany’s various governments for the next four decades. Bülow, however, had to manage the Pan-Germans when they were just growing in self-confidence. The League’s mobilization of support for the Boers coincided with nothing less than a comprehensive popular campaign to create a German navy. For the Pan-Germans a battle fleet was essential to achieving world power status and managing colonial holdings. Together with the Navy League and the Colonial Society, and in cooperation with the Imperial Naval Office, the Pan-German League directed the popular campaigns of 1898-99. It was clear to the nationalist associations that Germany’s naval armament required a broad popular consensus.

The government in turn saw the usefulness of extraparliamentary associations like the Pan-German League in promoting the naval plans in the public and putting pressure on the Reichstag. In tandem with the Colonial Society and Navy League, the Pan-Germans organized

89 See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 8 December 1900, BA-B R 8048, vol. 23, 4-6.
public lectures about the significance of a German navy. Representatives of these associations attended one another’s meetings and they both organized their interests in the Colonial Council (Kolonialrat), which was founded in 1891 as an advisory council to the government. It was Peters who demanded in 1886 that an advisory council be set up by the government to manage colonial affairs together with colonial entrepreneurs. The government had to tame the mobilization of private interests and the colonial council was one of the most prominent institutions of extraparliamentary expert knowledge applied by the government in colonial matters. Yet the colonial council existed only until 1907 in its initial form with a total of 64 members served throughout its existence. Smaller successor councils were set up in 1911 and 1913. The Pan-German League and the Colonial Society were the most influential associations that were represented in the council. Of the personnel of the first colonial council, 23 members were active in the Colonial Society, 2 members were in the Pan-German League, and 12 members were organized in both associations. The close connection between state bureaucrats, colonial entrepreneurs, and the members of parliamentary conservative parties was apparent in the biographies of the Pan-German members of the colonial council. The council contained Pan-German colonial pioneers like Georg Schweinfurth, Paul Staudinger, Hans Meyer, and Joachim Graf von Pfeil. Pan-German state officials and party activists also served at the council such as the National Liberal member of parliament and minister president of Baden, Karl von Grimm, the Prussian minister of trade and state secretary of Alsace Lorraine, Karl von Hoffmann, member of the Baden parliament, Prinz Alfred zu Löwenstein-Wertheim-Freudenberg, the National Liberal member of the Prussian Abgeordnetenhaus, Alexander Lucas, the leader of the Conservative Party in Saxony, Carl Paul Mehnert, the Regent of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Braunschweig.

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Cooperation between the government and the Pan-German League gave the League credibility, but it also strengthened the League’s hand for future conflicts with the government. Competition and different approaches of colonial demands already bred conflict in the Colonial Council when representatives of the Colonial Society, for instance, often voted in the interest of the government’s colonial strategy, while the Pan-German lobbyists demanded colonial politics that were defined not only by economic interest but met considerations about Germany’s world power status a great colonial power. During the First Moroccan Crisis in 1905-1906, the rift between the government and the Pan-Germans became increasingly apparent, as the government and the League pursued different policies. For the Pan-Germans, the importance of Morocco was also due to the closure of alternative influence spheres in Latin America. Fabri, Hübbe-Schleiden, and Weber also argued that South America was a potentially viable continent to redirect German overpopulation and domestic economic surplus, particularly to Paraguay, Uruguay, and especially South Brazil. In the parliament in 1894, Hasse had already complained about a confusing German foreign policy that did not offer a clear direction for either the extension of German borders within Europe for the creation of a comprehensive German ethnic and cultural zone or the creation of new ethnic and cultural settlements overseas. In order to keep German culture as pure as possible, settlers were advised to gather in comprehensive settlement projects, which

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would ensure the spread of German trade and political influence. The government’s plans for a German foreign policy toward Latin America remained meager and after Theodore Roosevelt introduced a corollary in 1904 stipulating American military intervention as a means to prevent German and British banks to help Central American countries to pay their debts to the USA the result was a final retreat of Germany from the region.

In 1904, Claß still dreamt of South America as the future “new Germany” (Neudeutschland), which would constitute an “additional home territory” (Tochterland) of the German Empire. However, the abandonment of Latin America as Germany’s colonial Hinterland brought Northern Africa, and especially Morocco, at the center of Pan-German agitation. Morocco, according to Claß, was the only territory left in the world that met the economic, strategic, and climatic demands for German colonial settlements.98 The government’s resistance to wage war with France (and Great Britain) over Morocco during the first serious crisis of 1905/06 left the Pan-Germans frustrated over Germany’s foreign policy, which was dangerous enough with Germany’s claim for an “open-door-policy” for the Allies. Michael Peters and others have shown that the Pan-German League had been cooperating closely in laying out public propaganda in foreign affairs with the Foreign Office and several state departments.99 This was the case after Claß became the League’s chairman in 1908 and until Morocco again became the object of discord in 1911, when the government sought to use the Navy League and the Pan-German League to influence public opinion. The foreign minister, Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter, took up contact with leading Pan-Germans in August 1910 after Reventlow established trustful

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relations beforehand. The Pan-Germans viewed North Africa as a suitable area for German settlement, but economic interests played a major role in Morocco, too. The Mannesmann steel company had established mines in Morocco since 1906 and the company was represented by Heydt in the executive council of the League in its early years. Georg Krake, a member of the Pan-German League, acquired 80,000 hectares of land in Morocco together with Reinhardt Mannesmann. Hugenberg had also close contacts with the Krupp steel company, which was also engaged in iron and copper mining in Morocco before he became a member of the board of directors of Krupp AG in 1909.

When initially Kiderlen-Wächter reached agreements with Claß about a propaganda campaign against France, and when first funds were wired to the Pan-German defense fund, the League’s Alldutsche Blätter and various other newspapers carrying Pan-German editorials like Reismann-Grone’s Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung praised such cooperation. As the Pan-Germans and Kiderlen-Wächter organized popular support for an anti-French foreign policy, the Pan-Germans were under the illusion that the Foreign Office shared their views and was prepared to wage war if France did not accept German claims in Morocco. However, the German government negotiated a peaceful settlement, which included only German acquisition of areas in the Congo in exchange of territories in Togo and the granting of a French protectorate over Morocco in exchange for free access of German trade. The League strongly opposed this resolution of the crisis and, during the summer of 1911, directed its propaganda against Kiderlen,

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101 See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 28 April 1911, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 79, 4-5.
the government, and the Emperor. The pamphlet “Westmarokko Deutsch!” did also very well on the nationalist media market with 48,000 sold by August 1911 and a 6th edition in the planning. The disappointment over the outcome of the crisis left the Pan-Germans frustrated and the rejection of radical Pan-German demands in the Moroccan issue represented another brick in the wall between the League and the government. In the fall of 1911, almost all leading members of the executive committee demanded that the government publicly denounce the weak politics of Kiderlen-Wächter.

These symbolic conflicts with the Emperor’s authority signaled the deep disappointment and anger that Wilhelm II caused in the minds of the Pan-Germans. At the end Karl Itzenplitz from the executive committee concluded in August 1911 that in Morocco simply “everything failed because of the resistance of the Emperor.” Pan-German agitation after this crisis showed how much the League rejected the government’s management of colonial affairs, just as it demonstrated to the government that the Pan-Germans could not be controlled. The crisis also resulted in the Pan-Germans’ parting of ways with other nationalist associations like the Colonial Society and the Navy League, which eventually accepted the deal that the German government had negotiated with the French. For the Pan-Germans, the Moroccan crisis suggested that war was the only means to achieve future German territorial expansion, especially on the European continent after Germany’s colonial expansion had failed to produce a convincing design for grand strategy of Weltpolitik, settlement, and economic autarky.

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104 Heinrich Claß, West-Marokko-deutsch! (Munich: Lehmann, 1911).
106 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 9 December 1911, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 82, 20.
109 Alldeutsche Blätter, 10 January 1914.
Propaganda for war also entailed elements of appeasing domestic social and political tensions. The astounding electoral success of the Social Democrats in the elections of 1912, which gained 37.7 percent of the votes, left the Right deeply concerned. To share personnel, media infrastructure, and resources of information, the Pan-German League had agreed to cooperate with the Agrarian League on 4 July 1913. This cooperation was strong enough to support each other’s war aims, especially in regard to territorial expansion in the east. The threat of the Social Democrats led Bethmann Hollweg to form the so-called “cartel of the productive estates” in 1913, which was supposed to work as a Sammlung of the National Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, Central Union of German Industrialists, the Agrarian League, the Imperial Association for the Defense of Social Democracy, and the Imperial German Middle Class Association (Reichsdeutscher Mittelstandsverband). Although this new Kartell was only of “declamatory character,” it signaled the loss of mass support of the Conservative, liberal, and nationalist parties on the eve of the war.\footnote{Hagenlücke, Deutsche Vaterlandspartei, 43.}

The Pan-Germans were most troubled and sharpened their radical demands in both domestic and foreign policy. The most well-known programmatic statement was written in secret and published in private, though: “If I were the Kaiser” by Claß. Written in 1912 after the shock over the electoral success of the Social Democrats and published in the same year under the pseudonym “Daniel Frymann”, it laid out a radical reform program, which included radical demands for territorial expansion on the European continent in addition to the colonial periphery, prohibition of parties of the so-called “enemies of the state”, and cultural homogenization of German society. The Pan-Germans themselves often wondered about its true authorship as Claß successfully kept the true authorship secret and revealed himself to only very few of his friends.
The most dramatic paragraphs referred to a radical expulsion of all German Jews who had not acquired citizen rights and a status of legal aliens for all those Jews who entered the German Empire after the unification on 18 January 1871. The exclusion of Jews from civil service posts, the military, positions in law firms, leading posts in banking, the prohibition to acquire agrarian land and the right to vote, as well as the prevention of marriages between ethnic Germans and Jews were all programmatic elements to deprive German Jews of their citizenship rights.111

Claß’s demands also reflected a radicalization of discussions that had troubled the League’s leadership in the past. In 1892, first debates about the exclusion of Jews from the local chapters of the Pan-German League in Berlin (1,600 members) and Hamburg (300 members) were still being counterbalanced by leading figures of the League like Peters, who, despite his fervent racist ideology toward Africans, enjoyed friendly relationships with other leading Jewish Pan-Germans, like Arendt, and feared a split of the movement.112 The Jewish doctor and later director of the institute of pathology at the Berlin Charité, Otto Lubarsch, was one of the founding members of the “Swiss group” of the League.113 Prominent baptized deputies like Robert Friedberg were among the ranks of the League and National Liberal leaders like Ernst Bassermann and Gustav Stresemann had Jewish wives.114 Hasse also saw no need to give in to anti-Semitic exclusionism of the Hamburg chapter and asked the executive committee in October 1901 to denounce efforts in Hamburg to prohibit Jewish membership.115 The influence of anti-Semites like Fritz Bley, Paul Dehn, and Erich Stolte was not significant enough to show

112 See Perras, Carl Peters, 222. For membership figures see Beiblatt zu Mitteilungen des Allddeutschen Verbandes, Nr. 3, 21 May 1892 and Hamburger Tageblatt, 10 February 1892.
113 Andreas Ebert, Jüdische Hochschullehrer an preußischen Universitäten 1870-1824: Eine quantitative Untersuchung mit biographischen Skizzen (Frankfurt Main: Mabuse, 2008), 127.
immediate results and the Berlin chapter, which had been leading the anti-Semitic advances, suffered most from subsequent internal discussions.

Anti-Semitism had always played a significant role for Pan-German members, but Claß’s sharpened demands began to play an increasing role within the Pan-German League on the eve of the First World War. Claß recognized all too well that the demands he put forward in his “Kaiserbook” were radical and he asked Gebsattel to keep the true authorship of the book a secret.\footnote{Claß to Gebsattel, 1 June 1913, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 9.} Gebsattel expected public criticism against the Pan-Germans if the League would declare anti-Semitism as a core element of its politics.\footnote{Gebsattel to Claß, 29 January 1914, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 99.} Gebsattel, who had already advocated the naturalization of Jews who were able to name at least three grandparents ethnic Germans, still claimed that liberal values were an essential part of the Pan-German League’s followers and losing thousands of members due to anti-Semitic propaganda would deal a death blow to the movement immediately.\footnote{Gebsattel to „Daniel Frymann,” 28 May 1913, BA-B, N 2089, Vol. 1, 6 and Gebsattel to Claß, 2 July 1914, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 152.}

Therefore, in a meeting of the Pan-German executive committee in October 1913, Albrecht von Gröling, the committee’s guest from Vienna and a close advisor to Schönerer, planned to initiate the foundation of a secret society to work against Jewish influence in Germany and Austria. Among his first supporters were Hermann Rippler, the co-editor of the Alldeutsche Blätter and formerly of the Tägliche Rundschau, Friedrich Hopf from the local chapter in Dresden, and Felix Hänsch, the chairman of the local chapter in Pirna. However, three other members - Leopold von Vietinghoff-Scheel, Georg von Stössel from the local chapter in Potsdam, and Claß himself opposed the idea indicating his fear that the constitutional constraints of the penal code (Reichsstrafgesetzbuch), which stipulated the prohibition of secret and terrorist societies in § 128 and § 129, could be applied to the Pan-Germans as much as it was used
extensively against the Social Democrats during the era of the anti-Socialist laws. They argued that the secrecy of an anti-Semitic society would spark suspicion in the public and Hänsch lamented that a program that evolved entirely around anti-Semitism would be too narrow to present to the public: “What would we have to offer to the members? At the moment sheer idealism; yet with that we would only attract some respected men, but not at all the significant number of people necessary for such an enterprise.”

It was Gebsattel who took another lead in the matter. In October 1913, he distributed a pamphlet written by himself to 200 influential people of German society including the chancellor Bethmann Hollweg and the Crown Prince. In his program, Gebsattel advocated a reform of the electoral law according to which the individual vote was to be ranked depending on education and property together with a regulation which placed Jews in Germany under the status of legal aliens and made them pay twice as much tax. While Bethmann Hollweg was cautious in commenting on these ideas, it was the Crown Prince who agreed with Gebsattel´s ideas. Claß even thought about a Staatsstreich to contain the enemies of the Empire with a völkisch reform of the electoral system, the renewal of the Socialist Laws, and the exclusion of Jews from social and cultural power. Gebsattel advocated Claß´s view from the “Kaiser-book” again in a paper in 1913 that he and Claß sent to the Crown Prince Wilhelm, who then passed it on to the Emperor. The Crown Prince was in close contact with the Pan-German League since 1910, applauded the aggressive politics of the Pan-Germans during the Second Morocco Crisis, and supported the

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120 Hänsch at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 17 October 1913, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 91, 33.
122 Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 40-46.
program that Claß laid out. The Emperor was more skeptical, as was Bethmann Hollweg, and rejected a *Staatsstreich* as stupidity only suitable for regimes in Central and South America.

For the Pan-Germans, war was a suitable option to solve Germany’s domestic tensions and foreign struggles over territorial expansion. For the Pan-Germans, turning to the continental peripheries of the German Empire, and especially to Eastern Europe became an alternative for realizing economic autarky and German settlement. Already Hasse and Hugenberg, who had worked for the Prussian Settlement Agency in Poznania, had advocated ideas of domestic colonization in German lands to be cultivated for settlements and the development of new modes of agricultural production for years. Stepping back from colonial aspirations in distant lands and concentrating on the neighboring territories and border frontiers in Europe now provided a new agenda of concrete planning for the Pan-Germans. By 1914, not colonization overseas, but domestic colonization and territorial expansion, especially in Eastern Europe, was the prime objective for the Pan-Germans. The war of 1914/1918 represented a new scenario of world conflict that initially seemed to allow the Pan-Germans to realize their utopia: political appeasement, rigid cultural homogenization, territorial expansion, and the creation of a continental Empire built upon hierarchical gradations of Germany’s neighboring states with the German Empire at the center of political domination. With the failure to appease political conflict during the war Pan-German opposition to the government now became even more radical and further challenged the position of the League as an extraparliamentary movement of the radical

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Right. The war, however, showed not only the clear limits of Pan-German visions of *Volksgemeinschaft*. It also brought powerful experiences of death, personal loss, and physical frailty, which marked the transitional phase of the Pan-German League and made the First World War a watershed in the League’s entire history.
II. Total Pan-Germanism and Total War, 1914-1918

The outbreak of the First World War on 1 August 1914 was welcomed by the Pan-Germans as an opportunity to unite the German people. The Pan-German discourse adopted the language of moral purification and images of resurrection, as they spoke about war and domestic reconciliation. For Claß, the war was to bring about the domestic “healing of the ethnic community, the guarantee of its physical as well as moral health for all time.” Konstantin von Gebsattel, who had joined the League in 1913 after he was fascinated with the anti-Semitism and the demand for authoritarian reform in Claß’s “Kaiser-book,” declared the war to be a “fountain of youth for the German Volk.” The Pan-Germans hoped that regeneration would proceed along lines that they themselves had laid out on the eve of the war and the enforced Burgfrieden would allow for comprehensive reform.

The concept of Volksgemeinschaft, which was propagated by the Pan-Germans as a political and cultural unity, came under severe pressure by the erosion of domestic peace and the political radicalization of Germany’s party system. Peace negotiations, the promise of democratic reform, and the failure to prevent the revolution in 1918 enforced the dichotomy between the League and the government. These developments represented severe crises for the Pan-Germans, who responded with the radicalization of anti-Semitic propaganda and the planning for a civil-military dictatorship that would determine the League’s fundamental opposition to the Weimar Republic and Pan-German efforts to align with Germany’s anti-Republican forces after the war.

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1 See also Alldeutsche Blätter, 3 August 1914.
3 Gebsattel to Claß, 4 August 1914, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 178
The war was in fact a mixed blessing for the Pan-Germans. It reshaped their ideology and perceptions of politics, as well as it profoundly affected their personal lives and the organization of Pan-German mobilization. The personal experience of war left its mark on the Pan-Germans, underlining the transitional nature of the League’s own development. Not only did the Pan-German League suffer from a shortage of everyday items and restrictions on its freedom to hold meetings, but the workings of the League were also immediately affected by military mobilization.

Chapters near the frontlines, such as in Königsberg, had to postpone their regular meetings, while others, such as in Bonn, had to reduce their activities because of the time claimed by mobilization. Especially during the harsh winter of 1916/1917, goods were in desperately short supply, and hunger became a hallmark of physical deprivation during the second half of the war. The Pan-Germans enjoyed no privileged access to food or coal. Claß moved his sick children to Würzburg in October 1918, because Mainz had been hit by air raids and he had no food or medicine at hand. Gebsattel suffered from severe stomach irritations caused by the consumption of bad bread. Although he owned an estate in Bavaria, he was unable to secure special rations. Not even the Ruhr magnate Kirdorf could arrange for coal to heat the League’s headquarters in Mainz. The coal shortage resulted everywhere in restrictions on meetings. In Munich, Richard Graf du Moulin-Eckart announced that due to the shortage of coal, meetings were prohibited by the local government. The shortage of paper made it necessary for the editors

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5 Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch. 3.12.
of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* to ask readers in 1918 to distribute the weekly among their friends and to send unused copies back to the editors for redistribution.\(^9\)

The war also cut more deeply into the lives of Pan-Germans. When Hänsch as a member of the League’s executive committee characterized the war as the best opportunity for the spiritual and communal “healing” (*Genesung*) of the German people, he had in mind the personal loss and suffering.\(^10\) The rhetoric of uncompromising war clashed with the physical realities. The war affected the bodies of the Pan-Germans, many of whom were inducted and killed in battle. Several members of the executive committee were in the army. Itzenplitz served as a commander of a munitions convoy, and Stössel commanded a *Landwehr* regiment. August Keim served as a military governor in the Belgian province of Limburg, leaving the executive committee of the Pan-German League as well as the chairmanship of the German Defense League, which was founded by the Pan-German League in 1913 to promote comprehensive rearmament.\(^11\) Others, like Hans von Wrochem, who became an inspector of the West Prussian *Landwehr*, died of influenza shortly after the outbreak of the war.\(^12\) Two other members of the executive committee, Johannes Wadehn, who was also the deputy director of the Agrarian League, and the professor of economics Friedrich Waterstradt from Hohenheim, were victims of the war.\(^13\) Also, the administration of the headquarters in Mainz was affected by the loss of Heinrich Theony, who died at the front in March 1918.\(^14\)

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\(^9\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 17 August 1918.

\(^10\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 1 August 1914.


\(^12\) See Claß, *Wider den Strom*, 330-333 and *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 3 October 1914.

\(^13\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 7 November 1914.

\(^14\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 6 April 1918.
Virtually every chapter lost members to military service. Public recognition of this sacrifice was not as broad as the Pan-Germans would have liked, given its importance for their propaganda and their self-understanding as the vanguard of the nation. In 1918 the members of the chapter in Oldenburg responded to charges from local Social Democrats that the Pan-Germans had propagated war without fighting it. The Pan-Germans in Oldenburg stressed that in our chapter there are men serving who were decorated with the Iron Cross, first and second class, and who are still serving at the front to defend our country. In our ranks stand brave men who, with the Iron Cross on their chest, return home crippled (Invaliden). To us belong fathers who have sacrificed one or even two sons for the fatherland and others whose sons are still fighting bravely at the front. But all of us have brothers or other relatives and beloved friends at the front.\footnote{Alldeutsche Blätter, 5 January 1918.}

The absences affected almost every chapter. The chapter in Greiz had six members serving in the army, while the chapter in Delitzsch, for instance, had forty. The chairman of the chapter in Stuttgart, General Karl Gustav Adolf von Martin, followed his son to the grave, while in Lübeck the chapter mourned Dr. Reuter, who had died in the trenches in France. In Plauen, the chapter mourned the death of Oberlehrer Keil, who died at Ypres.\footnote{See Alldeutsche Blätter, 9 January 1915, 16 January 1915, 23 January 1915, 6 March 1915, 27 March 1915, and 22 May 1915.} In Kassel, two members had died and ten more were at the frontlines during the first year of the war.\footnote{See Alldeutsche Blätter, 10 April 1915 and 8 June 1918.} In Kiel, after a Pan-German member was killed on the eastern front, the members of the chapter started to pray together for the sons of League members who were serving in the war. In some chapters, such as the one in Ulm, it became a ritual during the meetings to honor the Pan-German victims of the war and their families. The executive committee of the Pan-German League also mourned family members. When Rippler lost his son, Claß assured him of the League’s sympathy.\footnote{Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 27 January 1916, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 103, 6.} Lutz Korodi mourned his nephew, Fritz Rahn, who died at the front in Italy.\footnote{Alldeutsche Blätter, 13 January 1917.} Lehmann lost his only son on
the Somme in February 1917 and Samassa announced the death in May 1918 of his only son Fritz.\footnote{Alldeutsche Blätter, 17 February 1917; Melanie Lehmann (ed.), Verleger J.F. Lehmann: Ein Leben im Kampf für Deutschland. Lebensbild und Briefe (Munich: Lehmann, 1935), 44-46; and Alldeutsche Blätter, 8 June 1918.} Ferdinand Putz, one of the most active members of the League’s chapter in Munich, lost sons in August 1914 and March 1918.\footnote{Alldeutsche Blätter, 13 April 1918 and 13 December 1919.}

The war also affected the staffing of the chapters. In October 1914 the death of Adam Pittroff, the chairman of the chapter in Duisburg, made it necessary to reorganize the local staff. Stössel was replaced as chairman by Professor Grell in Potsdam, Amtsrichter Bachmann by Stadtrat Senff in Arnstadt. In Düsseldorf, Itzenplitz and his deputy chairman Friedrich Majefsky were also at the front. In 1917, the “academic chapter” in Breslau, which had attempted to gather university students and teachers for academic discussions, had to close down because all its members were in military service. All told, more than forty chairmen, treasurers, and secretaries from the League’s chapters were serving at the front in 1917.\footnote{See list of chapters in Handbuch des Alldeutschen Verbandes 1917, 21st ed. (Munich: Lehmann, 1917).} Even the publication of the League’s handbook for 1918 had to be postponed because of a shortage of printers.\footnote{Alldeutsche Blätter, 22 December 1917.}

The war also offered the League an opportunity to present itself as a group of war heroes as soldiers had now become the vanguards of Imperial expansionism. Several members received the Iron Cross, especially after the victorious battles in the fall of 1914. Among them were members of executive committee, including Itzenplitz, Eduard von Liebert as the former governor of the colony German East Africa, Stössel, Fick, Walter Bacmeister, Friedrich Majewsky, Alfred Roth, and Eduard Lucius, who was the League’s treasurer and Claß’s nephew, as well as a partner in his law office in Mainz. Lucius’ absence led to difficulties managing the Pan-German funds. Annual reports could not be compiled as Lucius’ assistants were themselves
called up. The war affected the organization of meetings, basic proceedings at the headquarters, and the League’s communication with the media and other associations. Lehmann had trouble keeping his publishing house in order once his “regular staff” was called up. When Franz Sontag, one of the editors of the Alldeutsche Blätter and executive at the headquarters between 1914 and 1917, was called up, the League provided a monthly subsidy of 300 Mark to his wife to keep Sontag on the League’s payroll for the future. With so many members on active duty, a restructuring of the League’s leadership became necessary. Especially the pool for recruiting personnel had to be expanded to secure the League’s leadership. New elections for the executive council (Gesamtvorstand), which were postponed until October 1914, brought fifteen new members to the council. Between 1914 and 1918 the number of members serving on this body increased from 99 to 148. This increase was partly due to the increase in the League’s membership, but it was also meant to ensure sufficient members to manage the board’s workings in wartime.

The Pan-Germans interpreted their physical sacrifices as the price of an expanded and homogenized Pan-German Empire. This goal seemed to demand physical sacrifice of the heroes who championed it. The Pan-German vision of collective and individual suffering had religious accents. The war was a purifying force. Keim spoke of the “holy rage” that would determine the victory of the Central Powers, much as Clàß had celebrated war as a “holy, a reforming destiny” in his “Kaiser-book.” Professor Klingemann, the chairman of the chapter in Essen, likened the war to the medieval crusades and suffering of Christ. The war was a “painful christening”

28 See appendix Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4.
29 August Keim, „Der Wille zum Siege aus heiligem Zorn,” in Der Tag, 7 August 1914 and Clàß (Frymann), Wenn ich der Kaiser wär”, 182.
(Leidenstaufe) for all Germans, just as past wars had forged a distinctive (arteigen) German culture and religion. These images of collective sacrifice and personal martyrdom borrowed from the Protestant reformation and the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon. References to the Reformation invoked a purely German spirit, a belief in extending the German Empire and integrating all ethnic Germans. The war was represented as struggle to free the “unfree,” this time German people, who had to be liberated from its own domestic divisions and military encirclement by foreign powers.

In another idiom, the Pan-Germans invoked biological metaphors of Social Darwinist struggles of survival to make sense of the war. Anxieties about the actual biophysical effects of the war, however, troubled the Pan-Germans individually and these fears were omnipresent because the League’s membership suffered from the effects of war and was itself ageing. Probably only few contemporary political associations or parties had leaders who were as old as those of the Pan-German League. August Diederichs, who was a member of the League’s general council, died in office in 1917 at the age of 99. Although younger activists also joined the Pan-German League during the war, the prominence of older members began to frame public perceptions of the Pan-Germans as an organization of older men.

Nevertheless, before the war, it was not age but health that was of prime concern for the Pan-Germans. When important changes were made in the organizational hierarchy of the Pan-German League, it was sometimes a result of the poor health conditions of leading members. For instance, Hasse died of typhus at the age of 62. Six months prior to his death, in 1908, he asked Claß to be introduced as the future chairman of the League. Hasse suffered from severe urarthritis, which he attributed to the “trouble of the last weeks,” especially when Lehmann

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30 See Puschner, Die völkische Bewegung, 203-262.
31 Alldeutsche Blätter, 27 October 1917.
vetoed the appointment of Claß as Hasse’s successor.\textsuperscript{32} Poor health also limited the activism of other Pan-Germans like Otto Ammon, who had to give up his job as a journalist and editor for the \textit{Konstanzer Zeitung} in the early 1880s due to chronic stomach pain or Gebsattel, who had left the military at the rank of a General Lieutenant in 1910 because of his chronic asthma. Restlessness in the management of radical nationalism demanded dues that the entrepreneur of nationalist publications Lehmann had to pay, too, when he was sent to a sanitarium in Davos on 1908 against his will where, according to his wife, “the overworked man was able to relax, the tireless man had time to think.”\textsuperscript{33}

Health was of even greater concern to the Pan-Germans during the war. Like the nation itself, its nationalist avant-garde was supposed to combine mental health and physical fitness. The war tested the physical health and nerves of leading Pan-Germans. Fighting for radical nationalism exacted a price in deteriorating mental and physical health. Lehmann declared in 1917 that his health demanded an immediate vacation.\textsuperscript{34} The same year Otto Helmut Hopfen, who started out as a fervent Jesuit before he turned to Protestantism and radical anti-Catholicism, announced that he was losing his good cheer because of disappointment over the limitations of the war effort and the \textit{Burgfrieden}.\textsuperscript{35} He suffered, he claimed, from “being completely drained” (\textit{Ausgepumptsein}) and, if a “strong need for warmth and sleep means sickness, I am sick.”\textsuperscript{36} The chronic illnesses of older members affected the operations of the Pan-German League. Kirdorf went to health resorts for treatment of his chronic rheumatism.\textsuperscript{37} Gebsattel, who turned sixty-four in 1918, still suffered from chronic asthma, which limited his ability to perform his official duties. He was often in pain, and when poor nutrition began aggravating his stomach problems,

\textsuperscript{32} Hasse to Claß 10 August 1907, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 321, 11.
\textsuperscript{33} Lehmann, \textit{Verleger J.F. Lehmann}, 34.
\textsuperscript{34} Lehmann to Fritz Schwartz, 24 April 1917, in Lehmann (ed.), \textit{Verleger J.F. Lehmann}, 139.
\textsuperscript{35} Hopfen [to Claß], 3 March 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 391, 219. See also Puschner, \textit{Die völkische Bewegung}, 212.
\textsuperscript{36} Hopfen [to Claß], 26 January 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 391, 199-200.
\textsuperscript{37} Kirdorf to Claß, 16 September 1916, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 411, 44.
he sought a homeopathic doctor.\textsuperscript{38} Claß himself was burdened by the “overload of the highly important political matters of the Pan-German League” as well as eroding physical health.\textsuperscript{39} He suffered a first nervous breakdown in early 1916, when Gebsattel had to stand in for him and he endured the workload by subjecting himself to “ruthless self-cures” (\textit{Gewaltkuren}), high doses of aspirin and champagne for his exhausted nerves, which he had to consume everyday before lunch.\textsuperscript{40} It must have been a wrong assessment of his physical capacities that Claß even volunteered for military service in the fall of 1914 but was rejected due to his age - just like Gebsattel, who had already retired from his military career in 1910 because of his asthma.\textsuperscript{41}

The stress and the shaky nerves of League’s leaders were evident in the pages of the “\textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}.” It was announced that administrative work at the headquarters had been interrupted because the hospitalization and rehabilitation of leading Pan-Germans. When Claß was temporarily replaced again between March and May 1917, his political opponents spread the rumor that he was “tired of his post.”\textsuperscript{42} It seemed as if Claß himself was unable to meet his own high standards of order and mental strength, as he occasionally subjected colleagues to “hysterical” fits. It came as no surprise, therefore, that many Pan-German members wondered about the increase of his rhetorical harshness.

Concerns about personal health colored the Pan-Germans’ political commentary. Emotional stress and its biopsychological effects were part of the self-image of leading Pan-Germans as a selfless vanguard, whose members were paying a physical and mental price for their pursuit of radical nationalism. In attributing personal suffering to ideological disharmony among the German people, the Pan-German discourse on health thus widened to broader social

\textsuperscript{38} Gebsattel to Claß, 16 August 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 357, 155-157.
\textsuperscript{39} Hauptleitung des ADV to Hans Bodenstedt, 18 January 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 495, 33.
\textsuperscript{41} See Leicht, “Heinrich Claß,” ch. 4.1.
\textsuperscript{42} See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 31 March 1917, Ibidem 21 April 1917, and \textit{Staatsbürger-Zeitung}, 10 June 1917.
and political “pathologies.” The Pan-Germans saw themselves involved in a Social Darwinist struggle for survival against their political and cultural enemies. Weak nerves and poor health were the “hidden cost” of the League’s modernization of German society and one of the responses to concerns about the entropic loss of energy was turning personal suffering into a cult of enduring the pain that seemed to be necessary to craft a völkisch German Empire. The Pan-Germans were themselves thus “wounded” by the war, physically, mentally, materially, and ideologically.

The Pan-Germans were well aware of the relationship between health and political performance. The prominence of medical doctors in their ranks—men such Max von Gruber, Adolph Fick, and Lubarsch—spoke to the concerns of radical nationalists not only about Volksgesundheit and racism, but also about personal health, mental hygiene, and physical fitness. The official propaganda of the Pan-German League addressed anxieties about the effects of war on health only in footnotes to the news from the battlefields. Gruber, a hygienist and leading activist in the chapter in Munich, predicted that the loss of German manpower would have to be overcome by the reproduction of healthier stock after the war. Overcoming personal pain seemed to be the highest service in the labor of patriotism. Present-day grief was to be remedied by the vision of a brighter future, which was laid out in the war aims program of the Pan-German League.


44 Medical doctors and Sanitätsräte made up between 6 and 9 percent of the chairmen of the chapters of the Pan-German League between 1914 and 1921. See appendix Tables, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Planning the Future and Its Restraints: War-Aims, International Law, and Censorship

The Pan-Germans hoped that the war would provide the opportunity to achieve the unification of ethnic Germans on the European continent and to acquire additional settlement space. Thomas Müller has pointed out that the First World War provided a *tabula rasa*, which allowed the radical Right to “modernize and radicalize” its demands for territorial expansion. The Pan-Germans hoped above all to prevent the planless and arbitrary expansion of Germany in the manner of Bismarck´s colonial policy. The experience of failed colonialism and the disappointments of Germanization politics in the eastern Prussian provinces left a significant imprint on the Pan-German debates about war aims. The central significance of this debate for the Pan-Germans had to do with the ambivalent relationship between the government and the nationalist pressure groups. The political self-righteousness of the Pan-Germans translated into uncompromising political practice at the beginning of the war and resulted in unprecedented levels of conflict with the government. The debate over war aims brought to the forefront the conflict over the legitimacy of extraparliamentary interest groups in shaping public discourse and influencing the government´s conduct of politics. The tensions between the nationalist Right and the government over the custodianship of national interest could no longer be balanced. In addition, the radicalization of the political Left and the rise of a mass movement that urged both political reform and a moderate peace fueled the conflict between the government and the nationalist Right.

Immediately, political parties, extraparliamentary associations, and economic interest groups joined the debate over Germany’s aims in the war. Matthias Erzberger of the Center party, the industrialist August Thyssen, the Central Association of German Industrialists (*Centralverband Deutscher Industrieller*), the Agrarian League, and the League of the

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Industrialists (*Bund der Industriellen*) all laid out their plans for future autarky and strategic security in war-aim programs. These programs had in common the demand to acquire territory to ensure autarky, especially the industrialized parts of Belgium and northern France, as well as the Atlantic coast of France for strategic reasons and parts of Poland for agricultural production.

Colonial acquisitions remained an essential part of war-aims propaganda, but the focus of aggrandizement shifted to the European continent. Only a few colonial agitators, such as Wilhelm Solf in the Colonial Office and Johann Albrecht zu Mecklenburg of the Colonial Society, kept their focus on acquisitions overseas. The government did not and nor did the Pan-Germans, who thought in terms of inheriting existing French and British colonial possessions after the war, once these powers had been defeated on the continent. Gebsattel demanded in his war aim declaration to the chancellor Theobald Bethmann Hollweg of 5 May 1915, which was supported by the Agrarian League, the Central Association of German Industry (*Centralverband der Deutschen Industrie*), the Conservative Party, and the National Liberal Party in Prussia, that colonial acquisitions were only supplemental elements in the relentless march toward economic autarky in a future expanded German Empire.\(^{47}\) Instead, he insisted that German settlement be redirected from abroad to Central European territories that Germany acquired during the war. The neglect of colonial acquisitions reflected the Pan-German view that the military authorities should decide which colonial outposts suited the securing of international commerce and weakening Great Britain as a sea power.

Shortly after the outbreak of the war, on 28 August 1914, the Pan-German executive committee met to discuss war aims and the distribution of the Pan-German program to the

public.\(^{48}\) Claß, Hugenberg, and Vietinghoff-Scheel, who would be crucial in running the League’s headquarters, had determined the basic demands in advance. The chapters had already begun to engage in discussions, and an extensive exchange of letters among members carried a passionate debate over war aims. The war aims that Claß put before the executive committee were far-reaching. They included the realization of German domination in Central Europe and the destruction of France, Britain, and Russia as competing powers. The demands included the propositions that the war should bring the acquisition of land, the unification of ethnic Germans in Central Europe, and the restructuring of Germany into a “true nation-state.”\(^{49}\)

Specifically, Claß proposed that partitioned Poland be unified in a Polish kingdom in league with Austria-Hungary. The three Russian Baltic provinces—Latvia, Livonia, and Estonia—were to be attached to the German Empire, while the districts of Suwalki, Kowno, Vilna, and parts of Witebsk were to become territorial bridges to the Baltic provinces. For strategic reasons, Germany was to acquire northwest France north of the Somme, including the departments Nord, Pas de Calais, Somme, Aisne, Ardennes, Meuse, Meurthe et Moselle, and Vosges. These departments were home to almost 4.4 million people, who were to be expelled and replaced with Germans.\(^{50}\) With its 7.5 million inhabitants Belgium was to be put under German political and economic domination.\(^{51}\) A strict administrative regime was to make possible the comprehensive Germanization (\textit{Eindeutschung}) of the 3.2 million Flemish residents in Belgium, who in the Pan-German view tended toward the German language and culture. The gradual expulsion (\textit{Verdrängung}) of the Walloons, who were linked to French language and culture, required forceful measures. British naval power was to be destroyed and a Central African

\(^{48}\) See also Kruck, \textit{Geschichte des Alldeutschen Verbandes}, 71-90.
\(^{49}\) See for the following Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 28 August 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 96, 8-10.
\(^{50}\) Claß, \textit{Denkschrift}, 182b.
\(^{51}\) Claß, \textit{Denkschrift}, 182b.
Empire under German domination should be created out of French and British territories as colonial *Hinterland* for an expanded and autark German Empire.

Claß’s proposals met all manner of responses from the executive committee: agreement, compromise, skepticism, and astonishment. No one disagreed, however, that Germany was fighting on legitimate grounds and that it should acquire extended territory from its enemies. The disagreements had to do with practical considerations. Liebert expressed astonishment over the far-reaching expansion plans in eastern Europe. Along with Stolte and Pezoldt, he was also skeptical about expelling millions of foreign inhabitants from future German territory and settling millions of ethnic Germans in these areas. These doubts were based on failed German settlement policies, both in Prussia and in the colonies. Hänsch from Leipzig was doubtful about the costs of resettlement and compensation. He assured everyone, however, that his doubts were not due to “humanitarian reasons,” but to the meager outcome of prewar settlement. In his own defense, Claß pointed to tens of thousands of prospective settlers from western and southern Germany, whom the Prussian Settlement Agency could recruit for resettlement in the east. The editors of the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, Heinrich Pohl, who also served as a member of the executive committee, and Rippler, agreed with Claß, Gebsattel, and Vietinghoff-Scheel that resettlement plans were to be an essential part of Germany’s war policies. Vietinghoff-Scheel tried to soften resistance to Claß’s plans, noting that the Russian peasant would be willing to leave his land to settle somewhere else, if he were granted a bigger piece of land. In the end, the question of ethnic expulsion remained open, but the executive committee agreed that resettlement had a central place in German war aims and that the practical translation of the formula “land free of people” should depend on specific circumstances on the ground. A leaflet that was then distributed to the
chapters stated that resettlement policies had been discussed extensively and all questions were being considered, but that the doubters had overestimated the difficulties.\footnote{52}  

Gebsattel believed that the slogan “land free of people” needed to be explained better to the people. Through experience he knew that expulsion had not been popular among all Pan-Germans prior to the war. Yet he was firm that Germany should aim at comprehensive settlement of the new territories in eastern and western Europe within the next ten to twenty years.\footnote{53} Russia was to be destroyed, “its face turned back to Asia.”\footnote{54} He also planned the creation of a Polish kingdom as a retreat for German Poles who had to leave Germany.\footnote{55} The expulsion of all ethnic Poles from German territory, regardless of German citizenship, marked a new level of extremism in Gebsattel’s planning, which caused the \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} to call him in 1917 a “man of violence” (\textit{Gewaltmensch}).\footnote{56}  

The expulsion of people from their homelands, as demanded by both Claß and Gebsattel as a dimension of ethnic homogenization, signaled a new approach to German ethnic politics, although it built on earlier settlement policies and inequalities within the German Empire. The vision of a future German east European empire “free of people” brought to a radical conclusion Claß’ thinking about state-enforced Prussian domestic colonization. The vision of ruling over territory “free of people” had not been an inherent part of Pan-German thinking about colonial administration. Nor had mass expulsion of ethnic minorities from Germany been openly discussed before the war, while Germanization east of the Elbe had remained a dynamic and contested field of nationalism and opposition.\footnote{52} „An die Ortsgruppen-Vorstände und Vertrauensmänner des Alldutschen Verbandes,” 27 October 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 97, 19.\footnote{53} Gebsattel to Graf Podewils, 18 January 1915, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 392 and Gebsattel to Freiherr von Cetto, 14 January 1915, in Ibidem, 383.\footnote{54} Gebsattel to Claß, 7 December 1914, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 302.\footnote{55} Gebsattel to Claß, 4 August 1914, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 179.\footnote{56} \textit{Berliner Tageblatt}, 13 June 1917.
Claß’s plans were new because they demanded the physical expulsion of ethnic foreigners and their resettlement outside a future German Empire. His plans also violated principles of international law, which stipulated that the occupying forces had to protect native customs and law in the occupied territory. Segregation of ethnic groups was the main goal of Claß’s plan. In the new lands seized by Germany, foreign inhabitants would be driven out and their place would be taken by ethnic German peasants. This comprehensive project recalled medieval models of peasant settlements. Now, however, ethnic German settlements in the east would fortify German language, culture, and military prowess. Soldiers and officers would be provided land after the war. Here they would become the props of a stable and secure administration, as well as vehicles of the “Germanization” of these territories. Claß justified “land free of people” as a means to “make the east truly German,” pointing to resettlement policies undertaken by the enemy powers.57 “Our enemies set the example.”58 He had in mind the Russian Empire’s directing of European settlers to Siberian colonies and Claß also took note of Russia’s policies of dispossessing ethnic Germans of their businesses and estates, the internment of ethnic Germans in camps, and the expulsion of ethnic Germans from areas under military rule (from the province Novgorod to the Don) to regions east of the Urals.59

Demanding territory “free of people” was by no means the position of the entire Pan-German League as for various members the brutality of such a program ran counter to concepts of the Rechtsstaat and nascent stipulation of clear boundaries between military combatants and

non-combatant civilians as laid out in earlier peace conferences around the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{60} On the other side, the stipulation of international law prior to the First World War happened against the backdrop of Imperialist warfare and colonial acquisitions in territories that lay outside of defined areas of international law.\textsuperscript{61} Instead, Claß’s plans how to administer occupation \textit{in praxis} by bringing concepts of order and German culture to the occupied lands, as well as preparing the land for the settlement of ethnic German peasants and retired soldiers, split the Pan-Germans into radical and “moderate” wings.\textsuperscript{62} The historian Dietrich Schäfer, for instance, did not believe that the enforced expulsion of inhabitants from Belgium or Russia accorded with basic norms of civilized behavior. He agreed with Claß about the anti-German potential of Polish nationalism, but he did not believe that Pan-Slavism constituted a racial community, nor did he think that nation-state building was likely among thirty different peoples in eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{63} Instead, he wanted to create European buffer states, which Germany would control politically and economically.\textsuperscript{64} Claß himself was well aware that his demands were radical, but he played down their inhumanity, emphasizing that the politics of resettlement was a mandate for the state and

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\textsuperscript{62} See also Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, \textit{War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I} (Cambridge: CUP, 2000).


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was not suitable for “weak nerves and soft souls” (Gefühlsmenschen).\textsuperscript{65} He dismissed “humanitarian considerations” in dealing with Germany’s enemies and demanded “cold-blooded and steady” war-aim politics, albeit “free of hatred against other people.”\textsuperscript{66}

At this point, in September 1914, Claß was still developing his ideas in discussions with his fellow Pan-Germans. The process was not always easy, especially with the Gelehrtenpolitiker Schäfer, who himself called for territorial acquisitions and a strong German dominated Mitteleuropa, which he thought had its historical precedent in the Hanseatic League. Claß tried to convince him about the need to consider a hierarchy of territories and ethnic communities. In addition, he promised that the propaganda for resettlement would be put as mildly as possible.\textsuperscript{67} Schäfer agreed that Germany must increase its influence in Europe and the two stayed in close contact, although Schäfer left the executive committee in September 1914. Schäfer shared with Claß a vision of annexations between East Prussia and the Baltic provinces.\textsuperscript{68} The prolonging of the war did not change his mind about population displacement and settlement, but it did make him join forces with Claß to promote a victorious war. In 1916 he rejoined the executive committee and, according to Claß at least, never had major disagreements over his war aims.\textsuperscript{69}

Meanwhile, however, Schäfer had organized support for his views in the Independent Committee for a German Peace (Unabhängiger Ausschuß für einen Deutschen Frieden), which was founded in July 1915 and became increasingly active in mobilizing the public. Its 128 chapters had representatives (Vertrauensmänner) in most German cities, including Posen,

\textsuperscript{66} Claß, Denkschrift, 116-117.
\textsuperscript{67} Claß to Schäfer, 1 September 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 455, 18-19.
\textsuperscript{68} Schäfer to Claß, 7 September 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 455, 22.
\textsuperscript{69} Claß to Heinrich Calmbach, 6 July 1928, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 455, 50-51.
Königsberg, Kassel, and Leipzig to Munich, Stuttgart, and Hamburg. Leading agrarian activists like Franz Buhl, Wolfgang Kapp, Konrad von Wangenheim, Kuno Graf von Westarp, and Gustav Roesicke worked as members of Schäfer’s inner circle to promote a “victorious peace” and the annexation of territory from the Baltic provinces to western Poland. Schäfer turned down Claß’s offers to integrate the Committee into the Pan-German League, because Schäfer detected too many differences between the organizations. The Pan-Germans were nevertheless well represented, as Kirdorf, Paul Fuhrmann, Admiral Ferdinand von Grumme-Douglas, and the Berlin historian Eduard Meyer served in leading positions. At its meeting in August 1914, the executive committee had left the idea of “land free of people” unresolved. It decided to postpone the question until all ninety-nine members of the executive council could meet in October. Claß was empowered to decide alone the management of the League’s finances and other affairs until that meeting. In addition, an initial statement of war aims was sent to all the chapters immediately, and reactions were welcomed by the executive committee. However, in part because of the dislocations of war, the relationship between the executive committee and the chapters was increasingly centralized, while many reports about discussions in the leadership were not distributed to the chapters.

After the meeting of the executive council in October, Claß put together an extended list of war aims. It specified that The Netherlands should become a closer partner of Germany, that Luxembourg should be linked to the Empire, and that Belgium should be occupied and divided between the Walloon and the Flemish communities. France and England were to be weakened,

72 See also Ackermann, Die Geburt des modernen Propagandakriege, 166-180.
73 Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 28 August 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 96, 40.
their influence around the world reduced to a minimum. Only in this connection did Claß direct his attention toward the French, British, and Portuguese colonies, calling for German possession of French Morocco and the Belgian and French Congo, in order to create German Central Africa. Although disagreements remained within the League over the priority of western or eastern Europe in the program, these aims were welcomed among the chapters of the League, including the demand “land without people.”

The most important reason for putting such a list together was the fear that the government’s censorship would silence the League’s voice in the war-aims debate. The Bethmann Hollweg government had put together its own, more ambivalent war-aims program in September 1914. It called for peace through territorial expansion, which would entail the comprehensive weakening of France and Russia, as well as economic exploitation of Belgium and the creation of an expanded colonial Empire in Africa. The defeat of the German offensive in the fall of 1914 prevented the government from announcing a far-reaching war aim programs. Bethmann Hollweg feared that the morale of the common soldier would be weakened if it seemed that nationalist interest groups were insisting on radical war aims in what had been justified in August as a defensive war.74 Public discussion of radical war aims like the Pan-Germans’ would also complicate a peace settlement with the Entente powers. When Gebsattel met in February 1915 with the Foreign Secretary, Arthur Zimmermann, he was greeted with harsh complaints that the Pan-Germans had always caused trouble for the government.75 Zimmermann denounced Pan-German war propaganda as “cowboy games” (Indianerspiele), “childish fantasies” (Flausen), which were taken seriously abroad and put the German government in the situation of having to

75 Gebsattel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6 February 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 98, 16.
respond to charges brought forward by the Entente powers.\textsuperscript{76} Arnold Wahnschaffe, Unterstaatssekretär in the Imperial Chancellery and a friend of Hugenberg, told Pohl early in 1915 that the government had to appease the neutral powers like Italy and the United States, although he assured Pohl that that the formula “land free of people” was met with considerable favor in military circles.\textsuperscript{77}

Claß’s war-aims memorandum had the character of an official statement. Two thousand copies were printed by Lehmann’s publishing house. Claß sent it in December 1914 to almost two thousand political, military, and media leaders, including the royal houses of Prussia, Württemberg, Saxony, and Oldenburg.\textsuperscript{78} Inspired by General Paul Hindenburg’s victories over the Russian army in east, Claß did not consult with the executive committee. This procedure was in accord with the unlimited authority given to Claß in August. Nevertheless, to secure consensus among the chapters, the headquarters organized a series of meetings. Alfred Breusing from the executive committee, Lehmann, Gebsattel, and Ferdinand Putz were dispatched to chapters in Lower Bavaria, and Hänsch, Pezoldt, and Dr. Flitner worked in Saxony.\textsuperscript{79} Heinrich Calmbach was active in Württemberg and South Baden, while Professor Viereck and Justizrat Kleinrath managed the chapters in Hanover, Braunschweig, Hildesheim, Osnabrück, Bielefeld, and

\textsuperscript{77}Pohl at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 7 February 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 98, 20.
\textsuperscript{79}Hauptgeschäftsführer to Putz, 12 September 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 634, 22 and Hauptgeschäftsführer to Hänisch, in Ibidem, 27.
Detmold.\textsuperscript{80} Professor Grube and Senator Johann Neumann from Lübeck were sent to Hamburg and Bremen.\textsuperscript{81}

However, general censorship on military matters had been passed by the government earlier in June 1914 when the law against revealing military secrets ("Reichsgesetz gegen den Verrat militärischer Geheimnisse") prohibited any public discussion of troop movements and naval plans. Then, on 31 July 1914, proclamation of a state of siege imposed comprehensive censorship on newspapers and magazines. The nationalist Right interpreted the law primarily as a means to limit the public influence of the Social Democrats and the labor unions.\textsuperscript{82} The nationalist associations did not foresee that censorship would also be applied to them. Thus the Conservative and National Liberal parties deplored the fact that they were subject to censorship much like the Social Democrats and the Center Party.

The Chancellor and the military tried to restrain the Pan-Germans in other ways, too, which left a deep mark of surprise and frustration among the Pan-Germans. The Prussian deputy war minister, Franz August von Wandel, warned Claß against calling for war aims that had yet to be gained on the ground. Erich Ludendorff, the chief of staff under Hindenburg, also asked Claß in December 1914 not to make any public use of the memorandum.\textsuperscript{83} Then, in January 1915, the army—with Bethmann Hollweg’s support—seized copies of the war-aims program during two

\textsuperscript{80} Hauptgeschäftsführer to Calmbach 12 September 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 634, 25 and Hauptgeschäftsführer to Viereck, 12 September 1914, in Ibidem, 26.

\textsuperscript{81} Hauptgeschäftsführer to Putz, 12 September 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 634, 22; Idem to Hänsch, 12 September 1914, in ibidem, 27; Idem to Calmbach 12 September 1914, in Ibidem, 25; Idem to Viereck, 12 September 1914, in Ibidem, 26; and Idem to Neumann, 12 September 1914, in Ibidem, 28.


searches of Claß´ home and office in Mainz. Claß filed a request for criminal prosecution against General von Bücking, the governor of the Mainz district who had authorized the search of Claß´ home. The request was turned down, but these and other censorship measures intensified the Pan-Germans´ anger at the government. They appeared to represent the stigmatization of the League as war-mongers by the highest state authorities. Silencing the nationalist associations in this way seemed to work against war mobilization and to set the state up against the true representatives of the Volk. As Lehmann put it:

If a commanding general proves to be incompetent, he will be discharged from his rank the next day. If the Chancellor acts like a child, should it really be the citizen´s duty to keep his mouth shut and sustain such a situation for the benefit of the state? The more I think about it, the more I conclude that this would be a crime against our Volk.

A flood of demands for political reordering, ethnic resettling, economic redistribution, and territorial acquisition were censored. The government was supported by Bethmann Hollweg in seizing Claß´ pamphlet and searching his office and private home. Surveillance was placed on his outgoing mail in March 1915. Censorship affected the League in all of its forms. The Alldeutsche Blätter were subject to preventive censorship once the Bonn professor Moritz Trautmann published an article in January 1915, in which he advocated compulsory resettlement in the francophone territories. Thereafter, the journal regularly contained blank spaces. Pan-German leaflets and pamphlets were censored, too, and several members faced serious problems in their neighborhood receiving the League´s paper. Since Claß distributed his war aim program

85 Gericht des stellvertretenden VIII. Armeekorps, Gerichtsherr von Ploetz, 21 April 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 635, 527 [incorrect page numbering, old pagina 698].
in the fall of 1914, many members of the Pan-German League abstained from the postal delivery of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* not to be identified by the neighbors in their home towns as Pan-Germans, while and many post offices had already refused to deliver the paper. Such censorship treatment caused so much anger among the editors and members of the executive committee that they considered abandoning the *Alldeutsche Blätter* for as long as the war dragged on. Rippler suggested moving the paper’s editorial office from Mainz to Munich, where censorship was less strict than in Prussia. However, censorship of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* helped mobilize the League. Postal delivery of the weekly to all members was realized for the first time in its history. In 1915, subscriptions were made compulsory for all members—a measure that had been discussed before the war but that Vietinghoff-Scheel now called “our only means of influencing our members politically.”

The experience of censorship led the Pan-Germans to conclude that the government was incapable of supporting total mobilization of the nationalist public. However, in its conflict with the government the Pan-German League found significant support among industrialists and right-wing members of the parliament. The industrialist Hugo Stinnes (a cousin of Itzenplitz from the executive committee) favored Claß’s program, as did Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach. The leader of the National Liberal Party in the parliament, Bassermann, and the Conservative members of the parliament, Gustav Roesicke and Albrecht von Graefe-Goldebee, supported Claß in the *Reichstag* and his attempts to lift the censorship of his war-aims memorandum. Otto Fürst

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89 See Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch.3.5.
91 Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6 February 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 98, 11.
zu Salm-Horstmar, Grumme-Douglas, and Ernst von Hertzberg-Lottin all declared their sympathy for the Pan-German war aims in the Prussian parliament.

In the war-aims debate the Pan-Germans enjoyed a central role among the nationalist associations and industrial interest groups in shaping concepts of territorial expansion. A group of representatives from leading economic interest groups, including the Central Association of German Industry, the Agrarian League, and the League of the Industrialists, met under the leadership of Hugenberg in Berlin in December 1914 to coordinate annexationist propaganda.\(^94\)

There was general agreement that Belgium and Northern France should remain in German hands, while territorial acquisitions in Poland and the Baltic provinces were to be determined by the strategic situation.\(^95\) The idea of acquiring land “free of people” met with general sympathy among the participants, who included Kirdorf, Stinnes, Wangenheim, Roesicke, and Westarp. The denial of political rights to foreign inhabitants was accepted as a viable temporary alternative and posed challenging questions for the government about how to pursue Germany’s war aims once the army would have won the war.\(^96\) Although Westarp called Claß’s war aims utopian, he acknowledged that they contained a sharp inner logic emblematic of “constructively thinking people.”\(^97\)

At a second meeting in January 1915, Claß was assigned to compose a joint-memorandum but while the economic pressure groups and the National Liberals supported Claß’s far-reaching war aims, especially Westarp and Heydebrand felt extremely uneasy about the demand to acquire

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“land free of people.”98 Once the Conservative Party withdrew its support for Claß´s war aim program, this new document resembled Claß´s program of October. Gebsattel sent it to the chancellor on 5 May 1915, along with a letter that criticized the government for not embracing more far-reaching territorial claims.99 Bethmann Hollweg was once again pained by the Pan-Germans´ approach and denounced their “lack of political understanding,” which, he claimed, had been “raised to grotesque levels” during the war.100 Kurt Riezler, Bethmann Hollweg´s closest advisor, shared the chancellor’s assessment when he found it “unfortunate” that the Pan-German war-aims propaganda found such broad support among right-wing political parties and economic pressure groups, because their war-aims politics represented a “psychosis.”101

Nevertheless, an additional petition was on the way. The so-called petition of the intellectuals (Intellektuelleneingabe) of 8 June 1915 popularized Pan-German war aims among the intellectual elite. This petition was much in accord with Claß´s demands for territorial acquisitions in western and eastern Europe and the expulsion of inhabitants.102 It demanded corrections to the borders with France, control over Belgium, a military challenge to Great Britain´s world-power status, and the creation of a border-strip between Germany and Poland, to be settled with ethnic Germans. Signed by more than 1,300 leading figures in German public life, this petition was powerful testimony to Pan-German propaganda. Claß, Kirdorf, and Hugenberg had helped to initiate this so-called “Seeberg-Adresse,” which was worked out by the Berlin

98 See Claß, Wider den Strom, 360-361; Kruck, Geschichte des Aldeutschen Verbandes, 76-77; Retallack, Notables of the Right, 215-218; and Hagenlücke, Deutsche Vaterlandsparie, 61.
101 Quote in Jarausch, „Die Alldeutschen und die Regierung Bethmann Hollweg,” 460 and 466.
theologian Reinhold Seeberg, Schäfer, and the professor of economics (Nationalökonomie) in Bonn, Hermann Schumacher. Leading Pan-German activists signed it, among them Bacmeister, the historian Georg von Below, the Pan-German publicist Houston Stewart Chamberlain (who joined the League as soon as he changed his English citizenship and received a German passport in August 1916), Gebsattel, Grumme-Douglas, Gruber, Kirdorf, Lohmann, Pezoldt, Schäfer, Stolte, and Admiral August von Thomsen from Pan-German headquarters.103

In this way the Pan-German League contributed to the split of the German academic community between radical (Annexionisten) and moderate wings (Gemäßigte). The Pan-Germans provided a powerful vision of a new European order to academics like the historians Below, Meyer, Schäfer, and Otto Hoetzsch. On the other hand, Hermann Oncken, Hans Delbrück, Meinecke, and Harnack were among the prominent university professors who supported the Bethmann Hollweg government against Pan-German attacks and radical war aims.104 Several “counter-petitions” followed. Harnack, Delbrück, the former Colonial State Secretary Bernhard Dernburg, and the editor of the liberal Berliner Tageblatt, Theodor Wolff, delivered the most important of these, with 141 signatures, to the Chancellor on 9 July 1915. In the spring of 1915, however, the annexationists seemed to outnumber the moderates in the German academic community.

Meanwhile, the Pan-Germans attempted to influence government policy by other means. Hugenberg composed a memorandum in March 1915, which contained his vision of a future borderland in the east.105 Germany was to occupy large swathes of territory, from which millions of people—“extremely inferior races”—Poles, Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians, and White

Russians were to be expelled and the area resettled by ethnic Germans. A “comprehensive ethnic reallocation” (völkische Flurbereinigung) was to be organized. “Parts of the Jewish proletariat,” too, would be resettled in eastern Poland (Grodno and Minsk), if they had not emigrated to Russia or Northern America. In his thinking about eastern Europe Hugenberg was in agreement with other radical activists of the Pan-German League. Gebsattel focused on the idea of a Polish kingdom. The Poles in Germany were to be expelled to such a kingdom, unless they were willing to accept German language. Posen, Western Prussia, and Silesia would be resettled with ethnic Germans. Since the Poles tended toward “socialism and anarchy,” a borderland strip would control the exchange between Germany and Poland. Gebsattel spoke to similar visions that Claß pursued, who had also planned that peasants were to be settled in the Medieval-like villages, joined by former soldiers as a cultural and paramilitary defense wall (Ringwälle) against the Slavs.

These were not the ideas of the extreme annexationists alone. Similar projects were discussed within the government and military. Ludendorff and Hindenburg advocated vast settlements of soldiers and officers after the war in borderland strips between Germany and Poland and in the Baltic provinces. Wahnschaffe and the general Consul in Warsaw, Albrecht Freiherr von Rechenberg, worked out plans to expel Poles and Jews from a future German border-corridor in Poland. Pan-German schemes were welcomed by the government and the military once the German army advanced far into Poland and the Baltic lands in 1915. The

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106 Hugenberg, Denkschrift, 69.
107 Hugenberg, Denkschrift, 71.
Imperial Chancellery consulted the Pan-German *Regierungspräsident* Friedrich von Schwerin as an expert in Polish matters. In two memoranda, dated 25 March and 31 December 1915, he and his close advisor Max Sering, with whom he had founded the Association for Domestic Colonization three years earlier, demanded the creation of a border-territory, a “land free of people, from which Polish peasants were to be expelled for German ‘mass settlements.’”¹¹² Closing the Russian border with Germany would prevent Jews from emigrating to Germany, while the German authorities were to support the Zionist movement.¹¹³

Schwerin’s ideas were taken up. A meeting of the Prussian government departments on 13 July 1915 ended in a consensus about the need to create a border corridor with Poland. Wahnschaffe thanked Schwerin for his input, but asked that he not broadcast his ideas beyond the Association for the Promotion of Domestic Colonization and the Chancellery.¹¹⁴ Schwerin, however, had already distributed copies of a pamphlet to the war ministries of several German states, the general staff, and the *Oberpräsident* of the province of Brandenburg, as well as to Ministers of the Interior, Finance, and Agriculture in Prussia.

The extraparliamentary associations were crucial in generating these ideas, and the Pan-German League was central in putting out pamphlets like Schwerin’s. The public estrangement between the Pan-German League and the government during the war seemed to emphasize the growing importance of Pan-German activities in expert councils and extraparliamentary pressure groups. The Pan-German League functioned as a mediator. In 1916, Schwerin, Sering, and Hugenberg were all members of its executive council. The Pan-German League joined the

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Association for German Settlement and Migration (Vereinigung für deutsche Siedlung und Wanderung), which had been founded in the summer 1916 and brought together the Colonial Society, the German Society for the Eastern Marches, the Association for the Promotion of Domestic Colonization, the Association for German Abroad, and the Welfare Association for German Remigrants (Fürsorgeverein deutscher Rückwanderer). The founding declaration of the new organization made clear the resonance of the Pan-Germans’ resettlement plans of the Pan-German League. All these institutional links broadened discussions of annexations and resettlement from into extraparliamentary groups and bodies of experts, as well as at the grass-root level of the Pan-German League.

As the networks grew, the distribution of propaganda material and the organization of common meetings and petitions took place through the Information Bureau of the United Associations (Auskunftsstelle Vereinigter Verbände), which was founded under the chairmanship of the steel industrialist Oskar Poensgen in December 1914. It was supported by the Pan-German League through the presence of Vietinghoff-Scheel, Bacmeister, Kirdorf, and Schäfer on its supervisory board. In addition, the Central Coordinating Committee (Hauptvermittlungsstelle Vaterländischer Vereine), which was founded on 8 July 1915 and headed by Graf Baudissin, brought the Pan-German League and the German Defense League together with the Association for Domestic Colonization, the German Society of the Eastern Marches, the Independent Committee for a German Peace, and other nationalist organizations. These networks also helped popularize radical war aims among the Pan-German League’s own members. The idea of defensive enclosures, which would serve as bases for the spread of German settlement into Poland and Lithuania, became increasingly accepted in the League by the beginning of 1916.\footnote{Carl Caesar Eiffe demanded the implementation of the principle that Germans were to be kept in Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 25 March 1916, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 104, 30-47.}
Germany and that “sympathy for other people means betrayal of Germanness.”\textsuperscript{116} The German Defense League also demanded the exchange of populations in eastern Europe as a prerequisite for a “reckoning” (\textit{Abrechnung}) with Russia.\textsuperscript{117} In a petition to the Chancellor dated 27 January 1916, the Defense League claimed that the acquisition of the Baltic provinces would meet the need for settlement territory:

Inhabited by only 2 ½ million, but capable of hosting 15 million once an efficient agrarian policy is applied, and, in addition, being mainly state property, the Baltic provinces are suitable for settlement like no other region. That Poland will be considered for settlements goes without saying, while here, as well as in regard to the Baltic provinces, the option of population exchanges has to be considered. All of this contains potential hardship, but it will only be of good value in the long run.\textsuperscript{118}

Keim now made it clear that it was time for a “showdown” (\textit{Kraftprobe}) over the Polish question and advocated the “ruthless” resettlement of two million ethnic Germans from Russia—the “entire Germanization of the East was [in the past] executed in brutal ways and similar measures will have to be pursued in the future.”\textsuperscript{119}

Plans for comprehensive reterritorialization and resettlement in eastern Europe merged with similar plans in the west. Western Europe was of interest because of its industrial and strategic value, and to a lesser extent for \textit{völkisch} reasons. Together with the German Farmer´s League (\textit{Deutscher Bauernbund}), the Central Association of German Industrialists, and other agrarian and industrial organizations, the Agrarian League petitioned the Chancellor in the summer of 1915 to annex Belgium and the northern French coast for economic and strategic reasons. The attention of the Navy League was directed toward Great Britain. In December 1917, the Association of German Iron and Steel Industrialists (\textit{Verein Deutscher Eisen- und Stahl-}

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\textsuperscript{117} Werner Conze, \textit{Polnische Nation und Deutsche Politik im Ersten Weltkrieg} (Cologne/Graz: Böhlau, 1958), 155.
\textsuperscript{119} Keim to Claß, 7 June 1916, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 6, 303.
\end{flushright}
Industrieller) and the Association of German Iron Workers (Verein deutscher Eisenhüttenleute) demanded the acquisition of the ore basin in Lorraine to secure Germany’s autarky.  

France, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Luxembourg also constituted a focus of Pan-German thinking on war aims. For Claß territories under consideration for German occupation were “elastic” frontier zones. The granting of equal civil rights was inconceivable to him. Belgium was to be separated into a Walloon and a Flemish Mark and placed under German administration. A wider border zone that extended into France would back up the core lands in Belgium and the Netherlands, which were also to be tied closer to Germany. French and Belgian firm owners were to keep their property and to be paid low prices for producing goods for Germany. The Germans in fact administered some five hundred firms during the war. A law imposed by the German government on 15 March 1917, which provided for the liquidation of French enterprises and the dispossession of farms in Lorraine, marked another significant breakthrough of Pan-German thinking into the administration of western Europe. The Pan-Germans hoped that settlement agencies would promote the settlement of German peasants in Lorraine. Keim, as military governor of Limburg, called for ethnic segregation, so Belgian elites would be “systematically defanged” and “actually eradicated.” For Keim Belgium had no right to self-determination under international law. In early 1917 the Pan-German League again demanded keeping Belgium under German control, while France was to be subjected to permanent German occupation according to the outlines of Claß’s war-aim program of October

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121 Claß, Zum deutschen Kriegsziel, 30.
122 Roger Chickering, Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918 (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 84.
123 Alldeutsche Blätter, 11 August 1917.
125 August Keim, Belgien: Eine Schicksals- und Lebensfrage für Deutschland (Berlin, 1917/1918), 8 and 17.
Mindful of the need to pay the expenses of the war, Pan-Germans also insisted on keeping the industrial resources of Belgium, northern France, the Baltic provinces, Lithuania, and parts of Poland in German hands. But as the war in the west continued, it increasingly turned into a racial war in the minds of the Pan-Germans.

The situation was more favorable in the east after the Russian Revolution. Germany acquired vast territories, including the Baltic provinces Courland and Livonia. Riga was occupied in September 1917, and Vietinghoff-Scheel cheered “Riga is ours again!”\(^{127}\) The negotiations at Brest-Litovsk prompted the Pan-German League to participate in the waves of petitions that went to Ludendorff from right-wing circles, demanding that the peace settlement to be used for a comprehensive restructuring of Eastern Europe.\(^{128}\) Resettlement became a real option. In March 1918 Vietinghoff-Scheel again expressed the hope that the ethnic resettlement of Poland would proceed.\(^{129}\) In April 1918, the executive committee of the Pan-German League reaffirmed its war aims of 1914. The Pan-Germans now regarded themselves as the providers of concrete war aims that had been achieved in the peace with Russia.\(^{130}\) They welcomed the “liberation of the Baltic Germans” with “proud joy.”\(^{131}\)

**Politics of Power: Foreign Labor and Ethnic Definitions of Citizenship**

The Pan-Germans defined citizenship not as a status granted by state regulations, but as set by birthplace and ethnic heritage. As defined in 1913 by the new citizenship law, ethnic Germans had access to citizenship. The Pan-Germans argued, however, that the *Staatsbürger* had

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\(^{127}\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 15 September 1917.

\(^{128}\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 23 February 1918 and ibidem 16 March 1918. See also Conze, *Polnische Nation*, 332.

\(^{129}\) Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 7/8 July 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 114, 8-17.

\(^{130}\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 16 February 1918.

to be understood ethnically, as *Volksbürger*.\(^{132}\) Vietinghoff-Scheel had already stated in August 1914 that the status of full civic membership (*Vollbürger*) should be granted only to those “whose blood makes them members of the Volk, which constitutes the state.”\(^{133}\) As a determining feature of German belonging, citizenship defined the markers of order, belonging, and the separation of ethnic communities. Germans were the carriers of culture (*Kulturträger*), unlike “uncivilized” foreign communities. For ethnic communities that were to be included in the expanded German Empire, the status of “subject” (*Untertanenrecht*) defined rights and obligations, especially of Poles and Russians who were held to be inherently inferior in culture and ethnicity. Claß also denied political rights to Poles in Poland and Walloons in Belgium and limited them for Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians.\(^{134}\) In eastern Europe only ethnic Germans would enjoy full citizenship and property rights. Flemish workers would serve as a proletariat in industrial sites in west Germany. Alfred Jacobsen called them “*Heloten,*” like slaves in Ancient Sparta, who had no citizenship rights.\(^{135}\)

The Pan-Germans’ plans for radical ethnic segregation conflicted, however, with considerations of economic efficiency in the war economy. Pan-Germans ideas about second-class citizenship for non-Germans in an expanding German Empire did not account for the millions of German soldiers who were missing from their work places. The outbreak of the war had given new importance to foreign labor in the German economy. In 1914, war the Prussian War Ministry stipulated that Polish seasonal workers were to be prohibited from returning to Russia. In addition, 500,000 to 600,000 Polish and 130,000 to 160,000 Belgian workers were

\(^{133}\) Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 28 August 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 96, 33-34.  
\(^{134}\) Claß, *Denkschrift*, 144.  
\(^{135}\) Quoted in Müller, *Imaginiertem Westen*, 159.
recruited during the war through a mixed system of free employment and enforced recruitment.\textsuperscript{136} Increased demands for labor since 1915 led to a change in the legal framework of the labor market and Eastern European Jews were now also recruited in Poland.\textsuperscript{137} In total 35,000 Jews came to Germany as workers and the number of Jews living in Germany increased from 80,000 in 1914 to 150,000 in 1918.\textsuperscript{138}

However, the Pan-Germans were primarily concerned about the political and social consequences of the influx of two million POWs and a million foreign workers.\textsuperscript{139} The demand to seal the borders against foreigners was part of the war-aims program of the fall of 1914. Early in 1915, the Pan-German executive committee began to formulate concrete plans to close the borders to foreign labor, especially to the east. In the name of the Pan-German League, \textit{Kaiserlicher Geheimer Regierungsrat} Georg Fritz and \textit{Oberamtmann} Dr. Wolfgang Heinze prepared pamphlets about the danger of migration within Europe (\textit{Umwanderungsbewegung}) and the possibility that east European Jews might endanger the ethnic composition in east Germany.\textsuperscript{140} Heinze called for closing the border in an article in the well-respected \textit{“Preußische Jahrbücher.”}\textsuperscript{141} Fritz lamented the central European “ethnic chaos” (\textit{Völkerchaos}) and predicted that the Jews in Germany would “die out” in 40 to 50 years if the borders in the east were closed

\textsuperscript{136} See Jens Thiel, \textit{„Menschenbassin Belgien:“ Anwerbung, Deportation und Zwangsarbeit im Ersten Weltkrieg} (Essen: Klartext, 2007), 32.
\textsuperscript{137} See Trude Maurer, \textit{Ostjuden in Deutschland 1918-1933} (Hamburg: Christians, 1986), 34-46.
\textsuperscript{140} Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 28 August 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 96, 16.
to immigration of Jewish workers and students.\textsuperscript{142} His fears about an influx of six million “physically and morally underdeveloped people” who were “racially alien, Jewish Mongols” led Fritz to demand closure of the border as a precondition for segregating Polish inhabitants, including Jews, from ethnic Germans in future settlement territories.\textsuperscript{143} In November 1915, Gebsattel demanded of the Bavarian government that everything be done to prevent eastern European Jews from entering Germany like a “swarm of locusts.”\textsuperscript{144} Especially in the wake of the Russian Revolution, the Pan-Germans spoke out against the spread of foreign culture and foreign political convictions in Germany, which, they feared, would encourage the radical Left of the German Social Democrats and the workers, as well as soldiers at the front. Instead of employing foreign labor, the Pan-Germans demanded the resettlement of ethnic Germans from the Russian Empire, which they believed would meet the labor shortage during the war.

Closing the border to half a million Polish and Russian refugees and substituting ethnic German remigrants for prisoners of war reflected the Pan-Germans’ preference for segregation and economic exploitation. On 12 February 1916, the executive committee sent a petition to the Chancellor, the state governments, and members of the Reichstag, demanding closure of the border.\textsuperscript{145} The Pan-Germans called for new legislation to close the border to “unwanted immigration”, which represented a new impetus for transferring elements of citizenship politics from peace times into a comprehensive concept of Volkstumspolitik on a continental scale.\textsuperscript{146} Claß, Kirdorf, and Gebsattel clamored for a comprehensive Imperial Immigration Office (Reichseinwanderungsamt) to supervise and direct foreign immigration. In the eyes of the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{143} See Fritz, \textit{Die Ostjudenfrage}, 4-43.
\bibitem{146} Alldeutsche Blätter, 11 March 1916 and see also Gosewinkel, \textit{Einbürgebren und Ausschließen}, 333-334.
\end{thebibliography}
military, however, the labor shortage and the need to adapt the economy to war production took precedence. The mobilization of additional labor and intensified war production under the Hindenburg Program made it impossible to segregate ethnic Germans from foreign labor. The war brought instability to the ethnic communities in central Europe and shuffled people as well as soldiers from one place to another. Nevertheless, the Pan-Germans clung to the idea of closing the border, although by the end of 1917 they foresaw postponing the issue until after a peace settlement.\textsuperscript{147} In the wake of Brest-Litovsk, however, the border was in fact closed between Germany and Russia.

The debate over closing the border showed how, in the eyes of the Pan-Germans, anti-Semitism, racism, and anti-Bolshevism defined völkish purity along political, religious, and ethnic lines. Hierarchically ordered citizenship rights and cultural status underwrote anti-Semitic beliefs about the uniqueness of German ethnicity. Jews turned increasingly into a scapegoat for the Pan-Germans, a means to shift responsibility for democratization and the loss of the war onto shoulders of group that they defined as alien to the German Volk.

\textit{The Crisis of Pan-Germanism and the Radicalization of Ethnic Nationalism: Anti-Semitism as Racism}

Pan-German thought became increasingly intolerant toward the Jews during the war, but the internal debate in the chapters and the executive committee remained ambivalent. It was only after 1917, racist anti-Semitism, which had been laid out before the war, became more aggressive. To a new degree, racism and anti-Semitism fused during the war. Claß continued to be the driving force behind anti-Semitism, supported by close advisors like Gebsattel, Vietinghoff-Scheel, and Gertzlaff von Hertzberg. By 1917 open anti-Semitism had become a

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 13 October 1917.
viable option for extending the League’s influence. The radicalization of almost all political camps, from the Social Democrats to the Left Liberals and the Center Party, shaped Claß’s perception that the breakdown of political order and the Burgfrieden was due to actors who were foreign to the ethnic German community. At the outbreak of the war, Claß had cautiously advocated the expulsion of German Jews to Palestine, fearing, among other things, that Jewish officers would take over the army step by step. Support for the creation of a Jewish state was a point in Claß’s war-aims program. However, the “Jewish question in the new land in the east,” as Claß put it, posed “especially severe problems.” The further Germany advanced in the east, the more Jews would have to be resettled to create “land free of people.” Again, a Jewish state in Palestine offered a solution. The biologization of the Pan-Germans’ ideology was increasingly prominent in calls for state-organized resettlement and the expulsion of Polish, Russian, Walloon, and French people. Gebsattel saw the war as racial conflict between two world views. Western capitalist societies were determined by Jewish finance, while the German Gemeinschaft was built upon ethnic coherence and solidarity among the classes. In this interpretation, culture determined communities and individuals. Jews were un-German, for Gebsattel associated them with western capitalist society.

Owing to growing frustrations over the war, anti-Semitism met with increasing support from the political Right in the parliament. The Pan-German, anti-Semitic deputy Ferdinand Werner introduced a petition in June 1916, which led to the so-called “Jew-census”

149 See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 28 August 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 96, 7 and 11.
150 Claß, Zum deutschen Kriegsziel, 50-51.
151 Claß, Denkschrift, 136.
("Judenzählung") in the army.\(^{153}\) In October 1916, Erzberger demanded a list of all the members of the War Material Sections according to profession, social status, and confession. Bassermann called for restricting foreign students at German universities, especially from Russia—a call that was directed against eastern European Jews.\(^{154}\) In March 1916, the founder of the anti-Semitic Reichshammerbund Theodor Fritsch and his political friend, Roth, had sent a petition to the Emperor, federal ministries, and state governments.\(^{155}\) Roth and Fritsch believed that War Raw Material Divisions, which had been established by Walther Rathenau, and Central Acquisition Agency, which was headed by Albert Ballin, signaled the predominance of Jews in the management of the war economy, hence enhanced corruption, inefficiency, and betrayal. Gebsattel thought along similar lines. He attempted to persuade the Bavarian minister of war, Philipp von Hellingrath, who was also his brother-in-law, that Jews were avoiding frontline service. “The Jew is more than doubly as brave as the German,” he wrote. “He is also three times as bullet-proof as the German.”\(^{156}\) However, the "Judenzählung" raised uncomfortable issues about the Pan-Germans’ own participation in frontline service. Data published in the Alldutsche Blätter in April 1916 proclaimed that the number of Pan-Germans killed (139) corresponded to the number of those who had received the Iron Cross (139).\(^{157}\) Exact numbers are impossible to retrieve. Only in 1918, the editors of the Alldutsche Blätter, however, estimated that a total of 2,000 members of the League were currently recruited and they knew because the League did not


\(^{155}\) See also Alfred Roth (Pseudonym: Otto Armin), *Die Juden in den Kriegsgesellschaften* (Munich: Boepple, 1921).

\(^{156}\) Gebsattel to von Hellingrath, 9 March 1917, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 4, 98-99. See also and Lohalm, *Völkischer Radikalismus*, 346

\(^{157}\) See appendix Figure 4.
retrieve any membership dues from them.\(^{158}\) Nevertheless, the *Judenzählung* provided the occasion for Gebsattel again to promote anti-Semitism within the Pan-German League. In April 1916, he repeated to Claß his view that all anti-Semitic (*judengegnerisch*) associations should be put under the common leadership of the Pan-German League and that the Pan-Germans should make anti-Semitism their official ideology.\(^ {159}\) However, he acknowledged that the League’s rank and file was not ready for such a turn just yet.\(^ {160}\)

The year 1917 marked a turning point in the radicalization of Pan-German anti-Semitism. In June Claß, with the backing of Gebsattel and Fritz, introduced the dichotomy of “Pan-German” (*alldeutsch*) versus “Pan-Jewish” (*alljüdisch*), which then became the central axis of Pan-German thought.\(^ {161}\) The “international forces of revolution and money” were to be met by a new anti-Semitic movement, which the Pan-German League wanted to lead into a mass movement.\(^ {162}\) Still cautious on the matter, Claß wanted “to move step by step, feeling the pulse of public opinion, working in such ways that our power will not be weakened or atomized.”\(^ {163}\) Yet pressure mounted from important leaders of the Pan-German League to embrace anti-Semitic ideology publicly. In October 1917, Claß initiated a discussion about changing the League’s statutes. Now he wished to see members listed by “confessional affiliation,” so “this indication of Jews being unwelcome [is] made very clear.”\(^ {164}\)

By the end of the war the League had decided to step forward to promote anti-Semitism. In September 1918, together with Fritz, Gebsattel organized a “Jewish Committee”

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\(^{160}\) Gebsattel to Claß, 23 December 1916, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 661, 44.

\(^{161}\) See Deutsche Zeitung, 21 September 1917 and Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 50.

\(^{162}\) Alldeutsche Blätter, 13 October 1917.

\(^{163}\) Claß to Gebsattel, 4 July 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 661, 47.

\(^{164}\) Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 3 October 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 115, 5.
(Judenausschuß) within the Pan-German League under his chairmanship.¹⁶⁵ The “Jewish Committee”, however, did not resume its activities immediately and it was the meeting of the executive committee on 19/20 October 1918 that marked the turning-point in the radicalization of anti-Semitism, because it extended the discussion about anti-Semitism to the leading administrative body of the Pan-German League after the matter had been repeatedly discussed since the 1890s. However, the anti-Semitism was never a prime objective for all of the members and it was only at the end of the war that the issue gained significance. Present were Claß, Keim, Thomsen, Fritz, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Walter Schönrock, Dr. Julius Dumcke, Julius Schön, Joerges, Gebhard, Lohmann, Wilhelm Niemann, the Hamburg Kaidirektor Paul Winter, Rechtsanwalt Freigang, Pezoldt, Stolte, Rippler, Neumann, and Lehmann from the executive committee. Only two issues were discussed—the political situation in Germany and the “Jewish Question.” Gebsattel insisted on a public proclamation from the Pan-German League to help the “special committee” for anti-Semitic questions that he had just organized. Gebhard and Jacobsen agreed, although Stolte wanted to make sure that such an enterprise was attractive to the broader public, not only to the educated.¹⁶⁶ The discussion ended in agreement that anti-Semitism was a central element in the Pan-German ideology. Whether this ideology should also be turned into political practice was unclear because of fears that it could split the Pan-German movement.

At the end of the meeting, Gebsattel framed the new ideology in simple terms. The Jews were to be used as a “lightning rod” (Blitzableiter), as scapegoats for all Germany’s problems. Claß announced his sympathy for the rhetoric of violent anti-Semitism when he quoted Heinrich von Kleist’s reference to the French during the Napoleonic Wars: “beat them to death, God

¹⁶⁵ See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 13 September 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 120, 22b and also Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 51-56.
¹⁶⁶ See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19/20 October 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 121, 75-76.
Lehmann gave expression to the same sentiments, which anticipated the stab-in-the-back-legend (Dolchstoßlegende): “Who broke the back of the German people? The Jews and the Jewish press. They have destroyed the belief of the home front (Heimat) and then they eroded the military at the front. The Volk senses that, but who has the guts to say the truth?”

Claß himself embodied the radicalization of Pan-German anti-Semitism. However, sentiment in the organization remained more cautious. Joerges, the chairman of the Gau Mecklenburg, argued that anti-Semitism did not represent a consensus in German society and that adopting it publicly would work in favor of the Pan-Germans political opponents. Of the movement in Mecklenburg he added that it “in fact has Jews in its rank and file in Mecklenburg and these are very precious to me.”

Lehmann advocated secret management of the issue, while Lohmann thought it wise to found an anti-Semitic association outside of the Pan-German League. Jacobsen, too, demanded that the League stay in the background. Lucius was convinced that the “Jewish question” should be tackled now through cooperation with existing anti-Semitic associations. Meanwhile, support for Claß and Gebsattel came from anti-Semitic activists like Werner and the leading representative of the Agrarian League in Hessen, Franz von Bodelschwingh-Schwarzenhasel. Claß’s violent rhetoric reflected in any case the aggressive

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167 The original minutes contained in Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19/20 October 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 121, 55-76 do not represent an extended version of the meeting’s minutes, which includes Claß’s quote. Yet see copy of the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19/20 October 1918, FZH [copy order number 65008851, page 44b]. Also quoted in Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 76. For the Kleist reference see also Georg Minde-Pouet (ed.), Heinrich von Kleist: Germania und ihre Kinder (1809) (Leipzig: Gesellschaft der Freunde der Deutschen Bücherei, 1918).
170 Statement Deutschbund, 31 October 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 252, 38; statement Julius Lehmann, 19 November 1918, in ibidem, 80; statement Landgerichtsdirektor Lohmann, 31 October 1918, in ibidem, 39; and statement Alfred Jacobsen, 2 November 1918, in ibidem, 37.
171 Statement Ferdinand Werner, 18 November 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 252, 41 and Alfred Roth to Hauptleitung des ADV, 18 January 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 252, 70. See also Friedrich von Bodelschwingh [to August
attitudes of many leading Pan-Germans, who at the end of the war felt increasingly threatened by political changes that they had feared for decades and were not able to prevent.

The turn to anti-Semitism at the end of the war also signified the processing of an ideological crisis in the League, which was met by the radicalization of the League’s program and the redirection of their ideological tools. Neither colonial expansion abroad nor territorial acquisitions in central Europe had turned out to be viable means to overcome the limitations of the German nation. As the prospect of foreign expansion crumbled late in the war, Pan-Germans were forced to turn their attention to domestic politics and the dynamics of dissent that followed the collapse of the *Burgfrieden*. In the increasing political struggle against reformers, pacifists, liberals, Socialists, Communists, and bourgeois advocates of a compromise peace, the specter of encirclement by what used to be called the “enemies of the state” increased. As a marker of belonging, ethnicity was to be sharpened by the exclusion of German Jews. The trauma for the Pan-Germans was the breaking apart of their own ideological assumptions about a coherent *Volksgemeinschaft* at the end of the war, which they interpreted as a result of the threats posed by cultural and political “enemies” that they had bemourned before the war, and anti-Jewish sentiment was their means to make sense of the fast erosion of authority in Germany.¹⁷² The ideology of a German *Volk* demanded that the collapse of the *Volksgemeinschaft* to be explained in light of treachery and infiltration by outsiders into German society.

¹⁷² See also Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, „’Protestantische Traumatisierungen:´ Zur Situationsanalyse nationaler Mentalitäten in Deutschland 1918/19 und 1945/46,” in Manfred Gailus and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *Nationalprotestantische Mentalitäten in Deutschland 1870-1970* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 45-80.
During the war the Pan-Germans sought to understand a German polity that could not be reduced to a coherent Volkswille. As their own estrangement from the people continued, the Pan-Germans’ alienation from the government intensified to the point that the Pan-Germans denied the authority of the parliament, the Chancellor, and the Emperor. Pan-Germans believed that they themselves were the last champions of radical nationalism, the “last men of achievement and character.” When the Burgfrieden yielded to the authority of the Supreme Command, the situation might have provided the conditions to craft the civil-military dictatorship that the Pan-Germans had foreseen on the eve of the war. Yet they had come to realize that neither was the Emperor willing to listen to them, nor was the military powerful or coherent enough to let the Pan-Germans shape public opinion. Claß complained to Bethmann Hollweg in 1915 that the Chancellor treated “politically educated German men not only like infants,” but “even expect[ed] trust from them, for which there is no legitimate basis.”173

More difficult for the Pan-Germans was the unwillingness of the Emperor to listen to them. The Pan-Germans had hoped to exercise decisive influence and power during the war. Several Pan-German petitions advised the monarch in matters of military planning and domestic reform, but they were declined. In November 1914, when Claß asked for a personal interview with the Emperor to talk about preserving the Habsburg Empire, the Foreign Office replied that a meeting was not possible and that future petitions should be sent directly to the Foreign Office.174 Intervention through mediators remained standard procedure for the Pan-Germans, but their failure to reach the Emperor deepened their frustration. In October 1915 leading Pan-Germans discussed how the nationalist associations could find their way to the Emperor by organizing

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broad support among politicians, including the members of parliament like Bassermann, Ernst von Heydebrand und der Lasa, and the National Liberal Paul Fuhrmann, who joined the Pan-German League’s executive council in 1916. On 28 October 1915, after Salm-Horstmar reported about his failure to talk to the Emperor, Claß submitted another petition to the emperor and the chancellor. In January 1916, leading Pan-Germans again complained to the Emperor, who seemed not to be interested in their interventions:

As convinced believers in the monarchical tradition and the erection of a strong kingdom, we want to prevent the monarchy from turning into a shadow-monarchy; since this will be the necessary result of the high office of the German Kaiser if parliamentary government is introduced in the German Empire. And that it will be introduced, if all ruling institutions – the bourgeois, as well as the Marxist – start to rule, goes without saying.

The Pan-Germans’ frustration became increasingly public. In January 1918 Pezoldt, Lohmann, and the League’s professor at Berlin’s Technical University, Max Kloß, signed still another petition to the Emperor, which had been crafted by the Independent Committee for a German Peace together with the Agrarian League, to demand changes in the imperial court and the government. Ten thousand copies of this petition were printed, and the Pan-German chapter in Berlin alone distributed a thousand. The more the Emperor retreated and the more the military assumed control of a government deemed not radical enough in its war aim politics, the more the Pan-Germans felt themselves encircled by oppositional forces. So they concluded that the most critical “enemy of the Reich” was the government itself.

The relationship between the Pan-Germans and the Chancellor was no less complicated. In the Pan-Germans’ eyes, Bethmann Hollweg was the most important proponent of a limited war.

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177 Quoted in Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 1.2.
and a compromise peace. They interpreted their own public isolation as the result of the government’s policies, which made them feel as if they, not the Social Democrats or the Catholics were the prime “enemies of the state. The Pan-Germans constructed a dichotomy between “System A” (Alldeutsche) and a “System B” (Bethmann Hollweg). Their publications emphasized the cleavage between the Pan-German way of politics and the weak, indecisive regime of the chancellor. The government was unpatriotic and incompetent. Bethmann Hollweg, in return, called the nationalist extraparliamentary associations and their activists “pirates of public opinion” in 1916.\(^{179}\)

Prior to the chancellor’s outcry, which underlined the difficulties his government faced from nationalist agitators, the Pan-Germans had published a pamphlet by Sontag, which predicted the end of Bethmann’s Chancellorship in the near future.\(^{180}\) Hans von Liebig accompanied the attack on Bethmann Hollweg’s “politics of the diagonal” with additional publications.\(^{181}\) In the summer of 1915, Lehmann reminded members of the executive committee that the fall of Bethmann Hollweg and the replacement of his cabinet was the prime concern, which the Pan-German League should focus on.\(^{182}\) Claß agreed but emphasized the importance of indirectly influencing the government’s opinion by increasing the League’s public presence. Claß believed that Bethmann Hollweg, the Chief of the General Staff Erich von Falkenhayn, the Chief of the Naval Cabinet Admiral Georg von Müller, and the Chief of the Civil Cabinet Rudolf von


\(^{180}\) Franz Sontag (Pseudonym: Junius Alter), Das Reich auf dem Weg zur geschichtlichen Episode (1916). See also Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch 1.1.


\(^{182}\) Lehmann at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12 June 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 100, 12.
Valentini would all block petitions addressed to the Emperor.\textsuperscript{183} The refusal of the Emperor to listen to extraparliamentary advisory bodies like the Pan-German league was the real “tragedy” for Claß, who still believed in the powerful position of the monarchy as the prime institution for political decision-making.\textsuperscript{184} When Salm-Horstmar met with the Empress Queen Victoria Augusta on 15 October 1915, she assured him that everyone at the Emperor’s court thought like the Pan-Germans, but that because of ill health and the stress of war, neither the Empress nor the Emperor was able to speak to the Pan-Germans about politics.\textsuperscript{185}

The Pan-Germans found similar reticence among the other monarchies of the German states. Even König Ludwig III of Bavaria and the Duke Friedrich August of Oldenburg, who viewed the Pan-German League with favor, were reluctant to provide support. King Ludwig III told leading members of the League that he was helpless to persuade the Emperor to change the political course of Bethmann Hollweg’s government, while the Duke of Oldenburg denied Pan-Germans access to his court in March 1916.\textsuperscript{186} In May 1916 Claß nonetheless called on the state governments to intervene at the federal level to promote Pan-German war aims, since the German states were paying for the war.\textsuperscript{187} The states were not receptive to these interventions as Pan-German propaganda reportedly caused headaches for the Bavarian Minister President, Georg Graf von Hertling.\textsuperscript{188} The Pan-Germans thus concluded that “regardless of military successes the Imperial ship is sailing toward the cliffs without a commanding leadership by the captain,” as Gebsattel put it.\textsuperscript{189} They increasingly feared that an “incredible war weariness,” and an

\begin{footnotes}
\item[183] Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4 September 1915, BA-B, R 8048, Vol. 101, 10.
\item[188] Schoen to Jagow, 1 August 1916, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes IA Deutschland 169, R 2560, vol. 7, No. 16379.
\end{footnotes}
“oppressive democratic mood” was spreading through the country and that revolution might result if Germany did not get comprehensive territorial gains.\textsuperscript{190} They feared that the breakdown of domestic consensus was discouraging the common soldier at the front. According to Claß, “a Volk that did not gain anything else at the end except heavy tax burdens and deep mental disgruntlement about the uselessness of the great efforts pursued and the bloody sacrifices made, has to end in a state of tension, which would result in subversive political experiments at the first best occasion.”\textsuperscript{191}

Unrestricted submarine warfare offered hope. Pan-Germans like Sontag believed that the success of restricted submarine warfare against Great Britain during 1915 indicated that it would be possible to bring the British economy to its knees. To Claß, unrestricted submarine warfare represented the “twelfth hour.”\textsuperscript{192} Accordingly, the Pan-Germans called for the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare in 1916.\textsuperscript{193} The dismissal of the popular supporter of unrestricted submarine warfare and “father of Germany’s navy” from the naval command, Alfred Tirpitz, in March 1916, however, brought about fierce opposition from the radical Right.\textsuperscript{194} Gebsattel hoped that the public outcry over the dismissal, which the Pan-Germans helped orchestrate, would result in the public isolation of Bethmann Hollweg.\textsuperscript{195} Sympathies for Tirpitz as the “father of the navy” led nearly fifty chapters of the Pan-German League (48 out of 255) to send telegrams to Tirpitz voicing disappointment about his dismissal.\textsuperscript{196} Chairmen of chapters in Cologne, Hamburg, Halle, and Speyer personally communicated their support, as did representatives of other of

\textsuperscript{190} Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6/7 February 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 98, 14 and 18; Gebsattel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12 June 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 100, 11.
\textsuperscript{191} Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12 June 1915, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 100, 9.
\textsuperscript{192} Claß at the meeting of the chapter in Lübeck on 2 February 1917, quoted in Lübeckische Nachrichten, 3 February 1917.
\textsuperscript{193} Sontag at the Württemberg Gautag of the Pan-German League, 4 June 1916, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 475, 16.
\textsuperscript{194} Tirpitz to Wilhelm II, 12 March 1916, BA-F, N 253, vol. 179, 11.
\textsuperscript{195} Scheck, Alfred von Tirpitz, 41.
\textsuperscript{196} „Inhaltsverzeichnis Mappen II,” n.d. [1916], BA-K N 253, vol. 71, 1.
nationalist associations, such as the Colonial Society, the Navy League, the German Defense League, the Association for the Germandom Abroad, and the Agrarian League. The parallels between Tirpitz’s dismissal and Bismarck’s were transparent. Because of his symbolic status, Tirpitz had immense potential to mobilize opposition to the government. The founder of the German navy and the champion of unrestricted submarine warfare became a hero overnight.

Meanwhile, however, the situation seemed to deteriorate. The Central Powers offered peace negotiations in 12 December 1916. Unrestricted submarine warfare followed early in 1917, but it only brought the United States into the war. In March 1917 Erzberger initiated a peace resolution of the parliament, calling for negotiations and a moderate peace. On 19 July 1917 the peace resolution passed in the parliament, after Bethmann Hollweg resigned as Chancellor. The majority parties, the Social Democrats, the Center Party, and the Progressive Liberal Party, were already in accord over the abolition of the three-tier voting system in Prussia and other German states. Interparty talks had already begun one week earlier, after the Emperor agreed to the so-called Easter Resolution (Osterbotschaft) on 7 April 1917, promising democratic reforms after the war. The Emperor’s concessions to democratic reform were the last straw. Claß had warned Wilhelm II in May 1917 that monarchy was the only true basis of power (Volksherrschertum) and that debate over constitutional reform would undermine the position of the “educated and propertied sectors in the Fatherland.” Political revolution now seemed more imminent than ever, and with it the end of the monarchical order and Prussia’s class-based electoral voting system. Meanwhile, Wilhelm II was increasingly absent-minded at the military’s headquarters in Spa. Claß was furious over Wilhelm’s “silly games” when he received secret information that the Emperor was nerveously killing time by starring at a large military map and mumbling to himself.

197 See Scheck, Alfred von Tirpitz, 35-64.
as he proudly placed needles on the map of the current European frontlines, marking all the military places that he had visited so far.\textsuperscript{199}

The Pan-Germans hoped to forestall the eventuality of revolution by means of military success. When the public restrictions on the war-aims debate were lifted in November 1916, the Pan-Germans prepared for a comprehensive propaganda campaign. On 15 May 1917, Claß was informed that the ban on his own war-aims declaration from the fall of 1914 had been lifted.\textsuperscript{200} He was pleased that the document could now be distributed “in masses.” By July 1917 more than 10,000 copies had been distributed; by November 1917 the figure stood at 30,000.\textsuperscript{201} It was part of a massive Pan-German propaganda effort. Max von Grapow, who served as member of the League’s executive committee, sent his lecture on “Freedom of the Seas after the War” to the press office of the Naval Staff on 3 July 1917.\textsuperscript{202} Pan-Germans provided a counter-literature to USPD pamphlets, which circulated widely in the fall of 1917, especially among sailors in the German ports where mutinies had occurred in the late summer.

The League had expanded its media network during the war, which could be used at the end of the war to tackle the League’s opponents. In 1917, the League had founded a \textit{Neudeutsche Verlags- und Treuhandgesellschaft m.b.H. Berlin}, which became one of the biggest investment projects undertaken by leading Pan-Germans designed to provide the radical nationalist camp with its own newspaper. The \textit{Verlagsgesellschaft} founded in January 1917, was to combine Pan-German media enterprises in a single company after considerable amounts of money (about 500,000 Mark) were channeled to the League from representatives of the coal and steel

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{199} See Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, chs 1.2 and 2.8.
\item \textsuperscript{200} Bücking to Claß, 15 May 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 635, 561 [incorrect page count, old pagina 730].
\item \textsuperscript{201} Claß, \textit{Zum deutschen Kriegsziel}. See also Claß to Bang, 14 July 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 287, 49; Lehmann to Claß, 2 August 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 636, 68; and Lehmann to Claß, 2 November 1917, in Ibidem, 100. When Lehmann checked his books in 1927, “due to insignificant interest” some 3,600 copies were still left of the last edition, which Claß then attempted to buy with the limited funds of the Pan-German League. See J.F. Lehmann’s Verlag to Claß, 19 June 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 636, 113 and Lehmann to Claß, 14 July 1927, in Ibidem, 114.
\item \textsuperscript{202} See Deist, \textit{Militärische Innenpolitik}, 898.
\end{itemize}
industry. Its chief supporters included Fritz Hopfen, Rittergutsbesitzer Richard Pretzell, Neumann, and Jacobsen, together with other initial investors like the Berlin industrialist Ernst von Borsig and the industrialist Hirsch brothers from Essen. The Deutsche Zeitung, which Claß helped acquire from Friedrich Lange in the spring of 1917, was financed using almost 2 million Mark of capital from of the Verlagsgesellschaft, whose supervisory board aspired to raise its equity share capital from 3 to staggering 7 million Mark already in the late fall of 1917. The Deutsche Zeitung developed into one of the most important daily newspapers of the radical Right during the war, with Claß and Hopfen on its editorial board. It was no surprise that the newspaper was banned several times in 1917 and 1918.

The League’s media expansion was complicated as the League struggled to maintain its solvency during the war, as members of the executive committee and the extended head committee sought ways to refill the treasury. Kirdorf approved the transfer of 50,000 Mark from the “Bismarckdank” foundation to Claß, who spent the funds at his own discretion. The “Bismarckdank” was created in 1914 as an additional Pan-German foundation to collect funds for the 100th anniversary of Bismarck’s birthday on 1 April 1915. Hugenberg, Kirdorf, Klingemann, Schäfer, Grumme-Douglas, Gebsattel, Wangenheim, Reichstag deputy Hugo Böttger, as well as the bankers Karl Deichmann, Kommerzienrat Hasenclever, and Kommerzienrat Pintsch were among those who Claß considered suitable to serve on the foundation’s supervisory committee.

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203 See Krebs, „Der Alldeutsche Verband,” 15. See also BA-B, N 2089, vol. 6, 156.
Kirdorf usually served as the central figure in all these financial enterprises.\textsuperscript{209} It was also him who initiated the fundraising campaign at the beginning of 1916 that allowed the League to move its headquarters to Berlin.\textsuperscript{210}

These collections allowed for a major expansion of the Pan-German League into the nationalist media market. The money that Salm-Horstmar collected from Ruhr industrialists and magnates from Bavaria until the summer of 1916 to help the foundation of a national party was used to extend the Pan-German media market once the foundation of a party was dismissed. The \textit{Deutschlands Erneuerung} and the acquisition of the \textit{Deutsche Zeitung} in 1917 were the two major purchases. \textit{Deutschlands Erneuerung}, which was printed and distributed by Lehmann’s publishing house in Munich, was aimed at the core constituencies of the Pan-German League: the well-educated \textit{Bürgertum} and the middle classes. Lehmann considered the paper his “best weapon.”\textsuperscript{211} The mélange of right-wing intellectuals and politicians spoke to Pan-German efforts to establish a journal that appealed to a broad, educated readership. The editors were the well-known Pan-Germans Chamberlain, Below, Claß, Schwerin, Gruber, Martin Schiele from the Agrarian League, Kapp, and Seeberg. This coalition of political activists and \textit{Gelehrtenpolitiker} had as their objective to fight “anything un-German in law, science, art, press, and sociability (\textit{Geselligkeit}).”\textsuperscript{212}

While the editorship of the \textit{Deutsche Zeitung} aimed at the popularization of Pan-German ideas, \textit{Deutschlands Erneuerung} signaled an intellectual retreat into the discursive realm of high-culture nationalism and radical racism. Intellectual contortions like Chamberlain’s attempt to

define a specific German manner (Art) of thinking.\textsuperscript{213} That Ludendorff asked for more than 18,000 copies of the first issue to be distributed within higher military circles underlined the political influence ascribed by its publishers to the new monthly.\textsuperscript{214} The paper showed some respectable sales numbers. During the first year of its existence, \textit{Deutschlands Erneuerung} counted 3,800 private subscribers and 500 newsstand sellers.\textsuperscript{215} The success of the paper, however, remained modest over the years, although it had acquired some reputation among Weimar’s right-wing politicians and intellectuals. In addition to Lehmann, Hugenberg’s media business developed into another important staple of the League’s media presence since the war. His media empire included a variety of news agencies, which were founded between 1914 and 1917, such as the \textit{Auslands-Anzeigen GmbH} the \textit{Deutscher Überseedienst}, the \textit{August-Scherl Verlag}, the \textit{Deutsche Lichtbild-Gesellschaft"}, and the \textit{VERA Verlagsgesellschaft}, which had been founded as an alternative press agency to publish nationalist news uncensored by the military, although the censorship ban had been lifted in 1916. These enterprises represented the foundation of Hugenberg’s massive takeover of bankrupt newspapers during the Weimar Republic.

The League was well-equipped to enter the propaganda war between the Pan-Germans and the Social Democrats that was now underway in 1917. When the Social Democrats announced their own peace resolution on 21 April 1917, the Pan-German League called on its chapters to organize public demonstrations, in order to show the allies and neutral powers that the Socialist resolution did not represent either the majority or the common spirit of Germans.\textsuperscript{216} At the meeting of the executive committee on 14 July 1917, Claß announced that the hope of turning


\textsuperscript{215} Lehmann to Claß, 30 August 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 366, 90.

\textsuperscript{216} „An die Ortsgruppen-Vorstände und Vertrauensmänner des Alldeutschen Verbandes,” 25 April 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 628, 9-10 and \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 5 May 1917.
the Social Democratic Party into a “national party” had disappeared because of the Russian Revolution. “There will be very unpleasant struggles,” he predicted, given the “unbearable rise of the power consciousness of the Social Democrats.” Friedrich Ebert confirmed this fear when he spoke in Hamburg in November 1917 about the danger of capitalism and war, which “the Pan-Germans” had backed as “reactionaries” and “support troops of the Conservatives.” By the time of this speech, all advocates of a victorious war were commonly labeled “Pan-Germans” to highlight the discontent over the Pan-Germans’ cultural nationalism. The celebrations of the 400th anniversary of the Reformation in 1917 gave the Pan-Germans a further opportunity for propaganda, now against transnational Catholicism, as well as against the Russian Revolution and any other form of internationalist Socialism. For Klingemann and Below, the revolutionary combination of religious renewal and national consciousness still represented the foundation of a collective German spirit.

However, the Pan-Germans seemed increasingly isolated. In October 1916, their parliamentary ally, the National Liberals, agreed to join a standing committee with the majority parties to discuss foreign policy with the government. On 29 March 1917, Stresemann – a devoted member of the Pan-German League for years - himself proposed the establishment of a committee to consider a constitution. These political advances by the National Liberals toward the government and the political left brought the Pan-Germans increasingly at odds with their former political ally. Although he was a committed imperialist who favored territorial and economic expansion through war, Stresemann now saw the political system of Germany as

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218 Friedrich Ebert speech (duplicate) in Hamburg, 23 November 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 342, 2 and 3.
obsolete and foresaw that democratic sentiment would dominate after the war.\textsuperscript{220} When Stresemann left the Pan-German League in the spring of 1918, he called on his fellow party-members to leave the League as well, which resulted in a sharp exchange of words.\textsuperscript{221} Bacmeister denounced his National Liberal colleague Stresemann as deserving “mistrust,” while Claß spoke of the “general erosion” of the National Liberal Party, which itself needed reform.\textsuperscript{222}

The disappointment over domestic developments added to the frustration of the radical Right as it tried to meet the challenges of pacifists, liberals, Socialists, and Catholics. So another project became more attractive. In August 1915, Hopfen had originally approached Claß about founding a national party that would bring together the Pan-German League with the other major nationalist associations; and in May 1916 Gebsattel had made a similar proposal.\textsuperscript{223} The idea of gathering all nationalist associations and parties into one great party had in fact been considered off and on since the foundation of the Pan-German League itself. Claß himself favored such plans, not the least because the budget of the Pan-German League was in difficulty.\textsuperscript{224}

A first attempt revolved around creating a “German Volk Council” (\textit{Deutscher Volksrat}), which aimed to unify all the nationalist associations under Pan-German leadership. Although some seventy nationalist leaders agreed in the summer of 1916 to form the Council, Johann Albrecht of Mecklenburg-Schwerin declined the invitation and Tirpitz also turned down the offer when Claß approached him on 1 August 1916.\textsuperscript{225} Their refusals laid bare the limitations of cooperation among the nationalist associations. Still, the Pan-German executives did not give up the idea of founding a national party. Claß persisted in his efforts to get Mecklenburg-Schwerin

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{221} See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 29 June 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 119, 9.
\textsuperscript{222} See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 13 April 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 118, 11-12.
\textsuperscript{224} See for the following Hagenlücke, \textit{Deutsche Vaterlandspartei}, 90-101.
\textsuperscript{225} Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 1.4.
\end{footnotesize}
to take the lead, but the duke remained skeptical of an enterprise that aimed to unite all nationalist associations.\footnote{See Hagenlücke, Deutsche Vaterlandsparthei, 107-109.}

In the end Wolfgang Kapp, not the Pan-Germans, gathered the political Right in the German Fatherland Party in September 1917. As a \textit{Landschaftsdirektor} in East Prussia, Kapp had published a pamphlet in 1916 that criticized the government’s decision to retreat from unrestricted submarine warfare.\footnote{Wolfgang Kapp, „Die nationalen Kreise und der Reichskanzler. Denkschrift,” 20 May 1916, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 403, 1-4 and the manuscript BA-F, N 253, vol. 450, 1-26. See also Idem, “Zur Frage des Abschlusses eines Separatfriedens mit Russland unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der von Deutschland zu stellenden handelspolitischen Forderungen,” 13 February 1915, BA-F, N 253, vol. 440, 2-54.} During preliminary negotiations over the Fatherland Party, leading activists in the war-aims movement, among them Schäfer, Wangenheim, Tirpitz, and Franz Ferdinand Eiffe, endorsed Kapp’s activities and made him the leader of an organization that represented the last attempt of the nationalist Right to organize mass opposition during the war. Tirpitz and Mecklenburg-Schwerin became the honorary chairmen of the party. After their own disappointments with these two figures, the Pan-Germans had cause to distrust the Fatherland Party. In the event, mutual suspicion and rivalries clouded relations between the two organizations.

The Fatherland Party was to be open to all social classes and political milieux. Tirpitz made it clear that the Fatherland Party only sought to assist a future government win a victorious peace.\footnote{Tirpitz to Krupp von Bohlen, 1 October 1917, BA-K, N 1231, vol. 29, 197.} Like the Independent Committee for a German Peace, the Fatherland Party did not frame a detailed program for domestic politics, other than denouncing democratic reform, and it only advocated a military victory that would ensure territorial expansion. The new party soon had 800,000 individual and corporative members (the party officially claimed a membership of 1.2
million), but it could not reshape the radical Right from its elitist politics of notables or mobilize a mass constituency among workers, Catholics, or liberal regions of Southern Germany.229

The Pan-Germans agreed with the goals of the Fatherland Party, but cooperation among nationalist associations was principally pragmatic. The Pan-German League was not involved in the party´s foundation, although Claß, Below, and Schäfer became members of its smaller executive council (Engerer Ausschuss). Hugenberg donated 1,000 Mark, and Kirdorf was a principal source of funding.230 Nevertheless, Claß was disappointed. His complaint was that the party had organized independently of him, almost behind his back. He lamented that preliminary agreements that he had made with Kapp about the composition of the executive council had been rejected. Only if the party followed the “politics of character” would he provide significant support from the Pan-German League.231

With Kapp and Tirpitz in charge of the party´s activities, conflict with the Pan-Germans was rife. Pan-Germans were ignored or forced out of positions of authority. When Kapp spoke to prominent members of the Fatherland Party in Munich in November 1917, Hopfen complained that he, Liebig, and Lehmann had not been invited.232 Tirpitz fired Eiffe from an administrative position in March 1918, because he thought that Eiffe would represent the interests of Claß.233 The Bremen banker and war-aims activist Andreas Gildemeister, who was in touch with the Pan-German League, complained about Tirpitz’s meeting with workers and liberal groups. In fact, the propaganda office of the party stressed that it was open to left-wing speakers and would attempt to reach the masses.234 Furthermore, disputes about Tirpitz’s welcoming Jews as members made it difficult for the Pan-Germans to support the party, while they themselves were considering

229 See Hagenlücke, Deutsche Vaterlandspartei, 164-192.
233 F.F. Eiffe to Tirpitz, 5 February 1918, BA-F, N 253, vol. 62, 82-83. See also Scheck, Alfred von Tirpitz, 70-71.
234 Hagenlücke, Deutsche Vaterlandspartei, 175-179.
going public with anti-Semitism. In addition, Tirpitz’s belief that the Anglo-German conflict was central to the war conflicted with the position of the majority of the Pan-German leadership, which was convinced that annexations in eastern Europe were more essential than the subjugation of the British Empire. For their own part, Kapp and Tirpitz were eager to advertise their independence of Pan-German influence. Advertisements in the Navy League’s monthly *Die Flotte* announced that “We are neither Conservative nor liberal, neither agrarian nor are we representing the heavy industry, we are neither Defense League nor Pan-German.”235 Because the Fatherland Party attempted to unite instead of divide, association with the Pan-German would have undermined its putative mass appeal. Below the surface, however, there was a degree of institutional cooperation between the Fatherland Party and the Pan-German League. The League’s chapter in Burg, for instance, reported the foundation of a chapter of the Fatherland Party had not prevented members from joining the Pan-German League. After a lecture by Ernst Oberfohren at the meeting of the Pan-German chapter in Saltau in Holstein, membership cards were distributed for the Pan-German League as well as for the Fatherland Party.236 Leading Pan-Germans directed the Fatherland Party in places like Tübingen, where the chairman of the Pan-German League, the law professor Philipp von Heck, was chairman of the Württemberg Landesverband of the party.237

Cross-affiliations like these were common all over Germany. The pattern of the Fatherland Party’s mobilization was different, though. The Fatherland Party was especially successful east of the Elbe. The mobilizational success of the Fatherland Party corresponded to the strongholds of both the German Society of the Eastern Marches and the Agrarian League, on the one hand, and the Pan-German League on the other. The party’s strongholds were

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235 *Die Flotte* 12/20 (December 1917).
236 *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 5 August 1918 and 10 August 1918.
237 *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 10 August 1918.
concentrated in Pomerania, Saxony, East Prussia, and Silesia, as well as in the Duchy of Lippe and Westphalia. The Pan-German League, on the other hand, had been very weak in East and West Prussia, Pomerania, Posen, Silesia, Brandenburg, and Mecklenburg-Schwerin. However, the radicalization of nationalist politics during the second half of the war had driven the expansion of the Pan-German League, too, into almost all of Germany, especially into the provinces east of the Elbe that had been reserved mostly for the Agrarian League in the past. These gains of support in the east were certainly boosted by the rise of the Fatherland Party, but the League was able to enforce its inroads into the mobilization market of the radical Right in its traditional strongholds in Central Prussia such as Westphalia and in the south-eastern periphery of Thuringia and Saxony. Even Bavaria witnessed a significant increase of Pan-German local chapters – a phenomenon, however, that would not last after the war.

The Pan-German League witnessed an immense success of its mobilization offensive that the executive committee started in the spring of 1915. The League’s membership grew from about 17,000 in 1914 to 36,903 in 1918. The rise in membership took place in small towns as well as in big cities. The chapter in Wismar, for instance, was founded in August 1916 and increased its membership within four weeks to 62, making Wismar the second largest chapter in Mecklenburg; only Rostock counted more members. The chapter in Frankfurt am Main increased from 78 in 1914 to more than 200 in 1916, and it organized massive cultural and political celebrations, like the Sonnenwendfeier in June 1916, which attracted some 2,000 people. The chapter Stuttgart almost doubled its membership from 107 in 1915 to 206 in

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238 See Hagenlücke, Deutsche Vaterlandspartei, 180-187 and appendix Figure 5.
239 See appendix Figure 6.
240 See appendix Figure 1.
242 See Alldutsche Blätter, 4 March 1916 and 15 July 1916.
1916.\textsuperscript{243} In Hamburg the number increased from 605 in 1914 to 1,200 in 1918, while the chapter in Dresden organized 598 members in 1918 compared to 307 in 1913.\textsuperscript{244}

Paradoxically, in view of the tensions between the organizations, the rise of the Fatherland Party helped the Pan-German chapters to increase their presence in provincial strongholds in Westphalia and Hannover, the Hessian principalities, Thuringia, and Saxony. The chapter in Hannover, for instance, had 300 members in early 1918, Darmstadt counted 200 in the summer of 1918, Chemnitz increased its membership between the beginning of 1917 and the summer of 1918 by more than 100 members to 304, while even the smaller chapters, like the one in Eilenburg near Halle, increased its membership from 12 in 1917 to 129 in October 1918.\textsuperscript{245}

As the territorial acquisitions that followed the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty sparked a new wave of nationalist sentiment among Germany’s Bürgertum, the Pan-Germans mobilized chapters in eastern Germany, especially in Brandenburg, Silesia, Pomerania, and East Prussia. The chapter in Potsdam had a stable membership of 115 in early November 1918, and the membership in Danzig increased from 50 in 1915 to 500 in February 1918, including a women group (Frauengruppe), which itself counted 164 members in December 1916.\textsuperscript{246} Pomerania became a Gau in the winter of 1916, as new chapters were founded in Greifenhagen, Kolberg, Köslin, Neugard, and Rummelsburg.\textsuperscript{247} The chapter in Posen, which had been unsuccessful before the war despite Hugenberg’s activities during his service for the Prussian Settlement Agency, was refounded in 1917 and counted 185 members in August 1918.\textsuperscript{248} Eastern Germany, which had been the terrain of the Agrarian League and the German Society for the Eastern Marches, became more attractive to the Pan-Germans, as they started to compete with these

\textsuperscript{243} Wenck, Alldeutsche Taktik, 28.
\textsuperscript{244} See appendix Figure 3.
\textsuperscript{245} Alldeutsche Blätter, 16 February 1918, 15 June 1918, 8 June 1918 and 12 October 1918.
\textsuperscript{246} Alldeutsche Blätter, 8 June 1918, 2 February 1918, and 2 December 1916.
\textsuperscript{247} Alldeutsche Blätter, 10 February 1917.
\textsuperscript{248} Alldeutsche Blätter, 17 February 1917 and 10 August 1918.
organizations east of the Elbe. The right-wing *Sammlungspolitik* of the Fatherland Party clearly benefited the Pan-German League in the Prussian fringes of the Empire.\(^{249}\)

Although a lack of coordination in the local chapters and a lack of personnel troubled the League since the early days of the war, the League’s mobilization of public attention had been successful. Public halls rented for the lectures often could not contain the audiences that showed up. At the beginning of 1918, for instance, some five hundred guests came to hear Liebert’s lectures in Neubrandenburg and Göttingen on the current political and military situation. A thousand people showed up in Hamburg and twelve hundred in Berlin when Bacmeister lectured on the war and Germany’s future.\(^{250}\) In Stuttgart, Tilsit, Danzig, and Constance, attendance was large, and when Claß lectured in Königsberg on the war in early November 1918, four hundred people turned out.\(^{251}\) Like the Pan-German success, the mobilization of members in more than 2,000 chapters of the Fatherland Party all over Germany revealed the radical nationalist potential in German society.

Tirpitz and Kapp used this potential and employed tactics of “public agitation and intrigue” to persuade leading political and military leaders, like Hindenburg and Ludendorff, to go against the government in pushing for total warfare. This kind of “backdoor politics” entailed the possibility of a dictatorship, which Pan-Germans naturally found attractive.\(^{252}\) The issue of dictatorship had always been a part of Pan-German political plans, and the concept gained importance toward the end of the war. As early as the spring of 1915, Gebsattel had spoken of dictatorship as the last option to tame the democratic movement by force. He thought of Tirpitz, Falkenhayn, and General von Bissing as prime candidates for leading posts.\(^{253}\) Claß attempted to

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\(^{249}\) See Hagenlüke, *Deutsche Vaterlandspartei*, 294-304.
\(^{250}\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 25 February 1918 and 18 May 1918.
\(^{251}\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 2 November 1918.
\(^{252}\) Scheck, *Alfred von Tirpitz*, 35-64 and 82.
organize a civil-military dictatorship in the fall of 1917, but he was no more successful than in
establishing personal contact with the Emperor. In October 1917, he met with Ludendorff and
Max Bauer in Bad Kreuznach. Here he proposed a “cabinet in uniform.” Hugenberg was to
become responsible for the economic management of the country, Neumann from Lübeck was to
be made minister of the interior, and Lohmann was to be minister of justice. Several days later
Claß spoke with Bauer about the political situation and the possibility of a dictatorship, who
supported Claß’s plans, but these plans came to nothing, however, after Bauer was dismissed.

After Ludendorff himself resigned on 26 October 1918, Claß was furious and
“heartbroken” over the realization that a dictatorship was now out of reach. After the war,
however, he learned that General Hugo Karl Gottlieb von Kathen, who commanded the Eighth
Army in Riga, had pushed for Claß to become the political advisor to Hindenburg at the end of
the war. Hindenburg evidently rejected the idea, not wanting an advisor who was known to be so
“extreme” in his politics and convictions. Thus the Pan-Germans failed either to install a civil-
military dictatorship or to organize an effective radical nationalist Sammlungsbewegung that went
beyond the complicated relationship with the Fatherland Party. The Fatherland Party never stood
for elections, nor did it bring a halt to the events that led to the revolution on 9 November 1918.

The Fatherland Party, which was dissolved on 2 December 1918, resisted in any event
functioning as a “branch-organization of the Pan-German League,” as Heinz Hagenlücke has
concluded. The radicalism of the Pan-Germans created opportunities for their political
opponents instead. Criticism of Pan-German propaganda found a variety of spokesmen, such as
the Gelehrtenpolitiker who reflected the increasing political divisions in the academic
community. Criticism of radical nationalist Sammlungs politik also came from the liberals in the

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254 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 2.9. See also Kruck, Geschichte des Aldeutschen Verbandes, 104.
255 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 3.14.
256 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 3.14.
257 Hagenlücke, Deutsche Vaterlandspartei, 352.
former National Social Association (*Nationalsozialer Verein*, 1896-1903), which had aspired to unify the working, middle, and aristocratic classes on the basis of democratic and social monarchy. The failure of the Pan-German ideology to promote domestic peace put former National Socials like Max Weber and the pastor Martin Wenck in opposition to the Pan-German League during the war. Weber in particular abandoned the fervent nationalism that had once brought him to the Pan-German League between 1893 and 1899. In November 1917, he referred to the Pan-Germans’ anti-parliamentarianism as an “anxiousness about democracy” on the part of the wealthy and educated bourgeoisie, which, Weber claimed, aimed at the “depoliticization of the Volk.” Wenck portrayed Pan-German activities as manipulative “tactics” to protect a corporate concept of political representation. It became harder for the Pan-Germans by the end of the war to justify their radicalism as a means to secure order and unity, as the war caused increasing social deprivation, political disorder, economic erosion, and diplomatic disasters. Pan-German fears of a “witch hunt” now revealed their feelings of isolation. This isolation only contributed to their aggressive rhetoric and their insecurities.

At the beginning of 1918, Claß thought for a moment about approaching the leaders of the Center Party, the Social Democrats, and the Progressives to discuss the need to fight the war to a victorious end. If this enterprise were to fail, the Pan-Germans could at least point to their

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261 Wenck, *Alldutsche Taktik*.

262 *Alldutsche Blätter*, 3 March 1917.
willingness to negotiate. Hugenberg wished good luck in entering this “lion’s cage.”\textsuperscript{263} In fact, nothing came of the idea. In March 1918, Claß complained again about a “smear campaign against the Pan-Germans,” which prompted him to organize a Pan-German “defense office.”\textsuperscript{264} The Pan-Germans undertook a comprehensive counter-campaign in the right-wing media against politicians and intellectuals who advocated parliamentary reform and a compromise peace. Bethmann Hollweg’s successors, from Georg Michaelis and Hertling to Prinz Max von Baden, were just as reluctant to jeopardize the Burgfrieden and relations with the Supreme Command. When Hertling and Baden oversaw democratic change, the Pan-Germans demanded their immediate dismissal, claiming that they were not legitimate representatives of the Volk. Pan-German opposition also extended to Michaelis, despite the fact that he backed the war aims of the Supreme Command and, therefore, had found sympathy among the Pan-Germans. The Pan-Germans also denounced Richard von Kühlmann, the Foreign Secretary who worked for negotiations with the western powers late in the war, for leading an immoral private life. As a result of charges published in the Deutsche Zeitung against Kühlmann, the Chancellor instituted legal proceedings against Max Lohan, the editor-in-chief, as well as against Dumcke, one of the editors of the Alldeutsche Blätter.\textsuperscript{265} The spectacle prompted the leading representative of the Progressive Party in the parliament, Conrad Haussmann, to fear that the “struggle in Germany is in danger of turning increasingly ugly through Pan-German customs,” which made a scandal of German politics instead of leading rational political debates.\textsuperscript{266}

By the end of the war, the label “Pan-German” had become a marker for any political force that stood against peace, international diplomacy, cultural diversity, and democracy. For the


\textsuperscript{264} Claß to Bang, 12 March 1918, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 287, 90.

\textsuperscript{265} See Berliner Tageblatt, 24 April 1918; Vorwärts, 25 April 1918; Berliner Tageblatt, 4 June 1918; and Frankfurter Zeitung, 5 June 1918.

\textsuperscript{266} Conrad Haussmann, „Der alldeutsche Skandal,” in Berliner Tageblatt, 25 April 1918.
Pan-Germans, on the other hand, all these goals were subsumed under the term “liberalism,” which they regarded as was prime reason for the erosion of the *Burgfrieden*, the failure of territorial expansion, and the November Revolution. Claß used these developments to make broader observations about the relationship of liberalism, democracy, and diplomatic peace. Shortly before the end of the war, he argued again that “domestic freedom and foreign peace are entirely separated from one another” in Pan-German ideology, because “domestic freedom is a condition that results from the specific disposition of a *Volk*; one could say that it developed from its *Weltanschauung*.” The German *Weltanschauung*, German cultural and moral “dispositions,” Claß labelled inherently illiberal.

The First World War was the most significant event in the Pan-German League’s history and the revolution at its end the pivotal moment. The erosion of Germany’s class-based *Volksgemeinschaft* undermined the essential ideological assumption of the Pan-Germans, that cultural and ethnic German community could be established as a territorial and political unit. The triumph of anti-Semitism in Pan-German propaganda at the end of the war was the result of the ideological tension created by political disintegration. The tensions of the war also brought the final break between the Pan-German League and the government, although the schism had deep roots before the war. The Pan-German League increased its contacts with the other nationalist pressure groups, expert councils, and extra-governmental organizations. The restrictions imposed by the *Burgfrieden*, as well as the failure to organize a dictatorship with the help of the Supreme Command, left traumatic memories, which intensified the League’s ideological opposition to the new republic after 1918. The failure of the Fatherland Party to mobilize a genuinely mass constituency added to the frustration of the Pan-Germans as it only underlined that experience of the war demonstrated the limits of extraparliamentary nationalist mobilization. The Pan-Germans

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267 Heinrich Claß, „Wie soll es enden?,” in *Deutsche Zeitung*, 20 August 1918.
learned from the experience and sought to apply the lessons to the radically different political circumstances of post-war Germany, but they remained tied to their limited social constituencies and were overwhelmed by the rise of new radical nationalist movements that sought to reconcile the challenges of mass society and dictatorial rule through determined mass mobilization and broader promises of *Volksgemeinschaft*.
III. Revolution of 1918 and Reorganization of the Pan-German League

The Pan-Germans perceived the collapse of Imperial Germany as a fundamental crisis of order, culture, and authority. They believed that the ideological conflicts that had led to revolution and civil war threatened the very unity of German society. In the aftermath of the revolution of 1918, divisions within Germany were reinforced that had been apparent before 1914 but were disguised by censorship during the war. The Pan-Germans’ concept of war as the supreme means to achieve order and cultural unity had in fact led to disorder, destruction, and, for the Pan-Germans themselves, a heightened sense of traumatic disorientation, which sharpened the group’s collective identity and radicalized its political convictions.

Military defeat and the dissolution of the monarchical order made acute the Pan-Germans’ search for stable social order. They retained the belief that they themselves constituted a political and intellectual vanguard, that they, as Bildungsbürger, were entitled to educate the populace about the dangers of revolution and disunity. Educating the “misguided masses” was the basis of the League’s mission as a national opposition, for the Pan-Germans still saw themselves as experts in providing the necessary “weapons of the mind (geistigen Waffen).” However, this definition of their mission was not only contested in Weimar Germany - it also proved outdated.

Coping with Defeat and Disorder: Revolution as Trauma and Violence

The collapse of Imperial Germany in November 1918 provoked an ideological crisis in the Pan-German League. Although the Burgfrieden was for them nothing more than a shallow peace that had numbed both the state and the nationalist interest groups in their political

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1 See also Ulrich Matz, Politik und Gewalt: Zur Theorie des demokratischen Verfassungsstaates und der Revolution (Freiburg/Munich: Alber, 1975), 8.
3 See also Jeffrey C. Alexander, “Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma,” in Idem et al. (eds.), Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity (Berkeley/London: University of California Press, 2004), 1-30.
4 Alldutsche Blätter, 23 January 1919.
mobilization for the war, while the political Left was able to develop a new front of opposition, the revolution came not as a surprise but as a shock, especially because of the inability of Germany’s Bürgertum to hold up authority and order in the face of revolution.\(^5\) Defeat, revolutionary turmoil, and democratization not only rendered empty the Pan-Germans’ aspirations to expand the German Empire’s territory and to homogenize Germany’s society; they also raised more far-reaching concerns about the Pan-Germans’ claims to lead a radical nationalist opposition.

Instead, their aspirations were overwhelmed in social and political conflict. Claß had to experience his powerlessness in the midst of revolutionary turmoil himself. On the morning of 8 November 1918, he boarded a train to Cologne to attend a meeting in Hesse with Hugenberg, Stinnes, and Kirdorf. During the trip he learned of the proclamations of the Weimar Republic by the Social Democrat Philipp Scheidemann and the Communist Karl Liebknecht. Claß’s account of this experience suggested the deep impression that the disruptions made on him. Arriving in Cologne, he “saw events that are hardly describable.” Soldiers accosted their comrades who wished to return to the front, shouting “The war is over, hand over your weapons, take off your epaulettes!” Civilian boys “fell upon the officers, hung on them, ripped off their epaulettes, seized their side-arms.” It was shocking, Claß wrote, “to see how all the passengers who left their trains let everything happen with them. As far as I was able to see, I did not detect any resistance.”\(^6\) Upon his return to Mainz, Claß wandered the streets to learn “with ruthless clarity where we had arrived. The red flag was fluttering on top of the Rathaus building [...]. The picture was complete.”\(^7\)

\(^5\) Konstantin von Gebsattel, „Ein neuer Burgfriede?,“ in Deutsche Zeitung, 19 August 1918.
\(^6\) Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 3.12.
\(^7\) Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 3.12.
Claß remembered that the “events came thick and fast during the last couple of days that one ran out of breath if one were to follow the events closely.” The plundering of the Supplies Office, the Imperial Tin Factory, and the War Clothing Office in Kastel/Mainz by an “undisciplined mass” left a lasting impression on Claß and for him it was just “terrible to see those streaming back from the communications zone in their trucks who had robbed their own store magazines and graciously distributed gifts to the starving and begging masses.”

Claß could not comprehend how the revolution “became the driving force” at home, where things descended into political and “moral depravity,“ while obedience and strong leadership “was kept alive everywhere at the front.” Claß was by no means alone in his alarm over these events, which shattered the Pan-Germans’ concept of order and authority. The looting, self-empowerment of revolutionary groups, and general disarray in the military left them frightened about the revolutionary potential of the masses. The Pan-Germans now realized how powerless they were in the face of these political challenges. Lehmann’s wife Mathilde recalled witnessing with astonishment the plundering and shooting in the streets that had become commonplace in Munich by the spring of 1919. Hopfen reported that the revolution in Munich had spread even to his home in Starnberg with the “arrest of hostages, home searches, replacement of the mayor with a Jew, postal censorship, limitations on rail transportation, occasional violations of property rights, and general fear.”

The Pan-Germans still struggled to make sense of these developments. The Alldeutsche Blätter identified a “dichotomy between two different ideologies,” which had caused the
revolution and left a “deep rift” in German society.\textsuperscript{12} To overcome this division protecting order became the most immediate imperative and it led to several strategies. In order to prevent civil war, the Pan-Germans announced their willingness to cooperate with left-wing revolutionaries to safeguard social and bureaucratic order. In keeping with the concept of \textit{Volksgemeinschaft}, they now called the revolutionary worker “our enticed brother” who needed to be integrated into a future Pan-German society.\textsuperscript{13} As the purported custodians of authority, the Pan-Germans instructed their members to promote social routine and political obedience: “Where there exists a Pan-German local chapter, there is a mediating center for the maintenance of public order.”\textsuperscript{14} The shirking of this responsibility they condemned as a betrayal of order and even members who left the League after the revolution were labelled “deserters.”\textsuperscript{15}

Other Pan-Germans had meanwhile resorted to a different strategy, particularly in revolutionary Bavaria, which became the so-called “\textit{Ordnungszelle}” of Germany, boasting a variety of paramilitary defense units, free corps, and local civil brigades.\textsuperscript{16} Along with Grube and Lehmann, Hopfen became a radical-nationalist counter-revolutionary in hopes of re-establishing hierarchical public order and fighting democratization.\textsuperscript{17} The actions of these men revealed that there was a thin line between Pan-German hopes to achieve \textit{völkisch} transcendence of social divisions and their feelings of political exclusion, which required them to fight their political enemies, who were, by the Pan-Germans’ own definition, members of the German polity. The

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{\textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 19 April 1919.}
\footnote{\textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 9 August 1919.}
\footnote{\textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 16 November 1918.}
\footnote{\textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 14 December 1918.}
\footnote{See for the following also Krebs, „Der Alldutsche Verband,“ 54-60.}
\end{footnotes}
war had shown that education and censorship were not sufficient to resolve this paradox or ensure political homogeneity.

The Pan-Germans’ own role in the mass politics of democracy became a difficult issue. In January 1919, Claß told the League’s executive committee that only two parties would receive support from the Pan-Germans: the DNVP, which had been founded in November 1918, and the DVP, which had been founded the next month. Promoting right-wing parties extended the League’s prewar practice of cooperating with National Liberal and Conservative parties. The leadership of the League refused, however, to commit itself or its members formally to either of these new parties, owing in part to experiences with the Fatherland Party during the war. The proximity of the former German-Conservative and Christian-Social electorate to the early DNVP recommended this party to the League, but the new leader of the party, Oskar Hergt, who had not been a member of any party before 1918 and rejected the violent overthrow of the Weimar Republic, did not appeal to Claß at the time. Nor did the DVP under the leadership of the Pan-German renegade, Stresemann, although the DVP also attracted most of the former National Liberal electorate with which the League had previously identified before the war. This dilemma would determine the League’s own radicalization and its loss of significance in the years to come as its traditional constituencies realigned in new political ways after 1918.

The DNVP initially embraced the liberal values of the Rechtsstaat and endorsed the parliamentary system, hoping to participate in government. Short-term tactical considerations and the lack of a coherent Conservative program steered the party toward cooperation with the new regime and the parties that supported it, especially with the Center. So the DNVP was an unlikely

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vehicle for the Pan-Germans League’s opposition. The DVP under Stresemann was even more accommodating to the Republic. Therefore, the League’s cooperation with these parties was not coordinated through national headquarters or election committees, as it had been with the National Liberals during the elections of 1903 and 1907. The question of cooperation was now left instead to the local chapters and individual activists. Pezold spoke for many chapters when he revealed in 1920 that the most active members of the DNVP in Plauen, the men who ran the party’s local office, were almost all members of the Pan-German League.20 In another case, the president of the University of Breslau, Max Koch, was a leading member of the local chapter of the Pan-German League and promoted the DNVP at public meetings.21

Joint-membership in local chapters was thus the principal vehicle of cooperation between the Pan-Germans and the DNVP. The relationship was different on the national level. Claß’ failed bid for a parliamentary seat in 1903 led him resist running for parliament on a DNVP ticket. He felt ill-at-ease with putting himself before a democratic electorate, and he assumed that the DNVP was not interested in running prominent Pan-German candidates like himself.22 The real problem, however, was that immediately after the Revolution none of the parties represented Pan-German ideals. Instead, at least in the eyes of the Pan-Germans, they were run by politicians and state officials who had contributed to the failure of the Bürgertum and had done nothing to defend the monarchical order from collapse. Pan-German toleration of the DNVP and the DVP was due primarily to the hope that neither party would in the end support the new Republican political system.23 This was the distanced form of politics that the Pan-Germans now embraced: the cautious support of parties that they believed would fight the Republic.

22 Claß to Petzold, 10 May 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 321, 100.
The supporters of the Republic were not deceived. Following their longstanding enmity toward the Pan-German League, the Social Democrats charged the Pan-Germans with causing as much disorder as the Communists. They viewed the Pan-German League as *Republikfeinde* (enemies of the Republic), just as the Pan-Germans regarded the Social Democrats as *Reichsfeinde* (enemies of the Empire). The Socialists’ political feud with the Pan-Germans thus remained a constant source of conflict. This conflict reflected the wide gulf that separated the League from the Republic. Immediately after the revolution, the Würzburg entrepreneur Dr. Friedrich Fick and the Berlin historian Eduard Meyer tried to persuade Claß to accommodate the new regime. But Claß could not be convinced. Gebsattel’s threat to leave the League if any toleration of the republic were made public brought discussions to a rapid end.\(^{24}\)

The League’s radical opposition generated relentless pressure to succeed. Educating the masses in national values remained an essential aspect of right-wing politics, particularly in the case of the Pan-Germans. A central motif in this project was the myth that the undefeated German army had been betrayed by the home front. Propagating this myth was a device to distance the League from responsibility for the events of November 1918. Instead, the Pan-Germans could explain demands for peace and democracy in light of the spiritual and moral disease that had infected the masses. From their *bildungsbürgerlich* perspective, education and moral training were the best means to shield the masses from this ideological infection. To this end, the League’s chapter in Dresden, for instance, helped found a “Bismarck College” (*Bismarck-Hochschule*) for political lectures in the summer of 1919.\(^{25}\) In Berlin, Kloß

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\(^{24}\) See Krebs, „Der Alldutsche Verband.“ 38.

represented the Pan-German League in the “Arndt College” (Arndt-Hochschule), which functioned similarly.26

These endeavors were limited to political elites and did not speak to the masses. To broaden its message the Pan-Germans distributed anti-Semitic and anti-Republican counterpropaganda through lectures, pamphlets, and the Alldeutsche Blätter.27 In this effort, as before the war, symbolic politics and ideological campaigns became their main avenue in their politics. The so-called “Stab in the back legend” (Dolchstoßlegende) was prominent among these symbols. Blaming pacifists, Socialists, and Jews for betraying the war efforts and for revolutionizing German society was a central indictment that the radical Right leveled at the Weimar Republic.28 Imperial Government and its military leaders were not responsible for the defeat in this narrative. The Pan-Germans, therefore, demanded the safe return of Wilhelm II from exile in Doorn and insisted that all charges against him by the Allies be dropped.29 This policy was not the product of any misplaced affection for the former monarch. Wilhelm II remained a political symbol in the Pan-German vision. Claß acknowledged his own withering attacks on the monarch before the war, yet compared to the Weimar Republic, he insisted that the “German Empire of Wilhelm II [was] as pure and unstained as was the Empire of his grandfather.”30 Claß helped spread the “Stab in the back legend” almost from the beginning. Months before Hindenburg’s infamous testimony in November 1919 before the Parliamentary Investigatory Committee, he put the blame for the lost war on the home front, whose fortitude

30 Heinrich Claß, „Volksgeist und Staatsform,” in Deutsche Zeitung, 27 August 1922.
had been eroded by “black marketeers, fences, and usurers.” Claß, however, was quite uninformed about the actual details of his own fabrication. For example, when he started revising the 8th edition of his “German History” in 1919, Claß asked Gebsattel for editorial help since “especially the military events demand a lot of work from me because I have to gather information and documents together to come to a conclusion myself.” Gebsattel, who had received detailed firsthand reports of the situation at the front from his brother Theodor, must have been chagrined when Claß informed him that “contrary to your assumption that I possess all the necessary documents to write a historical account since the installment of the Supreme Command with Hindenburg and Ludendorff, I have to conclude that I own nothing, absolutely nothing, about these events, except for what I have in my memory, and that is not enough at all.”

The legend, therefore, also proved to overcome their factual ignorance and exercised a powerful allure over both Claß’s and Gebsattel’s convictions that the military had been betrayed by the revolutionary events at the home front and the undermining efforts of Socialists, Pacifists, and Jews.

Both the revolutionary changes of 1918/1919 and the weakness of the civilian government during the war required the Pan Germans to combine their ideas about civil-military dictatorship, Social Darwinism, and political rule by the educated and wealthy, as they sought a comprehensive re-engineering of German society. Two political goals became central: the re-education of German society and the exclusion of Germans who opposed the rule of those whom the League defined as qualified. The debate on reeducation complemented early Pan-German propaganda concerning “selection politics” (Auslesepolitik), whose premise was that only

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31 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 7 June 1919 and also Vorwärts, 11 June 1919.
educated and morally suitable men be selected for leadership in German society. Vietinghoff-Scheel thus made Social Darwinism a central element in his first reform program, which addressed the “structure of the völkisch state.” This program, which he began to frame in 1919 (although it was not published until the summer of 1933), constituted in many ways a radical revision of Claß’s “Kaiser-book” of 1912, which even Claß had by 1925 acknowledged to be insufficient to present-day issues. In his own program, Vietinghoff-Scheel demanded that the political elite be recruited from “nationalist circles,” which had demonstrated their reliability. He tied political, cultural, economic, and social suitability for leadership, as well as for participation in a Pan-German völkisch society, to ethnic descent, moral qualities, and education. His goal was the “systematic racial higher development of the German people through selection and promotion of all those who were gifted with the good qualities of German kind [Art].” He meant first and foremost a non-Jewish heritage, although Slavs and other ethnic foreigners were also excluded from this utopia of a “German Volk body.” Vietinghoff-Scheel’s vision also provided the ideological rationale for excluding unsuitable ethnic Germans from the racial and cultural community, if they were unwilling to accept the inferior social status that was bestowed on them by their educational disadvantages.

The principle of selection also led to the idea of euthanasia, which had found prominent proponents not only among Germany’s intellectual elites. It had been discussed among selected groups within the League long before the war, such as among Hasse, Claß, Ernst Haeckel, and Otto Schmidt-Gibichenfels. The adaption of selection, exclusion, and dislocation of Germans

36 „Grundriss des Aufbaus der praktischen, völkischen Arbeiten des ADV“, [Vietinghoff-Scheel], n.d. [1919/1920], STA Friedberg, NL August Gebhard, No. 8, vol. 3, n.p [37].
after the war made it more prominent in the League’s discourse. The Pan-Germans now
 demanded that scholarly research into euthanasia be aided by all means. Such research would
 substantiate, through scientific means, the Pan-Germans’ own political beliefs—that rule by
 select political elites was the only legitimate form of government and that this rule might come
 through either legal or extra-legal methods. The crisis of political disunity that followed the
 revolution was for the Pan-Germans an enduring crisis of leadership since Bismarck’s dismissal
 as chancellor in 1890, which was only to be overcome through the governance of Pan-German
 experts. As Liebig put it: “German renewal will come from the völkisch-minded or it will not
 come at all.”

*The Weimar Republic as Interval and Rebirth: Crisis, Despair, and Confidence*

For the Pan-Germans the Weimar Republic represented an interval—a Zwischenzeit
 between “night” and “day,” as these were represented respectively as the Republic and Pan-
 German utopias, which opposed each other in reference to collective expectations about past,
 present, and future. The foundation of Imperial Germany in 1871 had signaled the potential
dawning of a Pan-German Empire, while the foundation of the Weimar Republic in 1918
 represented the temporary end of a völkisch future. It was hard for the Pan-Germans to offer a
 plausible alternative to the failed Wilhelmine Empire or the despised Weimar Republic. Neither
 Imperial Germany nor the Weimar Republic could serve as a viable form of government, but
 what a Pan-German Empire would look like was also unclear after the war.

A wave of Pan-German literature appeared in 1919 that warned against the demise of
 Germany and demanded a radical renewal of politics and society. The language of this literature

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42 See also Ernst Wolfgang Becker, *Zeit der Revolution! – Revolution der Zeit? Zeiterfahrungen in Deutschland in
borrowed heavily from Pan-German programs before the war. Echoes of the popular cultural pessimists Paul de Lagarde and Julius Langbehn were common in the post-war writings of Klingemann, Walter Colsman, and Ludwig Schemann.\textsuperscript{43} Several Pan-German classics, such as Schemann’s “Gobineau and German Culture” and Claß’s “German History”, written under the pseudonym Einhart, went through several reprints and sold remarkably well immediately after the war.\textsuperscript{44} In fact, Claß’s “Einhart-book” became a fixture in many educated bourgeois and lower middle-class households. These publications all lamented the fall of the Bismarckian Reich. But their pathos signaled the need to craft a self-awareness among the Pan-Germans as a vanguard of the “national opposition.” For Claß, the dissolution of the monarchical order was another sign of the inability of the German people to learn the lessons from the religious wars of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, which had set Germany on a “fateful path of the martyrdom” of disunity.\textsuperscript{45} Allusions to the “fall and rise” of the German Empire, which lay in “ruins” after disunity and betrayal (comparable to the \textit{Nibelungenlied} legend) and could only be “redeemed” through “moral rebirth,” announced the impending transition to a higher stage of historical development.\textsuperscript{46}

Rebirth and resurrection from political ruin, therefore, were only possible through hard work. The topos of “work” was of central importance to the Pan-German \textit{Bildungsbürger}, as it signified both personal sacrifice and subsequent reward through individual labor. The term “work” was a key to the moral and legal reasoning in the Pan-German ideology. Pan-Germans believed that each social class had specific obligations. Phrases such as “To work!,” “Proceed to


\textsuperscript{44} Ludwig Schemann, \textit{Gobineau und die deutsche Kultur}, 4th – 6th ed. (Leipzig: , 1919) and Claß, \textit{Deutsche Geschichte} (1919). See also appendix Figure 23.

\textsuperscript{45} Heinrich Claß, “Der Märtyrer der Weltgeschichte,” in \textit{Deutsche Zeitung}, 1 January 1921; idem, „Luther in Worms,” in \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 16 April 1921; and Idem, „Bürgerkrieg der Lehrmeinungen?,” in \textit{Deutsche Zeitung}, 4 December 1921.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 23 January 1919 and 8 February 1919.
action!” or “To be German means to do things for their own sake!” indicated the importance of action, labor, and work, even as the Pan-Germans themselves, the leaders of this hierarchical working movement, endured pressures on their own nerves that threatened their health.\footnote{See Alldutsche Blätter, 1 February 1919, 13 March 1919, and 9 August 1919.} These topoi also invoked personal sacrifice and hard work to denounce political enemies. The strikes that accompanied the new political order in 1919 and 1920 the Pan-Germans dismissed as “un-German.”\footnote{Alldutsche Blätter, 1 February 1919.} Dumcke, for instance, argued that enforced unemployment was the hardest fate for an adult father who had to feed his family and that the postwar strikes signified “intentional laziness to work” (Arbeitsscheu).

The new circumstances required the League to reformulate its public agenda. At the meeting of the executive committee on 16-17 February 1919 in Bamberg, a new program laid out the basic demands of the League. The so-called “Bamberg Declaration,” which was published mostly as supplements to more than 300,000 newspaper copies over the next couple of weeks with another 700,000 copies published until the summer, included attacks against the Weimar Republic and Germany’s foreign enemies, France, Britain, and Russia.\footnote{See for the following “Erklärung des Alldeutschen Verbandes”, 16 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 123, 48-49. See also BA-B, R 8048, vol. 603, 1-43, Alldutscher Verband to Deutsche Tageszeitung, 28 February 1919, FZH, 412-1 Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trotzbund Propaganda, n.p., Krebs, „Der Alldutsche Verband,” 43-44, and Jackisch, „Not a Large but a Strong Right,“ 28.} Its basic message was that the Pan-German League was determined to retain its presence in extraparliamentary politics, that it was committed to opposing the Weimar Republic as well as Germany’s postwar order. It called monarchy the only legitimate form of government and demanded Prussian dominance in German politics, while the declaration rejected German membership in the League of Nations, as well as the liberal belief in “perpetual peace” among nations. A strong army was the precondition for regaining great-power status, securing domestic political stability, and educating the German people for their eventual renewal. According to the Bamberg Declaration, the Pan-German
League’s destiny was to offer “national opposition” to Germany’s current government, just as it had for the past thirty years. Although this role meant that the League would have to endure hard times in the future, service as the “shock troops of völkisch thought” was the supreme duty.\(^{50}\)

Leading Pan-Germans resisted this declaration for a number of reasons. Hänsch, for instance, thought it irresponsible for Pan-Germans who worked in the civil service to jeopardize their positions by signing the declaration.\(^{51}\) The lawyer H. Freigang of the Chemnitz chapter announced that he had come to terms with the new Republic and did not want to see his name placed on the declaration.\(^{52}\) Rippler opposed it because it treated the Supreme Command too mildly for its failure to lead Germany to victory.\(^{53}\) For other members, such as like Rudolf Fick in Berlin, who had been a member of the Pan-German League since its founding and was the brother of Claß’s close friend Dr. Friedrich Fick, the idea of principled political opposition was too hard to accept any longer.\(^{54}\)

Claß, however, was adamant. Ever since his appointment as chairman of the League in 1908, he had been unwilling to bridge the ideological gap between Pan-Germanism and more moderate Conservatives and National Liberals. Now he was unwilling to brook compromise with the new Republic. The Constitution represented in his eyes the triumph of Western legal systems, although it did allow Germans to emigrate and keep their citizenship, and it did call for the redistribution and settlement of land from inefficient Junker estates. Claß continued to believe that the German people could only be governed by a monarchy. Yet he acknowledged that the restoration of the monarchy was out of the question in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. The return of a monarchical order depended on a credible candidate. Even among the strongest

\(^{51}\) Hänsch to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 21 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 255.
\(^{52}\) Freigang to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 21 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 256.
supporters of the Hohenzollern monarchy, Wilhelm II had been hopelessly discredited.\textsuperscript{55} The question whether any monarch should lead Germany after 1918 was the single most debated issue among the Pan-Germans immediately after the war, and Claß had to defend the monarchical principle throughout the Republic, but he found it immensely “painful” that the supporters of the monarchical order had to defend the concept without the monarch present.\textsuperscript{56} Pezoldt from Plauen argued that in Saxony “99 percent of all Saxons are relieved that the Wettiner are finally gone.”\textsuperscript{57} Geiser stressed that Pan-German supporters in Austria were opposed to the reinstitution of the monarchy, fearing the return of the Habsburgs.\textsuperscript{58} These objections met considerable resistance within the executive committee, when Paul Bang (a friend of Claß who joined the League during the war), as well as Hopfen, Claß, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Pogge, Itzenplitz, Thomsen, Hertzberg, and Kloß all demanded that restoration of the monarchy remain a central plank of the League’s platform. It became clear during the discussions of the fall of 1919, however, that the problem had less to do with finding a new monarch than selecting a dynamic form of leadership to stand in opposition to the Weimar Republic. Royal blood was not the only qualification for ruling a modern state. Pan-Germans believed that educated experts should govern with monarchical blessings, once a suitable representative was found for the throne.

The Versailles Peace Treaty, which was made known to the public on 7 May 1919 and finally signed in June, also occasioned discussion in the leadership of the Pan-German League. For the first time in modern warfare it included a paragraph stating that the \textit{ius ad bellum}, the legitimate right of every sovereign state to go to war, had clear limits. The territorial secessions included large parts of Western Prussia and all of Posen to Poland, creating a Polish “corridor” to

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\item[56] Claß to Hauptleitung and Geschäftsführender Ausschuss des ADV, 27 January 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 98.
\item[57] Pezoldt at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusse des ADV, 30 August 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 125, 23.
\item[58] Geiser at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusse des ADV, 30 August 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 125, 24.
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Eastern Prussia, while large parts of Upper Silesia, North Schleswig, and Eupen-Malmédy were subject to plebiscites. Alsace became French, the Saar was put under supervision by the League of Nations for 15 years, and the left bank of the Rhine was divided into three zones subject to limited sovereignty, demilitarization, and Allied occupation. Article 231, which put the blame of war on the German Government, constituted a high-point of Allied efforts to break nascent German military, economic, and cultural dominance on the European Continent. The terms of the Versailles Treaty were clearly unacceptable but in internal discussions the League’s headquarters broached the idea that it should be signed in order to hasten the collapse of German society. Rapid social decay and economic “enslavement” would then lead to a “horrifying end” (“Ende mit Schrecken”).

Keim spoke for many Pan-Germans when he argued that Germany would be “strangled” by the “brutal” peace obligations.

The Pan-Germans believed that the end of the war represented a prolongation of the same enduring crisis that they had diagnosed before the war. The current state of affairs was still filled with hopes of the healthy renewal (Gesundung) and moral renewal (sittliche Erneuerung) of the German people, and the Pan-Germans awaited this turning point with optimism. The belief that the German Volk could rise from the ashes allowed Pan-Germans to predict that the “path to death” would prove to be a “path of renewal,” as Vietinghoff-Scheel put it. The rhetoric of apocalyptic downfall and resurrection had been common in radical nationalist debates before the turn of the century. A mix of despair and optimism characterized the Pan-German vision of the future, too. The imagery of political opposition as a “road of pain” reflected the commitment of

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60 August Keim, „Die Erwürgungspolitik unserer Feinde,” in Deutsche Zeitung, 6 December 1918 and Idem, Die Schuld am Weltkriege (Berlin: Neudeutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1919), 3.
the Pan-Germans to endure a heavy burden, much as the early Christians had. In such a reading, the current regime was nothing more than a temporary Reich before an alternative Imperial order of the *Kaiserreich* would be reinstated in the future. The Weimar Republic, therefore, was perceived as a *Zwischenreich* - at best only representing a period of waiting for the rebirth of a reformed new Second Reich under circumstances that would, in all likelihood, lead to another war. In February 1919, Claß predicted that the Pan-German League awaited an “agonizing ordeal” at the moment, but that the future held great promise.

This promise included new territorial claims. Colonial territory abroad remained the prerequisite for world power in the Pan-Germans’ eyes. Yet they continued to insist that the emphasis in Germany’s future expansion, be it economic or for purposes of resettlement, would be the European Continent. At the beginning of 1919, Fritz spoke of Germany’s obligation to expand into Eastern Europe rather than into “colonial castles in the air overseas.” Pan-German publications such as “Romantic or Practical Colonial Policies” underlined the practical insignificance of the colonial focus overseas. Instead, unification with Austria now offered the practical basis of imperial expansion, the final realization of greater-German aspirations, which would transcend the political cleavages between Republicans and Pan-Germans.

“The Power of Darkness”: Greater-German Unification and the Foundation of the Pan-German League in Austria

The concept of a greater-German Empire constituted the main political goal of the Pan-Germans after the war, which was to be realized “with all means of power at hand.” In addition to the political promise of unification with Austria, the primacy of language as the determinant of

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64 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 214.
65 *Alldutsche Blätter*, 15 February 1919.
66 *Alldutsche Blätter*, 21 December 1918.
culture overcame the ambivalence that many Pan-Germans had early felt about uniting with predominantly Catholic Austria. In the fall of 1913, Gebsattel still declared the unification with Austria-Hungary to be undesirable. For Gebsattel, even the integration of all the 13 million ethnic Germans in Austria would only constitute an “ultima ratio” because then the Catholics were in the majority in Germany and would seriously challenge the Protestant monarchy. 67 Eight weeks into the First World War, Gebsattel hoped that the Habsburg Empire would survive the war so its 10 to 12 million ethnic German Catholics would not call for a union with Germany. 68 He was not alone in his reservations but Claß enforced the Bündnistreue with Austria-Hungary as a pragmatic embrace of Realpolitik on the part of most Pan-Germans and he saw the multi-ethnic Habsburg state as the only reliable ally following Germany’s increasing isolation since the eve of the war. It was only after August 1914 that the proponents of Habsburg dissolution would leave the League such as Reismann-Grone in March 1915, a member of the executive committee and the chief editor of the influential Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung, who had always urged the priority of western over eastern Europe in his fierce debates about Claß’s war aims. 69 Retreats of members like Reismann-Grone worked to the benefit of those Pan-Germans who called for a pragmatic approach that made Austria-Hungary a member of the Central Powers’ war effort.

The collapse of the German and Austro-Hungarian war effort in 1918 spurred a broad consensus among right-wing movements in favor of unifying Germany with German-Austria. 70 The Pan-Germans’ hopes in this regard were encouraged by Woodrow Wilson’s “Fourteen Points,” which championed the right of self-determination of European nationalities. Unification

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67 Gebsattel to Claß, 6 September 1913, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 40.
68 Gebsattel to Claß, 1 October 1914, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 1, 231.
69 See also Frech, Reismann-Grone, 221.
with Austria, now no longer a multi-ethnic Empire, promised an opportunity to transcend religious and social conflicts that had separated German-speakers for centuries. The Pan-Germans found a favorable political climate in both Germany and Austria. Consensus reigned among almost all the political parties in Germany in favor of unification. Especially for the Social Democrats and the Left-Liberals, unification would realize a major goal of the liberal nationalist movement since the early 19th century. More importantly, the greater-German traditions that were written into the Weimar constitution reflected Pan-German aspirations in many ways. Given the certainty that Germany would lose territory as a consequence of the war, Austria represented suitable compensation. According to Claß, Germany had to regain its “strong position,” and German emigration could be steered toward Austria instead of overseas.\(^71\) On 12 November 1918, the Pan-Germans demanded that the German Government bind itself to unification.\(^72\) The Pan-Germans now reasoned that religious quarrels between Protestants and Catholics would be abandoned, so Austria could immediately send delegates to the German National Assembly.

Action on behalf of unification within Austria promoted the Pan-German cause and was aided by Pan-German allies in Austria. Michael Heinisch, Austria’s first Federal President, was a friend of Claß. Former sympathizers of Schönerer supported the Pan-German League in Austria. Support from the German-National Franz Dinghofer, another close friend of Claß and one of three presidents of the Austrian Reichsrat, and Josef Ursin ensured close contacts between the Pan-Germans and Austria’s government during the first years of the Republic’s existence.\(^73\) In the “Bamberg Declaration” unification with Austria was part of a larger plan for a German ethnic Empire, which was to include the “Baltic lands” as “ancient German colonial territories,” as well

\(^{71}\) Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 123, 5.


\(^{73}\) See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 7.1.
as Alsace Lorraine, which the Pan-Germans also called “ancient German Volksboden.” Western Hungarian territories (mainly the Burgenland) were also to be part of the future Austro-German nation-state, because of the presence of ethnic German communities in these areas. Building on traditional Pan-German demands of ethnic resettlement, German remigrants were be directed to Austria to restart its economy and bolster its ethnic German population.

The significance of unification was reflected in the foundation of the Pan-German League in German-Austria (Alledeutscher Verband in Deutschösterreich) on Bismarck’s birthday on 1 April 1919. The development of active local chapters in Carinthia, Styria, Vienna, and Salzburg spearheaded Pan-German mobilization in Austria, which peaked between 1919 and 1924. The success of the Pan-Germans in Austria was based on the turbulent politics of the era between the peace treaties of Versailles and Saint Germain and the crisis of 1923, which culminated in the Ruhr occupation and the aborted putsch by Hitler and his NSDAP. By September 1922, 13,000 had people joined the Pan-German League in Austria, while members in Germany had increased to 39,000.

The liberal Austrian laws of association, which had been passed in 1867 and remained in force after 1918, facilitated the founding of political associations like the Pan-German League. State supervision was mild and the establishment of local chapters was subject only to formal registration. Prior to its official foundation in Austria, the Pan-German League had counted 700 members in separate chapters in Graz (with 65 members), Linz (with 122 members), and other places. The League had also run a small office in Vienna. Given the high costs of operating in Vienna, the Austrian Pan-German League established headquarters in Graz, where it boasted of

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75 Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 1 September 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 135, 20. See also appendix Figure 1 and 11.
2,500 to 3,000 members in October 1919. The headquarters in Graz was run by Geiser and Dr. Joseph Hertle, who was a well-respected surgeon at the University of Graz. General Alfred Krauß took over Hertle’s position in 1927 and moved the headquarters back to Vienna in September.

Local chapters included those in Vienna (which already counted 4 sections and 500 members in October 1919), St. Pölten, St. Anton, Kufstein, Innsbruck, Baden near Vienna, Wels, Ried, Freistadt, and Leoben. Smaller provincial chapters included Steinach, Oberhollabrunn, Waidhofen/Thaya, Krems, Rottenmann/Selzatal, Enns, Melk, Bleiburg, Langenlois, Eferding, Bücklabruck, Lurnfeld, Weiz, Hermagor, Treibach-Althofen, and Lienz in the Eastern Tirol. By the end of 1921, more than 100 chapters existed. Membership in them was comparable to those in the German chapters. The chapter in Linz increased its membership to 200 members in 1920; Villach counted 400 members by the end of 1921, compared to 80 in October 1919. The Pan-German League was active all over Austria, although a higher concentration of chapters was found in the Republic’s urbanized frontier districts, especially in Styria, Lower Austria, and Upper Austria. Individual activists were instrumental in setting up the infrastructure and acquiring resources in Austria, too. Geiser, Graf von Wrangel, Krauß, and Joseph Hoyer, together with the acting director of the headquarters Hauptmann Gruber, Oberrechnungsrat Liensberger from Innsbruck, and Professor Flora from Schwaz, all played pivotal roles in building the organization. Accompanied by social evenings, lectures led to the founding of

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80 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 7.1. and also Polizeidirektor Graz to Steiermärkische Landesregierung, 4 March 1929, Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv Graz (henceforth StLA-Graz), LReg 206, A-031, n.p. See also Kruck, Geschichte des Alldeutschen Verbandes, 151 and Hering, Konstruierte Nation, 140.
81 Geiser at the Austro-German meeting in Passau 25/26 October 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 698, 88.
82 Dr. Georg Beutel to Ortsgruppen Oberelbegau des ADV, 3 October 1921, STA Dresden, 13.1, vol. 99, 18.
chapters in Melk, which had 90 members in 1921, Emmersdorf/Donau with 20 members, and Spittal, with 90 members in 1922.\textsuperscript{84} In Fölling the membership rose from 12 in May 1919 to 104 in September 1920.\textsuperscript{85} As they had done in Germany before the turn of the century, the Pan-Germans relied on trusted intermediaries (\textit{Vertrauensmänner}) to organize in small towns and villages in Austria—a process that involved bringing potential members together to discuss politics and enjoy one another’s company.\textsuperscript{86}

The Pan-German League’s structure in Austria was similar to its counterpart in Germany and used the same models of mobilization. Officially, the Austrian Pan-German League was independent of headquarters in Berlin. The Austrian branch of an “Alldeutscher Betriebsschatz” collected 12 million Kronen in 1922, and annual national meetings were organized—in Innsbruck (1921), Linz (1922), Klagenfurth (1923), and Graz (1924).\textsuperscript{87} Although decisions were made in Graz, they comported with the positions of Claß and Vietinghoff-Scheel. Claß, however, had no clear idea what the local chapters in Austria did, and the headquarters in Graz often had no record of the activities or even the existence of local chapters. Coordination between the German and Austrian movements failed in the face of local independence. Like chapters in Germany, Austrian chapters depended heavily on the activism of their leaders, and the fate of chapters was tied to the activity of the local leaders who founded the chapter. When the government of Styria requested reports from several chapters at the end of the 1920s, it learned that most of these had shut down after 1924.\textsuperscript{88} The collapse of local chapters usually followed the disappearance of local leaders.

\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 10 September 1921, 8 April 1922 and 11 March 1922.
\textsuperscript{85} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 18 September 1920.
\textsuperscript{86} Vorarlberg and the Bodensee-region were prepared for chapter foundations in Bregenz, Dornbirn, Feldkirch, and Brudenz in such ways. See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 15 July 1922.
\textsuperscript{87} See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 20 November 1922, 17 June 1922, 24 April 1923, and 5 April 1924.
The fragility of local chapters was also due to the academic background of the leaders. In Carinthia large numbers of local leaders came from the educated classes and worked in local or state government. Their backgrounds qualified them for Pan-German leadership, but they were unable to mobilize peasants in agrarian areas like the Salzkammergut. The League’s limitations in mobilizing mass membership were also a result of severe competition among Austria’s Right, which saw a significant realignment after the war as well. Nationalist organizations like the Home Defence Units (Heimwehren/Heimatschutz) competed with the Pan-German League. In Carinthia and Styria the presence of the School Association, which fought Slovenian nationalist and cultural associations, decreased the appeal of the Pan-German League on Austria’s cultural frontiers. The market for the nationalist press was as competitive as in Germany. Plans for a separate Austrian section of the Alldeutsche Blätter were turned down by the headquarters in Berlin in 1927 for financial reasons.

Nevertheless, expanding into Austria brought the Pan-German League to the largest membership in its history. By 1924 the Pan-German League in Austria had mobilized as many as 20,000 members in 200 local chapters with significant appeal for constituencies other than the

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92 See also Werner Drobisch, Vereine und Verbände in Kärnten 1848-1938: Vom Gemeinnützig-Geselligen zur Ideologisierung der Massen (Kärnten: Verlag des Kärntener Landesarchivs, 1998), 99-211.
Bildungsbürgertum and the middle-classes.⁹⁴ In May 1921, Bang even reported from his trips to Austria that membership in the Pan-German League was a badge of respect, which was open to public workers, such as postal and railway workers.⁹⁵ However, the Hitler Putsch of 1923 hurt the idea of Pan-German unification, as the violent potential of nationalist ideology repelled many erstwhile Pan-Germans. The Treaty of Saint Germain, which was signed by the Austrian delegation on 10 September 1919, brought to an end the idea of immediate unification and left the Pan-Germans with no way to revise the territorial status quo. The term “German-Austria” was prohibited by the treaty as well, in order to quell aspirations for unification with Germany. Several chapters disappeared once unification with Germany became moot after 1919. Still, building a greater-German Empire after 1918 remained of central importance to the Pan-Germans, as well as to the radical Right as a whole. Unification with Austria promised to transcend class and confessional in an ethnic Volksgemeinschaft. “Forward in the spirit of Bismarck” became a rallying cry for the Pan-Germans.⁹⁶ The radical Right was now able to transcend the kleindeutsch limitations of Bismarck’s Reich and present itself as the custodian of both großdeutsch Germany and Bismarckian authoritarian power politics.⁹⁷

When Schönerer died on 14 August 1921, the Pan-Germans could present themselves as the vanguard of unification.⁹⁸ The German Volk League (Bund der Aldeutschen/Deutscher Volksbund für Österreich), which was based on the principles of Schönerer, cooperated with Austrian Pan-Germans, such as Dr. Hans Hartmeyer and Alfred Geiser.⁹⁹ It became clear soon, however, that the Pan-Germans had to compete in both Germany and Austria with other radical nationalist movements, such as the Greater-German People’s Party (Großdeutsche

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⁹⁴ Alldeutsche Blätter, 5 April 1924.
⁹⁶ Alldeutsche Blätter, 30 July 1899.
⁹⁷ See also Gerwarth, The Bismarck Myth, 37.
⁹⁸ Alldeutsche Blätter, 20 August 1921.
⁹⁹ See Groß-Deutschland. Aldeutsche Mitteilungen, (No. 2) May 1919.
Volkspartei/GDVP), the Agrarian League (Landbund), the German-Austrian Protection Association Anti-Semites´ League (Deutschösterreichischer Schutzverein Antisemiten-Bund), and the Austrian German National-Socialist Worker´s Party (Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei DNSAP/NSDAP), all of which propagated the Anschluß.100

Provincialism, Centralization, and Enlargement: Reorganizing the Pan-German League´s Leadership and Membership

Between October 1918 and February 1919, Claß and his staff were unable to organize meetings of the executive committee, and this situation compelled them to process the revolution by themselves. The revolution had left the Pan-Germans in political uncertainty. The League´s organizational structure was in danger as well. Many members feared that the League would dissolve and joined right-wing parties or other nationalist organizations that had sprung up. Amid this insecurity, both the League´s political program and its membership radicalized, as many older leaders left the League. Other powerful figures, who had backed the Pan-German League before the war, also withdrew their support. Hans Heinrich Reclam, who ran the respected Reclam publishing house, had been a member of the chapter in Leipzig since the turn of the century. After the war, he became more cautious about what he published, reluctant now to “get involved in Pan-German politics.”101 Other former Pan-German notables distanced themselves from the League, because they wanted to preserve their respectablity. Those who did so included activists like Schäfer, who had organized political mobilization during the war. Although he remained a member of the Pan-German League and a friend of Claß, he was reluctant to write for

100 See also Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 31 January/1 February 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 141, 32.
the Pan-German paper after the war. Instead, he devoted his energy to other nationalist associations. Keim also became increasingly estranged from the League, both because of its official anti-Semitism and the entrepreneurial spirit of some Pan-Germans, such as Lehmann, whom Keim thought was only motivated by financial interests.

New members joined precisely because of the League’s radicalization during the war. Roesicke and Wangenheim from the Agrarian League now became members of the Pan-German League by 1919. Personal networks of Pan-Germans expanded through common affiliations in radical right-wing associations and debate clubs like the “National Club,” which was founded in 1919 and brought together leading Pan-Germans like Bang, Grapow, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Hugenberg, Kirdorf, Kloß, Ernst Graf zu Reventlow, who had served as member of the executive committee already before the war, Lehmann, and Reinhard Wulle with various other right-wing activists from the Association of the Eastern Marches, the Colonial Society, or the Kyffhäuserbund. Fears of persecution and isolation, however, made the Pan-Germans feel like radical outsiders, in spite of their bourgeois credentials. Not every member could afford to go as far as Bang, who gave up his post as a financial councilor (Oberfinanzrat) because he did not want to swear to the oath of the Weimar constitution in 1919. Hertzberg was one of the additional few who eventually left their position as a state servant: he resigned from the Landwirtschaftskammer für Pommern for the district Neustettin in 1921 to be independent and to devote his time for the Pan-German League. Vietinghoff-Scheel even feared that many

102 Dr. Dumcke may have contributed to the estrangement with the League’s former Gelehrtenpolitiker when Dumcke tried resolved the occasional confusion that Schäfer had to endure regarding the paper’s character as a political journal. Schäfer thought that the Alldeutsche Blätter was competing with other rather academic journals, while Dumcke made clear that the Alldeutsche Blätter was a paper only whose aim was to disseminate political sentiment and to “inflame völkisch thought.” See Dr. Dumcke to Schäfer, 25 April 1919, Staatsarchiv Bremen, Bestand 7,21, NL Schäfer, vol. 8, n.p.


104 See Holzbach, Das „System Hugenberg“, 140 and 143.

105 See Hering, Konstruierte Nation, 472.

106 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 6 December 1930.
members of the Pan-German League would lose their jobs because of their political activism. It would be necessary, he reasoned, to bring the Pan-German members closer together as a “community of solidarity,” especially since doctors, lawyers, teachers, and state officials would likely suffer significant losses of income. To avoid “proletarianization,” it would be necessary for Pan-Germans to help one another to find alternative employment in the private sector working for those who supported the Pan-German League.

Fears of social and economic isolation emphasized the new challenges the Pan-Germans expected, but the League itself seemed at stake in the members’ interpretation of increased political competition and civil war immediately after 1918. Attacks from the radical Left caused Claß and Vietinghoff-Scheel to consider moving headquarters out of Berlin, where the costs of operating had also become too expensive. The move to Berlin in 1916 had been possible because of funds gathered from wealthy members and sympathizers. Despite the rise in membership after the war, the League’s financial situation deteriorated. Given the turbulence in the capital, Claß considered moving to Gotha in Thuringia, which was not, like Mainz, in immediate danger of occupation. The proximity to the national chapter of the German League also recommended Gotha, as did the prospect of cooperation with other völkisch associations in Thuringia. The town’s excellent public transportation would have allowed an easy organization of meetings of members, while the medieval setting with Weimar and the Wartburg castle in nearby Eisenach harboured powerful historical images of Germany’s finest cultural, Protestant, and political traditions of Johann W. Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, and Martin Luther, as well as the student Wartburg festivities of 1817 and 1848. The Pan-Germans’ focus on Central Germany reflected a broader trend in nationalist circles. They increasingly romanticized Thuringia as an example of

rural harmony, culture, and the curative effects of the German forest.\textsuperscript{109} Vietinghoff-Scheel, who was from Erfurt, proposed a move to near-by Eisenach, pointing to the concentration of active and reliable local chapters of the League: the territory between the river Werra and the river Saale and between the Harz Mountains and the river Main, was to become the “national stronghold” by the Pan-German League.\textsuperscript{110} By the end of January 1919, however, Claß had decided against moving headquarters from Berlin.\textsuperscript{111} The capital was important as an administrative center, even if the prospect of more federal independence for the German states threatened its status. In spite of the expense of moving to the capital, which required extraordinary collection funds of 60,000 Mark, Berlin was for Claß “most disgusting” and “emotional,” and he still rather preferred a smaller location.\textsuperscript{112} The political situation in Thuringia, however, was just as uncertain, as revolutionary troops mobilized there. Many members feared that a move there would signal a retreat of the Pan-German League.

Plans to move the League to Thuringia were accompanied by more significant symbolic considerations. At the beginning of 1919, the executive committee debated whether the Pan-German League should change its name.\textsuperscript{113} Claß wanted to rename it the “Bismarck League” (\textit{Bismarck Verband}), in order to signal a new beginning and to emphasized the League’s historical


\textsuperscript{110} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 249-250.


\textsuperscript{112} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 123, 44. See also Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 250.

\textsuperscript{113} See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 123, 45.
roots and political convictions. The idea was to found a new group, which would unite all other nationalist associations under the leadership of the Pan-German League. The issue was forwarded to the chapters for discussion. Six weeks later, responses from thirty chapters were the subject of discussions in the executive committee in Bamberg in February 1919. The chapters in Augsburg, Bremen, Elbing, Löwenberg/Silesia, Weimar, Zwickau, and Würzburg agreed with the proposal to found the new group. The Dresden chapter, however, spoke for the majority of the League’s members when it expressed skepticism about the “associational egotism” of other nationalist associations, such as the Defense League, the Colonial Society, and the Navy League. Uniting all of them into a single association would mean sharing not only infrastructure, funds, and members, but also leadership, which would doubtlessly breed conflicts among associations that might otherwise cooperate.

The Pan-German League kept its name and did not attempt to merge with other nationalist organizations. This outcome reflected the isolation and elitism of the Pan-Germans, as well as their unwillingness to give up leadership roles. In fact, they themselves embodied the egotism that had long frustrated an effective nationalist Sammlungspolitik. The problem of “narrow-mindedness” (Eigenbrödelei) among Germany’s nationalist associations, as Itzenplitz put it, also encouraged the diversification of nationalist engagement of the Pan-Germans in the realms of Germany’s bourgeois Vereinsmeierei. Hasse had set a good example. He was a member of more than 50 associations and clubs, while Lehmann in Munich, for instance, had a hard time keeping track of paying his membership dues to the 160 nationalist associations that he had joined. Cross-membership between the Pan-German League and other nationalist associations,

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like the Navy League or the Society for the Eastern Marches, was still common. The war had increased competition among these associations, and while the Pan-Germans had promoted the Navy League and the Colonial Society, their support was not reciprocated.\textsuperscript{117} The League’s relationship with the Fatherland Party had likewise been difficult. Vietinghoff-Scheel complained bitterly about the refusal of leaders of the Fatherland Party to cooperate and share membership lists with the Pan-German League.\textsuperscript{118}

During the war, organizational changes (such as the subscription of all the League’s members to the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter} and the move of the headquarters to Berlin) helped centralizing the management of the League as well as its expansion. Distributing the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter} to almost every member of the League helped unify the rank-and-file under Claß’s leadership. To support Claß in this role in Berlin, the League provided him with an annual salary of 12,000 Mark, to be drawn from the \textit{Neudeutsche Treuhand-Gesellschaft}.\textsuperscript{119} Claß thus became a professional politician or \textit{Berufspolitiker}, as Max Weber called it, who lived off his political activities.\textsuperscript{120} He also drew another two thousand Mark from managing the \textit{Deutsche Zeitung}.\textsuperscript{121}

Centralizing the League’s operations and debates was facilitated by changes in the League’s staff. Carl Caesar Eiffe left the League after the war.\textsuperscript{122} So did Grumme-Douglas. Heinrich Pudor, who was so well known for his fervent anti-Semitism that Gebsattel felt obliged in 1917 to defend him against charges that Pudor would “be crazy enough to suggest the beating of Jews to death” in his rhetoric, fell out with the League and organized his own “Volk Council”

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{117} Calmbach at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 245.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 245.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Gebsattel to Geschäftsführender Ausschuss des ADV, January 1919, STA Friedberg, NL August Gebhard, No. 8, Vol. 3, n.p.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Max Weber, „Politik als Beruf ,” in Winckelmann, \textit{Max Weber: Gesammelte Politische Schriften}, 505-560.
\item \textsuperscript{121} See Leicht, „Heinrich Claß,” ch. 3. See also Roeder to August Frey, 20 February 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 210, 67
\item \textsuperscript{122} See also Krebs, „Der Alldeutsche Verband,“ 25.
\end{itemize}
in 1918 before the end of the war.\textsuperscript{123} Kurd von Strantz left the League in protest over Claß´s character and “vanity,” which surfaced, Strantz claimed, in the chairman´s attempts to centralize decision-making around a coterie of his followers, while he refused to tolerate “creative actors” who threatened his control.\textsuperscript{124} Other leading activists, like Reismann-Grone, Liebig, Friedrich Hopf from the Dresden chapter, Fick, and Reventlow, became estranged from Claß during the war. Grapow left the League in October 1918, after he demanded that Claß and the League support the government of Prince Max von Baden. Members who did not abide by the headquarters´ line were excluded. To force a showdown with his critics, Claß had already asked for a vote of confidence in March 1918.

Opposition to Claß´s war aims program had been stifled during the war. Claß was well aware of the opposition to his radicalism following his speech in Plauen in 1903, and he never forgot that quite a few leading Pan-Germans like Lehman were not sold on Claß´s abilities as chairman of the League in 1908. The first steps toward outmanoeuvring his opposition happened in 1911, when the chairman had first fought opponents to the demand “land free of people” in his Morocco pamphlet.\textsuperscript{125} Claß, finally, erased a few sections of his disputed Morocco manuscript, but he made sure that these quarrels were not repeated after 1914. Reismann-Grone was the most prominent victim of this policy of silencing opposition as Claß made use of threatening with resignation. The purge continued during the political turmoil after the war. The chairman of the Flensburg chapter \textit{Amtsvorsteher} Clausen was supplanted by \textit{Ökonomierat} Biernatzki from Boorde for his “separatist opinion” that Schleswig Holstein be unified with Denmark.\textsuperscript{126} Clausen was expelled from the League after the matter was examined by the headquarters in Berlin.

\textsuperscript{123} Gebsattel to Claß, 19 June 1917, BA-B, N 2089, vol. 4, 336.
\textsuperscript{125} Max Adler to Gesamtvorstand des ADV, 29 September 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 634.
\textsuperscript{126} Schön to Clausen, 5 September 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 604, 9.
Wulle’s expulsion indicated the increased competition between the Pan-German League and new radical nationalist movements. He had joined the editorial of the Deutsche Zeitung in Berlin in October 1918, after leaving Reismann-Grone’s Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung. He aspired to a political career and began giving public speeches outside of Berlin. In 1920, Wulle founded a radical nationalist working group (Arbeitsring) without Claß’s knowledge and ran successfully for parliament as a candidate of the DNVP.\textsuperscript{127} Claß dismissed him, furious not so much about Wulle’s political activities as about the “break of personal allegiance.”\textsuperscript{128} Wulle took revenge by spreading rumors that the Deutsche Zeitung was under the influence of Jesuits and Freemasons. Charges like these about the conspiratorial character of the Pan-German League’s workings remained an effective means of discrediting throughout the Weimar Republic. The Wulle case also underlined the personal mistrust and interpersonal rivalry among leading Pan-German activists that Claß was so concerned about. That Claß wanted to turn the Deutsche Zeitung into the main daily newspaper for the Pan-Germans only added to the conflict with Wulle.\textsuperscript{129} In December 1922, Wulle founded the German-Völkisch Freedom Party (Deutsch-Völkische Freiheitspartei) together with Albrecht von Graefe-Goldebee and both party leaders attacked the Pan-German League repeatedly in the future.

Claß’s obsession with preserving his authoritarian position underlay his attempt to control the League’s media enterprises, which he considered to be the most important means of educating the public. Sontag had left the editorial board of the Alldutsche Blätter in 1917. Pretzell resigned from the supervisory board of the journal in early 1918, peeved because of Claß’s attempts to

\textsuperscript{127} See Kruck, Geschichte des Alldutschen Verbands, 149.


\textsuperscript{129} See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 10/11 December 1932, BA-B, R 8408, vol. 172, 57.
control the editorial position of the paper. The editorial changes were many. Korodi gave up his post as “political director” of the Deutsche Zeitung in 1918, as did Max Lohan. After Wulle left the paper two years later, he was followed by the former Dresden pastor Max Maurenbrecher. Finding it difficult to recruit a suitable editor for the Deutsche Zeitung, Claß took over the editorial leadership himself, before he handed it over to Oberstleutnant Franz Schwendy.

The high rate of turnover, especially at the centers of decision-making, was unparalleled in the League’s history. As the political hardships accumulated, leading members showed signs of physical and psychological strain. Hopfen suffered from increased rheumatic fever and had to take drugs in 1920. Claß himself suffered from chronic anxieties about catching cold and his susceptibility to influenza. Immediately after the war a number of Pan-Germans died of illness or old age. Among them were several members of the general council (Gesamtvorstand) including Berthold Köring, Dr. Heinrich von Oberleithner, Professor Trautmann, Paul Lucius, and Dr. Ludwig Kuhlenbeck. In September 1920, Dr. Robert Pattei died, while Hauptpastor Georg Wilhelm Wagner died in mid-October shortly after his return to South Africa. After Putz from the executive council died in December 1919, Ernst von Hertzberg-Lottin followed him in December 1920. Professor Christian Calmbach, member of the general council and chairman of the Heilbronn chapter, died in an accident in May 1921. Hans Zabel, member of the executive council from Dortmund, died in August 1921, and Otto Füßlein from the general

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131 See also Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, chs 5.9. and 5.17.
133 Alldeutsche Blätter, 12 April 1919, 17 January 1920, 1 May 1920, 15 May 1920, and 29 May 1920.
134 Alldeutsche Blätter, 16 October 1920 and 27 November 1920.
council and the Lugau-Orlasnitz chapter passed away in September 1921.136 These deaths required an additional restructuring of the local chapters and executive bodies.

Such personal losses, combined with a rapid change in the membership, made it necessary to strengthen the Pan-German League’s core-constituency. The means to do so was the creation of an “honorary court” (Ehrenhof) in 1921. Set up as a symbolic extension of the leading bodies of the League, the court included an “honorary council” (Ehrenrat) and an “honorary executive court” (Ehrengericht), which was staffed by prominent members such as Stössel, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Stolte, Bang, Professor Kloß, Fritz, Bacmeister, Itzenplitz, Professor Stahlberg, Baron von Manteuffel, and the leading Pan-German activist in Switzerland, Freiherr Schilling-Cannstadt.137 Institutions such as these, which served mostly to bring together devoted supporters of the League’s chairman, bolstered Claß’s role as leader of the League, because they were staffed with his devoted supporters. Activists who joined these leading bodies of the Pan-German League after 1918, such as Georg Beutel (1863-1942) from the Dresden chapter, were either of the same generation as Claß, or, like Bang (1879-1945) and Gertzlaff von Hertzberg (1880-1945), slightly younger. Beutel was one of the most important leaders of the League’s local chapters, and he organized a large part of the League’s public relations, coordinating the publication of numerous pamphlets and leaflets. Bang became a close friend of Claß and one of the closest political advisors of Hugenberg. Hertzberg’s special relationship with Claß derived from Claß’s close relationship to Hertzberg’s father, who had helped expand the League into the Eastern provinces on the eve of the war, working with the German Conservative Party and the Agrarian League.138

136 Alldeutsche Blätter, 28 May 1921, 20 August 1921, and 8 October 1921.
137 Alldeutsche Blätter, 3 December 1921.
138 See also Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6/7 December 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 164, 119-120.
The changes in the League’s executive institutions accompanied significant changes among the rank-and-file. Membership continued to increase until 1924. The League counted 12,618 new members in 1917 compared to 2,354 who left; the number of new members in 1918 reached 9,623, compared to 4,998 who did not renew their membership. These figures revealed a significant turnover, which included almost a third of the rank-and-file. The immediate effect of the political radicalization during the November Revolution brought about another significant change, as 2,434 members left the League and 3,662 new members joined between September 1918 and January 1919. The largest upsurge in membership occurred in October 1918, when 1,188 new members joined, while the largest number of members (1,100) dropped their membership in November and December 1918. The chapter in Eilenburg near Halle/Saale increased its membership from 129 on 12 October 1918 to 180 on 16 November 1918. The membership in the Dresden chapter decreased initially from 598 in 1918 to 519 in 1919, before growing again to 530 in 1920 and 677 in 1921. The same pattern applied to the Chemnitz chapter, where membership stood at 304 in the summer of 1918, fell to 148 in 1920, then went up to 209 in 1921. Activity expanded almost everywhere in Germany. In Kiel membership increased from 282 in December 1920 to 350 within six months, while the chapter in Potsdam raised its membership from 115 in 1918 to 140 by 1924. Even smaller rural chapters, such as Gnoien and Dargun in Mecklenburg, which were founded shortly after the Revolution with no more than a handful of activists, increased their membership in 1920 to 55 and 80 respectively. This local trend reflected developments in the League’s national membership, which decreased

139 See for the following Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 30 August 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 125, 14.
140 Alldeutsche Blätter, 12 October 1918 and 16 November 1918.
141 See appendix Figure 3.
142 Alldeutsche Blätter, 8 June 1918 and 25 June 1921.
143 Alldeutsche Blätter, 21 February 1920, 11 June 1921 and Alldeutsche Blätter, 8 June 1918 and 28 June 1924.
144 Alldeutsche Blätter, 24 December 1920.
slightly from 36,377 in November 1918 to 34,074 in February 1919, before it increased to 36,839
members in Germany in June 1920.\footnote{See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6/7 December 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 126, 35-36 and Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19/20 June 1920, in ibidem, vol. 128, 35.} By early 1920, however, the League had lost 7,000
members because of higher membership fees, 2,400 members in territories controlled by the
Allies, and 400 members abroad, so total membership had fallen to 24,292 in January 1920. The
accession of new members increased the total membership, however, again to almost 37,000 by
the end of 1920.\footnote{See appendix Figure 1.} New members still outnumbered those who left from 1920 to 1921, but only
by about 300, which gave credence to Vietinghoff-Scheel’s fear of a major drop in the total
membership by the mid-1920s.\footnote{See also appendix Figure 8.}

The dramatic turnover did not mean that new members were interested in the everyday
running of the League. While the core of the rank-and-file became ideologically more
homogeneous, many new members only joined to express their general political convictions. Just
as every party or association consisted of members that had different degrees of activity and
engagement, the Pan-German League had both a limited core group and short-term or passive
members. Pezoldt from the Plauen chapter complained about the steady loss of activists.\footnote{Petzoldt to Claß, 25 November 1921, BA-B, R 133, 1-1a.} The
retreat from active politics among local members was the risk of depending upon a few leading
members to chair local chapters in the province. Pezoldt, who also served as the chairman of the
Gauverband Vogtland, lamented that many chapters, such as Auerbach, Falkenstein, Bad Elster,
Reichenbach, Markneukirchen, and Schönheide, had not organized activities for years. Plauen,
Zwickau, Ölsnitz, Klingenthal, and Schleiz, on the other hand, mobilized their members, while
the Oberelbegau recognized the possibility of refounding local chapters that had either “decayed” during the war or been dissolved in the wake of the revolution, as in Oschatz and Radeberg.\textsuperscript{149}

As the dramatic fluctuation in membership emphasized, the Pan-German League was at the mercy of political events. After the Weimar Republic stabilized in 1924, the League lost members rapidly. In 1926, Vietinghoff-Scheel complained that the League was “crumbling away from year to year,” while the income from membership dues was insufficient to cover the League’s expenses.\textsuperscript{150} A year later, he estimated that of the 400 local chapters in the Pan-German League, only 25 to 30 contributed funds to the national treasury, another 70 to 80 chapters devoted some time and energy, while the rest “contribute nothing at all.”\textsuperscript{151} This lethargy was partly due to a decrease of nationalist fervor during the quiet mid-1920s, but it spoke to more profound structural problems that began to seriously plague the League and that had to do with its own limited social boundaries. One proposal to overcome this social isolation was put forward by Vietinghoff-Scheel in 1918, who recommended the founding of “German Communities” \textit{(Deutsche Gemeinschaften)}, organizations that would precede the foundation of full-fledged local chapters, aiming particularly to attract Catholic members who were still hostile the League.\textsuperscript{152} Liebert was among those in the executive committee who voiced skepticism about this plan, so the proposal was buried shortly before the war’s end.\textsuperscript{153} Instead of extending participation in the local chapters, Vietinghoff-Scheel then suggested calling on a “reliable thousand” \textit{(Vertrauenswürdiges Tausend)} members, a group of activists outside of the leading bodies of the League, who would establish core constituencies of five members in 200 selected local

\textsuperscript{150} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 3 September 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 147, 99.
\textsuperscript{151} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12/13 February 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 149, 78.
\textsuperscript{152} See „Denkschrift Vietinghoff-Scheel‖, n.d. [September 1918], BA-B, R 8048, vol. 120, 51-59.
\textsuperscript{153} See „Bemerkungen Eduard von Liebert‖, n.d. [September 1918], BA-B, R 8048, vol. 120, 6b-6d.
These thousand members embodied the exclusiveness of the Pan-German League, for they would be recruited from long-term members. Vietinghoff-Scheel’s program aimed at the unification of the League’s activists into selected exclusive circles, which were designed to create strong relationships across the country.

In hopes of broadening the League’s appeal, other groups were planned to organize activists who were not members of the League. Members of these circles were to serve as a vanguard to be enlisted in a “root directory” (*Nationale Stammrolle*), or “German community” (*Deutsche Gemeinschaft*), although the Pan-German activists referred to themselves as the “officer corps.”

The *Deutschbund* served as a model for such schemes. In 1919 Vietinghoff-Scheel delivered a more elaborate proposal to structure political leadership of Germany “from top down.” The League would appoint a *Volk* council, a government that would consist of 17 Pan-Germans of suitable educational background, to run a government according to principles of aristocratic leadership and exclusive selection. The council would perpetuate the leading role of the Pan-German League, appointing new members from the League when existing members left office.

These efforts by Vietinghoff-Scheel all “failed miserably,” because no one was willing to engage fully in the field to which he had been assigned on the basis of his education or competence. Moreover, the *Volk* council and the “root directory” hardly concealed the influence of the movement’s educated and wealthy activists, who had served most reliably over the years. The League’s mobilization was designed to appeal to the League’s traditional

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154 See *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 11 January 1919.
constituencies; the social background of members of the executive committee, the executive council, the Gau districts, and the local chapters all documented the middle-class and Bürgertum bias of the League. The League also attempted to recruit aristocratic members, agrarian estate owners, and army officers. Although their share of the overall membership did not exceed two percent of the Pan-German League, nobles had long played a central role as mediators to the Hohenzollerns, the monarchies in the German states, and to chancellors, especially Bülow. Pan-German nobles opened doors when petitions had to be delivered or pamphlets and reform programs promoted - like Stössel who delivered Claß’s “Kaiser-book” to the Hohenzollern Crown Prince. Pan-German nobles supported the League as the leading extraparliamentary association to “fight against the dark powers that have ruined country and people and are ruining them further, to rebuild the Empire on bases that secure an orderly existence and a true development.” While these aristocrats called on their “estate comrades” (Standesgenossen), similar appeals were issued to military “comrades” and “farming-profession comrades.” The use of the salutation “comrade” was meant to appropriate the language of socio-economic solidarity and exclusivity, which had been popularized by the Socialists.

The contempt of the League for members from the working class extended to women of all classes. The League failed to attract significant numbers of women, and it attempted only slowly to expand its appeal to female members who, before the war, had been mainly organized in women’s auxiliary groups, which had supported male-dominated local chapters. The chapter in

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158 See appendix Table 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.
160 See also Stegmann, Bismarcks Erben, 297 and Malinowski, Vom König zum Führer, 187.
Hamburg counted only four women out of 640 members 1914. The League´s male leadership maintained an antagonistic position on social and political emancipation for women. Pan-German women did, however, serve a vital function in broadening the League´s symbolic appeal to nationalist or patriotic women, if only to accompany their Pan-German men. In fact, women played a more important role in the League than headquarters acknowledged as they were active in organizing fundraising, public lectures, social events, and meetings, as well as in giving these activities an element of sociability and a sense of family spirit. Similar activities had long been organized by the Navy League and the Colonial Society, which were more progressive in integrating female members. Several women´s groups of the Pan-German League, especially in the local chapters of Berlin, Danzig, Cologne, and Munich, were active in the nationalist German Women´s League (Deutscher Frauenbund), which had been founded in 1909 under the guidance of Liebert to promote the expansion of the German Navy and the Army. However, only on 24 October 1915 were the League´s statutes revised to reflect the fact that the sociability provided by women was an asset to the League´s appeal. Women were now allowed to join the Pan-German League as full members. Although the executive committee discussed the need to assign more important areas of responsibility to womens´ organizations, crucial political duties were not transferred from men to women on either the national or local levels. After the war, women were rare in the leading institutions of the Pan-German League than they were in other nationalist organizations, notably the DNVP. The local chapters of the League were as a rule chaired by

163 Hering, Konstruierte Nation, 389 and 252.
164 See Andrea Süchting-Hänger, „Das Gewissen der Nation:” Nationales Engagement und politisches Handeln konserativer Frauenorganisationen 1900-1937 (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2002), 76-90.
165 See also Ute Planert, Antifeminismus im Kaiserreich: Diskurs, soziale Formation und politische Mentalität (Göttingen: Vandenhoec & Ruprecht, 1998), 96-124; Hering, Konstruierte Nation, 390; and Chickering: We Men Who Feel Most German, 171-172.
166 Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 5 October 1917, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 115.
167 See Raffael Scheck, Mothers of the Nation: Right-Wing Women in Weimar Germany (Oxford: Berg, 2004); Andrea Süchting-Hänger, Das Gewissen der Nation; Kirsten Heinsohn, Konservative Parteien in Deutschland 1912 bis 1933: Demokratie und Partizipation in geschlechterhistorischer Perspektive (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2010);
men, although the picture slightly changed after 1919. In Pan-German thinking men made history. Wives and daughters were cherished as family members and for supporting the men who engaged in political activism (Claß’s wife Mathilde was a good example of the emotional and intellectual dependence of many Pan-Germans on their female family members). The Pan-German League, however, did not become a haven for female activism after the war and it remained a predominantly male association; a bulwark against feminization as well as democratization.

Expansion and Inflation: Reorganizing the Pan-German League’s Media and Finances

While the League failed to broaden the League’s appeal beyond its traditional constituencies, it restructured the League’s media presence and finances and tried to secure an influential place in the public. Expanding its public profile strained the League’s resources, as the acquisition and foundation of new papers led to heavy financial obligations, which could not be covered by regular sources of income. During the war, the financial assets of almost all of the nationalist associations had been siphoned off to the war effort. After the war, the media business of the Pan-Germans became increasingly linked to the Hugenberg consortium, which aimed at the mobilization of both a nationalist readership and DNVP voters. Hugenberg’s press enterprise included the Deutsche Zeitung, as well as important dailies like the Berliner Börsen-Zeitung, the Kreuz-Zeitung, and the Deutsche Tageszeitung. Altogether Hugenberg published papers with a total circulation of 340,000 in 1925 and 500,000 in 1930. By 1 April 1920,
however, the *Deutsche Zeitung* had a readership of only 40,000, which reflected a decrease in readership of 8,000 in the wake of Kapp Putsch in 1920.\textsuperscript{171} Already by the end of 1918, losses exceeded 665,000 Mark, and the supervisory board, which included Claß, Fritz, Hopfen, and Hertzberg, calculated that substantial subsidies would be necessary in the future.\textsuperscript{172} When inflation hit the newspaper market, the production expenses of *Deutschlands Erneuerung*, of which Pan-Germans remained in control, reached 700,000 Mark during the first 6 weeks of 1922 alone. The secretary of the League´s headquarters in Berlin, Major von Roeder, warned the League’s leaders that before spending a Pfennig these days the treasury had to think about it ten times beforehand.\textsuperscript{173} All the nationalist associations had to grapple with such hardships. The Navy League fell from 100,000 members in 1920 to 37,000 in 1925, while its paper *Die Flotte* lost half of its readership.\textsuperscript{174} The situation was even worse in the case of the Army League, which lost over 90 percent of its prewar membership counting 31,000 activists in 1919 and forcing Keim to restart his publishing activities by transforming the *Jahrbuch für die deutsche Armee und Marine* into the weekly *Politik und Wehrmacht* in 1919, with a paltry 450 subscribers and the editorial support of Liebig.\textsuperscript{175}

To stabilize the Pan-German´s media presence, Lehmann and Hugenberg expanded their enterprises. Hugenberg´s empire included a variety of news agencies like the “Auslands-Anzeigen GmbH” the “Deutscher Überseedienst,” the “August-Scherl Verlag”, the “Deutsche Lichtbild-Gesellschaft,” and the “VERA Verlagsgesellschaft.” All of these enterprises had been

\textsuperscript{171} Hauptleitung (Claß) to Hopfen, 6 April 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 392, 109.

\textsuperscript{172} Aufsichtsrat to Gesellschafter der Neudeutschen Verlags- und Treuhandgesellschaft, 19 April 1919, STA Friedberg, NL August Gebhard, No. 8, vol. 3, n.p.

\textsuperscript{173} Roeder to Lucius, 21 March 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 208, 153.


founded between 1914 and 1917 and laid the foundation for a massive takeover of bankrupt
newspapers across Germany during the Weimar Republic.\textsuperscript{176} Lehmanna, for instance, increased
his financial investment in his publishing house in Munich, and he acquired newspapers like the
\textit{Münchner Augsburger Zeitung} with the help of Hopfen and Claß in 1920.\textsuperscript{177} The Pan-German
League also wanted to assert its independence and to deal with rising costs. Claß invested
150,000 Mark in the \textit{Deutsche Tageszeitung}, in order to purchase a printing press that provided
significant financial relief.\textsuperscript{178} The take-over of the \textit{Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung} in 1921
extended the small media empire of the Pan-German League in Austria, which had as its
foundation the “Neudeutsche Verlag- und Treuhandgesellschaft.”\textsuperscript{179} The acquisition of the
\textit{Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung}, which had served as the \textit{Ostdeutsche Rundschau} for the
Schönerer movement, added to the financial burdens of Claß’s media enterprises, which were
only partly compensated by fundraising and advertising in Austria.\textsuperscript{180} In fact, in 1927 the
\textit{Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung} was handed over to publishers who sympathized with
Hitler.\textsuperscript{181} Inflation weighed on the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter} in Austria, which was printed in Austria
for the Austrian subscribers. Production costs increased to levels that by 1925 could not be
covered by subscriptions.\textsuperscript{182}

The onset of inflation in both Germany and Austria resulted in competition for the limited
financial funds between the League’s two headquarters in Berlin and Graz. Claß managed the
debts and imposed budgetary constraints on the Austrian Pan-German League, attempting to

\textsuperscript{176} See Guratzsch, \textit{Macht durch Organisation}; Holzbach, \textit{Das „System Hugenberg“}; and Wernecke and Heller, \textit{Der vergessene Führer}.
\textsuperscript{177} Claß to Hopfen, 26 April 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 392, 111-114.
\textsuperscript{178} Claß to Direktor Meesmann, 30 June 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 206, 39-40.
\textsuperscript{179} Claß to Hopfen, 31 May 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 392, 206.
\textsuperscript{181} Roeder to Karl Koehler, 4 February 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 213, 38.
\textsuperscript{182} Gruber to Direktor Salb, 11 August 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 211, 244-245 and Dr. Salb to Dr. Gruber, 14 August 1925, in ibidem, 246.
balance the Austrian budget through additional collections in Germany and in Austria. Geiser also organized collections in Austria, but the situation remained difficult, complicating political activities. The drop in value of the Mark and the Krone between 1920 and 1923 made it almost impossible to keep the League’s finances under control in either Germany or Austria. Members were unwilling to pay their membership dues or to subscribe to the *Alldeutsche Blätter* or *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*. In May 1922, Vietinghoff-Scheel calculated that the membership dues, which had risen from 4 Mark before the war to 6 to 25 Mark in 1922, would have to be increased to 200 Mark if headquarters were to cover costs.\(^{183}\) Such an increase would, he feared, lead to a loss of one third of the members. The production costs of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* had increased from 21,000 Mark before the war to 134,000 Mark in early 1919, and they could be met only by additional subsidies from headquarters.\(^ {184}\) In 1919, the shortage of paper temporarily forced the League to accept membership applications at reduced dues of 3 Mark.\(^{185}\) The production costs of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* had increased from 21,000 before the war to 134,000 Mark in early 1919, the difference only being met by additional subsidies from the headquarters, which totaled 94,000 Mark per annum in 1918/1919.\(^ {186}\) The subscription fee for the general reader of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* had already increased from 2 Mark in 1914 to 5.20 Mark in 1919, and, in 1919, 5 Mark of the League’s membership fee of 6 Mark was invested in the production of the paper.\(^ {187}\) In these dire circumstances, as subscription fees no longer covered costs of producing the *Alldeutsche Blätter*, the journal was cut back in April 1920 to appearing


\(^{184}\) Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 225.


\(^{186}\) Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 205, 225.

every second week with only eight pages. Book reviews were eliminated.188 Only ten issues appeared with even fewer pages in 1923.189 The Deutsche Zeitung faced increases in production costs, which forced Lehmann to announce a tripling of the sales price in the summer of 1922.190 By 1923 he was resetting the paper’s price on a weekly basis.

The inflation hit every aspect of the League’s operations. The headquarters in Berlin lost almost 60 percent of its staff, and three out of its four itinerant speakers between 1923 and 1926.191 In 1922, only one staff member from headquarters could attend the meetings of the executive committee. The advertising office had to be downsized as well. Julius Schön also left as the head of the advertising office (Werbeabteilung), and when Grube and Schilling-Cannstatt left their posts, no successors were appointed.192 The inflation also made clear that the expansion in the number of local chapters at the end of the war had owed more to the work of professional speakers and general nationalist activism than anything done by the League.

The reduction in the staff at headquarters had a particularly severe impact. The foundation of the Northern German Order-Bloc (Norddeutscher Ordnungsblock), which Claß helped set up between 1920 and 1921 with the help of leading Pan-Germans like Thomsen, Kloß, Professor Solger, his close friend Albert Vowinkel, and Salm-Horstmar, did not, contrary to his hopes, function as a central mediating and coordinating institution of the Right, as the United Patriotic Associations (Vereinigte Vaterländische Verbände) had earlier.193 Created in the wake of left-wing uprisings, especially in Thuringia, Mecklenburg, and the Ruhr area, this new institution

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188 Roeder to Adolf Meinecke, 29 February 1924, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 210, 28b.
189 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 14 January 1922.
191 Vietinghoff-Scheel to the local chapters, 30 December 1926, STA Dresden, 13.1., vol. 9, 125.
aimed at coordinating advertising campaigns in Germany but accomplished little. In 1922, only four itinerant speakers were active in Germany and Austria. Headquarters, which cost the League 600,000 Mark per annum, was staffed by only two full-time employees, who had to manage 500 local chapters and 30 districts. In Austria, the financial resources of the headquarters in Graz were likewise insufficient (almost the entire budget of 500,000 Mark was spent on administration), although the ratio of members to the general population was three times what it was in Germany. Mismanagement on the local level kept adding to the financial shortcomings. Already in September 1918, Vietinghoff-Scheel’s report demonstrated the dire budget confronting the League after the war and Claß complained with a bitter tone that the League had probably lost about 1 million Mark due to unprofessional handling of the chapters’ membership dues.

In these circumstances the League required extraordinary subsidies and contributions from wealthy patrons. In September 1918 a voluntary surcharge on 2,600 members brought in 200,000 Mark into the League’s treasury, far less than the two million Mark thought necessary. In 1921, similar surcharges yielded 170,000 Mark from 10,200 members, while other members were asked to donate by mail. In 1922, another surcharge of a total of 350,000 Mark was abandoned in the face of members’ reluctance. These failures to secure stable funding of the League put Claß under severe stress and frustration. In May 1922 Claß warned the executive committee that the existence of the League was in jeopardy if the chapters were not able to contribute additional funds. The statutes of September 1919 had stipulated that the insufficient

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197 Alldeutsche Blätter, 20 May 1922.

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collection of dues by the local chapters would trigger centralized collection from Berlin.\textsuperscript{199} Now, in 1922, the executive committee agreed to change the League’s statutes in order to collect dues in advance. Every local chapter was required to transfer the equivalent of 4 Goldmark, the only stable form of currency during the inflation, per member. The value of the \textit{Papiermark} to the Goldmark was to be determined by the headquarters four times a year.\textsuperscript{200} Thus in the summer of 1923, headquarters determined that in the third quarter of the year one Goldmark equaled 1,000 \textit{Papiermark} and that the subscription fee for the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter} would be 480 Mark for the next three months.\textsuperscript{201} Even with this device, effective budgeting was not possible. Members of the League in Austria took the financing of their expenditures into their own hands, so headquarters in Berlin ceased to manage the financial affairs of the headquarters in Graz. Austrian members were themselves asked to pay an annual fee of one \textit{Zoll-Goldkrone} for the year 1923. In addition, every member who subscribed to the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter} had to pay a surcharge of 4,000 Kronen, while dependent family members and students had to pay 2,000.\textsuperscript{202}

Attempts to raise funds among members had accompanied special collection-drives among wealthy patrons like in July 1914, for instance, when an appeal to 1,500 “generally wealthy members” helped increase the budget of the extraordinary Working and Defense Treasuries (\textit{Betriebs- und Werbeschatz}).\textsuperscript{203} Now, small sums were passed on to the Defense Treasure from Pan-Germans who had died in the war, but these were only minor contributions compared to the overall financial problems of the League.\textsuperscript{204} Regular subsidies came mainly from the coal and steel industry in the Ruhr, Saxony, and Bavaria. Anton von Rieppel of the

\textsuperscript{199} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 13 September 1919 and 4 October 1919.
\textsuperscript{200} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 23 September 1922.
\textsuperscript{201} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 29 May 1923.
\textsuperscript{202} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 20 October 1922.
\textsuperscript{203} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4 July 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 95, 42.
\textsuperscript{204} See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 1 February 1919.
“Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg” (MAN) and the Siemens-Schuckert plants in Berlin was one of the League’s leading supporters. He had supported the Pan-German League since 1915. Rieppel was a member of the League as well as Reinhard Mannesmann and Paul Reusch from the MAN plants. Support for the mobilizational efforts of the Pan-German League had come from MAN already during the Second Moroccan Crisis of 1911 and Rieppel, who worked for the MAN since 1889, certainly had a word in this cooperation between MAN and the League. The financial assets over which he presided were immense. He also served as a member of the supervisory board of the “Bayerische Diskonto- und Wechselbank AG Nürnberg” and the “Kriegskreditbank Nürnberg-Fürth,” while one of his sons had founded the well-funded Association for the Combating of Bolshevism (Vereinigung zur Bekämpfung des Bolschewismus). Rieppel’s connections as a member of the board of directors of the Central Association of German Industrialists helped further in acquiring funds for the League. Borsig in Berlin, the textile industrial Krahwinkel in Vollmershausen, the machine producer Lanz in Mannheim, and Albert Hoesch and Willy Scheidt from the coal industry in Harpen also counted among the League’s wealthy patrons after the war, as well as the entrepreneur Vowinckel, who was a close friend of Claß since 1919 and had joined the executive committee of the League in 1924.

As part of the same effort to raise funds among wealthy patrons, Breusing had toured Thuringia and Saxony to collect money for the Deutsche Zeitung. In 1920, he collected another

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205 See Krebs, „Der Alldeutsche Verband,” 17.
207 Holzbach, Das „System Hugenberg, “ 142.
40,000 Mark in Crimmitschau.\textsuperscript{211} Rural areas like those in the district of “Uckermark-Oberbarnim,” were less receptive to the League’s pleas. Still in 1925, Claß listed among the League’s potential donors important names like Gok (Blohm & Voss/Hamburg), but, while even Gok had only limited funds at his disposal to back the League, the circle of financial supporters became increasingly smaller. Kirdorf, who wired substantial funds to Hitler’s movement as well, and, to certain extent, Lehmann remained active supporters, but the bulk of financial contributions came mostly from smaller business men in Prussia and Saxony.\textsuperscript{212} The situation, however, did not improve and, in 1926, Roeder from the headquarters admitted that the League had only “a few friends in industry and among agrarians who had their own financial problems.”\textsuperscript{213} Proposals to raise money in America and Brazil had no prospect of success, because there were no funds to pay Pan-German agitators to travel to America.\textsuperscript{214} The Pan-German League had no meaningful presence in North America after the war, nor did it cooperate with other nationalist leagues there, except for the Barbarossa League (\textit{Barbarossa Bund}) in New York.\textsuperscript{215}

The wealthy members and “nationally-minded” citizens who contributed to the Pan-German cause typified the men who made up the chapters. The chapters in Lübeck and Hohenlimburg specified the names of wealthy businessmen in trade and light industry, while the chapter in Hattingen/Ruhr listed wealthy businessmen and the directors of local mine and steel

\textsuperscript{211} Breusing at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 14/15 February 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 127, 27.


\textsuperscript{213} Roeder to Karl Menne, 25 May 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 212, 313.

\textsuperscript{214} See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 24 and 25 January 1903, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 37, 2.

\textsuperscript{215} Hauptleitung to Dr. Anton Josef Hecker, 6 April 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 208, 185-186; Herbert Volck to Vietinghoff-Scheel, 8 May 1922, in ibidem, 212; Vietinghoff-Scheel to Herbert Volck, 11 May 1922, in ibidem, 219; and Headquarters to Dr. Friedrich Grosse, 5 September 1922, in ibidem, 295.
works. Nevertheless, Claß and Vietinghoff-Scheel repeatedly complained about the insufficient attempts of local chapters to collect money from local industrial elites. Additional funding, like the financial transfer that Liebert arranged in 1921, helped in managing the financial shortcomings. As the former chairman of the Imperial Association for Fighting against Social Democracy, dissolved in 1918, he secured assets worth 50,000 Mark from the association for the Pan-German League, while Salm-Horstmar acquired 50,000 Mark from wealthy patrons in Austria. These contributions, however, did not put the League on a stable footing and made Claß even suggest that the League learn from the Jews, who, he claimed, successfully raised money for liberal and left-wing movements.

The financial shortcomings were visible on all levels, although special donations secured the survival of the Alldeutsche Blätter, which published only ten issues between January 1923 and March 1924. The League’s financial woes had symbolic implications. Meetings of the executive committee were often cancelled because members could not be compensated for their travel expenses. In 1923, the executive committee met only once. Itinerant speakers such as Schilling resigned during the inflation because the League could not adequately pay them. The League’s plight went even so far that when the League planned to celebrate its 30th anniversary in 1920, it cancelled major celebrations because it lacked the necessary funds. The League also intended to offer to its members an official history of the League by the editor of the Alldeutsche

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219 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6/7 December 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 126, 36.
220 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 5.14.
Blätter Otto Bonhard, as a complimentary Festschrift. The distribution to all of the members became financially impossible. Instead, the League advertized Bonhard’s book at a reduced price of 17 instead of 20 Mark until the end of 1920.

Therefore, neither the expansion of the Pan-German League into Austria nor the attendant increase in membership could put the League on a sound financial footing. The shortage of money was balanced only by extraordinary collections and financial support from patrons. The financial problems that had plagued the League since its foundation thus remained unresolved. The organization could not generate sufficient regular sources of income, be they subscription fees or membership dues. Only extraordinary funding through individual patrons, most of them from Germany’s merchant and industrial elites (especially from the Ruhr area) or the educated bourgeoisie, secured the existence of the Pan-German League during the Weimar Republic.

Financial problems made it hard for the League’s leaders “to keep our heads above water given the monetary situation these days.” Claß had predicted in December 1918 that the Pan-German League would not turn into a mass-movement after the war. But despite inflation and endemic financial shortages the following years until 1923/24 would become the most successful era of activism in Germany and in Austria in the Pan-German League’s history. This activism found vent in efforts to organize political anti-Semitism as a mass movement, to appeal to youth, and to establish early contacts with the National Socialists.

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223 Alldeutsche Blätter, 27 November 1920.
IV. Call to Arms, 1919-1923

The Pan-Germans’ failure to mobilize military and aristocratic elites in the cause of counterrevolution, their persisting fears about the erosion of order, hierarchy, and authority after the revolution, reinforced Claß’s determination to push for a dictatorship, to promote anti-Semitism, and to establish contacts with Free Corps units, as well as with the incipient National Socialist movement. The revolution, however, laid bare the hollowness of the Pan-Germans’ pretensions to act on behalf of all Germans. Their designs on leadership foundered on an ideological dilemma: the reconciliation of mass inclusion and political exclusivity.1 Pan-German appeals to monarchical principles, their calls for the exclusion of liberal and left-wing parties, and their advocacy of dictatorial rule by experts hardly appealed to the young politicized masses after the revolution. Other, more successful radical nationalist organizations spoke to broader constituencies with new forms of political action and paramilitary violence. One of these organizations was the Protection League, which was supposed to work in a division of labor with the Pan-German League, mobilizing an anti-Semitic membership that the Pan-Germans were neither willing nor able to absorb. The Pan-Germans also initially supported the NSDAP. Early cooperation had consequences for both the Pan-German League and the NSDAP. The Nazi movement’s broader social and political appeal, as well as its populist commitment to a *Volksgemeinschaft* (which went beyond elitist notions of class society), helped it to exploit bourgeois associational life and to put pressure on the Pan-German League.

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1 See also Retallack, *Notables of the Right*, 2.
Approaching Old Elites: Monarchical Failure and Military Dictatorship

The failure of the Burgfrieden persuaded the Pan-Germans that a unified German people could be realized only through dictatorship. In January 1919 Claß concluded anew that monarchy was the only political order suitable for the German people.\(^2\) His plans to reestablish the Hohenzollern monarchy featured a military dictatorship, which would allow counterrevolutionary forces to dismantle the Republic. To this end, and in hopes of securing the support of the army, Claß came into contact with two icons of the Supreme Command (OHL). He met with Ludendorff in early 1919, shortly after the general’s return from exile in Sweden, where he had fled after the revolution. The meeting was cordial. Although he had turned down Claß’s offer to cooperate in organizing a civil-military dictatorship in October 1917, Ludendorff now agreed that Germany’s downfall during the war had been due to the failure of the OHL and Pan-German League to work together for final victory.\(^3\) Nonetheless, Ludendorff was not now inclined to join forces with the Pan-Germans, while he continued to pursue his own plans, including preparations in 1919 and 1920 for the Kapp-Putsch (to which Claß had been privy since November 1919).\(^4\) Hopfen and Wulle were also in contact with Ludendorff in 1919, but they complained that Ludendorff was often unavailable when travelling around Germany to organize his own counter-revolutionary activities.\(^5\)

In the early fall of 1919, Claß contacted the other icon of the OHL, Field Marshall von Hindenburg, in Hannover, after Claß returned from his stay at Norderney, where he finished the revisions for his “Einhart-book.”\(^6\) Hindenburg welcomed Claß into his home, but he opposed


\(^3\) Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, chs 2.9, 2.10, and 6.19.


\(^6\) Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 5.4.
Claß’s comments about the role of Jews in Germany’s downfall. Hindenburg reminded Claß that he “never was and never will be an anti-Semite,” since there were “decent Jews as much as there are decent Christians and there are indecent Jews as much as there are indecent Christians.” Claß thereupon concluded that Hindenburg was unfit for political leadership. His disappointment with Hindenburg was similar to his experience with Ludendorff during wartime; neither proved to be an ally.

The failure of Claß’s plans to establish a dictatorship with the aid of Hindenburg and Ludendorff accompanied the refusal of Germany’s monarchs to reestablish their authority, as Claß had hoped they would. The vacuum of power immediately after the war had raised a scenario in Claß’s mind that would combine monarchical authority, expert governance by the Bildungsbürgertum, and military dictatorship. The Hohenzollern monarchy was still the center of Pan-German visions of Germany’s political and cultural future, and close ties between the Grumme-Douglas and Wilhelm II lasted well into the Republic. Wilhelm, however, had demonstrated his political and military incompetence during the war and his unglorious escape to Doorn in The Netherlands left no doubt that Wilhelm had lost any credibility to serve as monarch. While Wilhelm was of “unsound mind” for Claß, the Crown Prince was no viable alternative, once he renounced his claim to the throne in November 1918; nor did he leave a favorable impression on Claß after the two met twice in Potsdam in the spring of 1919. Consequently, Claß pinned his hopes on the Crown Prince’s eldest son, Prince Friedrich Wilhelm

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7 Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch. 5.4.
8 Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch. 5.18.
of Prussia, who joined the Pan-German League after the release of the Bamberg Declaration in February 1919.\footnote{See Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 5.3, also\textit{ and Idem in the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 26 November 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 133, 10.}

In August 1919 Claß, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Hertzberg, Pogge, Hopfen, and Bang had again explained during the meeting of the League’s executive committee that the Pan-German program of comprehensive reform could only be put into practice in a monarchy. Claß set a plan in motion in the headquarters of the Pan-German League in Berlin that would test the Hohenzollern Prince’s fitness to serve as a dictator.\footnote{Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 30 August 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 125, 18-25.} Claß brought together Vietinghoff-Scheel, Bang, Thomsen, Fritz, Salm-Horstmar, Gertzlaff von Hertzberg and his father, Ernst von Hertzberg, to act out a scenario in which the prince formed a dictatorial cabinet of experts under his temporary leadership. The prince agreed to serve as a representative of the Hohenzollerns and Friedrich Wilhelm joined in rehearsing such a coup. Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Fritz, Bang, Salm-Horstmar, Thomsen, as well as Hertzberg and his father staged such a coup performance in which the Prince acted for Claß as if he exercised his powers as a monarchical dictator by preparing a declaration and appointing members of a civil-military dictatorial cabinet.\footnote{Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 5.3.} All of these simulations of course became redundant after Prince Friedrich Wilhelm von Hohenzollern contracted cancer in 1924 and died in March 1925.\footnote{Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 5.3.}

Other plans went no further than this “putsch game.” In Saxony, Lieutenant-General Rudolf Hammer, who had ties to the League, employed his contacts with the Wettin crown prince, Friedrich August Georg, to initiate talks about restoring the monarchy in Dresden. He attempted to persuade the crown prince not to become a Catholic priest (he was finally ordained...
in 1924) and instead to claim the throne. As an alternative to a Wettin restoration, the League’s chapters in Dresden, Leipzig, and Plauen resurrected plans for the annexation of Saxony by Prussia. Hopfen tried to save the Wittelsbach monarchy in Bavaria. Hopfen and the Wittelsbach Crown Prince had known each other since the university and the Crown Prince voiced his disappointment that Hopfen did not visit him more often at the front during the war, although he understood that the Supreme Command tried to limit interactions between Pan-German leaders and front commanders. After the abdication of King Ludwig III, the Pan-Germans turned to the crown prince, whom Hopfen had known since their student days together. In several meetings with Hopfen in the fall of 1919, Crown Prince Rupprecht declared that the war had been lost because of the incompetence of the military and political leadership. However, he could identify no suitable candidate for the imperial throne after he had ruled himself out, because he was physically and emotionally exhausted from his military service during the war. The physical frailty of the Wittelsbach Crown Prince did not dissuade Hopfen, but the Crown Prince’s remark that anti-Semitism was not an efficient means to charge the Jews with the responsibility of Germany losing the war. The failure to persuade Germany’s royalty to return to the throne, as well as the unavailability of Hindenburg and Ludendorff for a military dictatorship, invited the conclusion that the old leaders of Imperial Germany were unable or unwilling to fight the Weimar Republic. Claß therefore turned increasingly toward the new military forces that attempted to fill the vacuum of power.

Pulling Strings without Puppets: The Free Corps, Civil Defense Guards, and the Pan-German League

As it had developed during the war, the Pan-German vision of dictatorship entailed military force against left-wing revolutionaries and supporters of the Republic. The role of the army was thus always central. Now, however, Claß planned to supplement the professional soldiers with paramilitary troops as anti-partisan units against the new Republic. Pan-German leaders maintained contacts with local military units. Hopfen, Grube, and Lehmann are prime examples of those Pan-Germans who not only argued in favor of a counter-revolution, but who themselves became counter-revolutionaries determined to re-establish hierarchical political order and to fight democratization.  

Hopfen had well-established contacts with the local army leaders in Starnberg, and he eagerly joined when Württemberg General Otto Haas entered Munich in April and May 1919 with his Free Corps unit of some 2,300 troops to overthrow “Soviet Republic” proclaimed by the writer Ernst Toller with the help of a Bolshevist “Red Army.” For his part, Grube helped to imprison one of the leaders of the local council in Würzburg, while Lehmann joined the right-wing military opposition in Munich. On 27 December 1918, the radical nationalist and anti-Semitic Thulegesellschaft worked out a detailed putsch plan against the government of the Independent Social Democrat Kurt Eisner, who had come to power in Bavaria on 7 November 1918. Eisner’s regime would last only one week, but its violent suppression cost more than 600 lives, including, eventually, Eisner himself.

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17 See for the following also Krebs, „Der Alldutsche Verband,“ 54-60.
19 Alldeutsche Blätter, 12 January 1926.
During both the Eisner regime and the second Communist *Räterepublik*, Lehmann helped acquire weapons, the purchase of which had been co-financed by Wilhelm Seitz, the director of the Dresdner Bank in Munich. Home searches were carried out by the local police in and around Munich and Lehmann was arrested on 28 December 1918.\(^\text{21}\) He was soon released from prison. As a well-known representative of military opposition to the revolutionary councils in Munich, Lehmann was wise enough to hide from the revolutionaries the following spring. From the earliest days of the revolution in Munich, Lehmann went further than most of the Pan-Germans by actively supporting the civil defense units (*Einwohnerwehren*). Lehmann’s foster son Fritz Minke was arrested for serving in a civil defense unit in Munich to fight the Spartakus groups.\(^\text{22}\) He also helped to distribute weapons and was shortlisted to become the unit’s secretary. Minke was imprisoned in the spring 1919, while Lehmann was arrested at home again but was discharged shortly after from the Stadelheim prison on 3 March 1919. Lehmann’s commitment to roll back the revolutionaries did not stop there. In April 1919, the *Thulegesellschaft* co-organized another unsuccessful putsch in Munich with the support of radical activists and future National Socialists like Rudolf Heß, Hans Frank, and Alfred Rosenberg.\(^\text{23}\)

The radical activism that Lehmann pursued in the name of the *Thulegesellschaft* helped establish him as a leader of the counter-revolutionary movement. This reputation had its price. On 28 June, Lehmann received information that he was on an arrest list drawn up by the French military, and his wife remembered him saying it would be best if all of the people on the list committed suicide instead of handing themselves over to the Allies. Persecution of Pan-German activists was nothing new, since they had been targeted by the Imperial Government during the war, but the danger of criminal prosecution during the early years of the Weimar Republic led

\(^{21}\) Hopfen to Claß, 1 January 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 392, 1-2. See also Krebs, „Der Alldutsche Verband,“ 56.
\(^{22}\) See for the following  Lehmann, *Der Verleger J.F. Lehmann*, 46-58.
\(^{23}\) See Krebs, „Der Alldutsche Verband,“ 58.
many leading activists to doubt their physical safety. Claß himself was shocked to learn that the French occupation forces had orders to arrest him in Mainz.²⁴

In the summer of 1919, the Pan-Germans pursued their contacts with officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers who had been dismissed in the wake of the Versailles settlement. Hertzberg sought to organize support for the Pan-Germans’ plans for military dictatorship in Pomerania, Oldenburg in Western Prussia, von der Osten in Brandenburg, Seydlitz in Silesia, and Ledebur in Westphalia.²⁵ Hertzberg and Vietinghoff-Scheel traveled to the Baltics to contact Free Corps leaders who were still operating there like the unit of the *Eiserne Division* in Mitau, for instance.²⁶ By the spring of 1919, a total of 250,000 to 400,000 men were organized in paramilitary Free Corps units, which were troops that were not a part of the official *Reichswehr*.

To forestall a Council Republic (*Räterepublik*) in Austria, Bavaria helped organize and finance a *Heimwehr* starting in 1920/1921 with 110,000 paramilitaries – a figure that peaked with 300,000 to 400,000 as late as between 1928 and 1930.²⁸ These provisional Free Corps troops were dissolved on 27 May 1919 by the Minister of Defense Gustav Noske and the Prussian Minister of War Oberst Walther Reinhardt.²⁹ These Free Corps units continued to plague the Republic following their disbandment as they refused to disarm and continued their paramilitary activities to under the command of former officers who acted as independent military leaders.³⁰

The leaders of the Free Corps units (which numbered around 120 in 1920) were far from reliable.

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²⁴ See also Hopfen to Claß, 24 March 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 392, 6.
²⁶ See *Alldutsche Blätter*, 6 December 1930.
allies, however; and the disunity among them extended more broadly into the paramilitary Right. The Pan-Germans witnessed this during the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch in March 1920. After Noske dissolved the Marinebrigade Ehrhardt and Marinebrigade Loewenfeld on Allied orders, Lüttwitz refused to obey, and Kapp, who had organized Free Corps troops from the Baltics into a “National Association” (Nationale Vereinigung), proclaimed himself chancellor, declaring the Reichstag and the Prussian government dissolved. Kapp gathered together various right-wing organizations, such as the East Prussian Home League (Ostpreußischer Heimatbund), which had ties to the Pan-Germans.  

Pan-Germans were prominent in the putsch. Bang agreed to serve in Kapp’s cabinet as an expert on economics. Kapp had noticed him at a public meeting of the Pan-German chapter in Berlin at the end of 1918. After Kapp discussed plans for the putsch with him, Bang contacted Claß, who warned him about Kapp, with whom Claß’s own relationship had been bad since the founding of the Fatherland Party. Claß told Bang that he could not openly serve both Claß and Kapp, but that loose contacts to Kapp would be useful to the Pan-Germans. Other Pan-Germans also pursued their own activities with Kapp. Claß’s friend Major Otto Füsslein promoted the putsch in Magdeburg. The law professor from Breslau and leading Pan-German member of the DNVP Reichstag delegation, Axel von Freytag-Loringhoven, organized the putsch in Upper Silesia. Kapp chose Jacobsen to be governing commissar in Hamburg.  

The Kapp-Putsch caused serious irritations within the political Right and also leading Pan-Germans remained ambivalent about the putsch, particularly about the shoddy political preparations. Claß was surprised to learn that Kapp was attempting to overthrow the Republic in

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32 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 5.5. and Chamberlain, “The Enemy on the Right,” 142-143.
33 See Krebs, „Der Alldeutsche Verband,“ 63-64.
34 See Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 87.
spring 1920. Like Hugenberg, Claß was bedridden with influenza at the time of the putsch and regretted that Bang, Jacobsen, and Freytagh-Loringhoven had become involved but were also poorly informed by Kapp about the plans. Headquarters could not publish a declaration condemning the putsch, because the ensuing general strike paralyzed operations of the League. The Pan-Germans concluded that the putsch was carried out “without care,” while Pezold, who was in Thuringia at the time, condemned Kapp’s troops for acting “like robbers.” On the other hand, the disarray among the self-proclaimed paramilitary leaders suited Claß, because it raised the possibility of establishing alternative centers of political power under the informal leadership of the Pan-German League itself. Claß attempted to establish “centers of stability” (“Ruhepole”), from which Free Corps units would act under the guidance of the Pan-German League. Pan-German hopes now rested upon Forstrat Georg Escherich, whom the Bavarian Government appointed Landeshauptmann of the Bavarian civil guards. Escherich had founded his own paramilitary forces in May 1920 (Organisation Escherich/Orgesch), which were thought to number as many as two million men. Claß, Bang, and Hertzberg immediately established contacts with Escherich, meeting with him in July 1920 to discuss cooperation with the Pan-German League in establishing a dictatorship.

These talks failed. Escherich and Claß clashed over their respective spheres of influence. Escherich planned (especially in Mecklenburg and Holstein) to gather support and money in north Germany for the Bavarian Order Bloc (Bayerischer Ordnungsblock/BOB), an alliance among some forty right-wing associations and parties, which was eventually led by a member of

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39 Claß to Gebsattel, 7 July 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 375, 128.
the Pan-German League, Paul Tafel.\(^{40}\) The Bavarian Order Bloc was to lay the foundations for a right-wing overthrow of the Republic. In the aftermath of the Kapp Putsch, the right-wing government of Gustav Ritter von Kahr was also established in Bavaria with the support of Escherich’s civil guard units and Bavarian Free Corps units under Franz Ritter zu Epp, as well as the Police President of Munich, Ernst Pöhner. The Bavarian Order Bloc was attractive to the Pan-Germans because, as Hopfen put it, Escherich could unite workers and educated bourgeoisie in both urban and rural areas on an anti-Bolshevik and “Christian-German-völkisch” ideological foundation, which would also appeal to lower-class activists and the “culturally relevant bourgeoisie” in Austria.\(^{41}\)

The Pan-Germans hoped to unite right-wing parties in north Germany into a similar Ordering Bloc (\textit{Norddeutscher Ordnungsblock/NOB}) with Thomsen, Kloß, and the League’s head secretary Emil Junghans, among the League’s main representatives, while the League’s headquarters in Berlin was to become the central office. However, after debates over funds complicated relations between the two organisations, a division of labor was negotiated under which the NOB managed political propaganda while the BOB managed the paramilitary mobilization in Bavaria.\(^{42}\) Talks between Claß and Escherich continued throughout the summer of 1920, but the NOB lost significance before it could become the vehicle of a radical nationalist \textit{Sammlungspolitik}. The Social Democratic government of Prussia outlawed the NOB in November 1920.\(^{43}\) Claß thereafter assured Escherich of the unconditional support of the Pan-German League for the BOB, after Keim reminded him of Escherich’s importance in the

\(^{40}\) Hertzberg to Escherich, 3 September 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 258, 117-118. See also Chamberlain, “The Enemy on the Right,” 146-156.

\(^{41}\) Helmut Hopfen, „Laßt Euch nicht verwirren!“, in \textit{Deutsche Zeitung}, 3 May 1920.


paramilitary Right.\textsuperscript{44} The failure of the \textit{Orgesch} to quell the Communist uprisings in central Germany in the spring of 1921 thus left Claß furious.\textsuperscript{45} Claß’s anger reflected his exasperation over his own misjudgment of Escherich and his troops, as well as over the fragile loyalty of right-wing paramilitary forces.

Nonetheless, the Pan-Germans continued to negotiate with these same forces. In June 1920, Hopfen had met with Epp, General Otto von Lossow, the commander of the Infantry School in Munich, and the deputy commander of the Bavarian Army, General Arnold von Möhl, to discuss their loyalty to the Bavarian government. Möhl made it clear that he would not follow military orders from any leader in northern Germany if doing so endangered the Kahr government, while Lossow warned that his troops would defend this government should Kahr lose elections scheduled for the near future.\textsuperscript{46} Negotiations with the \textit{Brigade Erhardt}, which had occupied Berlin during the Kapp-Putsch then transferred its headquarters to Munich and renamed itself the \textit{Organisation Consul} in April 1920, were more successful. Ehrhardt received funds from Claß to support new civil guard units and although Claß could contribute little more than money, representatives of the \textit{Organisation Consul} and the Pan-German League met frequently until early 1922.\textsuperscript{47}

Still, the failure of the Kapp-Putsch convinced Claß that a dictatorship would have to be made palatable to the masses. The concept should, he concluded, be introduced to the public in “homeopathic doses,” in order to get those with “weak nerves” used to it.\textsuperscript{48} Between 1920 and 1921 the Pan-Germans were thus more reticent about using the term “dictatorship” in public.

\textsuperscript{44} Claß and Keim at the Sitzung des Geschäfts führenden Ausschusses des ADV, 24 September 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 129, 8-12.
\textsuperscript{45} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäfts führenden Ausschusses des ADV, 21 May 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 131, 8-9.
\textsuperscript{46} Hopfen to Claß, 6 June 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 392, 122-123.
\textsuperscript{47} Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 6.13.
\textsuperscript{48} See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäfts führenden Ausschusses des ADV, 2 September 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 132, 9-11.
During a crucial meeting of the executive committee on 2 September 1921, however, Claß demanded that the League commit to a clear position on the question of dictatorship. A majority of the executive committee opposed him. In response, Claß campaigned hard on behalf of the idea, especially in the *Deutsche Zeitung*, and, at the next meeting of the executive committee, he won a majority for the proposition that the dictatorship principle should henceforth define the League’s position, albeit with an emphasis on educating the masses through massive propaganda on the basis of anti-Semitism.

*Approaching the Masses: Violent Anti-Semitism and the German-Völkisch Protection and Defiance League*

Their failure to dominate the Fatherland Party during the war had persuaded the Pan-Germans that they themselves would have to take the lead in any *Sammlungspolitik*. At the Bamberg meeting in February 1919, the executive committee had decided that the German Völkisch Protection and Defiance League (*Deutscher Schutz- und Trutzbund*; since October 1919 *Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund*) should become the vehicle for this strategy.

The “Bamberg Declaration” of February 1919 was the first step toward anti-Semitic radicalization in public that placed the entire Pan-German League within the world view of racial anti-Semitism. Claß, of course, took the lead in pushing the Pan-German League toward anti-Semitic politics when the “selection and promotion of everyone according to good German nature” and the “combating [...] Jewish predominance” in German society were made a central part of the League’s public profile. In February 1939, however, Claß admitted that he was under serious pressure to give the League a comprehensive program for the time after the November

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50 See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 26/27 November 1921, BA-B, R 8048, Vol. 133.
Revolution that went beyond the League´s rather vague bylaws.\textsuperscript{52} Pushed by many of his political friends like Gebsattel, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Lohmann, and Gebhard, Claß took the demands laid out in his “Kaiser-book” and extended his program of 1912 into a concise political outline for the Bamberg meeting. Radical anti-Semitism reflected the League´s determination to exclude Jews from German society as Claß had demanded since 1912. According to Claß, it was only at the Bamberg meeting and after some considerable discussion about whether the revocation of Jews´ civil rights and their expulsion was legally possible that the executive committee decided to fight Jewish influence in Germany through the Protection League. It was apparent that Claß, who wanted to secure his position as the League´s undisputed leader, was also under pressure by the League´s anti-Semites such as Gebsattel to solve the ambivalence about the ideological, political, and mobilizational potential of anti-Semitism among the members of the Pan-German League and – partly in postponing the clarification of the League´s boundaries of support of violent anti-Semitism - the issue of anti-Semitic mobilization was delegated almost entirely to the Protection League.

The new organization seemed capable of unifying the fragmented anti-Semitic organizations that had proliferated after the war. In the spring of 1919, Jacobsen reported that there were three hundred of them in Berlin alone.\textsuperscript{53} The Protection League also appealed to older anti-Semitic groups, such as the Reichshammerbund. The Pan-German League wished, however, to remain behind the scenes. Claß cautioned that “the Pan-German League itself has nothing to do” with the Protection League and must “retreat entirely” as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{54} Also Lohmann, however, still wondered if the so-called “Jewish question” should become a central Pan-German concern. Doubts like these translated into the discussion over whether the Protection League

\textsuperscript{52} Alldeutsche Blätter, 5 February 1939.
\textsuperscript{53} Jacobsen [to Gebhard], 22 April 1919, STA Friedberg, NL Alfred Gebhard, No. 8, vol. 3, n.p.
\textsuperscript{54} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusse des ADV, 16/17 February 1919, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 123, 22.
should be accompanied by a secret anti-Semitic society called “German Community” (*Deutsche Gemeinschaft*) for those who did not wish to advertise their anti-Semitism.\(^{55}\)

Meanwhile, anti-Semitic activists pushed the issue and took matters party in their own hands. Jacobsen was the leading force in collecting money for the Protection League both at its headquarters in Hamburg and in local chapters in Northern Germany, such as those in Berlin and Saxony. To preserve the distance between the two organizations, Roth was appointed chairman of the Protection League. Roth had become a member of the Pan-German League’s executive committee in 1913 and he was well known for managing cooperation among the anti-Semitic political parties and associations prior to the war. He had also opposed the admission of Jews into the Pan-German League.\(^{56}\) Roth was active in the *Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilfenverband*, the *völkisch* youth movement, and the *Reichshammerbund*, which he chaired together with Theodor Fritsch. Under his leadership the Protection League set out to consolidate the smaller anti-Semitic organizations. The *Reichshammerbund*, which counted 3,000 members and 20 local chapters, served as an organizational model and constituted, along with the 9,000 members of the German-*Völkisch* League (*Deutschvölkischer Bund*), the initial core of the Protection League’s rank-and-file.\(^{57}\) Established anti-Semitic associations like the German Volk League in Berlin (*Deutscher Volksbund*) also joined with its 6,000 members, as did smaller groups like the German League for the Combating of Foreign Influence and the Promotion of Germanness in


\(^{57}\) See also Puschner, *Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich*, 386 and Lohalm, *Völkischer Radikalismus*, 56-71. The German-*Völkisch* League grew out of the German-*Völkisch* Party (*Deutschvölkische Partei*), which was founded in March 1914 as an amalgamation of the anti-Semitic parties in the parliament and joined as a corporative member the new DNVP by the end of 1918. See Lohalm, *Völkischer Radikalismus*, 66-71.
Stuttgart (Deutscher Bund zur Bekämpfung Fremden und Förderung Deutschen Wesens) and the German-Social Association (Deutschsozialer Verein) in Spandau.  

Like the Pan-German League’s, the program of the Protection League was educational in two ways. First, the organization sought to mobilize the public against the Jews. Second, it attempted to put public pressure on the government to limit Jewish influence in Germany. The Protection League thus became the leading anti-Semitic association in post-war Germany, as it blended racist violence with older prejudices—the propositions that Jews controlled German society through their manipulation of the liberal press, their demands for democratic reform, and their control of the capitalist market. Demands of the Protection League were drawn from Claß’s “Kaiser-book” of 1912. Its official program included closing the Eastern border to Jewish immigration and expelling all Jews who had immigrated after 1 July 1914. Other points radicalized proposals that Claß had made earlier, including demands to stop issuing extra food coupons to religious minorities, to prohibit Jews from owning land, to designate publicly newspapers that had Jewish editors and journalists, and to expel Jews from leading positions in the arts, banks, the law, the teaching and medical professions, and the civil service.

The Protection League operated under the dictatorship principle, “rigid unification under unified leadership; no diffusion but obedience and the will to follow.” Uwe Lohalm has pointed out, however, that the Pan-German League lost influence over of the Protection League almost immediately after its foundation with Roth being mostly in control of the League’s business on the national level. Roth had always seen the Protection League as almost entirely independent.

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60 Jacobsen [to Gebsatall], 8 February 1919, STA Friedberg, NL Alfred Gebhard, No. 8, vol. 3, n.p. See also Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 86.
61 See for the following Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 94-110.
from the Pan-German League and even Hertzberg and Gebsattel felt Roth’s claim for power throughout the years as both were often not informed about the League’s decisions and strategies. Instead, the Protection League was an amalgam association of various and often competing anti-Semitic splinter groups. The appointment of Ferdinand Werner and Friedrich Wiegershaus from the *Deutschvölkischer Bund* as members of the Protection League’s executive committee emphasized this fact. The advisory council (*Beirat*) continued to include a number of leading Pan-Germans, such as Gebhard, Stössel, Lehmann, Bang, Petzold, and Erich Jung, but their presence was largely cosmetic. Anti-Semitic leaders like Adolf Bartels, Theodor Fritsch, Artur Dinter did not regard themselves as representatives of the Pan-German League, nor did Alfred Brunner of the German Socialist Party (*Deutschsozialistische Partei*), Hildolf von Thüngen and Ernst von Bodenschwingh of the Agrarian’s League, Gerhard Börner, Otto Wittich, and W. Heins from the old anti-Semitic parties.\(^6^2\) Lehmann and Bang joined the extended head council in the summer of 1920 to secure the presence of the Pan-German League in the head committee of the Protection League, which consisted of a total of 54 additional members.\(^6^3\)

Roth’s authority was not, however, uncontested and additional rivalries between Gebsattel and Hertzberg on the one side and Wiegershaus and Werner on the other threatened his power. These quarrels left Roth increasingly drained, while Hertzberg and Gebsattel were left frustrated about the fragmentation of leadership and the loss of Pan-German influence. In May 1920 Hertzberg became executive chairman (*Geschäftsführender Vorsitzender*), but Roth remained League’s head executive chairman (*Hauptgeschäftsführer*), so the quarrels continued.\(^6^4\) By the summer of 1920, the dictatorial leadership of Roth and the Protection League’s headquarters, which was supposed to channel orders to the local and district leaders, turned out to be a failure.

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\(^{62}\) Lohalm, *Völkischer Radikalismus*, 98.


\(^{64}\) Gebsattel to Claß, 10 April 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 253, 34.
Roth had to acknowledge that the animosities between many local leaders and the headquarters were jeopardizing the future of the Protection League.\textsuperscript{65} Jacobsen’s close proximity to the headquarters of the Protection League, who also resided in Hamburg, did not help tame these internal quarrels. According to the bylaws of the Protection League, Gebsattel operated only in the background but the problem of leadership had been pressing from the very beginning and was only partly resolved when Hertzberg and Gebsattel were limited in their powers in April 1920. Roth was supposed to work under supervision of Hertzberg, but he acted as if he was an equal to Hertzberg and mostly ran the headquarters according to his own visions. The advisory council, which enforced the presence of the Pan-German League with the highest echelons of the Protection League, also failed to contribute more than occasional advice and did not function to appease the different wings of the Protection League.\textsuperscript{66} As a result, no leading Pan-German activists were included in the list of those fourteen itinerant speakers who were available for the Protection League in the fall and winter of 1920. Wiegershaus and Werner, on the other side, were available, as well as Gottfried Feder and Dietrich Eckert from the early DAP/NSDAP.\textsuperscript{67}

The Protection League’s growth emphasized its independence from the Pan-German League. After it accepted 100,000 Mark from Claß in the spring of 1918, the leadership of the Protection League began to take over its own finances.\textsuperscript{68} Like the Pan-German League, the Protection League depended on private donations for its survival. By 1922 over three hundred donors had become life-members.\textsuperscript{69} The key to the Protection League’s influence was its ties to other radical nationalist organizations, such as the Young German Order (\textit{Jungdeutscher Orden}),

\begin{footnotes}
\item[65] Roth to Geschäftsstellen des DSTB, 8 July 1920, FZH, 412-1, vol. 4, n.p. [196].
\item[66] Lohalm, \textit{Völkischer Radikalismus}, 98.
\item[67] "Anlage zum Rundschreiben No. 62" Hauptgeschäftsstelle, 19 August 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 253, 146.
\item[68] Lohalm, \textit{Völkischer Radikalismus}, 97 and 100-110.
\item[69] Alfred Roth, \textit{Aus der Kampfzeit des Deutschvölkischen Schutz- und Trutzbundes} (Hamburg: Selbstverlag, 1939), 17.
\end{footnotes}
which was founded in 1920 and boasted 70,000 members. Rival organizations, such as the German Völkisch Working Circle (*Deutschvölkischer Arbeitsring*), which was founded by Wulle, Ruge, and Richard Kunze in 1920, corporatively joined the Protection League. The widespread appeal of the Protection League to both nationalist associations and veterans’ societies like the *Stahlhelm* made it a unique association of anti-Semitic mobilization.

The propaganda efforts of the Protection League far exceeded those of the Pan-Germans. In the first half of 1920, the Protection League published almost 7.9 million anti-Semitic stickers, more than 4.7 million flyers, more than 7.6 million leaflets, and almost 9 million posters. Its publications sold well in the rising mass market for anti-Semitic literature in Weimar Germany. Roth became especially well-known, publishing under the pseudonym of Otto Arnim works that attempted to prove that the Army’s “Jew Census” of 1916 had been justified and that German Jews had avoided military service at the front and engaged in war-profiteering.

But the Protection League was more than an anti-Semitic organization. It also aspired to be a paramilitary movement, which borrowed in style and outlook from the militant youth groups and paramilitary units that plagued Weimar society throughout the Republic’s history. Although its headquarters did not organize centralized military training of its members, local chapters, such like the one in Freiberg in Saxony, offered their own training in weapons-use, primarily knifes and rubber truncheons, which were commonly used by paramilitary organizations on the left and

right in street fights and brawls. The bylaws of the Protection League did not mention paramilitary activity. The passage that called for the “elimination of all Jewish influence,” was broad enough, however, to include the boycotting of Jewish shops and banks, as well as violence against left-wing political groups. The rapid expansion and the increase of membership, the frequency of street fights, and large numbers of former soldiers and violent youths fanned aggressions that would have been hard to control, even if Roth and the executive committee had made an effort. In fact, the growing violence spoke to the growing power and autonomy of the local chapters.

By December 1919, the Protection League numbered more than 26,000 members, a year later more than 110,000 members had joined, and during the summer of 1922 between 160,000 and 180,000 members were enlisted. Like the Pan-German League, the Protection League attracted members who quickly left. This meant that local chapters, too, often had short lifespans. Between June 1920 and July 1921, 289 new chapters were founded while 97 dissolved. Many of those who left joined other nationalist associations or simply failed to pay their membership dues, even though the headquarters of the Protection League made it clear that there was no intention to “carry members without their paying their membership fees.” By the end of June 1921, some 25,000 members had been excluded from the membership lists because they did not pay their dues to the local chapter. For this reason, the Protection League faced the same financial problems as the Pan-German League. Taking the devaluation of the Mark into account, the budget of 1920 showed a deficit of more than 86,000 Mark, in addition to the more than

76 See appendix Figure 9.
160,000 Mark that the districts had not transferred to Hamburg. By the summer of 1921, the Protection League was running a deficit of 265,000 Mark in membership dues that had either not been paid or transferred by the local chapters. Given the annual membership fee of 3 to 12 Mark, depending on the member’s income, this sum suggested that some forty percent of the Protection League’s 110,000 members were not paying dues in August 1921. A special “Combat and Defense Fund” (Kampf- und Wehreschatz) did not help to offset the League’s financial shortfall. In 1921, this fund had more than 132,000 Mark, but the wages and salaries of the headquarters’ staff and the League’s professional speakers alone amounted to more than 416,000 Mark.

The employment of professional staff in additional branch offices in Berlin, Frankfurt Main, Nuremberg, Stettin, Hattingen, and Stuttgart, which were created in the fall of 1919, added to the financial obligations of the Protection League, and Roth emphasized that the creation of additional offices was only “a matter of money.” In the spring of 1920, when the League’s employee representative council of civil servants (Betriebsrat der Angestellten) demanded almost a doubling of the current wages the Protection League was exposed to further financial obligations. Roth even went without his own salary for two months to help balance the budget. He also complained to Claß that, due to the financial restraints, the Protection League could not employ first-class staff members in the branch offices.

All of these financial shortcomings made it imperative for the headquarters of the Protection League use efficient bookkeeping. By 1921, it spoke to the poor quality of the members’ morale that only 216 out of 518 local chapters in total had transferred their full membership dues according to the statutes, while 230 chapters paid their dues partly, and 72

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80 See circular Roth to Mitglieder des Bundesvorstandes, 8 March 1921, FZH, 412-1, vol. 5, n.p. [86].
81 See for the following „Rechnungsbericht des Schutz- und Trutzbundes für 1921 (1.1.-10.10.1921),“ 10 October 1921, FZH, 412-1, vol. 7, n.p. [135-139].
82 Roth to members of the Beirat, 1 December 1919, FZH, 412-1, vol. 2, n.p. [5].
83 Gebsattel [to Claß], 27 March 1920, FZH, 412-1, vol. 3, n.p. [144].
84 Roth to Claß, 17 April 1920, FZH, 412-1, vol. 3, n.p. [152].
chapters not at all. The League´s bookkeeping report of 1921 even mentioned that the local chapters in Berlin, Stetting, Munster, Allenstein, Cologne, Magdeburg, and Karlsruhe had “embezzled” funds amounting to more than 58,000 Mark. Strict regulations concerning the transfer of funds from the local chapters to the national headquarters were implemented in the summer of 1920, including the stipulation that members were only issued with their membership pass after they had actually paid their dues.\textsuperscript{85} Closer supervision of the League´s funds was ordered by the headquarters in early 1922, but Roth was fearful of tighter restrictions to make every member to actually pay for his membership. It only spoke to the fragile composition of the membership body of the Protection League that Roth assumed that 20 percent of the members would leave the Protection League under such bureaucratic pressure and were not willing to pay for the expenses that the League´s activism cost in managing its infrastructure and its legal disputes.\textsuperscript{86}

The history of the Protection League had always been a history of legal defense of their radical anti-Semitic propaganda and actions in Germany´s court rooms, which put additional financial strains on the budget as it demanded a considerable amount of the annual budget for court trials in which either the Protection League or individual members were made responsible for their violence against Jews and political opponents on the Left, as well as broader violations of the \textit{Rechtsstaat}. During the first ten months of 1921, almost 40,000 Mark were spent on court fees, which was almost as much as the Protection League´s total advertisement expenditures.\textsuperscript{87}

The Protection League also had large publishing expenses, which were covered with income from membership dues, subscriptions to its journal, the \textit{Deutschvölkische Blätter}, money from the

\textsuperscript{85} „Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund, Rundschreiben No. 53 K,“ 12 July 1920, FZH, 412-1, vol. 4, n.p. [55].
sale of anti-Semitic brochures, the bi-monthly *Deutschvölkische Warte*, and the *Politisch-Anthropologische Monatsschrift*, a major völkisch journal that had once been edited by Ludwig Woltmann and Schmidt-Gibichenfels.\(^88\)

The regional distribution of the membership documented successes in big cities, such as Berlin, Leipzig, Hamburg, Hannover, Stettin, Dresden, Essen, and Magdeburg. The largest local chapters, however, were in Bavaria. Nuremberg had 6,000 members in the fall of 1919 (although the figure dropped to less than 1,000 a year later), and Munich numbered almost 4,000 members in 1920.\(^89\) The Protection League was also strong in central and eastern Germany—in Westphalia-Lippe (89 chapters), Lower Saxony (54 chapters), East Prussia (53 chapters), Pomerania (69 chapters), and Brandenburg (52 chapters), Hesse (45 chapters), Provincial Saxony, Anhalt, and Thuringia (92 chapters). In the Rhineland (26 chapters), Mecklenburg (22 chapters), and northwestern Germany (29 chapters) political restrictions by the Allies limited the Protection League’s mobilization, while in southern Bavaria (18 chapters) the organization competed with the NSDAP.\(^90\) In the liberal southwest the organization remained weak, in Württemberg (23 chapters) and Baden (31 chapters), although Stuttgart served as important recruiting ground.\(^91\) The regional distribution of the Protection League chapters was remarkably similar to that of the Pan-German League, suggesting the consonance of the two organizations’ goals.

\(^88\) See Gregor Hufenreuter, „Die Politisch-Anthropologische Revue 1902-1914,“ in Michel Grunewald and Uwe Puschner (eds.), *Krisenwahrnehmungen in Deutschland um 1900: Zeitschriften als Foren der Umbruchszeit im Wilhelminischen Deutschland* (Berne: P. Lang, 2010), 281-293.


\(^91\) Jung, „Ideologische Voraussetzungen,“ 18.
The Protection League’s rapid increase was the product of organizational decentralization, which also fanned the leadership quarrels among Roth, Jacobsen, Gebsattel, and Werner.\textsuperscript{92} Chapters pursued their activities at the direction of their local chairman, while the League’s federal council exercised little control.\textsuperscript{93} Under the leadership of the lawyer Hermann Meyer, the chapter in Leipzig provided a good example of the situation. The chapter was founded in October 1920, and it continued even after the Protection League ceased to exist. It registered with the municipal government as a legally independent association (\textit{rechtsfähiger Verein}) and then joined the national Protection League as a corporative member publishing its own journal \textit{Der Deutsche Staat}.\textsuperscript{94} Between September 1922 and the fall of 1923, the Leipzig chapter increased its membership from 2,000 to 4,000, as Meyer worked out his own plans for comprehensive reform of Germany’s economy, which he sent to Hitler.\textsuperscript{95} Because both Meyer and his deputy, Dr. Otto Weidenhaupt, were cooperating with the National Socialist movement after 1922, the local police kept the Protection League under close supervision. Surveillance by the police prompted the Protection League in Leipzig to strengthen its presence in a variety of other local institutions, such an academy for \textit{völkisch} students, mostly from the University of Leipzig.\textsuperscript{96} In 1924, Protection League in Leipzig changed its name to the Association of the Protection and Defense League of the German Völkisch (\textit{Verein Schutz- und Trutzbund der Deutschvölkischen e.V.}).\textsuperscript{97}

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\textsuperscript{92} Lohalm, \textit{Völkischer Radikalismus}, 93.
\textsuperscript{93} Lohalm, \textit{Völkischer Radikalismus}, 93.
\textsuperscript{96} Meyer to Claß, 30 October 1923, FZH, 412-1, Vol. 13, n.p. [62].
\end{flushleft}
Similar to the chapter in Leipzig, independent branches were active after 1922 in Danzig, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Anhalt, Württemberg, Austria, and in Bavaria, where an independent Protection League was refounded in 1929, with a similar legal status as the League in Leipzig *(Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund in Bayern e.V.)*.98

In Leipzig and elsewhere, the Protection League experienced the disadvantages of decentralization. When the district chapters of North and South Bavaria demanded autonomy in handling their finances, equipment, and journal, the national leadership decided to strip the Bavarian leaders of their authority.99 Hertzberg described the separatism of the Bavarian chapters as “unrestrained, unplanned, rash, and insincere.”100 Smear-campaigns between the headquarters of the Protection League in Hamburg and the headquarters of the Munich Gau of the Protection League accompanied personal denunciations and public accusations that almost ended in court. The situation in Bavaria threatened the survival of the Protection League. The districts of North and South Bavaria had another fall-out with Roth and headquarters in Hamburg over outstanding funds. Almost 64,000 Mark from the district of North Bavaria and some 8,000 Mark from the district of South Bavaria were not wired to Hamburg between 1920 and 1922.101 Claiming that Roth was under the influence of a “Jesuit-Mason-Jewish” cabal, which had some credence because of Jacobsen’s membership in a Masonic lodge, the leaders of the Bavarian Protection League, Rudolf John (alias Gorsleben), Lorenz Mesch, and Arnold Ruge, complained about the “dictatorship in Hamburg,” which inhibited “any independent movement” and “strong-minded

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100 Hertzberg to Gebsattel, 8 March 1922, FZH, 412-1, vol. 9, n.p. [80].
101 See Sitzungsbericht der Bundesvorstandssitzung des DSTB, 29 January 1922, FZH, 412-1, vol. 8, n.p. [34].
and decent personalities” within the völkisch movement. Roth then expelled them. The Bavarian leaders therupon attempted to seize control over the Protection League in Bavaria. A court order, instigated by Roth, stipulated that national headquarters was the legal representative of the League.

In January 1922, Claß still hoped that Roth and Hertzberg would be able to run the Protection League because Claß himself was neither willing nor able to deal with the League’s management himself. During the Bavarian quarrels, Claß left the negotiations to an honorary council (Ehrenrat), which decided to strip of the Bavarian leaders of their authority. As a consequence of this episode, in the summer of 1922 Hertzberg again became executive manager of the Protection League in order rule in a “dictatorial fashion.” The disappointment over these separatist aspirations in Bavaria left a deep mark in the Pan-German headquarters´ memory: when John wanted to attend the meeting of the executive committee of the Pan-German League later in December 1929 as a guest the response from the headquarters left no doubt that John was prohibited to attend since he was excluded from the Protection League “cum infamia” in the Spring of 1922.

The problem of personal rivalries and the demand of leaders to rule with full authority were characteristic of radical right-wing movements in Weimar Germany, but the situation in Bavaria had severe implications for the survival of the Protection League. As a result of their expulsion John and Mesch attempted to take over the Protection League in Bavaria themselves. It

103 See Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 262.
106 Artur Dinter to Hertzberg, 12 October 1922, FZH, 412-1, vol. 11, n.p. [450].
was only in the summer of 1922 that the Pan-German League took over management again when Hertzberg became executive manager of the Protection League in order to deal with the defense and the subsequent dissolution of the Protection League in a “dictatorial fashion.”

The Protection League was not only troubled by severe internal fragmentation on the national and the local level; it again failed to reach out to broader constituencies as the League was a middle class phenomenon and, therefore, failed to mobilize the working classes. Membership data is scarce, but Uwe Lohalm has shown that some local chapters, like the one in Nuremberg, did attract workers, although the numbers were small. So were the number craft-workers, such as saddlers, tailors, electricians, gardeners, or nurses. In Leipzig, Meyer claimed that a third of the chapter’s members were working-class. However, the Protection League more generally attracted state officials, members of the lower middle-class, and academics, who made up more than 10 percent of the membership. Teachers and white-collar workers were also prominent, while chapters in Oldenburg, Wilhelmshaven, and Krefeld comprised up to twenty percent merchants. Although the Protection League failed to attract Communists or Social Democrats, it did recruit from another traditionally coherent milieu. Local chapters, like the one in Paderborn, reported that their rank-and-file consisted to a significant degree of members of the Catholic Center Party.

The Protection League also appealed more than the Pan-German League to women and young people. In some chapters the leadership demanded that male members bring girls and

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108 Artur Dinter to Hertzberg, 12 October 1922, FZH, 412-1, vol. 11, n.p. [450].
111 Lohalm, *Völkischer Radikalismus*, 111.
women to the meetings. By the end of 1919, women constituted a sixth of all the members, although the national leadership found this figure a disappointment. In Jever, women made up thirteen percent of the membership, in Krefeld 17.5 percent. The Protection League had an important appeal for a new generational cohort that was soon to determine politics and tactics of mass mobilization of Weimar’s Right. It attracted significant numbers of young men from the so-called “front generation.” Around 85 percent of all the members were between 17 and 45 years old. One was Werner Best, who joined the chapter in Mainz at the age of 15 and would later occupy leading posts in the Security Service and the occupation forces of the Third Reich. Detlef Dern, who later became district leader of the NSDAP in Neuwied, joined the Protection League at the age of 14; he was the youngest member of the Neuwied chapter during the French and American occupation of the city.

The League had reached its peak in membership and public attention when in the summer of 1922, however, the Protection League was outlawed. The assassination of Germany’s Foreign Minister, Walter Rathenau, on 24 June 1922 by two members of the Organisation Consul precipitated events. After a series of assassinations carried out by the Organisation Consul and other right-wing organizations, the murder of Rathenau was the last straw. The assassination of Rathenau, who was Jewish, led to heated debates in the Reichstag. Chancellor Josef Wirth declared that the main enemy of the Weimar Republic “stands on the right!” The Reichstag passed the Law to Protect the Republic (Gesetz zum Schutze der Republik/Republikschutzgesetz)

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114 See Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund Ortsgruppe Erfurt, Gedanken zu deutschvölkischer Frauenarbeit (1919).
115 See Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 111 and 116.
118 See also Gabriele Krüger, Die Brigade Ehrhardt (Hamburg: Leibnitz, 1971), 86-105.
on 21 July 1922, which remained in force until the end of 1932.\textsuperscript{120} It compelled state officials to obey and enforce the Republican constitution, empowered the police to dissolve meetings of suspicious individuals or associations, prohibited secret societies, and punished the publication of anti-Republican periodicals with up to 5 years in jail and fines of up to 5 million Mark.

The Protection League, the Pan-German League, and dozens of other right-wing organizations were thus proscribed in parts of Germany. Although there was no clear evidence that either the Protection League or the Pan-German League had participated in any assassinations, their close relationship with organizations that had been involved, such as Freikorps Oberland, the Germanenorden, the Thule Society, and the Organisation Consul, was sufficient grounds for the prohibitions.\textsuperscript{121} Claß had been in close contact with the Organisation Consul. The district leader of the Protection League in Mecklenburg was charged with passing a gun to Rathenaus´s murderers, and rumours spread that a Berlin merchant by the name of Hoffmann, who was a member of the Pan-German League, was involved in financing the Rathenau murder.\textsuperscript{122}

Whether or not it was complicit in the murders, the Protection League had provided a hospitable ideological environment for some of the perpetrators. Several of those who had earlier attacked Scheidemann, including the merchant Hans Hustert, the farmer Karl Oehlschläger, and Alfred Günther, were members of both the Protection League and the Organisation Consul.\textsuperscript{123} In February 1922, Ruge, a leader of the Protection League and an obsessive anti-Semite, had himself attempted to kill Rathenau.\textsuperscript{124} The Pan-German League had its fair share in propagating

\textsuperscript{120} See Reichsgesetzblatt 1922, No. 52, part 1, 23 July 1922, 585-590.
\textsuperscript{122} See Deutsche Zeitung, 2 May 1922, 3 April 1924, and 2 May 1925; Berliner Tageblatt, 2 May 1922 and 3 May 1924; and Bergisch Märkische Zeitung, 3 July 1925. See also Martin Sabrow, Die verdrängte Verschwörung: Der Rathenau-Mord und die deutsche Gegegrevolution (Frankfurt Main: Fischer TB, 1998), 136.
\textsuperscript{123} Lohalm, Völkischer Radikalismus, 220 and 230-231.
\textsuperscript{124} See Sabrow, Die verdrängte Verschwörung, 33.
anti-Semitism as it had publicly denounced Germany’s Jewish politicians. In May 1922, the executive committee defamed Eisner as “a Jew who was foreign to Germany and increased the blood-guilt of his racial comrades toward the German Volk and Germany disproportionately.”

The Protection League was prohibited in all German states except Bavaria (where the state government refused to enforce the federal law) and Württemberg. The Pan-German League dissolved in Hamburg, Schamburg-Lippe, and Thuringia. Elsewhere it was put under surveillance by state authorities. In Weilburg/Lahn, the Landrat prohibited Grube from speaking at the chapter’s meeting of 7 September 1922, because the latter had denounced the Republic as well as as Jewish leaders. The Deutsche Zeitung came under police surveillance as well. Several issues of the paper were prohibited between 1922 and 1924 under the Law to Protect the Republic, and the paper was banned altogether in the occupied Rhineland between 1923 and 1927. The delivery of the Alldutsche Blätter remained a matter of constant political debate until 1923, especially in Thuringia, where the local post offices often refused to deliver the paper. The state of Thuringia, where Claß had once considered opening new headquarters of the Pan-German League, was ruled by a left-wing coalition and was particularly hard on the Pan-German League. House-searches of several leading Pan-German activists were carried out by police in Eisenach, Greiz, and Weimar. Oberregierungsrat Gerstenhauer, the chairman of the Pan-German chapter in Meiningen, was suspended from his duties by the Thuringian government. The Ministry of the Interior in Thuringia followed the assumption that the Protection League (as well as the Pan-German League) attempted to establish a political dictatorship based on a specific non-democratic understanding of governmental legality: crafting political order through distinct

127 See Deutsche Zeitung, 31 August 1927.
norms and legal understanding that were not subject to the rule of majorities (“aus eigenem Recht”). Meanwhile, the state government of Hamburg dissolved the Pan-German chapter because of its close cooperation with the Protection League: both had planned a Sonnenwendfeier three days before Rathenau’s assassination. The state government in Schaumburg-Lippe also dissolved the League, arguing that the Pan-Germans’ program was a threat to the Republic.131

Although Lohmann had warned his colleagues as early as in September 1921 that the decree of the Reich President to dissolve associations when they represent a threat to the Republic could also be applied to the Pan-German League one day, the Pan-Germans were shocked by these measures.132 Claß surmised that the dissolution of Pan-German League, along with the Protection League in Hamburg and Thuringia would signal the “hour of fate” for the Pan-German League.133 Appeals to the Rechtsstaat now became a common, if mendacious strategy. The executive council appealed the League’s dissolution in Thuringia on 30 June 1922, in Hamburg on 10 July, and in Schaumburg-Lippe on 12 July 1922.134 While the Deutsche Zeitung repeatedly complained about the exclusion of the public from the investigations at the Supreme State Court, Claß handed over full authority to Bang to serve as a legal representative in all matters for the Pan-German League after Claß submitted his appeal on 12 August 1922.135 The resulting litigation took months during which Claß was able to employ his contacts with a

133 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 1 September 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 135, 7-8.
135 See Deutsche Zeitung, 11 August 1922 and 23 September 1922; „Vollmacht Claß,“ 30 September 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 671, 70; and „Bescheredeklage Heinrich Claß an Staatsgerichtshof zum Schutz der Republik,“ 12 August 1922, in ibidem, 48a-48b. See also Claß to Gebsattel, 10 August 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 255, 368-369.
former colleague from the district court in Mainz, Dr. Schmidt, who acted as the President of the State Court in Leipzig and testified to Claß’s good character.\textsuperscript{136}

The Federal Supreme Court, at which the matter was resolved, issued a verdict on 26 January 1923. It found no evidence that the Pan-German League had planned any assassinations or that it had any significant connections to the \textit{Germanenorden} or (remarkably) even to the Protection League.\textsuperscript{137} The dissolution of the Pan-German League in Thuringia, Hamburg, and Schaumburg-Lippe was consequently lifted. In addition, the Supreme Court declared that Claß was of respectable character and that the Pan-German League was, in view of its long and distinguished history, unlikely to participate in the violent overthrow of the Republic. Although it was overturned, the prohibition of the Protection League and the Pan-German League in several German states had a significant impact. While the Pan-Germans had lost influence within the Protection League over the years, they now had to cope with its dissolution. Roth moved on, leaving the management of the Protection League in the hands of Hertzberg and Gebsattel.\textsuperscript{138} The Protection League left an ambivalent legacy to the Pan-Germans. The Pan-German League itself suffered from the dissolution of the Protection League, to say nothing of its own prohibition. In April 1923, of the 512 chapters of the Pan-German League, 91 had “decayed,” another 74 were not functioning properly, and the situation in Thuringia and Schaumburg-Lippe was entirely unclear.\textsuperscript{139} Headquarters in Berlin estimated that 61 chapters were operating without leadership, and membership dues had to be retrieved through headquarters in Berlin. By early 1923 only 70 chapters were operating properly.

\textsuperscript{136} Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 5.16.
The dissolution of the Protection League, however, signalled a crisis of the radical Right as a whole. In December 1922, the Reich Commissar for the Surveillance of Public Order classified 48 nationalist associations as “right-wing movements” and the promulgation of the Republic Defense Law of 1922 led to the dissolution of 43 associations. The Protection League splintered after its dissolution, in what one of its activists called a decisive “split of the völkisch movement.” Many former members joined organizations such as Local Economic Associations (Örtliche Wirtschaftsvereine), which organized the purchase of (non-Jewish) goods and food for their members, or the League for German Freedom and German Law (Bund für deutsche Freiheit und deutsches Recht). The major beneficiary of the League’s dissolution was the NSDAP. Even before 1922, cross-membership had led to informal collaboration between the two organizations. Fritz Sauckel, the deputy district leader of the Protection League in Franconia from 1919 to 1920, joined the NSDAP, as did Best, a founding member of the Protection League’s chapter in Mainz. Fritz Tittmann, a secretary of the Protection League, and Heinrich Kersken, founder of the Protection League’s academic section in Munich joined the NSDAP, as did Emil Gansser. Roth himself also joined a NSDAP and ran as the party’s candidate in the Hamburg elections in 1932. Many who became prominent figures in the Third Reich passed through the Protection League. They included Viktor Lutze, Leonard Conti, Wilhelm Gustloff, Fritz Sautel, and Julius Streicher.

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143 See also Kurt Bauer, Nationalsozialismus (Cologne/Weimar/Vienna: UTB, 2008), 91.
The Pan-German League, by contrast, did not benefit from the dissolution of the Protection League. Membership in the Pan-German League and the Protection League had not much coincided.\textsuperscript{144} Francis Carsten simply assumed in his seminal study on the rise of Fascism in 1964 that many of the early Nazis were former members of the Pan-German League.\textsuperscript{145} As Lohalm correctly pointed out, the DSTB was one among other organizations in which future Nazis were to be found; and the success of the DSTB as a transitory phenomenon from Pan-Germanism to the NSDAP, therefore, marked only another step toward the irrelevance of the Pan-German League as a mobilizational force within the radical Right. Joint-membership in the two organizations was rare also because members of the Protection League tended to be significantly younger representing the so-called front generation and those born after the turn of the century. Otto Reche, professor for racial anthropology in Leipzig and Vienna, was among the few, as were Professor Hans Kluge at the Technische Hochschule Karlsruhe and Gustav Hagen, who later became President of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce.\textsuperscript{146}

Although the appeal of radical anti-Semitism diminished after 1923, anti-Semitism had become a common element among the radical-nationalist and \textit{völkisch} movements in Germany.\textsuperscript{147} In Austria, the competition with anti-Semitic and right-wing organizations posed an even more serious matter for the Pan-Germans. Although Geiser informed Claß in the spring of 1921 that the foundation of a Protection League in Austria under the temporary leadership of

\textsuperscript{145} Francis L. Carsten, \textit{Der Aufstieg des Faschismus} (Frankfurt Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 34.
Ursin was in the works, Claß recalled in his memoirs that he did not believe the Austrian Protection League to have much of a future on account of the poor quality of its leadership.\footnote{Geiser to Claß, 12 April 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 287, 194-196 and Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 7.2. Roth mentioned the existence of a “Gau Landesverband Österreich” without detailed data about membership and local chapter distribution. Roth, \textit{Aus der Kampfzeit}, 17.}

The bylaws of the Austrian Protection League were passed as late as in June 1921 which stated that the education of the public about the influence of Jews in Austrian society and fighting any non-German forces that would endanger “German \textit{Eigenart}” were its core missions.\footnote{Satzungen des Deutschvölkischen Schutz- und Trutzbundes für Österreich, 13 June 1921, StLA-Graz, LReg 206, vol. FU-034, n.p.} The Austrian Protection League under the leadership of \textit{Obmann} Leo Haubenberger included other Austrian anti-Semitic splinter associations like the radical German-Austrian Protection League (\textit{Deutschösterreichischer Schutzverein. Antisemitenbund}).\footnote{See also Leo Haubenberger, \textit{Die jüdische Herrschaft: Betrachtungen über Judas Macht und Einfluss im wirtschaftlichen und politischen Leben Österreichs} (Vienna: Verlag Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund, 1923) and Idem, \textit{Es werde Licht!} (Vienna: Nationalistischer Verlag, 1923).} Unlike its German counterpart, the Austrian Protection League chose the Viennese capital as the location for its headquarters.\footnote{Roth, \textit{Aus der Kampfzeit}, 17.}

Little is known about the Austrian League’s membership and local chapter distribution. In Styria, for instance, the Protection League was not as active as the Pan-German League, but chapters existed in small towns like Hartberg, Pöllau, and Fürstenfeld. All of these chapters existed after the Protection League was prohibited in Germany in 1922 because the old Austrian association law from 1867 was still valid after 1918 and not accompanied by additional regulations similar to the German Law for the Protection of the Republic. Much like the decline of the Pan-German chapters in Austria after 1923, the Austrian Protection League withered after 1923. In 1924, the chairman of the Austrian Protection League, Haubenberger, warned von Hertzberg that the völkisch movement suffered from serious discontentment, especially after the Great German People’s Party, the most significant nationalist party under the leadership of Dinghofer and Ursin.
demanding unification with Germany, lost a significant share of votes in the elections in October 1923.⁰¹⁵² All of the remaining chapters from the Gau district Styria were deleted from the association register in Graz between 1935 and 1937, but many chapters had already ceased their activities shortly after their foundation in the early 1920s.⁰¹⁵³

The NSDAP was hardly alone in using anti-Semitism as an integral aspect of its political program. The “systematic propaganda against the Jews in German society,” which the Supreme Court in Leipzig had cited as the main reason for prohibiting the Protection League in 1922, thus had lasting effects on the radicalization of the political Right in Germany.⁰¹⁵⁴ But the Pan-German League was not the primary beneficiary. This was partly due the League´s reluctance to adopt anti-Semitism for its own rank and file with the same determined attitude. Albert Niedermeyer, who was half-Jewish and a former member of the Pan-German League in Breslau, also remembered in 1938 that the League´s official anti-Semitism and racism was not always as strict in practice during the 1920s as the League´s programmatic outlook suggested in public. What counted more for the League´s members was their overall Gesinnung of völkisch homogenization, which allowed Niedermeyer to remain in the League long after the Bamberg declaration included anti-Semitism in the League´s official program in 1919.⁰¹⁵⁵ An amendment to modify the statutes was already passed at the meeting of the executive committee on 30 August 1924 (German Jews and Gentiles with Jewish ancestors were excluded from membership in the League) and the new bylaws became effective as of March 1925.⁰¹⁵⁶ It was also in 1925 that the

⁰¹⁵⁴ See also Reichskommissar für die Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, 1 September 1922, BA-B, R 1507, vol. 18, 55.
Pan-German League in Austria added “aryan descent” as a precondition for joining the League after it had demanded the “ruthless fight against Jewish dominance” since the passing of its first bylaws in 1920. The failure, however, to organize a paramilitary Sammlung among the Free Corps and civil guard units, as well as the poor management of ties to the Protection League suggested that the Pan-Germans were overwhelmed in the new politics of the German Right.

Failing to Mobilize the “Pan German Youth”: Limits of the Pan-German Political Style and Generational Cleavages

While the Pan-Germans struggled to harness the potential of the “front generation,” they hardly tried to mobilize the nationalist youth. In fact, they had never devoted much effort to cultivating younger generations of nationalist activists from the middle classes and the educated bourgeoisie. Other nationalist organizations had taken the lead, especially in schools and universities. In 1911, the Navy League organized special field trips for young people as well as for school teachers and their students. In 1916, the Association for Germandom Abroad founded a chapter for girls in Charlottenburg and expanded its network of academic chapters during the Weimar Republic. Much like Catholic and Socialist organizations, some nationalist associations recognized the importance of recruiting young members as a step toward winning over their entire families. In the 1920s a Reich Committee for German Youth Associations (Reichsausschuß für Deutsche Jugendverbände) coordinated nationalist youth activities.

The Pan-Germans abandoned their neglect of the young for a short time between 1919 and 1923. The need to mobilize young people appeared to grow with the Revolution of 1918, which repealed the Reich Association Law of 1908 and allowed people under 18 years to join

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158 Die Flotte, 12/14 (December 1911).
159 See Deutschum im Ausland, I/1916: 71 and Drinnen und Draußen, February 1929.
political rallies, parties, and associations. In January 1919 the chapter in Würzburg called on the League to devote more resources to mobilizing young members, a sentiment shared by the council and the executive committee. In March 1919, Vietinghoff-Scheel laid down an agenda to this end. He considered the traditional Wandervogel movement of the 1890s to provide a blueprint for the League but without concerns that Schilling-Cannstadt raised, for instance, when he complained that the Wandervogel, which boasted of 745,000 members in 1914, had converted young members into “wild, unbound radical groups” instead of well-educated and well-behaved nationalist patriots. Vietinghoff-Scheel suggested that responsibility for organizing youth groups rest with chapter leaders and that headquarters only collect membership applications and forward them to the chapters. His ideas were translated into reality on 24 January 1920, when the Berlin chapter founded a youth group (Jugendabteilung), which included 250 members in 10 subchapters in the city. The importance of individual activists was clear. Stolte, his wife, and his daughter played a central role in organizing the youth group (along with the women’s group and the main chapter). Berlin set an example for chapters in Danzig, Leipzig, Nauen, Goslar, Hagen, and Langen in the Rhineland. In individual cases, the creation of a local youth chapter like the one in Melk in Austria was even the prelude to the foundation of a regular local chapter of the Pan-German League.

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164 See *Alldutsche Blätter*, 10 September 1921 and also Hering, Konstruierte Nation, 172.
165 See *Alldutsche Jugend-Blätter*, 1 October 1921.
166 See *Alldutsche Blätter*, 10 September 1921.

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Although it was founded by individual chapters, the “Pan-German Youth” (Alldeutsche Jugend) was coordinated by the League’s headquarters in Berlin (under the leadership of Rolf Meyer), while the branch headquarters in Innsbruck oversaw youth chapters in Austria. In Berlin three regular staff members, including the chairman, and an additional Working Committee (Arbeitsausschuss) with eight staff members oversaw the youth organizations. Despite its professionalized administration, the Pan-German youth groups paled in comparison to those of other nationalist organizations. All between the ages of 9 and 21 were eligible, regardless of social background, although Jews and “members of foreign ethnicities” were excluded.¹⁶⁷ Girls’ groups (Mädelgruppen) and sport clubs were founded in regional alliances (Landesverbände). Education and hiking were the main attractions. The chapter in Berlin was the most important. It organized regular field trips and other recreational activities, including music, photography, and theatre. Parents’ evenings (Elternabende) were to educate parents about the activities of their children and to entertain them with theatrical and musical performances.¹⁶⁸ Festivals to celebrate the solstice in the Germanic tradition brought the Pan-German Youth together with other nationalist sports clubs and Wanderbewegungen.

In all these activities, political indoctrination and training accompanied sociability. The idea was to train young members to train others. Lecture evenings, which were to be held two to four times a month, emphasized training in public speaking. In 1921, a library was founded to provide patriotic books to compensate for the inflationary prices for books and serve as an institution in which young Pan-Germans could educate themselves using nationalist and patriotic literature.¹⁶⁹ Youth homes (Jugendheime) and advisory boards to help members of the youth organization find jobs were calculated to create a more coherent Pan-German milieu. However,

¹⁶⁸ See Alldeutsche Jugend-Blätter, 20 March 1921.
these efforts were strapped by a lack of personnel and other resources. Members had to subscribe to the semi-monthly *Alldeutsche Jugend-Blätter*, which in 1921 had a high annual subscription fee of 7.80 Mark in Germany and 30 Kronen in Austria. Financing of *Alldeutsche Jugend-Blätter* proved as problematic as maintaining the Pan-German Youth as a whole. The journal, which was published twice a month since March 1921, folded in the spring of 1922, so the Pan-German Youth struck a deal with the editors of the *Deutsche Zeitung* to insert short notices about the activities of the Youth organization. The financial obligations of the local chapters to national headquarters left no significant room for maneuver in the difficult economic circumstances of post-war Germany as voluntary contributions were negligible.

The central importance of the Berlin chapter and the failure to recruit younger family members of current Pan-Germans indicates that the Pan-German Youth was a mere side-institution for the Pan-Germans, although education in the spirit of the nationalist romanticists Fichte and Ernst Moritz Arndt was a central theme of the program of both the Pan-German Youth as well as the Pan-German League. Politically, the Pan-German Youth was set up to build support among young people for the program of unification with Austria and the re-establishment of the monarchy. The Pan-German Youth organized its own annual meetings, but they were often neglected at meetings of the executive committee like in Goslar in September 1921. The request of the Pan-German Youth to hold a youth congress at the next annual meeting of the executive committee in Essen in September 1922 was only treated with benevolent ignorance. Outside Berlin, the Pan-German Youth was of negligible relevance for the Pan-Germans. National meetings in Goslar and Essen, which both lasted for five days, were the only important events in the Pan-German Youth´s history. The Pan-German Youth was supposed to serve as a rallying

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171 See *Alldeutsche Jugend-Blätter*, 1 June 1921 and *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 10 September 1921.
point for all nationalist youth organizations, but competition with these other organizations was the principal issue.

In addition to the Protection League, the DNVP was another source of mobilizational competition when it was decided in 1920 by the DNVP headquarters to found a “Bismarck Youth” (Bismarckjugend), which came into existence in 1922. The Bismarck Youth integrated earlier youth groups of the DNVP like the “German Youth League Bismarck” in Berlin and Brandenburg (Deutscher Jugendbund Bismarck), which was founded in 1920 and increased its local chapters from 29 in 1921 to 41 in 1922. The Bismarck Youth would serve as the party’s official youth organization and would target members between the ages of 14 and 25 years. Already in 1921, Mayer explicitly pointed out at the meeting of the Pan-German Youth in Goslar that the Pan-German Youth only attempted to found local chapters if the DNVP’s Bismarck-Youth or one of the various German-National predecessor organizations was not present already. Before chapters of the Pan-German Youth handed themselves over, there was some cooperation on youth matters between the Pan-German League and the DNVP. In 1920, Pogge had already declared that the German National Youth Group received valuable training at the meetings of the local chapter of the Pan-German League and that he worked together with the DNVP’s Bismarck-Youth in their political working groups. Cooperation and cross-affiliation between the Pan-German League and the DNVP on the local level complicated the independent management of a specific young Pan-German core constituency. In 1922, the Bismarck Youth counted 40,000 members in 400 local chapters (Marken), increasing to 49,000 in 1926 before

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172 See Günther Ehrenthal, Die deutschen Jugendbünde (Berlin: Zentralverlag, 1929), 137, Jung-Bismarck-Berlin, 1 October 1921, and Jung-Bismarck-Berlin, 1 February 1922.
173 Alldeutsche Blätter, 10 September 1921.
declining to 42,000 members in 800 local chapters in 1928 and 20,000 members in 1930.\textsuperscript{175} The decision of the head council of the Pan-German League to create youth organizations in every single local chapter with a variety of activities from reading clubs to choir and sport clubs was made in June 1922 shortly before the dissolution of the Pan-German Youth. Given all these scenarios of competition over Germany’s nationalist \textit{bildungsbürgerlich} Youth and self-inflicted impotence, the Pan-German Youth only existed in very selected chapters like in Berlin, Breslau, Lübeck, Cottbus, Elberfeld, Remscheid, Berlin, Gera, and Hamburg; all areas in which the Bismarck Youth was well-represented.\textsuperscript{176} The contest over the political reach and surveillance of nationalist young people was further diversified by the activities of the DVP which founded its first local youth chapters in 1919 that counted 40,000 members in 1921 organized in 500 local chapters- a number that declined, too, to 12,000 members of the “Hindenburg Youth” (\textit{Hindenburgjugend}) in 1930 as the party’s youth organization was called since 1929.\textsuperscript{177} The \textit{Jungstahlhelm}, founded in 1924, was another organization that succeeded where the Pan-Germans failed: after steady mobilization it numbered 63,000 members by 1929.\textsuperscript{178}

Finally, the inflation proved fatal for the Pan-German Youth. The organization, along with \textit{Aldeutsche Jugendblätter}, collapsed in 1923. This failure reflected more fundamental problems in the Pan-German League, which could not commit itself to the effort of mobilizing youth. There was no intention to pass the torch on to a new generation, despite a lot of talk among the Pan-Germans about about their own advancing age. By 1925, the Pan-Germans were well aware

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{176} „Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund, Rundschreiben Nr. 8,“ June 1922, FZH. NL. Alfred Roth 11/R14, n.p.
\item \textsuperscript{177} Krabbe, \textit{Parteijugend zwischen Wandervogel und politischer Reform}, 15 and Idem, \textit{Die gescheiterte Zukunft der Ersten Republik}, 146-149.
\item \textsuperscript{178} „Fragebogen Jungstahlhelm zwecks Aufnahme in den reichsausschuss der deutschen Jugendverbände,“ n.d. [c. 1929], BA-B, R 72, vol. 190, 56.
\end{itemize}
that they had lost the fight over Germany’s youth and had lost interest in refounding the Pan-
German Youth.\textsuperscript{179} Claß was both confused and frustrated about the limited appeal of the Pan-
German League. He continued to believe that the young would listen to their fathers when it
came to politics.\textsuperscript{180} Even Lehmann, however, recognized that, copying the principles of the
Wandervogel, Social Democrats, Communists, and Catholics had better mobilized young
members than the Pan-Germans.\textsuperscript{181}

This problem of mobilization spoke to another. The Pan-Germans were contemptuous of
paramilitary training and street violence. Despite the fact that several thousand of its own
members had served during the war, the League was unable to exploit the experiences of the
“front generation” in crafting a paramilitary milieu, even as the rise of paramilitary politics on the
Left and Right rendered the Pan-Germans´ reverence for monarchy an anchronism.\textsuperscript{182} Kirdorf
alluded to this problem when, in 1922, he cautioned against holding Pan-German meetings in the
occupied Ruhr, lest violence result and provide grist for “the mills of the mob.”\textsuperscript{183} With the
success of the Nazis facing him, Claß himself reflected in 1932 on the same problem, noting that
the Pan-Germans had attempted to combine the “stormy National Socialist spirit of attack with
the persistence of the German-Nationals [DNVP], which aims rather at long-term politics.”\textsuperscript{184}

Such a statement was meant to assure the League’s members of the determinedness of the Pan-
German movement, but it was hardly based on the reality of their strategic cooperation. The
competition between “old” and “new” nationalist organizations was central to the political Right

141, 33-36
\textsuperscript{180} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäfts führenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12 December 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 145,
31-32
\textsuperscript{181} Lehman at the Sitzung des Geschäfts führenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12 December 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol.
145, 27.
\textsuperscript{182} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäfts führenden Ausschusses des ADV, 21 May 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 131, 12.
\textsuperscript{183} Kirdorf to Claß, 22 August 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 411, 64.
\textsuperscript{184} Alldeutsche Blätter, 18 June 1932.
after 1918 and it revealed crucial dilemmas for the Pan-Germans.\textsuperscript{185} The Pan-German League was a Janus-faced movement, which aspired to extraparliamentary power but, in addition to its contempt for paramilitary violence, lacked the means and ideology to appeal to the masses. Otto Graf Stolberg-Wernigerode aptly described the Pan-Germans as representatives of an “undecided generation,” which was caught between the radical nationalism in the older tradition of Bildungsbürgertum and the violent racism of the younger National Socialists.\textsuperscript{186}

\textit{Curiosity, Competition, and Estrangement: The Pan-German League and the Early NSDAP}

Just as the Pan-Germans were unable to organize a comprehensive youth movement, they also failed to found an umbrella organization to unite the anti-Semitic organizations in Germany.\textsuperscript{187} After the Protection League’s dissolution, many members moved on to other paramilitary organizations or the National Socialists. The growth of these other nationalist organizations emphasized the marginality of the Pan-German League.

This point deserves emphasis given the fact that generations of historians have concluded that the Pan-Germans constituted one of the most important platforms for the NSDAP. There were admittedly many points of ideological convergence between the Pan-Germans and the early NSDAP. Furthermore, a significant number of leading National Socialists underwent their political baptism in the Protection League, which the Pan-German League had called to life. However, the relationship between the Pan-Germans and early National Socialists was more complicated. Rivalry and competition, caution, ambivalence, and quarrels characterized this


\textsuperscript{187} See also Jochmann, \textit{Gesellschaftskrise und Judenfeindschaft}, 154.
relationship. In the beginning was mutual admiration and the hope that the two movements could compensate for one another’s shortcomings. Their “alliance” was a marriage of convenience. The early NSDAP was less “a child of the Pan-Germans and Justizrat Claß,” as Karl Dietrich Bracher concluded. Instead, the Pan-Germans were adoptive grandparents, from whom Hitler borrowed ideological convictions and pocketed money.

Claß was early aware of the rising NSDAP and its propaganda officer, Hitler, who wanted to become an “advertising public speaker” as he had been told he owned “that potential skill.” Most Pan-German leaders and itinerant speakers, including Vietinghoff-Scheel, Krauß, Geiser, and Claß himself, lacked Hitler’s publicity-skills and his public charisma. Their speeches were like educational lectures. The Pan-Germans were suspicious of mass rallies and were unwilling to pander broadly to political constituencies. When rumors spread in May 1920 that Claß would run for parliament, he immediately ended any speculation. In December 1918, Vietinghoff-Scheel had already demanded that Claß run for parliament again after Claß gave up such aspirations in 1903. The failure to be elected as candidate for the National Liberal Party still weighed too heavy. Claß remained skeptical that the people would vote for “strong characters” like himself. Claß responded, however, in 1920: “You ask me if and in what constituency I will run for parliament? Nowhere! Leave alone that the DNVP is not interested in people like us, which I know for sure, I still believe that anything that goes on in the parliament is of secondary importance and of irrelevant significance for the biggest decisions in the future.” Claß´s lack of passion to become a public leader for parliamentary elections had larger implications. As Roeder remarked of Claß, he “despises everything that suggests pushing his person into the spotlight.

189 Ludolf Herbst, Hitlers Charisma: Die Erfindung eines deutschen Messias (Frankfurt Main: Fischer, 2010), 104.
191 Claß to Petzoldt, 10 May 1920, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 321, 100.
Such behavior is certainly the wrong approach these days, but I do not believe that we will be able to change him in this respect.”

Lehmann in Munich was the League’s principal early conduit to the DAP/NSDAP. He published party brochures with financial assistance from the Reichswehr and came into contact with Ernst Röhm, who served as chief of staff with the military governor of Munich. Lehmann was also a member of the Thulegesellschaft, which served as the main rallying point in Munich for radical nationalists, including the early leaders of the DAP, such as Anton Drexler, Gottfried Feder, Dietrich Eckert, and Alfred Rosenberg. Tafel, who was a member of the managing board of MAN plants in Nuremberg and had already served as a representative of the Pan-German League at the Bavarian Ordering Bloc, had significant influence on Drexler in founding the DAP in 1919.

The Protection League then became the main vehicle of cooperation. The leaders of the districts of North and South Bavaria, Gorsleben and Mesch, were susceptible to the NSDAP’s appeal. In Bavaria cooperation between the Protection League and the NSDAP was most developed. In January 1920, the Protection League invited Hitler to deliver a speech at a public meeting that attracted 6,000 to 7,000 people in the Munich “Kindl-Keller.” Feder and Eckert then joined the list of Nazis who spoke to the local chapters of the Protection League. While the Protection League profited from employing Hitler as a speaker, the NSDAP gained access to the chapters of the Protection League. In Stuttgart, for instance, the NSDAP founded one of its

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194 See for the context also Kurt Gossweiler, Kapital, Reichswehr und NSDAP 1919-1924 (Cologne: Pahl Rügenstein, 1982), 142 and Pätzold and Weißbecker, Geschichte der NSDAP, 12.
few chapters outside Bavaria shortly after Hitler attended an event of the Protection League in May 1920. Such cooperation also increased competition. As early as in February 1920, the local chapter of the Protection League in Munich emphasized that the Protection League should work as independent as possible in the local chapters and in the districts.

By 1920, Hitler had already acquired a reputation as a “drummer and rallier” but also as a political lunatic drunk with self-grandeur. The attempt to create a Führer-Myth around Hitler left many contemporaries with the impression that the NSDAP was building on a new charismatic concept of leadership by “artist-politicians” that enabled Hitler to catch the public’s attention through rousing speeches and mass events. The ideological influence of the Pan-German League on the early NSDAP was clear. Hitler had certainly read some major works from the Pan-German publication list, such as Chamberlain’s “Foundations of the 19th Century” and an edition from 1919 of Claß’s “Einhart-book”, which Lehmann had sent to Hitler after the war. However, the NSDAP’s “Twenty-Five-Point Program,” which was adopted in February 1920, resembled demands that Claß had listed in his “Kaiser-book” in 1912 and that were subsequently

199 Hitler to Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, [1922], quoted in Kershaw, Hitler 1889-1936, 169. See also Albrecht von Graefe-Goldebee, Völkische Freiheitsbewegung, Deutschnationale und NSDAP (Berlin: Unsere Waffen Verlag, 1930), 12.
popularized by the Protection League. On the other hand, Pan-German ideas about authoritarian rule by professional experts were anathema to the National Socialists.

In fact, nothing better exemplified the clashing styles of the two organizations and the difference between Hitler’s reputation as “artist politician” and Claß’s image as an educated expert politician. This much was clear in the wake of the first meeting between Hitler and Claß. In his memoirs Claß claimed that the first encounter took place in February 1920, although it is possible that it occurred during Hitler’s first visit to Berlin in mid-March of the same year. It is more likely that they met for the first time in August 1920, after Hopfen and Lehmann had gotten in touch with Hitler first, and Gebsattel might have even met with Hitler as early as January 1920. There was cautious admiration on both sides prior to their first meeting. In the wake of the Kapp-Putsch, Heß, for instance, wondered about public denunciations of Kapp that condemned his putsch plans as ill-fated Pan-Germanism. Heß rather saw the most suitable politicians among the Pan-Germans. Besides Lehmann, Hopfen was also enthusiastic about contacting Hitler and had publicized his exploits through the *Deutsche Zeitung* since 1920. Hopfen met with Hitler in August that year at a meeting of the National Socialists in Salzburg and received his “brilliantness” with warm-hearted affection. Hitler was principally interested in financial support from the Pan-Germans for his political travels to Austria—a subject that he had broached with other leaders of the League, especially through Dr. Walter Riehl, who was an advisor for the League’s executive committee since 1919 as the leader of the Austrian

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203 Herbst, *Hitlers Charisma*, 94. See also Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, addendum [1936]; Jackisch, „Not a Large, but a Strong Right;“ 107-108; and Leicht, „Heinrich Claß;“ ch. 4.2
206 See *Deutsche Zeitung*, 11 November 1923.
207 See also Pezold, „Claß und Hitler;“
National Socialist Party (founded in 1904 as *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* and renamed *Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei/DNSAP* in April 1918) and who advised Geiser to pay more attention to Hitler.\(^{208}\)

Claß remembered the meeting with a sense of confusion about Hitler´s character and political convictions:

> Our meeting lasted a little longer than two hours. The term “meeting” is inappropriate, in the sense that during almost all of the time I had to listen to lectures by Hitler... I felt as if he were treating me as if I were in a mass rally. He spoke most emotionally with great exertion of his voice, and he accentuated his points with the emphatic and stormy movements of his hand and feet. He moved so close to me that I almost lost consciousness and fainted, because of dizziness due to his hand movements right in front of me and especially my eyes. This man was a political wild man, who felt the need to persuade everyone of his convictions through his forceful voice or the movements of his arm and hand. No doubt: every word that he spoke was definitely honest and genuine. This young man developed his judgement about his observations from a sound national or *völkisch* Weltanschauung. Overall, he represented something completely new in the political life of our people [...]

> Two points made me wonder, though. He admitted that he had designed his program so he could appeal to the masses and that he was willing to be flexible once he was successful in gaining support [from various constituencies]. This seemed to me, given my old-fashioned [“altväterlichen”] opinion about the duties of a politician to educate his citizens, a breach of faith. Do the ends justify the means here?

> The other point was the unshakable belief in himself and his persuasiveness, as well as the entire manner of his appearance. After the first 15 minutes I knew I was dealing with a hysterical man, although I was not able to tell if his hysteria was caused by the war or other circumstances. As a lawyer [...] I have had to deal with a lot of hysterical men, learned much from medical experts’ reports and educated myself with many books. I could venture some guess about my guest, who wanted to introduce a new kind of politics to our Fatherland.

> In my final conclusion I acknowledged that for the time being it may be, or is very likely, that Hitler´s hysterical eloquence had an immense appeal to the masses [...].\(^{209}\)

Theodor Duesterberg, the leader of the *Stahlhelm*, came to similar conclusions about his first meeting with Hitler in 1920 when he reflected upon it in the wake of the Second World War. Duesterberg remembered that Hitler had a dog whip in his hand, shouted like he was addressing a

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mass rally, rejected any level-headed discussion, and refused to countenance any contrary opinions: this was “how this ‘Ego-obsessed’ raged himself out,” as a “smudgy comedian, “hysterical”, “self-idolizing”, and full of “inferiority complexes.” Nevertheless, Hitler’s unique blending of paramilitary violence, polemicism, and his evocation of a vague Volksgemeinschaft ideology appealed to many bourgeois and middle-class nationalists.

After Hitler strategically assured Claß that his own ideology had been decisively shaped by the Pan-Germans, Claß overcame his ambivalence about Hitler’s character and donated 1,000 Mark to help fund Hitler’s activities. Further talks between the two were discussed. Hitler participated in Austrian elections on behalf of NSDAP’s Austrian counterpart at least six times between 29 September and 11 October 1920 with financial support provided by Claß. Claß paid additional funds to support Hitler’s appearance before Austrian chapters of the Protection League during the same period, as well as at an anti-Semitic conference in Vienna in March 1921.

Claß’s initial financial support left Hitler wanting more. In December 1920, the Police President of Munich, Pöhner, who helped coordinate relations between the Pan-German League the Bavarian Ordering Bloc, endorsed additional support. He characterized Hitler again as “an extremely talented and powerful representative of our common ideas,” who would speak in northern Germany if the Pan-German League financed his travels. Claß met with Hitler again in Berlin on 20 December 1920. Here the two discussed funding the NSDAP’s acquisition of the Völkischer Beobachter (formerly Münchner Beobachter), which had been owned by the

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212 See Anton Joachimsthaler, Hitlers Weg begann in München 1913-1919 (Munich: Piper, 2000), 274 and Maser, Sturm auf die Republik, 246.
Germanenorden and the Thulegesellschaft.\textsuperscript{214} In December 1920, the NSDAP acquired the ramshackled paper, which had 300,000 Mark worth of debts, as well as an additional 120,000 Mark worth of dues at the capital market. The NSDAP had to pay back these debts over the next 5 years and revenues from the paper were rather modest. The paper was published with an edition of just around 11,000 copies and a daily edition was only planned for the next year.\textsuperscript{215} Claß agreed to help Hitler finance the paper, but approached Tafel and Otto Gertung, who was the closest political advisor of Rieppel from the MAN plants, to gauge the willingness of Rieppel to wire funds to the NSDAP.\textsuperscript{216} The final decision was postponed because both Claß and Rieppel did not have sufficient funds at hand and wanted to see the outcome of the Hitler´s struggle for power within the NSDAP.

In the summer of 1921 the two met again, and Claß provided additional money.\textsuperscript{217} Altogether, in 1920 and 1921, Claß provided 60,000 Mark, while Franz Xaver Ritter von Epp, whose former Free Corps units had been adopted by the Bavarian Army, made available the other 60,000 Mark for the acquisition of the Völkischer Beobachter from Reichswehr funds. The NSDAP, however, profited from the inflation as Hitler was able to pay back the loans of 120,000 Mark in 1921. This was still a substantial amount of money but Hitler never thanked Claß for this assistance, which soon soured the relationship between the two.\textsuperscript{218} Nor did he accept Claß´ suggestion that headquarters of the NSDAP be relocated from Munich to Berlin and that the party´s presence expand outside Bavaria, in order to assist in Claß´ plans to organize northern

\textsuperscript{214} See Maser, Sturm auf die Republik, 258-259 and also Krebs, „Der Alldeutsche Verband,“ 129.
\textsuperscript{216} Claß to Otto Gertung, 29 January 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 258, 238 and also Leicht, “Heinrich Claß,” ch. 4.2., and Pezold, Claß und Hitler, 278.
\textsuperscript{217} See Joachimsthaler, Hitlerws Weg, 284-285.
\textsuperscript{218} See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936] and also Petzold, Claß und Hitler.
Germany in the Northern German Ordering Bloc.\textsuperscript{219} Claß visited Hitler in Munich several times during the next two years, as selective cooperation between the Pan-German League and the NSDAP continued. In June 1922, on the eve of the Protection League’s dissolution, the NSDAP’s treasurer, Emil Gansser, approached the Pan-German League again for funds.\textsuperscript{220} Although the Pan-German League was itself in hard financial straits at that time, the impending criminal prosecution of both organizations bound the two. Claß met Gansser’s request and provided money to support the Bavarian Ordering Bloc’s propaganda against the Law to Protect the Republic. In December 1922, Roeder as the headquarters secretary of the League still hoped that the NSDAP would be a suitable vehicle for promoting the Pan-German cause among younger circles, so long as one casted aside the “youthful fermentation process that they still currently go though.”\textsuperscript{221} This “fermentation process” of the NSDAP soon turned into increased competition over leadership within the radical Right in Germany.

Relations between the League and the NSDAP then became caught up in the general crisis of 1923. The occupation of the Ruhr by French and Belgian troops in January united the entire country in passive resistance.\textsuperscript{222} Claß was hopeful that passive resistance would eventually drive the French troops out.\textsuperscript{223} Instead, it provoked a crisis. Forced deliveries of coal, censorship in the occupied areas west of the Rhine, and the expulsion of more than 100,000 people by French troops turned the Ruhr into a war zone and created further turmoil on the German Right.\textsuperscript{224}

\textsuperscript{219} See also Krebs, „Der Alldtische Verband,“ 129-140.
\textsuperscript{220} See Krebs, „Der Alldtische Verband,” 133.
\textsuperscript{221} Roeder to Herr Hildebrand, 7 December 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 208, 506-507.
\textsuperscript{223} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 26 November 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 133, 19.
Thanks to the Ruhr-occupation right-wing politics became, as Ian Kershaw has noted, even more riddled with intrigue, conflict, and competition.\(^{225}\) The Pan-German League was once more at the center of this struggle over leadership, as were several Free Corps units and the head of the Reichswehr, Hans von Seeckt.

In spite of his own reservations about the general, Claß had been in contact with Seeckt since the end of February 1923, when General Richard von Behrendt brought the two together on the urging of two Pan-German military officers, the retired General Otto von Below and Colonel Rudolf Frantz. Claß informed Seeckt that he had been in contact with Free Corps leaders in an effort to organize a private army that would serve under a dictatorship, but that no action was possible against the French occupation without the consent of the Reichswehr.\(^{226}\) The private army would be put under the command of Seeckt once the dictatorship took power.\(^{227}\) Seeckt shared the desire for a radical change in German politics, for he was concerned about the power of the Social Democrats, Communists, Center Party, and Liberal parties, as well as the Prussian Minister of the Interior, the Social Democrat Carl Severing. Nevertheless, he cautioned Claß about military action in the Ruhr.

Plans proceeded meanwhile on another track. The Ruhr industrialist Heinrich von Thyssen and the textile producer Scheidt visited Claß, Hertzberg, and Vietinghoff-Scheel at headquarters of the Pan-German League, in order to seek the League’s cooperation in crafting a coalition to lead a new regime. Thyssen and Scheidt had already selected Lieutenant-General Oskar von Watter to lead a private army against the French.\(^{228}\) In further discussions among Claß, Thyssen, Scheidt, Seeckt, and Seeckt’s representative, Lieutenant-Colonel Friedrich Wilhelm von Willisen, plans took shape for the employment of Free Corps troops under the leadership of one

\(^{226}\) Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch. 6.3.
\(^{227}\) See also *Vorwärts*, 10 April 1930.
\(^{228}\) Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch. 6.4.
of the military leaders in the Ruhr, the ominous Vorarbeiter Schlittgen. Claß was enthusiastic, assuming that Schlittgen would provide 62,000 troops to the Pan-Germans. Subsequent investigations demonstrated the emptiness of these expectations.

The center of attention then turned to Bavaria, where Hitler had become nervous about challenges to his leadership of the radical Right. When Claß visited Kahr in April 1923, he complained about the “magalomaniac” Hitler, who had told Claß recently that he could bring Munich under his control in “three days, Bavaria within three weeks, and Germany in three months.” As good as his word, Hitler staged a “dry putsch” in Munich with his party troops on 1 May 1923, although the police quickly put it down. Hitler planned another putsch to steal the thunder from Kahr, Seeckt, and Claß, all of whom he regarded as rivals. His honesty was thus not above reproach when he met with Claß on 20 May 1923 in Berlin and promised his full support to the Pan-Germans. Claß, however, preferred to seek his allies in the Reichswehr and called for a meeting with Seeckt in late May. In a conversation with the head of the Troop Office (Truppenamt – the secret successor to the General Staff), Major General Otto Hasse and Seeckt’s chief political advisor, Major Kurt von Schleicher, Claß learned that the leadership of the army was unwilling to contemplate war plans against France and that a dictatorship would only be possible under Article 48 of the constitution, which allowed the Reich President to rule by emergency decree. Seeckt’s refusal to support his plans, plus the realization that the available Free Corps were insufficient, spurred Claß to meet with Free Corps leaders in June. These leaders made it clear that they had only a few thousand troops at their disposal and that they would not serve under Pan-German leadership. Claß then abandoned his plans for a putsch with their

229 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 6.6.
231 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936].
232 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 6.9.
support. Instead, his attentions turned to Major Ernst Buchrucker from the “Black Reichswehr,” who was reputed to have several thousand soldiers at his disposal and was himself planning a coup against the Republic. In early September Claß and Bang met with Buchrucker in Berlin, who suggested that 35,000 men under his command ready for a putsch. But his political vision shocked Claß, because it included political cooperation with the Christian-national labor unions and the Center Party. So cooperation with Buchrucker also became impossible. For his own part, Buchrucker attempted to march on Berlin on 1 October 1923, but this putsch also failed.

At the same time, the Organisation Consul planned a putsch that would feature the assassination of Seeckt, who was planning to integrate the Organisation Consul into the Reichswehr. Claß was reported to have visited the headquarters of the Organisation Consul in early October, but the Hitler Putsch in Munich on 9 November 1923 rendered the question of Pan-German cooperation with the Organisation Consul moot. The failure of the Buchrucker-Putsch left the paramilitary Right in Bavaria in severe competition over the establishment of a civil-military dictatorship: especially Hitler, Kahr, and Ehrhardt with his 15,000 troops of the Viking League (Bund Wiking - a successor organization of the Organisation Consul). It bespoke the tangled state of affairs on the Right that Claß had also met again with Seeckt on 24

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237 See also Gerhard Schulz, Aufstieg des Nationalsozialismus: Krise und Revolution in Deutschland (Berlin: Propyläen, 1975), 504-507.
239 See also Gordon, The Reichswehr and the German Republic, 233-235 and Jones, Hitler’s Heralds, 230.
September 1924 to inquire about Seeckt’s own plans to organize a dictatorship. Seeckt told Claß that nationalist and paramilitary leaders were planning to launch coups in the near future. They included Ludendorff, Hitler, Ehrhardt, and General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, who had participated in the Kapp Putsch and was a member of the Ehrhardt Brigade. Seeckt dismissed all these plans as “dumb” and told Claß that he would shoot those on the “right as well as on the left, as long as I have a machine gun and as long as there is one man who follows his orders.” When Claß encouraged Seeckt himself to seize power, the general replied that “it is the task of the Reichswehr to preserve the unity of the Reich, and those who endanger it are my enemies, whatever side they may belong to!” Instead, Seeckt spoke about a ruling directory of political experts, perhaps even Stresemann, who would be appointed after consultation with the Reich President. Seeckt’s evasiveness convinced Claß that collaboration with the General was impossible.

Claß turned now to Kahr, who had become General State Commissar in Munich, and to Pöhner, to discuss turning Bavaria into an “ordering cell,” a dictatorial model for the rest of Germany. These talks, which began in October, were hindered by Kahr’s and Pöhner’s desire to include the Center Party and the Catholic Bavarian Volk Party (Bayerische Volkspartei) in any dictatorial government. Claß, on the other hand, held both Catholic parties to be nationally unreliable. The more pragmatic Kahr thus came to regard Claß as a nationalist “barometer,” who turned up to conspire in Munich whenever rumours indicated something might happen. In any

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240 See also Wilhelm Hoegner, Der politische Radikalismus in Deutschland 1919-1933 (Munich/Vienna: Olzog, 1966), 75-94.
243 Kahr, Lebenserinnerungen, 1234-1235.
case, Claß informed Kahr that he had given up his plan to organize a dictatorship with Seeckt and that Seeckt needed to be “pushed out of the plans.”

He kept in close touch with Kahr and Pöhner, however, as the two turned Bavaria into a haven for Free Corps members who had fled north Germany and planned to invoke martial law. On 8 November Kahr spoke to 3,000 people in “Bürgerbräukeller” in Munich. Together with SA troops, Hitler then stormed the pub, held Kahr, Lossow (the former Bavarian Commander of the Reichswehr), and Hans von Seisser (of the Bavarian Country Police) hostage and compelled them to agree to participate in a dictatorial triumvirate under Hitler´s leadership. At this point Hitler released the three, who promptly broke their word. In desperation, Hitler marched on the Feldherrenhalle in Munich´s city center. Regular troops fired on the marchers, wounding and capturing Hitler and other leading plotters.

Hitler´s putschism marked a watershed in the history of Weimar´s Right as it signaled a fundamentally new quality of violence and determinedness so far unmet by “old” nationalist movements and the transitory forces of the Kapp putsch. Claß was by now well-aware of the pitfalls of ruthless activism, so he could not comprehend Hitler´s reasons for launching a putsch. Other Pan-German activists in Munich were also surprised by the putsch. Claß learned the details early in the morning of 9 November from Captain Lieutenant Eberhard Kautter of the political department of the Ehrhardt Brigade and together with Bang he then drove to Munich.

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244 Kahr, Lebenserinnerungen, 1234 and 1236.
247 See for the following Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936] and also Vietinghoff-Scheel to Bruno Wenzel, 7 December 1923, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 232, 17.
met with Kahr, who reported his own surprise about the putsch and his feelings of betrayal by Hitler. However, he rejected Claß’s suggestion that he issue a general amnesty for the putschists.

Like the failure of the Kapp Putsch in 1920, the collapse of Hitler’s putsch still left Claß wondering but impressed about the power and resilience of the Republic’s executive institutions, as well as about the reliability of his own erstwhile co-conspirators. The events of 1923 also signalled the end of any Pan-German aspirations to overthrow the Weimar Republic by the means of a civil-military coup. Claß and Hitler alike concluded that they would have to pursue legal measures to destroy the Republic. Furthermore, the Pan-Germans had to acknowledge the greater appeal of the NSDAP although ambivalence about the rise of the NSDAP was rife among the leadership of the League, both in Berlin and in the local chapters. In Esslingen, for example, Calmbach endured criticism in late 1923 that there were no guidelines about how to position the League within the radical Right. Cross-membership exacerbated the issue in Esslingen and elsewhere. A significant number of members were members of the NSDAP. After the failure of the Hitler-Putsch, the Pan-German League was under pressure to take the lead in mobilizing the radical Right. The problem remained that the Pan-Germans lacked the charisma and public appeal of Hitler. They had never matched the big events staged by the Protection League, let alone the NSDAP, whose rallies numbered as many as 100,000. Before the Beer-Hall Putsch, leading Pan-Germans like Claß and Calmbach deluded themselves that they could manipulate Hitler for their own benefit. The view that Hitler was a neurotic politician with no social manners was prevalent in the League after Claß’ first meeting with him.

Claß attempted nevertheless to make the Pan-German League flexible enough to support Hitler, regardless of his distaste for mass politics and the rhetoric of corporatist uniformity. But he underestimated the appeal of the Nazi movement. The temporary prohibition of the NSDAP,

249 Deutsche Zeitung, 27 January 1923.
the closure of its headquarters in Munich, and the confiscation of its assets confirmed his low estimation and encouraged the Pan-German League to strengthen its ties to the DNVP instead for an overthrow of the Weimar Republic by legal means. Reconciling themselves at least temporarily to Weimar´s party system had more than symbolic implications for the Pan-German League´s policy. It also signalled the limitations of the Pan-Germans’s ability to mobilize—a problem that had its origins in the Imperial period.

After the war, the Pan-Germans were perceived by their new right-wing competitors as radical yet conservative who were the *Honoratioren* of the German extraparliamentary Right. They had gained a reputation as the vanguard of radical nationalism in Wilhelmine Germany, but now they were regarded as outdated in their personnel, organization, and their elitist ideology. The prestige that they enjoyed among leaders of the radical Right by 1918 as notables of nationalist extraparliamentary activism became increasingly irrelevant after the war, because they were unable and unwilling to create a program with enduring appeal to the masses. Founding the Protection League represented the most successful attempt at mass mobilization and ideological manipulation, but the Pan-German League´s associational infrastructure was too modest and old-fashioned to meet the expectations of younger radical nationalists after 1918. Even the Protection League was a failure, and the Pan-Germans’ inability to control it, even before its proscription, presaged their inability to mobilize its followers once it folded.

The crisis of 1923 also revealed the inability of the Pan-Germans’ leaders and the rank-and-file to adjust to the new political conditions, which seemed to demand violent anti-Semitism and a paramilitary politics. The arrival of the Free Corps and the Nazis rendered obsolete the older men who had led the extraparliamentary mobilization during the Wilhelmine era—men like Claß, Vietinghoff-Scheel, and Gebsattel—while other Pan-Germans, such as Hopfen or Lehmann, only served in supporting roles in new right-wing movements. Some younger Pan-
German activists, like Bang and Roeder, challenged the proposition that the League should, like the paramilitary organizations, embrace radical rhetoric and action. By 1923, when radical nationalism began to ebb until the late 1920s, the Pan-German League had reached the limits of its appeal. It was left with a membership that, in size as well as in social background, looked much like its membership before the war.
V. Propagation and Limits of Pan-German Radicalism, 1924-1928

The Pan-Germans’ claim to speak for all the German people on the basis of their Bildung came under attack after the war. Imperial Germany’s official symbols of nationalism were no longer relevant to most of the new nationalist movements, and even the Pan-German League jettisoned traditional notions of monarchical rule and military authority during the early Weimar years, as competition over political and cultural leadership of the nationalist Right intensified. The era between revolution and the end of 1923 revealed an astounding level of fragmentation among more traditional nationalist organizations, paramilitary units, and new movements on the radical Right. The years between 1924 and 1928, which brought political and economic stability to the Weimar Republic, were also “stable years” for the radical Right in Germany as political strategies were reconsidered.

The Pan-Germans also adopted new strategies to influence the parliamentary system. They penetrated the DNVP, a strategy that forced them to deal with complex intraparty politics. Although Hugenberg’s taking the DNVP chairmanship in 1928 was subject to a variety of influences and motifs, the Pan-Germans considered it their own success. Claß increasingly transferred power in the League to leaders of the DNVP, while the League’s chapters helped purge local Landesverbände of the DNVP of rival factions, leaving local organizations of the party loyal to Hugenberg. The League’s alliance with the DNVP, and the power exercised in it by a handful of selected Pan-Germans, pushed the DNVP in a radical, anti-Republican and völkisch direction. However, it also made the Pan-German League an appendix of Hugenberg’s DNVP. The entry of the Pan-German League into party politics bespoke the immense influence that pressure groups exercised in Weimar’s right-wing parties during the 1920s, but the League kept
losing members and the dependence on the DNVP often robbed the League of its role as an independent movement, the would-be vanguard of a new national leadership.

*Denunciation and Suspicion: The Legacy of the Hitler Putsch*

The Hitler putsch had a lasting legacy for the Pan-Germans as it had raised basic questions about the extent to which the Pan-Germans and National Socialists were working together to overthrow the Weimar Republic. The League appeared to be uninformed about the NSDAP’s plans. Several days after the putsch, the chairman of the League’s Munich chapter, du Moulin-Eckardt, visited Kahr to obtain first-hand information.¹ Pan-German supporters of Hitler, such as Lehmann, were shattered by the failure of the putsch. Both he and Reventlow reacted by strengthening their ties to the NSDAP as a part of Hitler’s “Gesellschafts-Gefolgschaft” in Munich to which also belonged another Pan-German idol, Chamberlain, who met Hitler at the “Haus Wanfried” in Bayreuth in the summer of 1923 and subsequently romanticized Hitler as the exact “opposite of a fanatic.”² Claß believed that the Nazi movement would have some appeal in the future, but Hitler’s demagoguery precluded serious political cooperation. Claß and the League’s headquarters were especially convinced that the NSDAP’s economic program was objectionable and needed to be changed significantly if anyone were to take Hitler seriously after the putsch.³

Hitler’s trial for treason, which lasted from 26 February to 1 April 1924, revealed not only the internal feuds, but also the resolution on Weimar’s radical Right. Claß believed that Hitler’s justification of his actions represented a smear campaign against Claß himself, in which Hitler

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¹ See Kahr, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1389.
tried to deny his responsibility for the putsch as he dismissed charges of high treason.\textsuperscript{4} Claß was shocked that Hitler excused the putsch by asserting that Claß had planned similar scenarios in hopes of installing Seeckt, Kahr, or even Hitler himself as dictator. Ludendorff, who joined Hitler on the dock, supported the accusations against Claß. According to Ludendorff, the Pan-German League was “the most powerful political organization in Germany” as Claß had established contacts with Ehrhardt, who had returned to Bavaria after he fled to Hungary in the wake of the Erzberger murder in 1921 and supposedly planned already another putsch in Munich.\textsuperscript{5}

Kahr, too, testified at the trial but denied any contact with Claß. He also played down Hitler´s allegation that he had agreed to a dictatorship cabinet under Claß´s leadership. Kahr denied as well Hitler´s accusation that he was to announce a dictatorship during his speech in Munich´s \textit{Bürgerbräukeller} on 8 November 1923.\textsuperscript{6} Hitler was furious. During Kahr´s testimony, Hitler intervened repeatedly and together with his attorney he tried to show that Hitler was only reacting to other putsch plans and was thus not guilty of high treason.\textsuperscript{7} Although the judge ruled against this legal strategy, the defense attorneys succeeded in confusing the jurors about Claß´s involvement.\textsuperscript{8} Claß himself was under extreme pressure to testify but he refused, fearing that he would be charged as a conspirator. Instead, he submitted a written declaration, in which he assured the court that he had made neither agreements with Kahr nor contacts with Lossow or

\textsuperscript{4} Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, addendum [1936].
Seisser. Claß also denied any part in proposing a post-coup government with Kahr as leader. In reaction to this declaration, Hitler testified that Claß had asked him to join a dictatorship cabinet under Claß´s leadership. Hitler’s attorney then alleged that Claß and Roeder discussed a putsch in Munich with Seisser on 2 November 1923, after talks with Seeckt about a putsch in Northern Germany had failed. In yet another written declaration, Claß dismissed this idea, as well as the proposition that Kahr’s speech on 8 November was designed to spark a putsch. Claß also lied about his contacts with Seeckt. Claß and Kahr admitted that they had spoken with one another several times in 1923, but the lack of documentation left it unclear whether they planned a putsch for 8 November 1923.

The Pan-German League had in fact no role in energizing Hitler’s plans. In a published account of his contacts with Hitler and Kahr, Claß stated that he had not been in touch with Hitler since the summer. Nor was he aware of Kahr’s decision to support a dictatorship under Claß’ own leadership. Claß insisted that Hitler’s allegations about Claß’s ambitions to lead a dictatorial government were baseless, insofar as he himself had always favored a dictatorship of a single leader, not a collection of figures who could only compromise the pursuit of decisive, authoritarian policies. Claß’s view was widely shared among Pan-German leaders. In January 1924, Roeder stated that, while the apparent downfall of Hitler and the NSDAP was certainly a tragedy for the völkisch movement, a dictatorship under Hitler would have brought chaos, not the least because Hitler was not educated enough to compete with the Pan-Germans for leadership of

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9 „Erklärung Claß,“ read in Volk Court Munich on 24 March 1924, in Gruchmann and Weber, Der Hitler-Prozeß 1924, Vol. IV, 1376.
10 Hitler at the Volk Court Munich, 25 March 1924, in Gruchmann and Weber, Der Hitler-Prozeß 1924, Vol. VI, 1377-1378.
11 Karl Kohl at the Volk Court, 26 March 1924, in Gruchmann and Weber, Der Hitler-Prozeß 1924, Vol. VI, 1546-1547.
12 „Drahtung Claß,“ read in Volk Court Munich on 27 March 1924, in Gruchmann and Weber, Der Hitler-Prozeß 1924, Vol. VI, 1559.
13 See also Kruck, Geschichte des Allddeutschen Verbandes, 197-199 and Leicht, „Heinrich Claß,“ ch. 4.2.
14 Alldeutsche Blätter, 19 April 1924.
the entire Right. According to Roeder, attempts by Pan-German chapters to organize local working groups with other nationalist organizations including the NSDAP had been a “compromise of the foul middle” and sheer populism.¹⁵

The legal quarrels between Hitler and Claß documented their rivalry over leadership of the radical Right. The Hitler Putsch put the entire Right in a complicated situation, insofar as the law provided severe punishment for treason, including expulsion from Germany. Although it once again feared the organization’s own dissolution, the executive committee of the Pan-German League declared in late October 1924 that Hitler should not be expelled and handed over to the Austrian government, for instance.¹⁶ Such plans had been discussed widely. Although the Law to Protect the Republic required that Hitler be expelled from Germany (he could have been sentenced to death), the Austrian Minister President, Ignaz Seipel, repeatedly rejected the idea on the grounds that Hitler had forfeited his Austrian citizenship by evading the Austrian draft in 1914, leaving the Habsburg Empire, and choosing to fight for Imperial Germany.¹⁷ According to Hitler’s testimony, however, he chose the military service in Bavaria out of “Pan-German foresight”, in that it was Germany that was to fight for the entire German nation including the ethnic Germans in the Habsburg Empire.¹⁸ Hitler’s strategy worked, and the court accepted his arguments that he staged the putsch out of a sense of patriotism to save Germany from both the Republic and right-wing competitors. In the event, due to the careless investigation by the chairman of the Peoples Court in Munich, Georg Neidhardt, Hitler received a scandalously mild sentence of five years in prison.

¹⁵ Roeder to local chapter Esslingen, 15 January 1924, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 210, 21a-21c.
¹⁶ Alldeutsche Blätter, 1 November 1924.
While Hitler served his sentence in comfortable circumstances, he reflected upon his future leadership role and how to ground his claim to power. In the two volumes of *Mein Kampf*, which were published in 1925, he paid tribute to Austrian Pan-Germanism as a broader political movement in the development of his ideology toward anti-Semitism, racism, and aggressive expansionism on behalf of a greater Germany. But he made no mention of the Pan-German League. Rather, he stated that the Austrian Pan-German movement of Schönerer and Lueger had deeply influenced him, instilling his opposition to any state authority that neglected the interests of the *Volk*.\(^{19}\) Still, Hitler condemned the inability of these figures to incorporate the masses into their vision of a racially pure and anti-Semitic society.\(^{20}\) Hitler’s omission of Claß’s role in financing the *Völkischer Beobachter* and his silence about his several meetings with Claß clearly reflected Hitler’s strategic neglect of the Pan-German League. In this reading, the Pan-German League occupied no role in the NSDAP’s past and Hitler deprived the League of its political significance by distinguishing between Pan-Germanism as an ideology and Pan-Germanism as a rival movement.

The Pan-Germans made similar distinctions. While National Socialism’s broader ideology of a socially comprehensive *Volksgemeinschaft* was attractive to them, the Nazis’ program was too socialist for their taste. The review that appeared in the *Deutsche Zeitung* in 1925 criticized Hitler’s arrogant writing style and his tendency to blame others with unnecessary harshness, while significant passages about historical contexts had been plain wrong.\(^{21}\) Claß considered Hitler’s book well written and interesting in certain regards, but he believed that many of Hitler’s arguments were untenable.\(^{22}\) Claß clearly thought the Nazi movement to have some appeal in the


\(^{20}\) Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 133.


future, but Hitler’s demagoguery did not allow for any serious political cooperation. Roeder made clear that Claß and the League’s headquarters was convinced that the economic program of the NSDAP was especially egregious and needed to be changed significantly if anyone was to take Hitler seriously after the putsch. The NSDAP’s populist demands of socializing banks were simply unbearable and betrayed the fabric of the Pan-German economic program according to which efficient distribution of wealth was organized within a framework of capitalist production and private property.

The Hitler-Putsch made public the increasing competition between the Pan-German League and the aspiring movements of the radical Right. Hitler’s trial only reinforced rivalries that already existed and the Pan-German League increasingly lost relevance on the political Right. The banning of the Protection League in 1922 had already drawn support for anti-Semitic mobilization towards other movements, which mobilized members through the party system. The League’s broad programmatic demands were now represented in new aspiring right-wing parties. The shift from extraparliamentary movement-politics to parliamentary party-politics had become necessary given the importance of the Weimar parliament. Compared to Imperial Germany’s parliament, the powers of the Weimar Reichstag were much increased, and they compelled even the most radical right-wing organizations to change their strategies and to engage in parliamentary politics for anti-parliamentary goals. This trend had been confirmed in the foundation of the German-Völkisch Freedom Party (Deutschvölkische Freiheitspartei) in December 1922 under the leadership of Graefe-Goldebee and the former Pan-German, Wulle. After the NSDAP was prohibited in 1922 in several German states, it cooperated with the DVFP. In March 1923 the Nazis claimed leadership in Bavaria, while the DVFP’s influence was

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concentrated in northern Germany. The DVFP was itself threatened, however, by internal conflicts; and when the Hitler Putsch led to a temporary ban of the DVFP, several splinter parties emerged around former National Socialists, mirroring the sectarianism of the anti-Semitic and National Socialist Right. The National Socialist Freedom Party (Nationalsozialistische Freiheitspartei/NSFP), which was founded in late 1923, aimed to unify the rank-and-file of the former NSDAP with the DVFP after the putsch, while Graefe-Goldebee from the DVFP and Ludendorff aspired to fill the leadership vacuum themselves. The NSFP served as a potential Sammlungspartei for the prohibited NSDAP during the elections in May 1924, when 32 candidates from the prohibited party were elected to the parliament.

Personal quarrels between Claß and Wulle hindered cooperation between the DVFP and the Pan-German League, while attempts by Ludendorff to reconcile his differences with Claß failed repeatedly until relations between the DVFP and Pan-German League became less heated in the fall of 1926. Claß was convinced that the foundation of the DVFP had further fragmented the radical Right, while Graefe-Goldebee agreed that cooperation between the Pan-German League and the DVFP was inconceivable. The second round of elections in 1924, in December, resulted in severe losses for both the NSFB and the DVFP, and plans to unify the parties failed repeatedly. When Hitler refounded the NSDAP on 27 February 1925, not only the völkisch bloc in the parliament but also the radical Right in Germany was in shambles. The NSDAP reinvented itself under Hitler’s leadership, while the DVFP lost all significance as an alternative to both the NSDAP and the DNVP, particularly once Hitler forbade cooperation between the

26 Graefe Goldebee at the Sitzung der Führerschaft der DVFP, 10 July 1923, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 226, 95.
27 See also Martin Döring, „Parlamentarischer Arm der Bewegung:“ Die Nationalsozialisten im Reichstag der Weimarer Republik (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2001), 76.
NSDAP and DVFP in the fall of 1925. Claß watched the refoundation of the NSDAP with some sympathy. Still, competition between Hitler and himself had left a legacy of mistrust. While he repeated his view that cooperation with Hitler was impossible in May 1925, Claß was privately willing to meet, were Hitler to make the approach and give up his pretensions to lead the Right.²⁸

Competition over leadership, however, poisoned their relationship and Heß informed Claß that Hitler had no desire to discuss political strategy with the Pan-Germans.²⁹ Both Claß and Hitler had changed their political strategies by declaring violent putschism as an inconceivable means to overthrow the Weimar Republic. While Hitler came to such a conclusion in March 1925 (after the NSDAP movement began to stabilize under his personal leadership again), Claß had grasped the necessity of adhering legalism by the end of 1925.³⁰ Between 1925 and 1928 the relationship between the Pan-Germans and the National Socialist movement remained unsettled by competition and distrust. Hitler enforced the professionalization and bureaucratization of the NSDAP, as well as the strengthening of his leadership. Ideology and populism did not change, however. In May 1926, the NSDAP leadership decided that its 1920 program (that Claß had found remarkably Pan-German in many of its core-demands, especially in regard to its anti-Semitic rhetoric) remained valid and should neither to be amended nor abandoned.³¹ Claß attempted to organize another extraparliamentary Sammlungsbewegung in 1926 by founding the Emergency Community (Notgemeinschaft), composed of various leaders of nationalist organizations, but its impact was a failure.³² The consolidation of Claß’s leadership role within the Pan-German League and the embrace of the “leadership-principle” that characterized almost

²⁹ Rudolf Heß to Claß, 9 June 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 211, 185.
³⁰ See Döring, Parlamentarischer Arm der Bewegung, 58 and Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936].
³¹ See Gottfried Feder, Das Programm der NSDAP und seine weltanschaulichen Grundlagen (Munich: Eher, 1927), 18.
all of Weimar’s right-wing movements were supposed to secure the League’s vanguard role of the Right but could not help the Pan-Germans to overcome their mobilizational limitations.

Dictatorship Ante Portas? Plans for a Legal Dictatorship, the Government, and the Public

Between the failure of the Kapp Putsch and the failure of the Hitler Putsch, it had become apparent to the Pan-Germans that the violent overthrow of the Weimar Republic was not an effective strategy for seizing political power. Paradoxically, however, after the Hitler putsch, Claß’s conspiratorial past came back to haunt him, as the Pan-Germans became prominently linked to a series of plots that appeared to aim at just this result. Claß had long promoted the idea of dictatorship as the center of his vision of a Pan-German state. Such a vision had animated his many negotiations with leaders of the Free Corps and other organizations of the radical Right during the early 1920s. At the meeting of the executive committee in September 1921, Claß acknowledged that his attempts to organize a paramilitary Sammlungsbewegung for a putsch were hampered by the strength of Republican forces. The final vote surprised Claß: although eight members of the executive committee favored a dictatorship, ten members opposed Claß’s plans. Claß’s failure to gain a majority of votes for his dictatorship plans was one of the few occasions of open opposition to his dominance within the executive committee, and the discussion was postponed until May 1922, when the executive committee finally adopted his proposal.

In the meantime, Claß also advocated his plans under his own name through articles for various journals and newspapers like the Deutsche Zeitung. He accompanied his publications with selected talks at local chapters where he extolled the concept of a dictatorship, but it was

34 See also Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 27 May 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 134, 14.
35 See also Leicht, „Heinrich Claß“, ch. 4.2.
clear to the majority of the leading Pan-Germans that a violent dictatorship was unconceivable. Even Vietinghoff-Scheel, who, in 1924, advocated a *völkisch* dictatorship did not fail to emphasize that such a government could only be implemented through legal means with the assistance of the parliament.36

By the beginning of 1924, plans for a dictatorship had been unsettled not only by the failure of the Hitler Putsch, but also by public allegations that Claß had conspired against Seeckt—in fact, that he had planned Seeckt’s assassination after the Chief of the *Reichswehr* refused to support right-wing uprisings in the occupied Ruhr. In January 1924, the office of the Reich Commissar for the Surveillance of Public Order received information from members of the DVFP that the former lieutenant Alexander Thormann, who was a member of the NSDAP in Augsburg, and Georg Grandel, who was in close contact with Reventlow, Claß, and Kahr, had plotted Seeckt’s assassination with Claß’s financial assistance.37 Claß had in fact been in close contact with Grandel since the occupation of the Ruhr, and the two had discussed how to get rid of Seeckt, who was pursuing his own plans for a dictatorship.38 But there was in any case no clear plan for an assassination and these allegations were circulated by Claß’s rival Wulle, who had befriended with Grandel, and Horst von Tettenborn, who was a leading member of the DVFP and had recruited the student Hans Köpke to execute Seeckt’s murder.39 The investigations continued nevertheless. Grandel and Thormann were arrested in January 1924, and during the investigation, Grandel implicated Claß. Grandel recanted his testimony several days later and confessed that,

while Claß had offered financial support of 50,000 Mark, the Pan-German leader had never planned to assassinate Seeckt.  

For the Pan-Germans, these allegations came again as a surprise and compounded the stress that surrounded Hitler’s treason trial. In January 1924, Claß testified twice in connection with the Seeckt investigation. He admitted that he had discussed with Grandel Seeckt’s refusal to offer the Reichswehr’s assistance in a putsch plan (in fact, Seeckt had thrown Claß out of his office). The allegations became public and left the League’s chapters wondering about Claß’s role. Vietinghoff-Scheel assured the leaders of the chapters that Claß had no hand in such plans and that neither Grandel nor Thormann was a member of the Pan-German League. For the editors of the Social Democratic Vorwärts, the investigations against Thormann and Grandel were in fact a “Claß trial,” which revealed that Claß was planning a putsch. Claß himself was overwhelmed by the allegations that were also put forward against him during the court hearings which lasted from 20 May until 8 June 1924. Claß, who had to show up personally at court at the end of May, nearly broke down during the hearing parrying the judges remarks that he should calm down by shouting at the audience that he would have ended up in an asylum 15 years ago had he not trained his patience over the years to survive all these political allegations. He testified that he had fought for a dictatorship for years, but he protested that he “had become the scapegoat of the events in Munich, the murder of Rathenau, etc.” He claimed that he had worked with a “small general staff,” which he could trust in organizing cooperation between the Right

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42 Vietinghoff-Scheel to Ortsgruppen, 26 January 1924, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 672, 10 and Deutsche Zeitung, 1 June 1924.
43 See Vorwärts, 28 May 1924, 31 May 1924, and 6 June 1924.
44 See Berliner Tageblatt, 31 May 1924.
and the *Reichswehr*, but that he had never planned the murder of Seeckt.\textsuperscript{45} Claß was acquitted on all counts, as were the other defendants. The court found that their intent to commit murder was not a sufficient basis for conviction under the Law to Protect the Republic. Although he had defended himself successfully, the verdict deepened public suspicion about future Pan-German putsch plans.

The SPD remained particularly concerned about the Pan-German League as a force of anti-Republican discontent. In January 1925, the Social Democratic Minister President of Prussia, Otto Braun, described the League as one of the most dangerous enemies of the Weimar Republic, declaring that the responsibility for current economic and political crises lay with the same right-wing forces that had pushed German society into war in 1914.\textsuperscript{46} The office of the Reich Commissar for the Surveillance of Public Order also reported in November 1925 that there was “remarkable activity” within right-wing circles around Claß regarding a putsch.\textsuperscript{47} *Vorwärts* warned about a tightly knit web of “organized putschism,” which included Claß, Hugenberg, and associations like the VVVD and the Pan-German League.\textsuperscript{48} In early 1926, Hugenberg, who had served as a DNVP deputy in the parliament since 1919, condemned parliamentarism as a tool of the radical left to establish a quasi-dictatorship of the Republican parties.\textsuperscript{49} Graefe-Goldebee from the DVFP predicted a right-wing dictatorship in 1926, since the Republic’s crisis of legitimacy among nationalist circles would lead to authoritarian solutions.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{45} *Berliner Tageblatt*, 31 May 1924.
\textsuperscript{46} See *Berliner Tageblatt*, 23 January 1925.
\textsuperscript{47} Reichskommissar für die Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, 17 November 1925, BA-K, R 43/I, 770, 75-77 and *Vorwärts*, 18 February 1926. See also Albert Grzesinski, *Im Kampf um die deutsche Republik. Erinnerungen eines Sozialdemokraten*, ed. Eberhard Kolb (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2001), 159.
\textsuperscript{48} Reichskommissar für die Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, 17 November 1925, BA-K, R 43/I, 770, 75-77 and *Vorwärts*, 18 February 1926.
\textsuperscript{49} *Lokalanzeiger*, 9 January 1926.
\textsuperscript{50} *Deutsches Tageblatt*, 1 January 1926.
In March 1926, the Berliner Tageblatt reported rumours that radical right-wing circles had again begun planning a coup d’etat; this one would feature Hindenburg’s invoking Article 48 of the constitution.\(^5^1\) Claß himself had stated that this provision of the constitution offered the best legal vehicle to the destruction of the Weimar Republic. In this light, he rejected a violent putsch and tried to persuade Hindenburg to appoint a dictatorial cabinet under the Hugenberg’s leadership.\(^5^2\) In these machinations Wilhelm von Dommes served as the Pan-German League’s link to the President. Dommes, who served as an aide-de-camp for the exiled Emperor in Doorn, was a friend of Claß and he attended the meetings of the executive committee repeatedly as a guest between 1927 and 1932 before he joined the executive committee. In discussions with Hindenburg at the end of 1925, he opposed Hindenburg’s plan to appoint chancellor Hans Luther as a legal dictator and instead suggested Hugenberg, who would enjoy more political credibility on the Right.\(^5^3\) Salm-Horstmar, who was a friend of Hindenburg and one of Hindenburg’s fellow-Freemasons of the Johanniterorden, met with Hindenburg on 30 October 1925 and promised him that the appointment of Hugenberg would lead to the return of the Hohenzollern monarchy. Hindenburg declared in private that he, too, regarded the presidency as an interim solution until the return of Wilhelm II from exile.\(^5^4\) Hindenburg, who had just been elected into office in April 1925 and tried to work with the parliament, remained unconvinced, however, that the appointment of a Hugenberg Cabinet under Article 48 would calm domestic politics, even as others promoted this scheme. Hindenburg had always declared in private that he accepted the Presidency as a quasi-interim solution until the return of Wilhelm II from exile in Doorn.\(^5^5\) Claß could build on influential friends, who promoted such plans. General August von Cramon, who

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\(^{51}\) Berliner Tageblatt, 1 March 1926. See also Vossische Zeitung, 29 December 1927.
\(^{52}\) See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 8.3.
\(^{53}\) Dommes to Hindenburg, 6 January 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 673, 1/33.
\(^{54}\) Salm-Horstmar to Hindenburg, 6 February 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 454, 93-94.
was also in touch with the Kaiser, and the DNVP deputy, Elard von Oldenburg-Januschau, who belonged to the inner-circle of the camarilla around Hindenburg and his influential son Oskar, used their influence on Hindenburg on Hugenberg’s behalf. By January 1926, Claß concluded later in his memoirs, Hindenburg would have considered a dictatorship cabinet under Article 48 if Hugenberg were appointed in a minor role.

All these negotiations contributed to rumours that a Pan-German putsch was in the offing with the President’s support. In April 1926, the Pan-German Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung dismissed these rumours, but the Communists used them to act. On 30 April 1926, referring to a report in the Vossische Zeitung the day before, the KPD petitioned the Reichstag to investigate rumours that the VVVD was coordinating a network of more than a hundred nationalist associations to overthrow the Republic. Because the Pan-German League was a corporate member of the VVVD and Hans von Sodenstern, who was the leader of the paramilitary Wikingbund as well as an editor of Claß’s Deutsche Zeitung, was involved in several of these putsch activities, Claß again became the center of attention. More significant, however, was the willingness of Hindenburg to appoint a right-wing cabinet after the Luther cabinet fell on 12 May 1926. The issue over which the cabinet fell was whether the German merchant marine should fly the old Imperial flag. This so-called Flaggenstreit heated the political debate between the Republican forces and the nationalist revisionists over the validity of the Republic’s symbols. Additional rumours spread in the press that right-wing circles wanted to exploit the referendum in June 1926, which addressed the question whether the princely houses should be

57 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 8.3. and addendum [1936], Kruck, Geschichte des Aldeutschen Verbandes, 173-175, and also Dorpalen, Hindenburg and the Weimar Republic, 102-103.
58 Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung, 20 April 1926.
59 Rote Fahne, 30 April 1926.
60 See Pyta, Hindenburg, 467 and 479-519.
compensated for their dispossession, as the pretext to implement Article 48. The Pan-Germans regarded this referendum, which had been initiated by the Communists and supported by the SPD, the Center Party, and the Liberal German Democratic Party (Deutsche Demokratische Partei/DDP), as nothing less than a sign of “Bolshevism.”

The on-going rumors of an anti-Republican putsch produced a reaction. In May 1926, the Prussian government had searched several houses and put several right-wing leaders under arrest after Heinrich Dietz, a member of the Center Party and a business partner of Bacmeister´s and Hugenberg´s publishing houses, reported to the Foreign Office and the Prussian government that a putsch was planned for the near future in right-wing circles including the VVVD and Claß. The Vice President of the Berlin Police, Friedrich Friedensburg, took action against various anti-Republican activists and associations after consultation with Prussia´s Minister of the Interior, Carl Severing, and the Foreign Minister, Stresemann, who both called for criminal investigations, especially against Claß. On 12 May 1926, several paramilitary associations, including the Olympia, the Wehrwolf, and the Wikingbund, were dissolved or their leaders arrested. The precipitating factor for this action was the discovery of an “emergency constitution” in Claß’s home. This document had evidently been made available to the NSDAP on the eve of their putsch in 1923 and had been found in the suitcase of Theodor von der Pfordten, who (as a member of the Bavarian Supreme Court), after he was shot in front of the Feldherrenhalle. It called for suspending the Weimar Constitution and the associational law, dissolving all political parties and

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61 See Vorwärts, 12 May 1926 and also Alldutsche Blätter, 17 April 1926.
62 See Vorwärts, 3 May 1926 and 19 May 1926 and Deutsche Zeitung, 27 November 1926.
the parliament, imposing press censorship and courts martial. Meanwhile, nationalist
associations, in cooperation with the *Reichswehr*, were to prompt Hindenburg to resign, to be
replaced by a nationalist chancellor, Senator Neumann from Lübeck, who was on the executive
committee of the Pan-German League.\(^{65}\) Hugenberg would be minister of finance and General
von Möhl minister of defense.\(^{66}\) This document had little basis in fact. Neumann had already
turned down Claß´s offer to become chancellor several times in early 1926 and so did
Hugenberg, who repeatedly rejected Claß´s plan to serve in a dictatorial cabinet.\(^{67}\)

Braun himself admitted that evidence of this Pan-German putsch plan was flimsy. The
Prussian minister of justice, Johannes Bell, however, continued investigations of people whose
names had been on Claß´s list, as well as members of the Economic Committee (*Wirtschaftliche
Vereinigung*) from industrial circles in the Rhineland and Westphalia, who were also implicated
in the plan.\(^{68}\) Among the suspects were Kirdorf, Hugenberg, and Leo Wegener, Hugenberg´s
close advisor and a member of the Pan-German League, who was named on the list as minister of
the interior. Braun admitted in private that the police had done a poor job in finding more
convincing evidence for a recent Pan-German putsch plan that went beyond this name list.
Furthermore, he stated that it would be very complicated to find evidence for Pan-Germans
intending a putsch that had not happened and the Prussian State Secretary, Dr. Robert Weismann,

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\(^{65}\) See *Vossische Zeitung*, 13 May 1926 and Hofmann, *Der Hitlerputsch*, 154 and 284-294.
\(^{66}\) *Vorwärts*, 12 May 1926.
\(^{67}\) See Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch. 8.3 and „Erklärung Heinrich Claß,“ 16 May 1927, in *Deutsche Zeitung*, 17
May 1926.
\(^{68}\) See Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, addendum [1936], E. Fritz Baer, *Putsch-Gefahr und Hochverrat! Die
Geschichte einer Polizei-Aktion auf Grund amtlicher Feststellungen* (Berlin: Neudeutsche Verlags- und
Vertriebsgesellschaft, 1927); *BZ am Mittag*, 12 May 1926; *8 Uhr Abendblatt*, 12 May 1926; and *Deutsche Zeitung*,
28 October 1927. See also Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, ch. 8.4 and Hagen Schulze, *Otto Braun oder Preußens
demokratische Sendung* (Frankfurt Main/Berlin/Vienna: Propyläen, 1977), 504-507.
warned his colleagues that the evidence found by the police would not suffice to charge the League with putsch allegations.69

All of these charges led to the prosecution of Claß, although the Supreme Reich Attorney, Ludwig Ebermayer, (who had served as prosecutor during the trials against Kapp in 1920 and Rathenau’s assassins in 1922) announced that evidence collected by the police was insufficient to guarantee a conviction against Claß and the others suspects.70 The trial, which took place before the Supreme Court in Leipzig, lasted thirteen months, from May 1926 to June 1927. It made clear that Claß’s ideas about using Article 48 posed a serious threat to the Weimar Republic. In his own defense, Claß declared that he had used legal means to pursue an authoritarian government and that none of his political friends had advocated a violent putsch in 1926. According to Claß’s testimony, the list of names for a dictatorial cabinet had been crafted before the Hitler Putsch, but afterwards he had discussed a dictatorship strictly within the framework of the Weimar Constitution.71 Vietinghoff-Scheel and Dommes confirmed that Pan-German politics had long revolved around a dictatorship, but that Claß had abandoned plans for a violent overthrow of the Republic after the failure of the Hitler Putsch.72 Dommes also testified that in early January 1926 he had discussed plans to invoke Article 48 with the son of the President, Oskar von Hindenburg. Oskar von Hindenburg replied that his talks with Claß and Dommes concerned issues besides a dictatorship.73 Further testimony by Hugenberg, Bang, Möhl, Epp, and Ehrhardt supported Claß and even Hitler, who was busy re-organizing the NSDAP movement, now leapt to Claß’s side,

70 Vorwärts, 23 May 1926 and Deutsches Tageblatt, 27 May 1926.
71 See „Erklärung Heinrich Claß,“ 16 May 1927, in Deutsche Zeitung, 17 May 1926.
denouncing the allegations against Claß as nonsense since “everybody knows that these gentlemen would do anything but stage a putsch.” Other witnesses, such as Otto Bornemann from the Young German Order, had political scores to settle with Claß. On 13 June 1927, Bornemann testified that Claß had planned a putsch in 1926, which would be triggered by a lockout at the Borsig plants in Berlin.74 The leader of the Young German Order, Arthur Mahraun, was another man with a serious grudge against Claß on which he built his testimony. Because Mahraun had distanced himself repeatedly from putsch plans that were so “incredibly popular in right-wing circles these days” he supported Bornemann’s statement and testified that he had witnessed agitation in right-wing circles in early 1926 that sought emergency rule by Hindenburg.75 However, Supreme Reich Attorney, Karl August Werner, gave credence to neither of these men, and on 15 October 1927 he closed the case against Claß.76

Claß was the scapegoat for putsch plans that had been discussed early in 1926 by paramilitary organizations like the Bund Wiking, Olympia, Ludendorff’s Tannenbergbund, the Stahlhelm, and Mahraun’s Young German Order.77 Still, the dismissal of the charges against him rested on fragile ground and did nothing to suggest that the Republic could defend itself legally from the Right. The Supreme Court saw no evidence that planning to use Article 48 as a vehicle to dictatorship could be considered high treason. At the end of 1927, the Social Democrat Hugo Sinzheimer, who helped craft the Weimar Constitution and was a professor of law at the

77 See also Deutsche Zeitung, 5 November 1927.
University of Frankfurt Main, declared the decision to not charge Claß a mistake, which opened the door to anti-democratic forces to overthrow the Weimar Republic by legal means.78

Meanwhile, to his chagrin, Claß had become a figure of ridicule in the left-wing media. A cartoon in the Die Jugend by Erich Wilk depicted Claß with an arrogant donkey´s head teaching fellow reactionaries with monocles in a classroom how to implement a legal dictatorship. The cartoon suggested a dull, intellectual, *spießbürgerlich* bureaucrat with old-fashioned radical ideas from the Wilhelmine era.79 The public lampooning of Claß included attacks on both his ideological convictions and his personal life. The police released confiscated letters from December 1925 that revealed his contacts with Wilhelm II in Doorn. The press portrayed these documents as proof that Claß planned to put the former Kaiser back on the throne. Claß responded that the contacts were harmless greetings from the Kaiser congratulating him on the 25th anniversary of his chairmanship of the Pan-German League, and that the Kaiser´s new wife, Hermine von Schöneich-Carolath, had asked Claß for his views on German politics shortly thereafter.80 In fact, Claß maintained limited ties with Wilhelm II and neither had he himself visited Doorn nor any other member of the executive committee or the headquarters.81 It was mostly Dommes who served as a primary point of contact as he was a close advisor to Wilhelm II in Doorn (and was appointed the Kaiser´s adjutant general in 1930), but hardly worked as a mediator to the Pan-German League as he was a member of various associations and the chairman of one of the DNVP´s districts in Potsdam. Claß´s suggestion to employ Salm-

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79 *Die Jugend*, 5 June 1926.
80 Roeder to Dr. Fortmann, 19 May 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 212, 300.

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Horstmar as such a link to Doorn was indication of Claß´ desire to keep the Kaiser informed about the League´s proceedings, but he also had no intention of bringing Wilhelm II back to the throne.82

The media attention did not stop with the Kaiser letters. The “Claß affair” had broader implications. The Claß trial cast the Pan-Germans in an unfavorable light, as warmongers who had plotted a putsch and civil war. Not only Germany´s “Hotel Association” was alarmed and complained about a number of holiday cancellations by guests who feared political unrest accompanying the Claß-trial.83 More importantly, the affair divided political parties over the use of Article 48. The DVP denounced putsches as a crime against the Republic, but it also condemned the house searches against Claß.84 The Prussian Social Democratic Minister of the Interior replied that right-wing associations had been the focus of his attention for years, and that they, not the Communists, posed the primary threat to the Republic.85 As a result of the “causa Claß,” the SPD and the Liberals pushed for legal measures to limit the powers of the chancellor and president, while the DNVP demanded the quick suspension of the Law to Protect the Republic.86 Under pressure from the city´ s Bürgerschaft Neumann, who had been implicated in documents found in Claß´ house, had to resign as mayor of Lübeck after the SPD and the KPD successfully introduced a motion of no confidence .87

Claß´s position as chairman of the League was, if anything, strengthened by his surviving the two legal attacks of 1924 and 1926. A wave of congratulations arrived from the local chapters

83 See Lokal-Anzeiger, 29 May 1926.
84 „Entschliessung Reichsausschuss DVP,“ 19 May 1926, in Deutsche Zeitung, 21 May 1926.
85 Vorwärts, 23 May 1926.
86 See also Deutsche Zeitung, 19 May 1926; Vossische Zeitung, 19 October 1926; and Vorwärts, 19 October 1926.
87 See Lübecker Generalanzeiger, 18 May 1926; Vossische Zeitung, 18 May 1926; Der Tag, 18 May 1926; Berliner Tageblatt, 26 May 1926; Lübeckische Nachrichten, 27 May 1926; Lübecker Generalanzeiger, 27 May 1926; Deutsche Zeitung, 4 June 1926; and Hamburgischer Correspondent, 3 June 1926.
to demonstrate how much he had become the public face of the League.88 By 1927, the title “Führer” of the Pan-German League, which had first come into use in the executive committee during the war, now became Claß’s official designation. The legal challenges represented the culminating event in the organizational history of the Pan-Germans and cemented his position as the “undisputed leader” of the League.89 But this centralization of power in turn brought significant political problems.

Transience and Frailty: The Legacy of the Claß Trial

The Pan-Germans paid a heavy price for Claß’s preeminence. They acquired a reputation that transcended the image of the restless “Alldeutsche,” which they had gained during the war. By the late 1920s, they had become public symbols of stubborn putschism, men who had failed to learn the lessons of the failed putsches in 1920 and 1923, and who increasingly faced a fading reputation as former vanguards of the Right. Particularly Claß’s failure to find broad support within the radical Right promoted such images, while the League had become a regular victim of police investigations and house searches. By the end of 1927, Claß summarized the experience of his latest ordeal and had to admit that he was surprised to see to what extent public opinion had become used to these kinds of putsch allegations – right or wrong.90

Claß and the Pan-German League still cast a long shadow over the Right, but their leadership had been transient. This transience was manifest in Claß’s own physical and psychological frailty. The investigations, trials, and the media glare put him under immense strain. When the police searched his home on 15 May 1926, he had to return early from another

88 See also Georg Beutel to Claß, 4 November 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 674, 33.
stay in Bad Kissingen. After Niemann from the Barmen chapter expressed his sorrow over Claß´s exhaustion, Roeder replied that Claß had to endure interrogations that lasted up to ten hours and left a visible mark on the chairman´s health. His doctor advised him that the only way to recover from the stress (and his chronic gall bladder problems) was to disengage temporarily from politics. Claß followed his advice. He handed over the chairmanship of the League to Gebsattel, Vietinghoff-Scheel, and Roeder. Vietinghoff-Scheel and Roeder had already become crucial intermediaries between the local chapters and the League´s executive bodies. Both now answered almost all of the incoming mail and spoke for Claß.

With Claß at the center of the League´s power structure, his absence, combined with the death of his wife Mathilde in the summer of 1927, who had suffered from nerve and cervical vertebra paralysis since 1924, created a lack of public leadership. Caring for his wife had left him with limited energy to take care of the Pan-German League. Over the years, he had been under constant emotional stress about his wife´s health. In October 1926, Claß had to return from another stay in Bad Kissingen after Claß was “very shattered” about his wife´s illness. He had no regular sleep pattern and occasionally lost consciousness at his wife’s bedside and he also suffered from diabetes in later years. Claß´s absences from Berlin at spas like Bad Kreuth, Baden Baden, and Bad Kissingen now consumed several weeks each year. When his wife died in early July 1927, Claß took another cure in Bad Kissingen on his doctor´s advice that lasted from early August to mid-October 1927. On these occasions he handed over the League´s proceedings.

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94 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 8.8.
95 Roeder to Karl Müse, 9 November 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 212 and Roeder to Gebsattel, 23 October 1926, in ibidem, 526.
almost entirely to the headquarters.\textsuperscript{96} In these circumstances was replaced by his closest assistants, while he himself handled only the most urgent issues. He communicated regularly only with political friends like Hugenberg, devoted chapter leaders, and staff members at the headquarters in Berlin.

After his legal difficulties, Claß avoided appearances in the local chapters and shied from public gatherings.\textsuperscript{97} The “causa Claß” had indeed broader implications, as the Claß trial put the Pan-Germans in a most unfavorable light as warmongers striving for putsch and civil war. In May 1926, the Hotel Association complained about a number of cancellations by guests who feared political unrest in Germany because of the putsch allegations of the Claß-trial and even demanded that the Foreign Office release an official statement affirming that law and order still prevailed in Germany.\textsuperscript{98} Claß’s moves away from the public had consequences for the League’s business. Starting in September 1926, guests who joined the meetings had to declare that they would keep the proceedings secret, not speak to the press, and not to share information about the League’s meetings.\textsuperscript{99} Repeatedly after 1926, Claß threatened to resign from the executive committee if it failed to assist with the League’s daily business or refused funds for an additional assistant at the headquarters. When, in December 1926, only 1,100 Mark were collected among the League’s members to hire an additional secretary, Claß was again immensely frustrated about the lack of understanding that he was unable to juggle the demands of authoritarian leadership and the attention that the League received due to Claß’s putsch politics in the past.\textsuperscript{100} Neumann’s

\textsuperscript{96} See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 15 September 1928.
\textsuperscript{97} See Roeder to Bruno Tanzmann, 9 June 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 212, 387.
\textsuperscript{98} See \textit{Lokal-Anzeiger}, 29 May 1926.
\textsuperscript{99} Claß to Hauptleitung, Geschäftsführender Ausschuss des ADV, 11 August 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 147, 36.
\textsuperscript{100} See Claß to Lehmann, 19 November 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 148, 98.
death in April 1928 also emphasized how limited Claß’s choice of suitable personnel for political leadership actually had become.\textsuperscript{101}

Roeder understood this dilemma and demanded that the League now turned all its resources into putting “state power in the right hands.”\textsuperscript{102} The Claß affair seemed to prescribe political strategies of anti-Republican legalism, which found new avenues through the conversion of the DNVP into a \textit{völkisch} party. The DNVP provided the most suitable political basis for the Pan-Germans to translate their policies of dictatorship into practice. However, Claß was not the driving force in this process. This role fell instead to a small group of Pan-Germans within the DNVP, who had infiltrated the party’s institutions after 1922 and whose efforts culminated when Hugenberg became chairman of the party in October 1928. Claß, on the other side, had returned from yet another rest in Switzerland and Bad Kissingen as late as in early 1928, where he cured his chronic stomach pains. Roeder expressed his relief that Claß did not return as a nervous wreck that he usually turned into during these cures and that Claß was able to engage into politics again.\textsuperscript{103} Only in early 1928 did Claß again become active in these efforts to organize a \textit{Sammlungsbe wegung} of the Right.\textsuperscript{104} But even then, his health limited his role and Claß was no longer the driving force behind these kinds of behind-the-scenes endeavors.

\textit{Passing the Baton: Empowering Alfred Hugenberg and the DNVP}

Since its foundation in 1918/19, the DNVP had been the center of Pan-Germans’ attention who aspired to political influence in the \textit{Reichstag} and other parliaments. Pan-German activists had also joined the DVP and the Catholic Bavarian People’s Party (\textit{Bayerische Volkspartei/BVP}) after 1918, but the DNVP was the most attractive for their purposes. Its anti-Republicanism,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[101] See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 14 April 1928.
\item[103] Roeder to Admiral Lilli Rosendahl, 2 February 1928, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 214, 32.
\end{footnotes}
nationalism, and its völkisch anti-Semitism, as well as its Prussianism, had also attracted most of the Fatherland Party and the old German Conservative Party, as well as significant numbers from the National Liberal Party, into this new party. The DNVP offered several avenues of influence, because it was federally structured. Forty-five regional organizations comprised 12,000 local chapters and a membership almost 700,000 in 1928.\textsuperscript{105} Several leading Pan-Germans served as Reichstag deputies for the DNVP. Hugenberg, Oberfohrren, and Roesicke had served since 1919, while the Pan-German district leader Otto von Feldmann joined a year later. Kloß and Klingemann both served with the DNVP in the Prussian Diet from 1919 to 1921 and Klingemann even chaired the DNVP district Koblenz-Trier.\textsuperscript{106} Vietinghoff-Scheel, Kirdorf, Lehmann, Wangenheim, Herta Schemmel, Irmgard Wrede, Franziska von Porembsky, and three close advisors to Hugenberg—Bang, Schiele, and Otto Schmidt(-Hannover)—also served in the Reichstag or other important capacities.

On the local level, cooperation between the Pan-German League and the DNVP was cordial, especially during state and national elections. In Düsseldorf, for instance, the League and the DNVP were run by activists who were members of both organizations.\textsuperscript{107} Pezoldt reported that thirty of the 37 founding members of the DNVP in Plauen were members of the Pan-German League.\textsuperscript{108} Similar cross-affiliations existed in other constituencies. The Pan-German Dr. Kretschmar in Dresden, for instance, was the chairman of the DNVP chapter there and enjoyed the support of the chapter of the Pan-German League. In 1922, after the dissolution of the


\textsuperscript{107} See Gisbert Gemein, „Die DNVP in Düsseldorf 1918-1933“ (Diss., Cologne, 1969), 166.

Protection League, Kretschmar and Dr. Hoenicke of the Dresden DNVP worked together with Bang and Beutel from the Pan-German League to mobilize resistance to the government’s crackdown on radical organizations.\(^{109}\)

Despite the prominence of Pan-Germans in the DNVP’s chapters, Claß’s outspoken opposition to the Weimar Republic and his agitation on behalf of a dictatorship prevented him from openly supporting any political party, although he repeatedly sought contact with Kuno Graf von Westarp, who was the leading figure in the DNVP on economic and agrarian matters.\(^{110}\)

The dissolution of Weimar’s party system was at the center of Claß’s plans, and he had lingering resentments over his experience in the Fatherland Party.\(^{111}\) Attitudes within the League toward the DNVP changed in December 1922, when a *völkisch* working-group was founded within the party. Its purpose was to keep the party from further fragmentation, after Wulle and Graefe-Goldebee left it and founded the DVFP as an alternative radical-right-wing party.\(^{112}\) Several Pan-Germans members of the party established the *Völkisch* Reich Committee (*Völkischer Reichsausschuss*) under the leadership of Freytagh-Loringhoven, which soon served as the main vehicle for the activists of the Pan-German caucus to set the stage for Pan-German agitation within the DNVP. The party’s quarrels with Wulle and Graefe-Goldebee also persuaded the Pan-German League’s headquarters to support efforts to retain remaining *völkisch* party members in the DNVP.\(^{113}\) Among the founders of the *Völkisch* Reich Committee leading Pan-Germans such

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\(^{109}\) “Aufruf an die Öffentlichkeit, DNVP,“ 27 December 1922, FZH, 412-1, vol. 11, n.p. [473].


\(^{111}\) See Roeder to Baumann, 10 January 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 208, 19-20.


as Gebsattel, Roth, and Grube from the League´s headquarters in Berlin, Wilhelm Prinz zu Lippe, Kretschmar, and Vietinghoff-Scheel.\textsuperscript{114}

Freytagh-Loringhoven, who taught law at the University of Breslau, was the pivotal figure, however. He had established himself as a leader of the opposition to Hergt in the summer of 1920, as he opposed all political cooperation between the DNVP and the Republican parties and called for cooperation with the Pan-German League. Freytagh-Loringhoven was an outspoken Pan-German as he advocated a monarchical state with the \textit{Bürgerturn} as its political and intellectual leader.\textsuperscript{115} Consequently, he wanted the DNVP to engage in the League´s propaganda for the overthrow of the Weimar Republic.\textsuperscript{116} Under his lead, the \textit{Völkisch} Reich Committee became virtually a Pan-German caucus within the party. His prominence in the Protection League´s chapter in Breslau, where he had also joined the chapter of the local Pan-German League, documented his anti-Semitism and confirmed his credentials for political leadership in both parliamentary and extraparliamentary politics. His efforts to infiltrate the DNVP were not directed by the League´s headquarters; instead they represented an attempt at self-mobilization within the völkisch camp of the DNVP’s \textit{Reichstag} faction. These efforts gravitated increasingly toward the Pan-German League, however, because most of the activists on the \textit{Völkisch} Reich Committee reported back to the League’s headquarters about their activities. Freytagh-Loringhoven did so, too, when he appeared as a guest at meetings of the League’s executive committee in September 1922 to report on his efforts to establish a right-wing pressure group within the DNVP. Other Pan-Germans became active in this cause like Bodelschwingh, who joined the \textit{Völkisch} Reich Committee. Another Pan-German deputy of the

\textsuperscript{114} Streubel, \textit{Radikale Nationalistinnen}, 194.
DNVP faction in the Prussian Diet, Walther Graef, became its chairman in 1923, while he had been the DNVP’s executive director at the same time. The Völkisch Reich Committee also had the support of the three most important women in the Pan-German League, Schemmel, Wrede, and Porembsky.

The first meeting of the Völkisch Reich Committee took place on 22 April 1923. The most pressing issue was the federal election of May 1924, for which the Committee sought to draft a program for the DNVP. Anti-Semitism and anti-Socialism constituted the central ideological reference points, but other Pan-German demands, German racial homogeneity and the exclusion of ethnic minorities, surfaced as well. At first, however, the Völkisch Reich Committee represented a minority view. The leadership of the DNVP remained in the hands of moderates. The departure of the party’s völkisch faction softened the infighting between the moderates, who supported parliamentary politics, and the party’s anti-parliamentary Right wing. But the threat of a further split within the party remained. The Sammlung of Conservative and anti-Semitic camps stoked internal opposition between the moderates and the right wing. Hergt, who was himself a monarchist and a former supporter of the Free-Conservative Party, advocated a pragmatic approach to the Weimar government and was concerned about the internal feuding in the party.

The beginning of the Völkisch Reich Committee, therefore, was complicated. In December 1923, Freytagh-Loringhoven complained to Graef that the several working-groups of the Committee had not become active. Vietinghoff-Scheel thus demanded modification of the DNVP’s program at the next meeting on 17 February 1924.¹¹⁷ Hergt, Hoetzsch, Karl Helfferich, and Hugenberg, who had dominated the party’s programmatic discussions since its founding,

could not satisfy the party´s völkisch forces. Helfferich blocked the inclusion of anti-Semitic, racist, and imperialist rhetoric in the party´s program. So the Völkisch Reich Committee took the lead in crafting a völkisch program for the DNVP. Dietrich Klagges, who had joined the DVFP shortly in 1922 and became a member of the NSDAP in 1925, put together an extensive working paper for the Committee in 1923. It became the ideological basis for further discussions. Vietinghoff-Scheel elaborated on it in his own pamphlet, “Ideological Basics of the Völkisch State,” offering his services as a speaker for the Committee during DNVP events.

During the meeting in February 1924, members of the Völkisch Reich Committee confronted Hergt. Hergt tried to explain why the DNVP had not supported the radicalism of Wulle and Graefe-Goldebee. He insisted that völkisch convictions had a place in the party, but that it was not the task of the chairman to promote them. Neither Hergt´s declaration nor Westarp´s presence appeased the members of the Committee. Westarp had initially joined the Committee but gravitated toward the moderate camp in the DNVP. Hergt´s warning that the DNVP could not match the political radicalism of the DVFP sounded cowardly to Vietinghoff-Scheel, who wished to move the DNVP toward a völkisch position during the next election and to exclude the Jews from the party. Both principles were accepted by a clear majority of the Committee, but there were further efforts to turn the DNVP into a Pan-German branch organization. Roth proposed to offer Claß and Bang leading positions in the DNVP and to reject joining the Weimar´s so-called “Grand Coalition” (especially the Center Party, DDP, and

Although Claß and Bang rejected any commitment to the party, these proposals set the stage for a struggle over leadership in the DNVP. They also demonstrated the extraparliamentary potential of the Committee’s radical demands. By 1924, the DNVP thus faced serious questions about its very character as a parliamentary force.

Vietinghoff-Scheel’s program for the Völkisch Reich Committee drew from various völkisch sources of ideological inspiration, including many demands of the Pan-German League. It called for monarchical rule, class-based franchise, exclusion of racial minorities, and eugenic measures against undesirable social and cultural groups.\(^{(124)}\) Together with Bang, Gruber, and Freytagh-Loringhoven, he officially represented the Pan-German League on the Committee. The Pan-Germans’ bid for control of the DNVP was encouraged when the DNVP and other völkisch parties made significant gains during the national election of 4 May 1924. The DNVP increased its share of the vote from to 19.5 percent (over 15.1 percent in June 1920). This gain was due to the party’s forceful propaganda against the government of Wilhelm Marx and the Dawes plan. Despite the electoral success, the DNVP’s leadership resisted the Völkisch Reich Committee’s demand that the party oppose both parliamentary negotiation over the Dawes Plan and offers to join a new minority government of the Center Party, DDP, and DVP. While the DNVP did not join the government, it did come under immense pressure over the Dawes plan from interest groups, such as the Reich Agrarian League (Reichslandbund/RLB) and the Reich Association of German Industry (Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie/RDI), which did not want to risk another descent into economic turmoil. Several of the 52 deputies who were aligned with the RLB voted for the Dawes Treaty, along with Thyssen, Borsig, Hugenberg, and Reusch from the

\(^{(123)}\) „Protokoll Sitzung des Völkischen Reichsausschusses,“ 17 February 1924, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 223, 43-44.  
The split was only possible because Hergt had allowed a free vote. The DNVP votes in favor made possible the passage of the Dawes Plan, although fifty-two deputies, including the Pan-Germans Gok, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Graef, Lohmann, Oberfohren, and Schmidt(-Hannover) voted against. Hergt’s handling of the vote, however, cost him his chairmanship, and on 23 October 1924 he was replaced by Westarp.

Shortly afterwards, during a meeting of the League’s executive committee, Claß repeated his doubts about the suitability of the DNVP as a center of parliamentary opposition. He again raised the possibility of a new nationalist Sammlungspartei, which he had advocated years earlier. However, the poor success of Sammlungspolitik of the Fatherland Party during the war, seemed to offer little hope for a prosperous new Conservative and nationalist party that had to compete not only with the DNVP but also with the DVP. Other leading Pan-Germans, such as Lohmann and Gok, favored closer cooperation between the Pan-German League and the DNVP, arguing that local leaders of the DNVP should promote Pan-Germans on local lists of candidates for national and local elections.

The Pan-Germans were ambivalent about Westarp. Dommes, who was the chairman of the DNVP’s Potsdam district that was also Westarp’s own constituency, saw him as the only hope of bringing the moderates and radicals together in an effort to block Germany’s entry into the League of Nations, while Roeder was disillusioned over the Pan-Germans’ attempt to take control of the DNVP, concluding that Gok’s and Lehmann’s efforts at cooperation would be

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126 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 12 May 1928 and Vorwärts, 29 August 1929.
Roeder defined the interests of the Pan-German League more narrowly. He believed that the Pan-Germans within the DNVP would bend the party to the League’s desire or the League would have to wait until the party fell apart. His skepticism reflected the ambivalence of the League’s headquarters about promoting the DNVP in upcoming elections. Still, in the new elections, which were held on 7 December 1924 in the wake of the Ruhr occupation one year earlier and the reorganization of the reparations in the Dawes Plan, the DNVP increased its share of votes to 20.5 percent.

These gains, which reflected the increased influence of the agrarian Reichslandbund in the party, led to demands for more conciliatory policies on the part of the DNVP. The DNVP therefore joined Luther’s new Bürger-bloc government on 15 January 1925. This development came as a shock to the members of the Völkisch Reich Committee, as well as to the Pan-German League’s headquarters. Claß was furious and demanded for the first time that the DNVP be turned into an “outpost for the Pan-German League.” To this end, Pan-German deputies mobilized. Gok, Freytagh-Loringhoven, and Lohmann, all of whom had just been elected, encouraged the Committee to push its racial agenda. Lohmann became immediately active in Völkisch Reich Committee. They were joined in early 1925 by Roth, who was now a member of the DNVP faction, and Vietinghoff-Scheel, who joined Freytagh-Loringhoven on the Völkisch Reich Committee’s executive committee. On their initiative, racial resolutions were passed that

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130 Roeder to Calmbach, 18 November 1924, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 210, 123.
demanded the sterilization of the mentally ill, state-enforced sterilization of convicted criminals, and the exclusion of Jews from the parliament.\textsuperscript{133}

The death of President Ebert and the forthcoming presidential elections, however, temporarily moderated the \textit{Völkisch} Reich Committee’s propaganda. When Hindenburg and Ludendorff ran for President, the Pan-Germans in the DNVP retreated from their radical propaganda, because neither soldier was, in their eyes, an ideal candidate, but they represented the only nationalist alternatives. Hugenberg, Freytagh-Loringhoven, and Reinhold Quaatz (Hugenberg’s political friend from the Chamber of Commerce in Essen), were reluctant to support Hindenburg, whose appointment would render the DNVP’s anti-Republican rhetoric difficult, since one of the most respected German war heroes and monarchists would be in the president’s office. Claß briefly favored the candidacy of General von Below, who in 1921 had been a candidate for military dictator in some of Claß’s early plans.\textsuperscript{134} But in the end the Pan-Germans in the DNVP had no alternative but to wait and Roeder stated in private that the Pan-German caucus would resume its propaganda within the DNVP after the presidential elections were over.\textsuperscript{135} However, Pan-German criticism of the DNVP’s participation in the government, and of Stresemann’s foreign policy in particular, became more outspoken. Gok complained that the DNVP faction would strategically retreat from those issues that were highly contested like the Paris revisions of the Dawes Plan, while the party concentrated on negligible matters like social policy and wage policy for civil servants.\textsuperscript{136} The headquarters of the League and several local chapters like the one in Dresden, for instance, increased their anti-governmental politicis and

\textsuperscript{134} Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 5.10.
\textsuperscript{135} Roeder to Hugo Gröling, 30 March 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 211, 126 and Roeder to Mootz, 30 March 1925, in ibidem, 129.
\textsuperscript{136} Gok at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 21 March 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 142, 90.
mobilized significant support in public protest meetings against Stresemann’s “unbearably pacifistic” foreign policy.\textsuperscript{137}

Meanwhile, the Völkisch Reich Committee continued its efforts to infiltrate the DNVP, but still lacked a majority in the party. It attacked the Luther government on every occasion, particularly during the debates over the Locarno treaties in October 1925.\textsuperscript{138} It distributed lists of itinerant speakers and issued instructions to DNVP districts for local propaganda.\textsuperscript{139} The Pan-Germans in the DNVP pushed for a radical course of fundamental opposition to the government as they reminded the party’s leaders that they could not serve in the government and lead the anti-Republican opposition at the same time.\textsuperscript{140} Local activism of the Pan-German League accompanied the headquarters’ propaganda against the Luther government. In the summer of 1925, Dr. Arthur Müller from the Plauen chapter sent documents to headquarters that showed that Stresemann had not informed the DNVP deputies in the Reichstag of Germany’s offer to renounce claims on Alsace Lorraine. The crisis of Westarp’s leadership reflected the dilemma of the DNVP to reconcile Conservative and radical nationalist demands with governmental Realpolitik. Leading Pan-Germans in the DNVP in Plauen now even demanded a statement from Westarp about his involvement in Stresemann’s negotiations with the Allies. Westarp’s wife Ada could only assure the DNVP leadership in Plauen that further diplomatic negotiations of Stresemann and the Allies would be in agreement with the party’s headquarters in Berlin in the future.\textsuperscript{141} Disputes like these about Westarp’s leadership extended to other party districts.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{137} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 31 January/1 February 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 141, 38-39.
\item \textsuperscript{138} See Sitzung des Völkischen Reichsausschusses, 5 September 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 223, 75; Sitzung des Völkischen Reichsausschusses, 30 September 1925, in ibidem, 93-94; and Sitzung des Völkischen Reichsausschusses, 22 October 1925, in ibidem, 96.
\item \textsuperscript{139} “Rundschreiben Nr. 127 Völkischer Reichsausschuss an Landesverbände,” 10 June 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 233, 77.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Roeder to Keim, 24 September 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 211, 284-285.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Arthur Müller to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 20 June 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 143, 11 and Gräfin Westarp to Deutschnationaler Volksverein Plauen, 4 June 1925 [draft], in ibidem, 12.
\end{itemize}
Especially in Saxony the DNVP opposed Stresemann’s policy and demanded the party’s departure from the government. Pogge from the League’s Uckermark district, Professor Dr. K. Grunert from Bremen, and Friedrich Karl Walbaum from Göttingen all reported immense frustration and discontent within the DNVP districts over Westarp’s leadership.\footnote{Kretschmar at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4/5 July 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 143, 53.}

Despite the DNVP’s policies, Claß believed that the party was indispensable to the League’s new strategy, which was to form a \textit{völkisch} party, which would in turn enable the League to work within the Weimar party system.\footnote{Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4/5 July 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 143, 57 and idem at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4 September 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 144, 9-11.} Hugenberg had established himself as a pole of opposition within the party. He pressured Westarp to take the DNVP out of the government over the issues of Locarno and Germany’s entry into the League of Nations, while the \textit{Völkisch} Reich Committee issued resolutions against diplomatic reconciliation with the Allies.\footnote{See Hugenberg to Westarp, 5 October 1925, Nachlaß Kuno Graf von Westarp/Böblingen-Stuttgart, Familienarchiv Freiherren Hiller von Gaertringen, Bestand I, VN 53, No. 12; Lohmann to Westarp, 1 November 1926, in ibidem, VN 54, No. 16; and “Entschliessung Völkischer Reichsausschuss gegen Locarno,” 23 October 1925, in ibidem, VN 55, No. 18.} Westarp could not ignore such Pan-German propaganda within the DNVP. A meeting among Claß, Hugenberg, and Westarp in September 1925 was designed to soften the League’s propaganda against the government, and Claß temporarily agreed. Pan-German opposition to Westarp’s policies continued nevertheless. It contributed to Westarp’s decision to take the party out of the cabinet on 25 October 1925 so that a second Luther government took office without the DNVP three months later. Schmidt(-Hannover), who was a close business advisor to Hugenberg and had entered the parliament in May 1924, declared the retreat of the DNVP from the cabinet as the only logical conclusion.\footnote{Otto Schmidt(-Hannover) to Franz Seldte, 15 December 1925, Nachlaß Kuno Graf von Westarp/Böblingen-Stuttgart, Familienarchiv Freiherren Hiller von Gaertringen, Bestand I, VN 123, No. 4.}
Westarp’s governmentalism persuaded Claß that the Völkisch Reich Committee would not be a sufficient vehicle to control the DNVP. Claß now sought to convince Hugenberg to run for the chairmanship of the DNVP so that the DNVP could now be turned into a parliamentary tool of the Pan-German League.\textsuperscript{146} During the meeting of the League’s executive committee on 4 September 1925, Claß announced that he considered Hugenberg to be the leader of the radical faction within the DNVP against Westarp. He would thus be the man to turn the radical group in the party against Westarp’s leadership.\textsuperscript{147} The powers of the president under Article 48 should then provide the means to appoint a dictatorial cabinet under Hugenberg. Hugenberg, who was in poor health himself laying in bed ridden by a lung inflammation at the time, was surprised to learn of Claß’s designs. Hugenberg cured his weak lungs for another two weeks and then, finally, went to Bad Kreuth for an extended stay. Early in 1926 Hugenberg’s wife, who was well aware of her husband’s problems of health and age, voiced serious doubts about whether he could find enough support within the DNVP.\textsuperscript{148} Hugenberg warmed to Claß’s plans, however, once Claß convinced him that he would enjoy the support of the Pan-German faction within the DNVP and that Bang, who was to be placed on the list of DNVP candidates in Saxony during the next election campaign, would advise Hugenberg on economic matters. After expressing considerable reluctance, Bang, who had turned down an offer to run for the party as a candidate by the chairman of the head committee of the DNVP in Westphalia, Dr. Strempel, six years earlier agreed to help bring Hugenberg to power.\textsuperscript{149} Claß, therefore, wanted Bang to meet Hugenberg as soon as possible in early 1926 during Hugenberg’s stay in a sanatorium in Bad Kreuth, while


\textsuperscript{147} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4 September 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 144, 15-17.

\textsuperscript{148} See Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 8.3.

\textsuperscript{149} Dr. Strempel to Bang, 24 May 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 287, 232.
Bang had to cure himself after a complicated surgery.\textsuperscript{150} Nothing had been decided in Bad Kreuth that made certain that Hugenberg would now compete with Westarp for chairmanship, but Claß had laid some foundations that made Hugenberg’s decision easier.

Still, a majority of the DNVP’s executive board opposed the radical propaganda of the Pan-Germans in the party, which led several members of the Pan-German caucus to support the foundation of another \textit{Sammlungsbewegung} of the Right: the German Emergency Association (\textit{Deutsche Notgemeinschaft}). Founded in December 1925, the Emergency Association was another propaganda organization (similar to the VVVD) under the leadership of Claß, while Alexander Graf Brockdorff from the League’s headquarters served as executive manager. This organization gathered several hundred representatives of leading nationalist organizations including Wulle and Graefe-Goldebee from the DVFP, as well as Lohmann, Gok, and Kretschmar from the DNVP.\textsuperscript{151} The withdrawal of the DNVP from the Government facilitated the clarification of the internal dispute between the moderates and the radicals, which extended into the party’s districts and began to affect Westarp’s position. Pressing issues materialized in a lack of party resources. The managing director of the DNVP, Max Weiß, reported to Westarp in April 1926 that the party was in disarray at the local level due to the lack of sufficient financing of the chapters.\textsuperscript{152} Feldmann even resigned from his chairmanship of the district Hannover a year later because of the party’s dire budget and his successor Schmidt(-Hannover) kept begging Westarp for financial assistance from the DNVP’s headquarters to no purpose.\textsuperscript{153} These financial problems contributed to Westarp’s leadership crisis. The Pan-Germans were well aware of the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Claß} Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 8.3.
\bibitem{AlndeutscheBlätter} See \textit{Alndeutsche Blätter}, 23 January 1926.
\bibitem{Weiß} Max Weiß to Westarp, 29 April 1926, Nachlaß Kuno Graf von Westarp/Böblingen-Stuttgart, Familienarchiv Freiherren Hiller von Gaertringen, Bestand I, VN 73, No. 12.
\bibitem{Feldmann} Feldmann to Westarp, 1 June 1927, Nachlaß Kuno Graf von Westarp/Böblingen-Stuttgart, Familienarchiv Freiherren Hiller von Gaertringen, Bestand I, VN 59, No. 23; Otto Schmidt(-Hannover) to Westarp, 16 April 1928, in ibidem, VN 100, No. 11; and Westarp to Schmidt(-Hannover), 19 April 1928, in ibidem, VN 100, No. 11. See also Dörr, \textit{Die Deutschnationale Volkspartei}, 431-442.
\end{thebibliography}
divisions in the party, and they increased their efforts to gain power. Freytagh-Loringhoven replaced Graef as the executive director of the Völkisch Reich Committee in 1926 and took up Hugenberg’s cause.

In November 1926, the Pan-German League also decided to forge closer cooperation with the Stahlhelm and the VVVD in hopes of forming a broader Sammlungsbewegung of anti-Republican opposition inside and outside of the Reichtag. The Stahlhelm was of particular importance to this effort. Its second leader, Duesterberg, like dozens of other members of the veterans association, served as DNVP deputy in the Reichtag. The DNVP’s Bismarck Youth joined the right-wing opposition to the party’s moderates and demanded more forceful attacks on Stresemann’s foreign policy. From the perspective of the Pan-Germans, such a Sammlungsbewegung would give the Pan-German League and the Völkisch Reich Committee additional power via extraparliamentary associations that acted in close cooperation with the DNVP. Such a coalition of extraparliamentary forces became more important as the Pan-Germans’ quarrels grew with Ludendorff’s Tannenbergbund, Mahraun’s Young German Order, Wulle’s and Graef-Goldeebee’s DVFP, and Hitler’s NSDAP. Joseph Goebbels, who led the NSDAP’s Berlin district, had complained in 1926 that the Pan-Germans certainly had the intellectual capacity to see the necessities for political reform, but they simply lacked the understanding of the means necessary to realize their goals. Hitler came to the conclusion at

154 See also Kruck, Geschichte des Alldeutschen Verbandes, 168-169 and Jackisch, Not a Large, but a Strong right, 218-265.
155 See also München-Augsburger Abendzeitung, 13 November 1927 and Deutsche Zeitung, 29 October 1927.
the general meeting of the NSDAP in May 1926 that “we have nothing to do with the Pan-Germans.”

In the summer of 1926, Lohmann repeatedly warned that a large majority of 60 to 80 percent of the DNVP deputies in the Reichstag was ready to join another government coalition, even if this move entailed support for Stresemann’s foreign policy. After the DNVP’s convention in Cologne in December, Lohmann declared that the DNVP had abandoned the politics of “national opposition” almost entirely once Westarp came out in favor of the DNVP’s participation in a governing coalition. In January 1927, the DNVP in fact joined the the Marx government. Although it was distracted by Claß’s poor health and the putsch investigations against him, the Pan-German League now joined forces with the VVVD to force the DNVP back into opposition. In February 1927, Rüdiger Graf von der Goltz, the chairman of the VVVD, demanded cooperation between the VVVD and the League, while Claß bemoaned the fact that he had lost influence over Westarp. Putting Hugenberg in the party leadership thus appeared all the more important. Lohmann, Kretschmar, and Feldmann called for further infiltration of the party. While Hugenberg shared all strategic objectives of his Pan-German colleagues, he still had doubts about his own role. As much as he and Claß were political friends and kept in close contact, Hugenberg also sought an independent public role as a politician and lobbyist. Hugenberg had emphasized his independence since 1908 when he turned down Claß’s request to

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160 Lohmann at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 3 September 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 147, 89.
become the Pan-German League´s honorary member just after Hasse had died. He did not want to be known simply as a Pan-German in the political public.\footnote{163}{Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4/5 April 1908, BA-B R 8048, vol. 64, 7.}

Westarp, on the other hand, was torn between his Conservative opposition to the Republic as “one of the last Prussians” and his sense of Realpolitik, which militated against fundamental opposition to the government. According to Claß, Westarp’s political ambitions were too narrow. He tended to focus on specific issues of fiscal and social policy. Claß charged him with a lack of political acumen because he thought that he could make Conservative politics in a moderate Republican government and a senile Hindenburg. The relationship between Claß and Westarp was damaged after 1925, while Claß’s unwillingness to assume the role of a dictator himself added to the confusion over leadership in the DNVP.

Especially Wegener and Bang, who were among Hugenberg’s closest political advisors and friends, convinced Hugenberg to consider the party chairmanship. Two other friends, whom he had installed in leadership roles in the party, worked to the same end. These were Gottfried Reinhold Treviranus, who became political advisor to the party chairman, and Wilhelm Widenmann, who ran Hugenberg’s Deutscher Überseedienst as General Secretary.\footnote{164}{See also Holzbach, \textit{Das „System Hugenberg,“} 192-208.}

Given Claß’s legal difficulties in 1926, however, Hugenberg remained suspicious about the Pan-German leader’s secret role in the DNVP’s politics. Hugenberg had to deny rumors that he would have accepted a ministerial post in a dictatorial cabinet.\footnote{165}{See also Alfred Hugenberg, „Putsch’ und Kabinettskrise,” in Sonderdruck Nr. 26 of the \textit{Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger}, 15 May 1926.}

Hugenberg remained reluctant to run for chairmanship until 1927, but support from leaders of DNVP districts in Saxony, Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, South Hannover, Potsdam II, Eastern Prussia, North and South Bavaria helped convince him to run.\footnote{166}{See also Holzbach, \textit{Das „System Hugenberg,“} 241.} His objection, though, that at that time he would lose was justified.
According to Claß Hugenberg had only two loyal partners in the DNVP fraction at the beginning of 1926, who supported Hugenberg in particular. Gok and Lohmann announced their undivided support for Hugenberg, while many in the DNVP were unsure about what exactly Hugenberg stood for.\textsuperscript{167} Even Georg-Wilhelm Schiele, who was a member of the Pan-German League and a close advisor to Hugenberg’s media enterprises, seemed to suffer from poor health and weak nerves, so that he was no suitable support for Hugenberg.\textsuperscript{168} The activists in the Völkisch Reich Committee continued to oppose Westarp, but Hugenberg had to turn himself into a more suitable alternative.

In February 1927, Claß announced the start of a propaganda campaign against Hindenburg, while Freytagh-Loringhoven and his Pan-German followers in the DNVP led the opposition to Westarp in the party. For Claß, the DNVP’s participation in the government had showed how weak the “national opposition” in the Reichstag had become. Unless something was done, Claß warned that the DNVP would be “fricasseed” in future elections.\textsuperscript{169} By early 1927, several district leaders of the DNVP had turned toward Hugenberg, and several chapters of the Pan-German League had helped purge DNVP chapters of moderates. The chairman of the League’s Bremen chapter, Grunert, announced that the local DNVP was now almost entirely in the hands of the Pan-Germans after the DNVP district leader and member of the Bremen parliament, Clemens Buff, had already conveyed the city’s official greetings to the Pan-Germans during the League’s convention in Bremen a year earlier.\textsuperscript{170} Feldmann made sure that the Hannover district supported Hugenberg’s aspirations and Colonel Friedrichs in the Berlin chapter of the DNVP assured the League’s executive Committee that the Pan-Germans could turn this

\textsuperscript{167} Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, ch. 8.1.
\textsuperscript{168} Gok at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4/5 July 1925, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 143, 48.
\textsuperscript{170} See Grunert and Feldmann at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12/13 February 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 149, 75 and 64 and Alldeutsche Blätter, 17 April 1926.
chapter in favor of Hugenberg. Bang, Freytagh-Loringhoven, and Oldenburg-Januschau all established themselves on their respective local DNVP´s election lists, together with 11 other representatives of the party´s right wing.

Still, Hugenberg´s victory was by no means assured, and some of his supporters anticipated his failure. To promote Hugenberg´s campaign for the chairmanship, Claß assisted in setting up a foundation (Schutzvereinigung für die geistigen Güter Deutschlands) to raise money and promote political cooperation with the Pan-German League. In February 1927, Vietinghoff-Scheel was already thinking beyond the next election, compiling a list of DNVP candidates who might form a new nationalist party under Pan-German leadership, were the DNVP to fail during the upcoming election. Over the next few months, talks between Pan-German headquarters and representatives of the DNVP took place, but only in the late summer of 1927 did Dommes form a formal oppositional group to Westarp in the DNVP, particularly among the party´s district leaders. With Claß again mostly absent from Berlin curing his health, their mission was to install Hugenberg as chairman, although Hugenberg was still reluctant to challenge Westarp before the next election. His candidacy would thus depend on the party´s performance in May 1928, although he slowly grew into his role as Westarp´s alternative.

Hugenberg was aided by the members of the Pan-German caucus in the DNVP, who tried everything to discredit Westarps´reputation as party leader. Freytagh-Loringhoven also

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175 See DNVP Berlin to ADV Berlin, 18 May 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 213, 199 and Roeder to Westarp, 28 May 1927, in ibidem, 204.
176 See also Roeder to Claß, 13 August 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 213, 241-242 and Roeder to Dommes, 18 August 1927, in ibidem, 213, 243-245.
intervened repeatedly at Westarp´s office to return to radical opposition to the government´s official foreign policy. Dommes also complained repeatedly to Westarp about the DNVP´s acquiescence to the Law to Protect the Republic because even the Kaiser was furious about Westarp and issued a call to all of his military supporters and political followers in Germany to leave the DNVP and join the Pan-German League instead. Westarp was under immense pressure as he feared a loss of his support from the DNVP’s monarchists so that he felt obliged to ask Dommes to stay in the DNVP to strengthen the monarchical wing of the party.

In November 1927, the executive committee of the Pan-German League moved to decentralize the League´s lobbying efforts in the DNVP. Reports from the Baden district leader of the Pan-German League, Amtsgerichtsrat Weber, from late 1927 voiced serious concern that several of the DNVP’s voters had given up on the party: “Nowhere in Germany are national issues met with such an indifference and apathy.” During 1927, various Pan-German chapters sent numerous resolutions to Westarp demanding explicit opposition to the Government by having the DNVP vote against an extension of the Law to Protect the Republic (after 67 DNVP delegates had voted in favor back in May), and the headquarters of the League tried to convince Westarp to have local DNVP chapters pass resolutions opposing Germany´s acceptance of the war guilt clause of the Versailles Treaty, which was debated again between Stresemann and the

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Allies since the military control of Germany was lifted in January 1927 as another step toward diplomatic reconciliation.\[181\]

The chapters were now to target individual deputies, and none should be supported who had been moderate in the past.\[182\] Hugenberg spoke now more frequently at DNVP meetings, while the Völkisch Reich Committee staged several propaganda events together with the Bismarck Youth and the Pan-German League.\[183\] Meanwhile, the relationship between the Pan-German caucus of the DNVP and the League’s executive committee became closer. Dommes and Wegener attended the Committee’s meetings repeatedly. Claß’s birthday party in February 1928 was the occasion for a gathering of leading Pan-Germans in the DNVP, including Beutel, Feldmann, Gok, Grunert, Kloß, Kretschmar, Lohmann, Müller, Vietinghoff-Schell, Dommes, Wegener, and Goltz.\[184\] Over the next few months, local Pan-Germans, in cooperation with the Stahlhelm and the VVVD, aided Hugenberg’s supporters throughout the DNVP’s districts.\[185\] Resistance was difficult in many places. Dr. Schneider in Thuringia and even Lohmann in Berlin and Gok in Hamburg had to struggle within their districts to gain places on the DNVP’s election lists.\[186\] Bang had to employ all his energies to purge the DNVP district in East-Saxony of its chairman, Kurt Philipp.\[187\] But even at this stage, Pan-German headquarters remained cautious about overt involvement in the DNVP as long as Westarp remained in charge. Hertzberg refused


\[183\] See Roeder to Oberstleutnant Schroeder, 27 January 1928, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 214, 26 and Deutsche Zeitung, 3 April 1928.

\[184\] See “Liste der Teilnehmer am Essen” [28 February 1928], BA-B, R 8048, vol. 153, 139-141.

\[185\] See also Alldeutsche Blätter, 17 March 1928.

\[186\] See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 21 April 1928, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 154, 70.

to run for parliament for the Hamburg DNVP. Claß, too, remained cautious and was reluctant to advise the League’s chapters to vote for the DNVP in the parliamentary elections. Some in the executive committee wanted the League to support only DNVP chapters that supported Hugenberg.

The elections of 20 May 1928 resulted in significant losses for the DNVP. The party’s share of the vote dropped to 14.2 percent. These results provided the signal for Pan-German activists in the DNVP to resume their calls for a purge of moderates in the party. The next five months saw a fierce struggle for power between Hugenberg and Westarp. The Hugenberg camp isolated DNVP moderates, like Walther Lambach, whom they excluded from the party’s leading committees and even former supporters like Trevirasnus faced substantial opposition to his critical comments about Lambach’s exclusion. The DNVP was at the verge of a full break between moderate and radical right wings. Hugenberg remained in an awkward position because of his fundamental opposition against the Republic, while powerful forces in the party, like the agrarian lobby, still hoped to gain financial rewards through the government’s “Osthilfe” program. During the elections of 1924, the DNVP still represented itself as a party lobbying for Prussia’s agrarian interest groups, but by 1928 the party had lost significant support among the Junkers East of the river Elbe, where the DNVP had its electoral strongholds. After the inflation of 1923, farmers had neglected the need to modernize their estates and a fall of prices for cattle only added to the financial crisis and led to the foundation of new interest parties such as the Christian National Peasant and Rural Volk Party (Christlich-Nationale Bauern- und

190 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 26 May 1928.
Concerns over protective tariffs, debt relief, loans, and state-enforced price regulations for pork, after the world market had inflated the sales prize, added to the conflict between moderates and radicals. Agrarian lobbyists like Martin Schiele, who belonged to the moderate camp and had served as Minister of the Interior and as Minister for Agriculture in the Luther and Marx Government, enjoyed a noble reputation as *Realpolitiker* in the DNVP, especially among Westarp’s supporters. It was Schiele who chaired the most important pressure group for agrarian interests, the *Reichslandbund* from August 1928 until 1930, which demanded the pragmatic enforcement of the DNVP’s engagement in governmental politics.  

For Hugenberg, reform of Germany’s indebted rural economy depended on larger economic and financial reforms, which involved the abolition of reparations. While agrarian lobbyists in the party sought state subsidies, Hugenberg wanted a new economic order, which would modernize Germany’s farming without subsidizing estate owners alone. Gathering support for Hugenberg among the agrarian lobbyists was even harder because Hugenberg had also long advocated domestic colonization at the expense of large indebted Junker estates, which were to be divided into smaller units for new settler families. Hugenberg thus had a problematic reputation as a modern media entrepreneur, a capitalist lobbyist for Ruhr industry, and an expert on Germany’s rural economy in Prussia’s peripheries. His program as a party leader, therefore, remained uncertain to many of Westarp’s supporters. Hans Hilpert, for instance, who was the

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leader of the Bavaria district and initially a supporter of Westarp, visited Hugenberg in Bad Kreuth in July 1928 to gather detailed information about Hugenberg’s strategies so that Hilpert was able to work out a consensual leadership modus of Hugenberg and Westarp that appeased the radical as well as the moderate districts.\(^{196}\) While Hugenberg tried to sell his fundamental rejection of the DNVP’s participation in a government without rejecting pragmatic concerns of the moderates, it became clear to Hilpert, however, that Hugenberg was determined to “bring the party in line” by splitting the two offices of party leader and chairman of the DNVP faction in the parliament after Westarp had combined both posts in his hands on 24 March 1926.\(^{197}\)

As the contest between Hugenberg and Westarp peaked, party leaders began to discuss ways to resolve the conflict. One option was the joint appointment of Hugenberg and Westarp. Another was a triumvirate of Westarp, Hugenberg, and Hugenberg’s supporter, Friedrich von Winterfeldt, which was suggested by Quaatz and Werner Steinhoff in a memorandum of 1 October 1928.\(^{198}\) Hugenberg accepted this solution, as long as he would have a free hand to transform the party leadership into a hierarchical authoritarian executive.\(^{199}\) Although Westarp rejected this idea on 12 October 1928, the leaders of the “Hilpert Group” (which included leaders of the DNVP in Bavaria, Eastern Prussia, Frankfurt Oder, and Württemberg) were in favor of it.\(^{200}\) Supporters of Hugenberg, among those were Pan-Germans who were active in DNVP chapters, tried to convince the party’s district leaders of Hugenberg’s ability to lead the DNVP to a legal dictatorship. Hugenberg’s adviser, Wegener, and Hugenberg’s business partner, Hans-Joachim von Rohr-Demmin, pushed Hugenberg’s interests in the Silesian and Pomeranian districts, while Bang and Kretschmar did the same in Saxony. Hugenberg’s supporters enjoyed

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\(^{197}\) Hilpert, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 3628-3629 and 3660.

\(^{198}\) See Holzbach, *Das „System Hugenberg,“* 236.

\(^{199}\) Hilpert, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 3699-3670.

success in infiltrating other districts in western and central Germany. In Hamburg, Gok extended support for the Pan-German League to Hugenberg. Dommes who had become close to Claß and was a welcomed visitor of the League’s meetings of the executive committee since 1927, served as leader of 17 districts favoring Hugenberg, which had announced their intentions at a DNVP convention on 8-9 July 1928. Porembsky, for instance, propagated Hugenberg’s leadership in the Thuringia district and Feldmann and Schmidt(-Hannover) in the districts of Hannover.

The chaotic events that surrounded Hugenberg’s election to the party chairmanschip on 20 October 1928 resulted in the party’s splintering into two camps, and they demonstrated the helplessness of Westarp’s supporters. The time was well-chosen. Parliamentary interventions and sharp comments could not disrupt Hugenberg’s coup because the Reichstag was not in session between 13 July and 12 November 1928. Almost 400 party activists attended the meeting in Berlin. After Hilpert failed to implement the concept of a triumvirate, which had been supported by the district leaders of Frankfurt Oder, Württemberg, Palatinate, and Eastern Prussia, the former Minister of the Interior and supporter of Westarp, Walter von Keudell had abruptly intervened, charging Hugenberg with having bribed several of the 38 representatives of the remaining 11 districts who were still undecided. During the summer of 1928, Hugenberg had secured 58 votes from 17 districts, while Westarp had 90 votes from 17 districts by early

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202 See for the districts supporting Hugenberg or Westarp Dörr, Deutschnationale Volkspartei, 444 and 448. Hugenberg was supported by the districts Berlin, Bremen, Grenzmark, Hamburg, Hannover-East, Hannover-South, Hessen-Darmstadt, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Oldenburg, Osnabrück, Potsdam I, Potsdam II, Thuringia, Westphalia-East, Westphalia-West, Lübeck, and Eastern Friesland. Westarp was supported by the DNVP districts Pommerania, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Schleswig-Holstein, Düsseldorf-East, Lower Rhine, Koblenz-Trier, Central Silesia, Central Rhine, Rhine Palatinate, and the “Hilpert Group” consisting of the districts Bavaria, Eastern Prussia, Frankfurt Oder, and Württemberg that favored a triumvirate including Westarp and Hugenberg. See also Hilpert, Lebenserinnerungen, 3667.
203 Deutsche Zeitung, 21 October 1928.
204 See also Hilpert, Lebenserinnerungen, 3714-3715.
October. Hugenberg denied the allegations of vote-rigging and the “Hilpert Group” then suggested a triumvirate consisting of the Pan-German Hugenberg supporter, Oberfohren, Hugenberg himself, and the trade unionist and former Minister of Transportation, Wilhelm Koch who was to appease the unionists of the Westarp camp. Before the chairman of the Eastern Prussian DNVP district, Horst von Resstorff, was able to suggest this new plan for a triumvirate, a Westarp supporter, Hans Schlange-Schöningen, suggested Hergt as a candidate for chairmanship, but Hergt immediately rejected the offer. After Westarp and Hergt were not willing to subject themselves to the open battle over leadership that had been going on for the entire day, Dommes proposed a secret election to make sure that neither Hugenberg nor the members of the head council would learn about the outcome so that Westarp and Hugenberg would not lose their face. The scramble for power led undecided district leaders like Hilpert to vote for Hugenberg, thereby hoping to secure a strong leadership that would do away with internal disputes. The results were never made public, and even after he won, Hugenberg did not know the exact number of votes in his favor, but he was elected chairman. Newspapers reported that he won with a slim majority of only 5 votes (out of 280 votes, including all representatives of the DNVP’s Parteivertretung).

Not only for many of the journalists covering the contest the proceedings were a farce as they revealed the deep internal crisis of the DNVP. Hilpert recalled later how Hugenberg’s backers were determined to seize power, while Westarp supporters appeared helpless and planless. The confusion at the convention showed that both moderate and radical camps refused to accept joint-leadership between Westarp and Hugenberg. Once Hugenberg had

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205 See Dörr, Die Deutschnationale Volkspartei, 448 and Holzbach, Das „System Hugenberg,” 242-243.
206 Hilpert, Lebenserinnerungen, 3682-3749. See also Berliner Börsenzeitung, 23 October 1928; Deutsches Tageblatt, 23 October 1928; Germania, 28 October 1928; and Der Jungdeutsche, 23 October 1928.
207 Hilpert, Lebenserinnerungen, 3719-3720.
208 See Deutsches Tageblatt, 23 October 1928 and Germania, 28 October 1928.
209 Hilpert, Lebenserinnerungen, 3703-3712.
accepted candidacy for the chairmanship, he played his cards well and he tried to mobilize all his resources to turn the DNVP into a determined opposition party under authoritarian leadership. He used the leadership crisis and the growing fragmentation of the party to play off the moderates against the radicals.

The party’s financial predicament also figured in Hugenberg’s success. Many activists were tired of the DNVP’s chronic financial shortcomings. Much as in the Pan-German League, low morale in the DNVP made members reluctant to pay dues or to raise additional funds for the party’s leadership. Constant complaints about the financial situation created a gulf between the national party apparatus and the regional and local groups. In these circumstances even the headquarters of the Pan-German League often received requests from DNVP district leaders for financial support. Hugenberg, who had long been a generous contributor to the Pan-German League, had significant financial assets, which could help the DNVP. As early as in 1921, Hugenberg invested 1.2 million Mark for the DNVP election campaign to the Prussian Diet, a figure which compared favorably to the party’s entire regular membership dues of 1.6 million Mark that year.\(^{210}\) Payments like these were repeatedly wired to the party’s headquarters and the district Westphalia received several sums of 50,000 to 150,000 from Hugenberg’s propaganda account that was filled with money from his various media enterprises. His wealth also supported the infiltration of the party by his loyalists. The connection between Hugenberg’s publishing houses and the DNVP’s leadership was close, since Hergt and Roesicke both served on the managing board of Hugenberg’s VERA media company. The circulation of Hugenberg’s newspapers increased from 340,000 in 1924 to 500,000 in 1930, while political support for DNVP also came from the *Deutsche Zeitung* and other papers, which had a combined daily...

\(^{210}\) Holzbach, *Das „System Hugenberg. “* 102.
circulation of 85,000 to 100,000. Hugenberg maintained a diversified set of media enterprises, including the UFA film company; and his earnings allowed him to spend 900,000 Mark for political campaigning in 1928. Such funds were essential to the DNVP´s fortunes, and it helped Hugenberg´s leadership bid that several of his senior employees served in leadership position within DNVP districts. One of the most important expenditures for Hugenberg was for the candidates for national elections to strengthen his support in the districts. Quaatz, for instance, was placed in Westarp´s electoral district (Potsdam II) because Quaatz was to be replaced by Bang on the DNVP list in Dresden-Bautzen. Hugenberg was willing to pay 50,000 Mark to the party´s treasury to cover Bang´s placement in Dresden, while Quaatz had to contribute 80,000 Mark for his nomination earlier. The disparity between Hugenberg´s resources and those of the DNVP are reflected well in the Bavarian district, which struggled to balance a budget of 58,000 Mark for the year 1929 since membership dues only totaled 15,000 Mark, while donations added only 4,000 Mark. The annual costs for running the Völkisch Reich Committee were even smaller adding up to only 1,800 Mark in 1927.

The efforts of the Pan-German League to radicalize Germany´s major Conservative party succeeded when Hugenberg became chairman on 20 October 1928. Although Claß enjoyed direct access to Hugenberg and was a source of counsel and inspiration, he was but one of several key players, like those in the Völkisch Reich Committee and in the districts. Activists like Lehmann, Feldmann, and Bang were influential in convincing a sizable portion of the DNVP´s leadership to back Hugenberg, while selected Pan-German district leaders of the DNVP, like those in Dresden,

211 See Fulda, Press and Politics, 23 and Leopold, Alfred Hugenberg, 35-45.
212 See Leopold, Alfred Hugenberg, 40.
213 See also Dörr, Deutschnationale Volkspartei, 391-465.
214 See Dörr, Deutschnationale Volkspartei, 385.
215 See Oberst Krafft at the Landesausschußsitzung der DNVP Bayern, 16 February 1929, in BHSA, NL Hans Hilpert, vol. 15, 27.
216 Dörr, Deutschnationale Volkspartei, 599.
Bremen, and Hamburg, turned the local rank-and-file against Westarp´s leadership and purged the party chapters of moderates. The most evident link to the Pan-German League remained the Völkisch Reich Committee. Freytagh-Loringhoven and Vietinghoff-Scheel spearheaded the League´s efforts, and party activists, such as Gok, Grunert, Lohmann, and Kretschmann, joined the League´s executive committee. Additional DNVP “guests” of the League´s meetings, such as Feldmann, Beutel, and Müller, reported on the DNVP. Dommes coordinated the activities of the 17 districts that came out in support of Hugenberg in the summer of 1928. The influence of the Pan-German League was thus transparent, and Wegener thanked Claß in November 1928 for the role the Pan-German League had played in facilitating Hugenberg´s seizure of power.\footnote{217}

Hugenberg also benefitted from the support of several extraparliamentary pressure groups, of which the Pan-German League was only one. Many industrialists backed Hugenberg´s campaign. They included Gok from the Blohm & Voss shipyards in Hamburg, Kirdorf from the Gelsenkirchener Bergwerks AG, Bernhard Leopold from the Verein Deutscher Eisen- und Stahlindustrieller, and members of the so-called “Ruhrlade” – an Industriellen-Vereinigung set up in January 1928 by leading industrialists, such as Albert Vögler, Krupp, and Reusch, to channel money to the DNVP, the DVP, Center Party, and the BVP during elections.\footnote{218} Representatives of the “Ruhrlade” transferred 200,000 Mark to Westarp´s office for the elections, but they made certain that he placed candidates on constituency lists who supported industrial interests. Although Gok and Kirdorf were also members of the Pan-German League, their friendship with Hugenberg and their industrial interests determined their financial support for him in 1927 and 1928. And even these resources brought only a narrow result in October 1928.

\footnote{217}{See Leo Wegener to Claß, 1 November 1928, BA-K, NL 1003, vol. 23, 99-100.}
\footnote{218}{See Holzbach, Das „System Hugenberg”, 240-253; Henry Ashby Turner, „Die ‘Ruhrlade:´ Geheimes Kabinett der Schwerindustrie in der Weimarer Republik,“ in Idem, Faschismus und Kapitalismus in Deutschland, 114-156; and Idem, German Big Business, 171-181.}
Claß admitted at the end of 1928 that there was a substantial element of surprise when Hugenberg was finally elected after a long time of tactics and cautious politics.²¹⁹

*The Price of Power: Party Dictatorship and Decline*

Immediately after Hugenberg became chairman of the DNVP, he purged the party of members who favored pragmatic Republicanism, negotiation, and parliamentary compromise. At the party convention on 8 December 1928, he began to streamline the party’s leadership with the introduction of the “Führergedanke.”²²⁰ He eliminated the leadership committee (Parteileitung), which had had 260 members, and turned the head council (Parteivorstand), with 42 elected representatives, into the center of political decision-making, freeing himself from the system of committees and commissions.²²¹ Opponents such as Treviranus, Keudell, Paul Lejeune-Jung, and Lambach were removed from the head council, and devoted Pan-Germans, such as Bang, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Dommes, Quaatz, and Oberfohren, took their place.²²² The districts turned increasingly in Hugenberg’s favor. Hilpert became Hugenberg’s loyal supporter.²²³ Walter Hirzel, who had run the Württemberg district of the DNVP since the spring of 1927, voted for Hugenberg’s election, as did the leader of the district Frankfurt Oder, Carl von Stünzner-Karbe. Hirzel and Stünzner-Karbe likewise brought their districts in line with Hugenberg, purging the party’s national leadership in the following years.

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Hugenberg laid the foundation for what many observers called a party “dictatorship.” This arrangement allowed him to define the DNVP’s policies without consulting the party’s elected representatives. The new bylaws of the party, which were passed in December 1928, excluded undesirable members, particularly Jews. The centralization of power in Hugenberg’s hands included his control of elections to the head council. In 1930, he gave himself veto power over all tactical and strategic questions.

The internal crisis that had beset the DNVP whenever it entered a governing coalition not only indicated Westarp’s political weakness, but also showed that his brand of moderate Conservatism was intolerable to the radical, völkisch faction. Hugenberg responded to calls for radical politics by eliminating parliamentary practices and Republican pragmatism from the party’s program. These programmatic changes accompanied the resignation of prominent moderates and the isolation of a generation of younger activists. Lindeiner-Wildau (1883-1947), Treviranus (1891-1971), Lambach (1885-1943), Schlange-Schöningen (1886-1960), and Lejeune-Jung (1882-1944) were expelled, while, in November 1928, Freytagh-Loringhoven warned that Hugenberg’s future success depended on his ability to mobilize new young members. The Pan-German activists in the DNVP who had facilitated Hugenberg’s rise to power did not belong to this generation. Instead, they belonged to the same cohorts that exercised power in the Pan-German League. Lohmann, Gok, Dommes, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Graef, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Feldmann, and Quaatz, were all born between 1866 and 1876. Hugenberg (who himself was born in 1865) preferred older advisors, like Wegener (1870-1936). So

226 See *Deutsche Zeitung*, 9 December 1928.
227 See also *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, 19 September 1931.
228 See also Jan Striesow, *Die Deutschnationalen Volkspartei und die Völkisch-Radikalen 1918 bis 1922*, 2 vols (Frankfurt Main: Haag & Herchen, 1981), 451-471 and Jones, „Kuno Graf von Westarp."
Hugenberg’s success hardly rejuvenated the party. The average age of the DNVP deputies in the Reichstag was around 48 at the time. Only Oberfohren (1881-1933) and Bang (1879-1945) came close to this age cohort in 1928.

Politically, Hugenberg’s assumption of leadership in the DNVP represented the Pan-German caucus’ major accomplishment. Paradoxically, the League did not much benefit from the party’s radicalization. The League’s local chapters did not experience a “Hugenberg effect”—the mobilization of new members from the DNVP. Membership in the League continued to decrease, from 16,500 in 1927 to 15,500 in 1928; and although the numbers stabilized in 1929, they dropped again thereafter. Compared to the 10,000 members of the Pan-German League in Austria around the same time, the decrease of membership in Germany becomes even more apparent. Hugenberg’s purge also encouraged the outflux of DNVP members, whose number had already declined from an estimated 950,000 in 1923 to 695,650 in 1928. In January 1930, Vorwärts reported that an additional 45,000 members had left the DNVP since Hugenberg was elected chairman in October 1928, although the headquarters of the party insisted that only 1,000 members had left. In all events, Hugenberg’s demand that the DNVP reposition itself as an oppositional “bloc” set the party’s course. Despite the loss of moderate members, the new “bloc” rhetoric did not reflect ideological unity among the party’s remaining rank-and-file. Hugenberg’s management of former Conservative, National Liberal, and anti-Semitic constituencies failed to produce a politically coherent party. Neither the DNVP nor the Pan-

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231 See also appendix Figure 12 and 13.
232 See appendix Figure 1.
234 *Vorwärts*, 3 January 1930 and *Deutsche Zeitung*, 5 January 1930.
236 See also Ohnezeit, *Zwischen „schärfster Opposition“ und „Willen zur Macht.“*
German League could rely on the support of its own core constituencies (mostly Protestant, Prussian, nationalist, and bourgeois, and in the case of the DNVP agrarian as well). The DNVP remained a fragile Milieupartei much as the Pan-German League remained a fragile Milieuverband trying to manage the support of its radical bourgeois and upper middle class members.237

The ideological fragility of the Pan-German milieu was best reflected in the change in the League’s membership. Immediately after Hugenberg’s election, 1,394 members left the League; almost 15 percent died (189), over 30 percent left without stating a reason (443), and another 15 percent (192) cited membership dues that were too high (although they were only 8 Mark per annum in early 1930).238 In December 1928, Vietinghoff-Scheel concluded that a further loss of members could not be halted, because membership dues failed to meet annual expenses.239 While Vietinghoff-Scheel called the situation “desperate,” Claß characterized the mobilizational dilemma of the Pan-German League as a “grotesque contradiction,” which resulted from the League’s loss of influence and the departure of members now that the League had become so prominent in the right-wing Sammlungsbewegung against the Weimar Republic.240 The rhetoric of decline and fall in the movement played out again in low morale, the refusal of the majority of members to engage in politics or pay their membership dues. Claß felt that his efforts remained unappreciated among the rank-and-file, offering that it would be better to dissolve the League

237 See also for the DNVP Leopold, Alfred Hugenberg, 37; Manfred Kittel, „‘Steigbügelhalter’ Hitlers oder ‘stille Republikaner’? Die Deutschnationalen in neuerer politikgeschichtlicher und kulturalistischer Perspektive,” in Hans-Kristof Kraus and Thomas Nicklas (eds.), Geschichte der Politik. Alte und neue Wege (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2007), 201-235; Mergel, Parlamentarische Kultur, 323-332 and 422-427; and Idem, Das Scheitern des deutschen Tory-Konservatismus, 323-368.
239 Vietinghoff-Scheel, at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 1/2 December 1928, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 156, 55-56.
240 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 1/2 December 1928, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 156, 56.
than to watch it die slowly.\textsuperscript{241} He also promised to secure additional financial funds through special collection. Such extra collections had secured the League’s survival in the past—as in 1925, when two special collections produced 20,000 Mark and helped close the gap between income and expenditures.\textsuperscript{242} These collections were mostly financed by prosperous members. In 1926, for example, eleven guests and members of the executive committee, including Lehmann, Grunert, Pezoldt, Pogge, and Itzenplitz, guaranteed 1,000 Mark apiece.\textsuperscript{243} By 1929 the deficit had reached almost 60,000 Mark; and it could only be balanced through a special collection of 56,000 Mark.\textsuperscript{244} Vietinghoff-Scheel lamented repeatedly that the poor willingness of the members in the local chapters to contribute additional money to the League left only 19 chapters contribute additional sums to the headquarters in 1926, for instance, while 158 chapters transferred money only occasionally and 200 chapters would not respond to such calls at all.\textsuperscript{245}

The weak support for the Pan-German League was also due to the increasing political irrelevance of the League, once more successful right-wing parties began to embrace aspects of its program. Competitors on the Right, plus the dominance of the Reichstag, made the Pan-Germans’ claim to speak for the entire German people seem preposterous. By 1928, the struggle for political leadership and authority in Germany took place in two public realms in which the Pan-German League faced severe right-wing competition: the realm of voluntary associations and the Reichstag.

\textsuperscript{241} See also Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 163, 29.
\textsuperscript{242} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 3 September 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 147, 598.
\textsuperscript{244} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 163, 28.
\textsuperscript{245} Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4/5 December 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 148, 42.
Shortly before Hugenberg’s election to the DNVP’s chairmanship, the *Berliner Börsenzeitung* reported that Pan-Germans had passed the baton to Hugenberg and the DNVP, marking a significant change in Pan-German tactics. The infiltration of the DNVP represented a transition from ideological theorizing about extraparliamentary politics and dictatorship toward political pragmatism. Still, the newspaper predicted that the Pan-Germans’ foray into organized politics would damage both the Pan-German League and the DNVP.\(^{246}\) In fact, the institutionalization of Pan-German ideology that followed Hugenberg’s election had far-reaching consequences. The expectation that the DNVP would spearhead the Right was not fulfilled, and Hugenberg was quickly overwhelmed by the rise of the NSDAP. Gok well captured the situation when he declared in January 1929 that the Pan-Germans “are a lost outpost” and would have to wait until a “Cromwell will come in the future to tame the parliamentary system.”\(^{247}\)

Hugenberg was neither able to fill the role of Cromwell nor could the Pan-German League provide alternative personnel. Pan-German politics were now mostly made in the DNVP but the League’s headquarters was not able to influence the proceedings within the DNVP. Freytagh-Loringhoven informed the League’s headquarters in November 1928 that the political propaganda published in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* had no impact on discussions within the DNVP, but that the Pan-German League could convey the need for a strong “national opposition” to its readers.\(^{248}\) Roeder, therefore, concluded that the Pan-German League could only provide the “leaven” for the unification of the radical Right.\(^{249}\) In fact, in 1928 the Pan-German League became a museum piece of the Right; it kept losing members as its Protestant *bildungsbürgerlich*

\(^{246}\) *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, 20 October 1928.


\(^{249}\) Roeder to Postdirektor Freymuth, 7 August 1928, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 212, 449.
audience fragmented further and its fate was now dependent on Hugenberg and the DNVP.\textsuperscript{250} The party itself, however, was unreliable and its electoral fortunes unforeseeable.\textsuperscript{251} Still, the Pan-Germans continued to provide political and symbolic value to both the DNVP and NSDAP, despite the League’s continuous loss of members and Hitler’s reservations against the Pan-German notables. The Pan-Germans enjoyed continued symbolic significance as \textit{Honoratioren} in the extraparliamentary opposition, where they had served since the Imperial era, and they remained important actors in the \textit{Sammlungsbewegung} on the radical Right, as it sought to destroy the Weimar Republic.


\textsuperscript{251} Gok at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 26/27 November 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 152, 61.
VI. Pan-German Realms of Authority and Leadership

The success with which Hitler´s NSDAP penetrated nationalist politics after the war spoke to the demands of mass mobilization and went beyond the antiquated techniques of the German Right prior to 1918. The Pan-German League helped set the stage for modern techniques of propaganda and mass mobilization through the Protection League. Nevertheless, the Pan-Germans were unable to transcend their own ideology of paternalistic authority and elite expert governance, which drew upon a vision of Volksgemeinschaft that remained, in the end, a class society, dominated by the Bürgertum. Although the Pan-Germans had lost their stable ideology of a homogenized Pan-German Empire during the war the League struggled to broaden its appeal and remained tied to forms of social mobilization from the Imperial era.

Pan-German political mentalité of paternalistic authoritarianism, which claimed to represent the interest of the German Volk, had severe limitations after 1918. The dominance of older men and the hierarchy in the League blocked an adaptation to the demands of Weimar politics. National conventions and Pan-German Bismarck Celebrations, for instance, marked such a retreat to bourgeois and middle-class cultures of sociability on one side, and the resignation in the face of relentless competition with the new forces of the radical Right that promoted mass rallies on the other side. These ritualized forms of exclusive sociability strengthened the sense of political and cultural security from the intervention of the League´s competitors and it presented the League as a reserve domicile and an idealized protective community shielding its participants from public interventions and the compromises of mass-politics. The hardening lines between the Pan-German League and the NSDAP, especially in the wake of the Hitler Putsch in 1923, reflected the broader competition among right-wing movements after 1918 and added to the Pan-
Germans’ siege mentality, which allowed them to think of themselves as outposts of true German culture and political expertise.

_Cultures of Leadership: Centralized Power, Male Dominance, and Generational Legacies_

Traditional forms of bourgeois associational life were not well suited to the new demands of radical nationalism in the Weimar Republic if they provided the only stage of activism. The fact that the League’s membership was constantly in flux, with a complete turnover of the majority of its membership every seven to eight years, did not help matters; Vietinghoff-Scheel made this important observation after the war and he noted that fewer than ten percent of the League’s chapters were actually engaged in Pan-German activities.¹ The departure of thousands of passive members (_Karteileichen_), who had joined for a short time without contributing anything beyond their membership dues (if even that), had always plagued the League. But the problem became crippling during the Weimar years when it camouflaged the League’s actual power in competing with other powerful right-wing organizations and sabotaged the League’s future financial plannings. Gebhard addressed the problem in 1927: the Pan-German League had been a fashionable vehicle for nationalist activists to visit as guests who sought to give their activism an outlet ("_Konjunkturpolitik_") after the war but did not intend to stay. The organization had been shortly flooded with opportunistic members, who joined in significant numbers between 1914 and 1924 in the hope that a nationalist government might take control of Germany. Those

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who remained the League in 1927, however, knew that they were part of a “dispairing minority,” members of one association among many that aspired to political leadership.  

In an effort to gain this leadership, the Pan-Germans instituted new forms of centralization, which significantly changed the League’s outlook and politics after the war. Power within the League’s leading institutions coalesced around the chairman and his hand-picked advisors. When Liebert labelled Claß the “Führer” of the Pan-German League in April 1918, Claß had already established himself as the undisputed leader, bringing to a culmination trends of recruiting devoted personnel that had begun in 1908 with the employment of Reventlow, who served as a new member in the executive committee and the editor of the *Alldeutsche Blätter* until 1910 (when he was succeeded by Claß’s nephew Lucius) and Vietinghoff-Scheel, who finally became executive chairman (*Hauptgeschäftsführer*) in 1913.  

The Pan-German League was thus increasingly subject to internal manipulation by Claß and his loyal servants. His consolidation of power met occasional resistance, but opposition usually reinforced his position. To thwart his opponents, Claß had several times offered his resignation when his position had not been adopted by the executive committee. In 1914, however, the executive committee gave him full authority to speak on behalf of the League. Supported by an inner circle that included Gebsattel, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Lohmann, Jacobsen, Hertzberg, and Bang, Claß changed the Pan-German League into an association that was governed by direct and centralized leadership (*Führerprinzip*). During the war, the shortage of personnel made centralized leadership even more important. Breusing, Liebert, Stössel, and Itzenplitz attended the meetings rather irregularly, while Keim was absent until early 1918. Kirdorf tried to fill the void shortly between 1916 and 1917, and Grapow and Thomsen stepped

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2 Gebhard at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12/13 February 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 149, 60.  
3 Quote in *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 20 April 1918. See also Leicht, „Heinrich Claß,“ ch. 3.2.  
4 See *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 12 December 1925.
in as late as in early 1918. Constant turnover in the head council made Claß the only constant source of power, although he was aided by members of the executive committee, who were loyal to him. In 1922, Claß forbade members of the executive committee to join any other organization or party that demanded their full service and discretion.\(^5\) During the investigations into Claß’s putsch plans in 1926, secrecy was made mandatory for the members of the League’s leading bodies. Although probably unjustified, this drive toward secrecy was fuelled by fears of infiltration by outsiders, as well as by threats from state agencies and political rivals. Overcoming opposition within the League required rigid discipline and the League’s carefully crafted power structure provided a suitable stage for this.

Decisions within the Pan-German League were usually made in the headquarters, the executive committee, and the head council. Authority was structured in concentric circles around the chairman, so the influence of the chapters was limited.\(^6\) The effort to prevent the erosion of ideological consensus among the League’s rank-and-file mandated the channeling of authority from the chapters toward the centers of power. Claß’s power to act in the name of the Pan-German League was renewed by the executive committee in 1921 and again in 1924.\(^7\) Claß’s bid for centralized power was encouraged by the prominence of men in the leadership who were his own age or older. After 1919, Claß’s most reliable allies in the head council were the longest-serving active members of the executive committee. Stössel was 64 in 1920 and died four years later, while Thomsen was already 79 and passed away in 1927 aged 87.\(^8\) Others, like Liebert (1850-1934), who served as chairman of the Munich chapter during the last years of his life, and Gebsattel (1854-1932), withdrew from the meetings before they passed away. Long serving

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\(^5\) Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 1 September 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 135, 5.
\(^6\) See Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German*, 172-182.
\(^7\) See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 5/6 February 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 130, 4-5 and Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 16/17 February 1924, in ibidem, 137, 62.
\(^8\) *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 19 February 1927.
members of the League kept dying during the 1920s such as Pastor Heinrich Reuß from the executive committee and the Hamburg chapter, who died in 1923 aged only 61 years after he had delivered a speech at the steps of Bismarck’s crypt in Friedrichsruh. Stössel, who had joined the executive committee in 1919, died in 1924 aged only 68 after long times of illness and Grapow died earlier this year after he had left the head council together with Keim in August 1919. Keim died shortly afterwards in 1926 at the age of 81.

While Bang, Hertzberg, Arthur Müllers, or the Austrian representative Hans Knirsch all belonged to a younger generation of Pan-German activists born between 1877 and 1883, most of those who attended the meetings of the executive committee between 1920 and 1934 were born in the 1860s and 1870s. They included Beutel, Frantz, Fritz, Gebhard, Gok, Korodi, Lehmann, Lohmann, Studienprofessor Christoph Pickel from the Northern Bavaria district, Pezoldt, Solger, and Hermann Walbaum from the Tübingen chapter. Still older members, who had been born in the 1850s, also influenced the discussions in the executive committee, among them Stolte from the Berlin chapter, Winter from Hamburg, and Viereck from Braunschweig. Others like Keim (1845-1926) and Grapow (1861-1924) had already left the head council during the war, while several loyal supporters died in office, like Pogge in 1930 after a lingering illness, and Pezoldt as a result of a heart attack in 1932. The presence of these older generations led to continued deaths in office of members of the leading bodies of the League from old age or sickness. In 1927, Carl Ipsen, for instance, passed away during a cure in Bad Gastein, and Ernst Hartwig died the same year from natural causes aged 73. Both had served at the executive council until their death.

9 Alldeutsche Blätter, 22 September 1923.
10 Alldeutsche Blätter, 23 August 1924 and 21 March 1924.
11 See appendix Figures 16 and 17.
12 See also Alldeutsche Blätter, 19 February 1927, 26 April 1930, and 13 August 1932.
13 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 30 April 1927 and 6 June 1927.
What Detlev Peukert once called the “Wilhelmine Generation” (born between the late 1850s and 1870) and “Reichsgründergeneration” (born between 1870 and 1880) thus predominated in the Pan-German League.\(^{14}\) The prominence of these two cohorts bred a sense of political determination and ideological cohesion, but it also blocked the aspirations of younger activists to turn the League into an association that could appeal to the “front generation.”

Younger generations of Pan-German activists followed older members only very slowly and in small numbers. District chairwoman in Silesia Wrede (born in 1896), and Fabian von Schlabrendorff (born in 1907), who was a close advisor to Claß since he had joined the League in 1928, were two among very few exceptions. The juxtaposition of traditional styles of mobilization, which were advocated by these older generations that dominated the League’s proceedings, and demands for a comprehensive appeal to the masses underlay the Pan-German League’s ambivalence toward the new modes of mobilization.

In strengthening his leadership position Claß also found a close group of colleagues to help him manage the League’s headquarters, including his daughter, Annelies. While the members of the head council and the executive council were still elected (in a very consensual form in accordance with Claß’s preferences) for three years to secure leadership stability, the staff of the headquarters was selected mostly by Claß alone. Occasional volunteers, who worked without payment at the headquarters and were usually young family members of Pan-German activists seeking some sort of temporary or political employment, were handpicked as well. Roeder served as his devoted secretary (Schriftwart) between 1921 and 1933 before he had to resign due to heart problems. Roeder was born two years after Claß in 1870 and not only his

military background but his close generational proximity to Claß helped establish mutual trust. In addition to Vietinghoff-Scheel and Gebsattel, Roeder became Claß´s spokesman when the chairman was on leave. Gebsattel, who served as Claß´s deputy chairman since the war, was followed by Hertzberg (1880-1945) from 1929 until 1939. Along with Vietinghoff-Scheel and Gebsattel, he became Claß´s spokesman when the chairman was on leave. Junghans, who was born in 1872, worked as a headquarters´ clerk (Kanzleivorsteher) for more than thirty years before he died in 1938. Only a very few younger activists worked at the headquarters, such as Bonhard (born in 1893), who worked as secretary between 1920 and 1939, and the humble Brockdorff (born in 1894), who served as an additional executive (Geschäftsführer) at the headquarters from 1925 until 1934. The League´s secretary Willi Reith added to the list as the former leader of the Dortmund chapter, who had served in the war and belonged to a slightly younger age cohort (born in 1884). With the Ruhr occupation Reith sought new political employment with the Allies seriously limiting any activities and mobilization of the League and after Reith was sentence to 20 years of prison for his nationalist activities he was employed at the headquarters.

By the beginning of the Weimar Republic, Claß employed not only a devoted staff at the headquarters, but also a number of reliable chairmen of important local chapters to streamline the channels of power and secure coherent agreement with the chairman. A significant number of them moved into the executive committee or the head council, which ensured an efficient working of the centralized power structure that evolved around Claß and was channelled to the local chapters in concentric circles through the executive bodies of the League. Stolte from Berlin, Jacobsen from Hamburg, Gebsattel from Bamberg, Liebert from Munich, Pezoldt from

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15 See Wili Reith to Claß, 16 November 1923, STA Hamburg, 621-1/72, vol. 1210/1, n.p.
17 See also Irving L. Janis, Groupthink, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982).
Plauen, Justizrat Schlüter from Essen, Dr. Oertel from Chemnitz, Beutel from Dresden, Gebhardt from Friedberg (who was a member of Claß’s family), the Walbaum brothers from Tübingen and Göttingen, Viereck from Braunschweig, and Grell from Potsdam were the most prominent.

While these structures of personal alliances worked in favor of Claß’s claim to rule without opposition, it also narrowed not only the ideological input in the League´s leading bodies, but the recruitment of new aspiring personnel. Owing in part to this age structure and the recruitment of devoted friends of Claß, the League faced a lack of qualified personnel. This was particularly the case in the occupied zone in the west and the lost territories in the east. While chapters in Gleiwitz, Ratibor, and Kreuzberg in Upper Silesia kept their local leadership, chapters in the Rhineland and the industrial cities of the Ruhr suffered from Allied military controls. In 1921, 30 chapters had become more or less inactive here, among them the groups in Aachen, Bonn, Coblenz, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Mainz, and Saarbrücken.18 In 1929, the Düsseldorf chapter, for instance, was in such a bad shape that Friedrich Kautzsch, who served as one of four to five additional executives and one of the most important itinerant speakers of the League´s headquarters, considered to move from Essen to Düsseldorf to manage the League´s business there due to a shortage of local activists and the absence of a chapter´s head council.19 The League´s national convention, which was planned to take place in Düsseldorf in 1929 to celebrate the beginning of the retreat of allied troops, had to be relocated to Essen, where Kautzsch still resided. The Mainz chapter faced similar problems, and Lucius, who attempted to revitalize the chapter, which had been abandoned after the war, complained that it was impossible to find a leader.20

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Chapters elsewhere were repeatedly chaired by allies of Claß. Together with Sanitätsrat Dr. Kretschmar, Beutel chaired the League’s most important outpost in Dresden. He not only organized the district Ober-Elbe, but he was also the busiest organiser of the League’s production and nation-wide distribution of leaflets and pamphlets. Pogge tried to expand the League into the agrarian areas of the Uckermark, while Grunert chaired the district Weser-Ems. Müller from Plauen chaired the Vogtland district in Thuringia. The political heir of Claß’s friend Pezoldt, he mobilized 1,000 members for lectures in his hometown. Calmbach advertized the League’s politics in Württemberg with the help of Professor Max Wundt, the chairman in Tübingen.

In late 1926, Vietinghoff-Scheel complained that the League had 36 districts on paper, but of these perhaps six were active in expanding the League’s realm. The most active districts of the League remained in northern and central Germany, with strongholds in Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, Saxony, Thuringia, the Ruhr area, and the central German states—the provinces of Hanover, Anhalt, Saxony, and Westphalia, as well as Brunswick and Hesse. The League also counted several chapters in Württemberg or the Uckermark, for instance, but the Pan-Germans had to contend with strong liberal values in the South-West or well-organized agrarian interest in Prussia’s north. The eastern provinces remained especially contested territories after the League had expanded significantly during the war into Posen, Eastern Brandenburg, Pomerania, Eastern and Western Prussia. While the loss of territory to Poland made mobilization more complicated, agrarian pressure groups dominated the eastern areas, as various Landbund chapters mobilized agrarian interests in Pomerania and Brandenburg. Bavaria remained a base for nationalist and paramilitary organizations, while the rise of the NSDAP limited the room for the Pan-German League. The annual meeting of the Pan-Germans’ Northern Bavaria district attracted only 200

21 Alldeutsche Blätter, 8 June 1929.
people in November 1927, even though the dynamic district leader, Pickel, had promoted the
League’s politics with all his energy. 

23 Baden had strong National Liberal and nationalist
traditions and Below and Schemann labored in the service of the League for years in Freiburg, for
instance, but Pan-German mobilization drew increasingly less numbers of members into the
chapters of which there were still many. Even after Grube visited chapters in Schwetzingen,
Baden-Baden, Lörrach, Offenburg, and Freiburg in 1927, the district Baden counted only 150
new members. 

24 By contrast, the chapter in Zwickau in Saxony alone counted 129 new members
in 1928. 

25 When Brockdorff toured the German states in early 1930, he spoke to 300 people of
the chapter in Freiburg (a city that counted almost 94,000 inhabitants), while in Glauchau, one of
League’s Saxon strongholds with only 25,000 inhabitants, the same number of people attended
his talk. 

This particular combination of devotion among the League’s leaders and the absence of an
engaged rank-and-file in the League’s districts also spoke, however, to the fact that there was no
major threat from the chapters to Claß’s position. Given a “general half-heartedness“ after the
war, chapters found it difficult to mobilize new members after 1923, Claß’ importance as national
chairman was magnified. 

27 The celebration in December 1925 of the 35th anniversary of the
League’s founding was devoted to the praise of Claß as Pan-German leader. Schäfer, whom Claß
had extolled as the doyen of the German historical profession, gave a laudatory speech and
underlined the close connection between politics and academia. 

28 Schäfer’s praise of Claß’s radical approach to acquiring “land free of people” reflected a consensus on Claß’s views within
the League, for Schäfer himself had opposed Claß during the war-aims debate. Shortly after

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23 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 21 January 1928.
24 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 7 January 1928.
25 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 14 April 1928.
26 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 1 March 1930.
28 See Deutsche Zeitung, 14 December 1925.
Cläß’s birthday, Gok declared in his speech at the meeting of the executive committee in Dresden that the demand for a Führer has been fulfilled by Cläß, who now embodied the kind of strong leader that the Pan-Germans would have expected since 1903.29 Cläß’s position as undisputed leader of the Pan-German League, however, raised a difficult question, for there was no suitable successor. Cläß himself was concerned about this problem, because he was only too aware of his weak health. Cläß’s frailty between 1924 and 1928 also caused a vacuum of power that could only be filled by the headquarters, and daily business was increasingly run by Vietinghoff-Scheel and partly by Roeder in the name of Cläß. The problem was itself due, however, to Cläß’s style of politics, which had limited the League’s appeal to potential younger leaders.

A related aspect of the same problem was the League’s continuous neglect of women as activists, despite the fact that women had become more numerous in the League after the war. The sanctity of the family was the foundation of Pan-German gender-ideals. The gendered hierarchy of the family was a model for the social order at large. The practical consequence was that the League’s gendered structure of power belied the political significance that Pan-German publications attributed to women. Women had always faced a difficult position in the Pan-German League. They were not allowed to attend the League’s national conventions until 1902, nor could they become regular members before 1915. Female membership increased during the war, when dues were reduced for the spouses of male members. Käthe Schirrmacher was perhaps the best-known female member. She promoted a völkisch women’s movement within the Pan-German League, as well as in the DNVP and other nationalist associations.

By 1919 almost all the political parties had founded women’s groups. No interest group could afford to neglect women, who now enjoyed voting rights. The Pan-German League, which had established special women groups in several chapters before the war, now expanded its

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appeal to women, too. The exact number of female members in the Pan-German League cannot be determined. In 1927, the League comprised 1,300 family members (out of a total of 17,000 members), who were mostly the wives and daughters of male members.\(^\text{30}\) Although the membership figure as a whole decreased significantly after 1919, the number of family members remained stable: in August 1919, the League had counted 1,135 of them (out of a total of 33,469 members at the time).\(^\text{31}\) Accordingly, women accounted for between 3 and 14 percent of the League’s membership. The percentages varied throughout Germany. In Zittau in Saxony, only two out of sixty members were women in 1919, in Radeberg in Saxony, only two of the forty-two members were female in 1926, while in Bensheim in Baden, they made up five of the twenty-eight members in 1931.\(^\text{32}\) Much as in other right-wing associations, women were underrepresented in the Pan-German League on both the local and national levels although Pan-German female members should become more active during the 1930s.

The headquarters of the Pan-German League was aware of the dearth of female activists in the organization. Not a single woman served on either the executive committee or the executive council.\(^\text{33}\) Occasional attendance “as guests” by the wives of members of the executive committee or the executive council between 1929 and 1932 offered little compensation. Even the Protection League had handled outreach to potential female supporters in more sophisticated ways. It employed a national supervisor for women’s activities and a leader for the organization

\(^{30}\) Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 12/13 February 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 149, 78.


\(^{32}\) See appendix Figure 18.

of social events for women in every local chapter.\textsuperscript{34} The result was a presence of 13 to 17.5 percent of women in selected chapters of the Protection League between 1919 and 1922.\textsuperscript{35} Similar to the Protection League, headquarters attempted to appeal to women via the chapters. Chapters that hosted meetings of the executive committee were ordered to bring family members to the festivities for which 50 out of 250 stickers advertising the League were ordered for women that showed a distinct emblem for female Pan-German members.\textsuperscript{36}

A few women were appointed to leadership roles, but most of these chapters were irrelevant or lay in contested constituencies that required hard work. The war and the subsequent absence or death of male activists in the chapters did not help women to take the position of their male colleagues. Instead, dozens of chapters remained in “decay,” without leadership, or the chapter simply “rested” after the war not pursuing any mobilization. In 1919, only one of the League’s 443 chapters in Germany and abroad, in Weißenberg, was chaired by a woman. This was the local pharmacist, Frau Geih, who took over her husband’s position in the League after the war.\textsuperscript{37} Weißenberg only counted fewer than a thousand inhabitants and was located far east in Saxony’s periphery. Two years later, the only female chapter leader (out of a total of 563 chapters) was the teacher Fräulein Charlotte von Kracht, who served in Fürstenberg, a village in Mecklenburg, where a chapter had been founded shortly after the war.\textsuperscript{38} As a rule, women’s influence in the chapters was restricted to social activities or supporting roles as wifes and daughters of activists. Even the most prominent site of female activity in the League, the Women’s Committee in Berlin, which was the only women’s group of the League after the

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\textsuperscript{34} Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund, Hauptgeschäftsstelle, „Richtlinien und Winke für unsere Mitarbeiter,“ n.d. [1919/1920], FZH, 412-1, vol. 3, n.p. [7].
\textsuperscript{35} Lohalm, \textit{Völkischer Radikalismus}, 111.
\textsuperscript{36} Hauptgeschäftsstelle to local chapter Köthen, [1927], BA-B, R 8048, vol. 150, 78.
\textsuperscript{38} See „Gliederung des Alldeutschen Verbandes,“ October 1921, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 533, 105-115.
\end{flushright}
Danzig chapter had abandoned its *Frauengruppe* after the war, remained in the hands of the female leader’s husband. Stolte had taken over the Berlin chapter during the war and appointed his wife as the leader of the chapter’s *Frauengruppe*. Mozart evenings, skits, and charity events were its staples, which were also enjoyed by Claß’s daughter Anneliese who proudly joined the dance group.\(^{39}\)

Occasional attendance of the wives of members of the executive committee and the executive council did not make up for the limited employment of female Pan-German activists in the management of the League’s leading bodies. The head council and the headquarters were entirely run by men throughout the League’s history from 1891 to 1939. Only between 1929 and 1932 did a few women began to participate in meetings of the executive committee as “guests” and once Hugenberg took over the chairmanship of the DNVP, women became more involved in DNVP politics.\(^{40}\) This trend was also reflected in the League. Hugenberg had enjoyed remarkable support from the DNVP’s women’s committees, of which there were 1,900 in 1922.\(^{41}\) Some DNVP women became prominent in the Pan-German League. They included Porembsky in Rudolstadt, Schemmel in Berlin, and Wrede in Breslau, who served as the chairwoman of the Pan-German League in Silesia.\(^{42}\) But even such scarce female influence was the source of much grumbling by male members, and the fragile connotations of gender difference were arbitrarily thrown together in the general discussion about the proper role of women within the League. The appointment of Wrede in Breslau provoked severe opposition from leading Pan-German

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\(^{39}\) See for Berlin *Alldutsche Blätter*, 20 October 1922 and *Alldutsche Blätter*, 27 October 1928.


\(^{41}\) Scheck, *Mothers of the Nation*, 32.

\(^{42}\) See for instance Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 30 August 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 159, 2-3 and Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 9 September 1932, in ibidem, vol. 171, 4-6.
members, who denounced her as “improper”, “arrogant”, “hysterical”, and even too “male”. Porembsky was elected chairwoman of the Thuringia district in 1928 and set about reactivating fallow chapters, like the one in Jena. In early 1931, Wrede, Schemmel, and Porembsky temporarily joined headquarters in Berlin as staff members but without a clear portfolio. However, they gave advice and helped revising the League’s manuscripts for publication. They also supported Claß’s busy political life, which demanded a great deal of travel, office work, meetings, and absence from home. The importance of Claß’s wife (and his daughter) in giving advise and revising his various manuscripts for publication made these female family members substantial and hidden staff members without portfolio. They also backed the chairman in his busy political life, which demanded a high amount of travelling, office work, meetings, and absence from home. Such arrangements of dividing labor were not uncommon. Westarp also combined his political and private life as he ran his DNVP’s office in Berlin solely together with his wife Ada and his daughter Adelgunde. Women in these functions were supposed to represent the feminine side of Pan-Germanism with charm, grace, and taste, while also helping with a sharp eye and a trained sense of political instinct.

The Pan-German League remained nevertheless a bastion of patriarchy, which offered only niches to female activism. Those female activists that sought political influence joined as Pan-German women the National Women’s Committee Against Versailles (Nationaler Frauenausschuss zum Kampf gegen Versailles), which united several women’s organization of the Right, or they had to organize their interests mostly within the extensive associational network of the DNVP’s Women’s Committees and Leagues. In this regard, too, the Pan-

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43 Quoted in Süchting-Hänger, Das „Gewissen der Nation“ 398 and Streubel, Radikale Nationalistinnen, 198. See also Hering, Konstruierte Nation, 393.
44 Alldeutsche Blätter, 13 October 1928.
45 See Deutsche Zeitung, 6 September 1931 and also Scheck, Mothers of the Nation; Süchting-Hänger, Das „Gewissen der Nation“; and Streubel, Radikale Nationalistinnen.
German League clung to bourgeois codes of patriarchy, order, and obedience. This understanding of the League’s role as a vanguard association had severe limitations, which constrained the League’s efforts to mobilize a broader constituency. However, they also strengthened the male activists’ sense of belonging. The League served its members as a comfortable counterworld to the new dynamics of political life. The rituals of associational life in the League, most of which had not changed significantly since the Imperial era, supported a high degree of predictability in the League’s politics and ideological statements. The attraction for many of the League’s activists lay in this stability. Socialization in the League promised both belonging and activism, a world of retreat and comfort amid the insecurities of Weimar’s mass politics. The League thus served as an oasis for a generation of male bourgeois nationalist activists, who sought a platform for their sense of political entitlement, educated expert knowledge, and moral superiority.

This particular combination of claims of leadership and outspoken exclusivity bred conflict and rivalry. Such overall exclusivity of Pan-German activism that was seemingly determined by a handful of older activists took effect in conflicts with the League’s rival organizations. Political opponents charged, not without foundation, that the Pan-German League operated like a Masonic lodge or other secret society. A whiff of secrecy and elitism accompanied the Pan-Germans throughout their history. Various famous members had been Freemasons in the past like Stresemann or the publisher Hans Heinrich Reclam, who had joined the Minerva lodge in Leipzig. After 1918, many prominent members were still Masons. They included Jacobsen in Hamburg, Willy Hahn from Berlin, and Grunert from Bremen. Right-wing opponents also repeatedly accused Bang and Itzenplitz of membership with the Freemasons, but both avoided a clear statement about their membership in any lodge. The relationship between the

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Pan-German League and Freemasonry was nebulous, however. Although many Pan-Germans were Freemasons, the League’s headquarters did not coordinate channels of communication with the lodges, if only to determine how many members were in fact Masons.\textsuperscript{47} The Pan-Germans were thus vulnerable to claims from right-wing opponents, such as Graefe, Wulle, and Ludendorff, that they supported secret lodges on behalf of a world conspiracy. Especially the chairman of Ludendorff’s \textit{Tannenbergbund}, Bronsard von Schellendorf, attacked the Pan-Germans as a main political rival. Claß in any case disavowed all ties to Freemasonry in 1921, but he repeatedly turned down motions to prohibit joint memberships generally.\textsuperscript{48} The executive committee discussed the problem of Freemasonry in 1927, when the National Socialists, Ludendorff, and even the former chairman of the DNVP and Minister of Justice, Oskar Hergt, again raised charges against the League, but could not decide whether to ban membership in the League to Masons.\textsuperscript{49} The League’s headquarters, therefore, failed to investigate cross-affiliation of its members and coordinate channels of communication with the lodges, which the \textit{Stahlhelm}, for instance, attempted in the summer 1926 to free themselves from such charges that had become a powerful tool of discrediting political enemies.\textsuperscript{50} Meanwhile, a number of members left


\textsuperscript{49} See also Hering, \textit{Konstruierte Nation}, 483; Erich Ludendorff, \textit{Vernichtung der Freimaurerei durch Enthüllung ihrer Geheimnisse} (Munich: Fortschrittliche Buchhandlung, 1927); Idem, \textit{Kriegshetze und Völkermorden in den letzten 150 Jahren im Dienste des „allmächtigen Baumeisters aller Welten”} (Munich: Fortschrittliche Buchhandlung, 1928); and his wife’s Mathilde Ludendorff, \textit{Der ungesühnte Frevel an Luther, Lessing und Schiller im Dienste des allmächtigen Baumeisters} (Munich: Selbstverlag, 1928).

the League because of the ongoing debate—some (as many of the 700 members leaving in Breslau) in favor of anti-Masonic organizations like Ludendorff’s *Tannenberg-Bund*.

The charges of Freemasonry thus complicated the Pan-German League’s relationship to its right-wing competitors, for these charges implied a general attack on the extraparliamentary associational traditions and the exclusivity of the League, which seemed to contradict new demands of public mass politics and charismatic leadership. How delicate the issue of Freemasonry was for the radical Right after the war is reflected in the volatile nature of the charge that one competitor put forward to the political enemy. In 1927, Hitler even accused Ludendorff at a rally in Regensburg that he was in fact himself a Freemason. Secret meetings, backroom politics, and exclusive networking seemed to dismiss the modern necessities of public politics and represent old-fashioned modes of political and social discourse that was to represent the noblest form of bourgeois political sociability in the past. The overall presentation of the Pan-German League in the public realm of symbolic politics also became increasingly important to discredit any charges of exclusive secrecy and to show the League’s willingness to embrace public leadership. This challenge, however, proved to be too overwhelming for the Pan-Germans.

*Cultures of Sociability: National Conventions, Bismarck Festivities, and Associational Competition*

The principal avenues of political mobilization in the League’s chapters featured festivities, educational lectures, and social evenings, all of which played to members’ sociability (*Geselligkeit*) —the exchange of ideas in contexts of extended social relations, education, and

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53 See Hoffmann, *Politics of Sociability*.
entertainment. Traditional forms of sociability, such as political festivals, came increasingly under attack during the Weimar years. Revolution, inflation, the Depression, and the rise of paramilitary violence all posed serious challenges to old bourgeois modes of sociability, drawing into question the self-appointed role of the Pan-Germans as bourgeois vanguards of a *Volksgemeinschaft*. If the Pan-German leaders like Claß had to defend their role as sources of intellectual authority and leadership before the war, they now faced more serious challenges as Germany’s postwar political and cultural “*Intellektuellengötter*.”

The social activities of Pan-German chapters prior to the First World War had been rooted in a rich repertoire of political *Festkultur*. Social events organized networks among Pan-Germans and other nationalist organizations, such as the Colonial Society, the School Association, and the Navy League. Celebrations of patriotic events like the birthdays of Wilhelm I (22 March) and Bismarck (1 April), the *Sedantag* (2 September), and the *Reichsgründungsfeier* (18 January) had marked the annual nationalist calendar, in addition to Protestant festivities honoring the Reformation (Luther celebrations, 31 October) and cultural celebrations of the *völkisch* movement like the *Sommersonnenwendfeier* (June). Except for the Kaiser’s birthday, the Pan-Germans continued to celebrate these occasions after the war. Advertisements by local chapters in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* stressed the sociable aspects (“*geselliges Beisammensein*”) of their monthly or biweekly meetings in a specific pub or other *Vereinslokal*, which served as social headquarters at the local level. Different arrangements applied to meetings in larger urban

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centers, where members of the League demanded more sophisticated entertainment, including films and slide-shows.\textsuperscript{57} To serve members here and in other chapters, the Pan-German leadership organized local lectures, as well as public celebrations in cooperation with a variety of Protestant, nationalist, and cultural associations, such as the Protestant League, the Gustav-Adolf Association, and the German Gymnastics Association (\textit{Deutscher Turnerbund 1919}) of Vienna.\textsuperscript{58} Local meetings combined formal political discussions, educational activities (which included slide-shows), lyrical performances, musical evenings, dances, and presentations by local gymnastics clubs.\textsuperscript{59}

In addition to the regular meetings of the local chapters, a national convention (\textit{Verbandstag}) took place usually four times a year in different German cities. These were events of prime importance to the headquarters, for they used to be the occasions on which the executive committee and the Head Council met and discussed the League’s strategy. They also provided a public space in which the policies of the leadership could be communicated to members. The national conventions, which attracted up to 800 participants represented the League’s central forum, in which Claß and his close advisers discussed matters of political significance.\textsuperscript{60} The presence of 70 and more members at the first meeting of the leading bodies of the League (\textit{Ausschusssitzung}) underlined the importance of Claß’s presence. The convention that followed the next day (\textit{Gesamtvorstandssitzung}) was open to family members and guests and mandated the booking of a special hall with a capacity of usually 400 to 600 seats in the respective city hosting the Pan-German League. The planning of these meetings was based on the usual attendance of

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\textsuperscript{57} Roeder to Dr. Fuchs, 26 January 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 208, 70-71.

\textsuperscript{58} Lehmann to Claß, 17 July 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 208, 307-308.

\textsuperscript{59} See also Chickering, \textit{We Men Who Feel Most German}, 161-167.

\textsuperscript{60} See for the convention in Plauen 1928 also \textit{Aldeutsche Blätter}, 15 September 1928.
\end{flushleft}
300 Pan-Germans on the first day and the expectation of an additional 100 to 300 guests for the
convention of which 150 to 200 came from outside of the host city.61

The exchange of ideas often lasted for hours and was moderated in an orderly fashion.
Lengthy reports by the League’s “experts,” such as Bang and Alfred Möllers from the head
council on economics, Hertzberg and Itzenplitz on agriculture, Hertle on Austria, and Dr.
Goerdeler on Poland, were fashioned into public declarations. The precision of these reports,
bureaucratic procedures, and the stress of presenting and speaking effectively that accompanied
these long meetings (sometimes eight hours or more) made it essential to offer a complementary
program of sociability. Claß himself, who, during the 1920s, was still in desperate need of
physical and mental relaxation after “times that were overloaded with work and political fights,”
also wished for social events to accompany the quarterly meetings.62 The concept of socializing
in an informal manner was central to many of the invitations that Claß received from other
associations and interest groups during the Weimar Republic.63 The benefits of discussing politics
outside of the formal rituals of organized meetings led Claß to call for large numbers of members
of the executive committee and the executive council. Although the many members of the
executive council were only granted the status of “guests”, and merely contributed to the
discussion, it was still important for the chairman to make full use of these meetings to
demonstrate that his leadership position was based on tangible rhetorical skills, modesty, and
collegiality.64

The programs of these social events, which were usually held on weekends, were
ritualized in form and content. Guests who arrived early were welcomed by the local chapter in

61 See Roeder to Wilhelm Schildknecht, 23 April 1927, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 150, 8; Junghans to Dr. Küll, 1
November 1927, in ibidem, vol. 154, 300; and Junghans to Dr. Küll, 15 February 1928, in ibidem, vol. 154, 8-9.
63 See also Vizeadmiral Adolf von Trotha (Sudetendeutscher Heimatbund) and Pfarrer Dr. Luther (Sudetendeutscher
64 See also Fabian von Schlabrendorff, Begegnungen aus fünf Jahrzehnten (Tübingen: Wunderlich, 1979), 149-151.
the Vereinslokal, which gave the local activists a sense of importance. A local committee arranged accommodations for Claß and other members from headquarters, reserved restaurants, and planned trips to local sites of interest and national significance—a tour of the shipyards and the artists’ colony in Worpswede during the meeting in Bremen in 1926, a visit to the local polytechnical school in Köthen in 1927 and the Krupp plants during the meeting in Essen in 1929.65 The most important part of these meetings, however, was the “German Evening,” which was also organized by the local chapter in cooperation with local sports clubs, church choirs, artists, and musical ensembles. These events were choreographed like church services. Amid German folk culture and Gemütlichkeit, they offered more than cultural entertainment or relaxation. The program was organized, if not regimented, in the strict order of introductory musical performances, marches, communal singing, a welcome address, recitation, and speeches.66 These “German Evenings” were designed to spread the “pure gospel of German Volkstum.”67 Austrian guests, therefore, had a special place in the Pan-German milieu. An exchange of itinerant lecturers took place between Germany and Austria and Vietinghoff-Scheel demanded that the League hold at least one annual meeting for Germany’s Auslandsdeutschum.68 However, instead of organizing another costly event, an exchange of itinerant lecturers was organized between both countries. Guest lectures by Hertle or Wrangel became a fixture at the meetings of the League in Germany while Brockdorff, Grube, and Lohmann were invited to local Reichsgründungsfeiern and the Verbandstage of the Austrian Pan-German League and Gok from the Blohm & Voss dockyards in Hamburg was a welcomed guest to bring a windy breeze from

the Northern Sea to the Alps. \(^{69}\) Austrian guests had a special place in the political and cultural formation of a Pan-German milieu, which made itself present in the organization of meetings of the Pan-German League after the war. Members of the League from Austria or the occupied western German territories received free accommodations at meetings elsewhere in Germany, and special travel associations (\textit{Deutschösterreichische Reisevereinigung Nord-Süd}) organized educational and holiday trips to Austria, Bosnia, Dalmatia, and the South Tirol. \(^{70}\)

Because of logistical considerations and because of the geographical limitations that came with the demilitarization of the Rhineland and the Ruhr occupation, most of the meetings of the executive committee took place in Berlin. Between 1929 and 1932, the Pan-German League received various offers from the mayors of Coblenz, Magdeburg, Chemnitz, and Darmstadt to hold the national convention in their cities, but mostly financial reasons made it necessary to restrict the meetings to Berlin. \(^{71}\) The prominence of Berlin also spoke to the chronic financial problems of the Pan-German League. Social events practically ceased after 1931, as members felt the effects of the Depression. The number of “guests” decreased significantly and after 1932 members of the executive council came mostly from Berlin, Saxony, and elsewhere in eastern Germany, while members of the council from Western Germany and Bavaria only showed up in handfuls. \(^{72}\) The financial strain on members also affected the arrangement of accommodations, meals, festivities, and day-trips. Money saved on food and accommodation at the national conventions could be spent the next day for the usual trip to local sights. In order to keep

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\(^{69}\) See also Roeder to Lohmann, 18 December 1924, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 210, 150 and Alfred Geiser to Gok, 21 May 1925, STA Hamburg 621-1/72, vol. 1214, n.p.

\(^{70}\) See Junghans to Dr. H. Maß, 9 February 1926, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 146, 11-13 and \textit{Alledeutsche Blätter}, 18 February 1928 and 22 June 1929.

\(^{71}\) See Bürgermeister Stadt Koblenz to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 28 March 1929; BA-B, R 8048, vol. 160, 2, Verein für Fremdenverkehr e.V. Chemnitz to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 29 April 1932, in ibidem, vol. 170, 3; Rat der Stadt Chemnitz to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 2 May 1932, in ibidem, vol. 170, 14; Magistrat Stadt Magdeburg to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 27 June 1932, in ibidem, vol. 172, 2; and Oberbürgermeister Stadt Darmstadt to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 24 June 1929, in ibidem, vol. 215, 209.

expenses as low as possible for attendees of the League´s convention, the local chapters were encouraged advised to strike deals with local merchants.

Headquarters was conscious of the different income-levels of its members. Education, property, and wealth had been indicators of the prosperity of most of the Pan-Germans before the war, but revolution, inflation, and the Depression strained the resources of members. Rich entrepreneurs like Kirdorf and Lehmann, prosperous physicians like the ophthalmologist Dr. Grunert from Bremen, and Junker aristocrats like Hertzberg could pay their own expenses. But members of the middle-class, professions, and pensioners were in a more difficult financial situation. Therefore, hotel accommodations and menus were offered at varying prices, which emphasized social divisions within the League. These arrangements also kept the festivities and general meetings open to less prosperous members. Even seasoned activists, such as Pezold from Plauen, could not attend the general meetings because of financial problems. It symptomized broader problems when Pickel, the leader of the North Bavarian district and a member of the executive committee, asked Vietinghoff-Scheel to reimburse his travel costs because he could not otherwise afford the trip to Berlin in December 1926.\footnote{Petzoldt to Claß, 30 November 1931, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 168, 15 and Pickel to Vietinghoff-Scheel, 13 November 1926, in ibidem, Vol. 148, 3.} The headquarters only paid the accommodation expenses for guest lecturers, as well as headquarters staff such as Vietinghoff-Scheel, Junghans, Roeder, and Bonhard, while Claß often resided in better hotels than his staff. Members in several chapters even offered visiting members their own home as a place to stay overnight to save other Pan-Germans costs for accommodation like at the convention of the Baden district in June 1930.\footnote{Alldeutscher Landesverband Baden, “Einladung zur Landestagung,” n.d., HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 31, vol. 2, n.p.}

Only Claß, the staff at the League´s headquarters, the editors of the League´s papers \textit{(Alldeutsche Blätter, Deutschlands Erneuerung, and Deutsche Zeitung)} were salaried employees.
of the Pan-German League. The chairmen of the chapters and districts worked pro bono. The same applied to the members of the executive committee, who had to finance their own political engagement in the Pan-German League. In the hopes of limiting these costs, the League sought to moderate expenses at non-essential festivities, such as birthdays of leading members. Gebsattel’s 70th birthday was celebrated in February 1924, Gok’s 60th birthday and Klingemann’s 70th birthday in November 1929, usually after the meetings of the executive committee and often plain in their arrangement. Even Kloß from Berlin was not able to join such a plain festivity like Gebsattel’s birthday since his salary had been reduced by one-third after the inflation and personal illness forced him to stop teaching at the Technical University Berlin.75 Kloß was not the only one suffering from personal financial shortcomings. During the 1920s several members of the League had become impoverished by inflation, depression, and unemployment. The leader of the Baden district, Karl Ernst, stressed the importance of cheap lunch prices at the League’s meetings for the average member as “a large part of our members do not belong to the better off classes.”76 When Bang’s 50th birthday arrived in January 1929, the invitation to the banquet made it clear that the cost of the meal would not exceed 5 Mark.77 Even at Claß’s 70th birthday, where guests were instructed to dress formally, a variety of meals was offered for those who had to economize. Claß himself could not have afforded his lifestyle without occasional subsidies from the League, sometimes under the table. After Claß had to flee Mainz and leave behind three of his houses under French requisition, he lived in a distinguished building of the Czech Embassy in Berlin-Tiergarten, which was located only a short walk from the League’s headquarters. A lot of members of the parliament lived under more modest conditions, and Erich Koch-Weser of the

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DDP, for instance, was one of the few parliamentarians who was able to afford an 8 to 9 bedroom apartment in the capital.\textsuperscript{78} That Claß paid less than 200 Marks in 1928 for a twelve-room apartment caused a stir in the media, which, after long court hearings (and repeated interventions against him by the Czech ambassador Kamil Kofta), forced him to relocate.\textsuperscript{79}

Claß had adapted to life among the political elite in Berlin. The close cooperation with his wife and daughter, who helped him in drafting political plans and resolutions, made it easier for Claß to “arrive” in the capital, while many of his political friends like Hugenberg were busy commuting between Berlin and their home to avoid a move of the entire family (Hugenberg’s wife stayed in Rohbraken and showed up in Berlin as late as in 1928).\textsuperscript{80} Despite his preference of backroom politics, secret agreements, and closed meetings of the executive committee that were only open to selected “guests” of the League, Claß wanted to be part of the Conservative and right-wing political establishment. His contempt for mass politics and democratic compromise reflected this fact, as did his authoritarian inclinations within the League itself. He demanded an extra room (Salon) during the League’s conventions, so he could socialize with guests and emphasize his self-styled status as a leader of Germany’s “national opposition.” His charm impressed his friends and strengthened his position as League chairman. During these meetings, the consumption of beer (or wine) and tobacco was particularly significant in communicating and socializing with one another. He enjoyed a cigar when he discussed politics with his friends like the early Wulle, for instance, who was a chain smoker, and Vietinghoff-Scheel, who was not averse to cigarettes either. Only Lehmann was one of the few who complained that the usual back rooms of Pan-German meetings in Munich were too much filled with cigarette smoke for his taste given his ailing lungs. Such social rituals, however, signaled mutual trust, which also found

\textsuperscript{78} See Mergel, \textit{Parlamentarische Kultur}, 124.
\textsuperscript{79} See \textit{Deutsche Zeitung}, 23 November 1928 and \textit{Berliner Tageblatt}, 23 October 1928.
\textsuperscript{80} See diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 16 February 1928, in Weiß and Hoser, \textit{Die Deutschnationalen}, 30.
expression in forms of address; in their letters leading Pan-Germans addressed one another as “Dear Friend.”

Especially Bismarck festivals offered a prominent venue for cultivating the League´s public profile. They also represented a last symbol of festive confidence, once mass rallies and parades had become new avenues to political leadership. Pan-German Bismarck celebrations originated in the Imperial era, but they retained powerful resonance in the bourgeois patriotic festivities of Weimar, which often wedded cultural folklore and Biedermeier with romanticized visions of political guardianship. They represented an updated version of Bismarck´s Kulturkampf against Catholics.

Now, however, establishing the monarchical order called for a retreat into authoritarianism against Republicans who advocated democracy and mass politics. The League continued to regard itself as the chancellor´s political heir. The “Bismarck Myth” that surrounded the popular memory of the former chancellor was embraced by elements of the bourgeoisie and the radical Right and it served to assign the Pan-German League the role of the chancellor´s political heir since Bismarck´s resignation in March 1890.81 The first torchlight procession of 2,500 people took place as early as in the spring of 1890.82 Bismarck´s estate in Friedrichsruh, where he resided and was buried in 1898, had a special place in the hearts of the Pan-Germans of the Hamburg chapter as well as of the headquarters in Berlin. Following Bismarck´s death and before the outbreak of the war in 1914, Pastor Reuß, chairman of the Hamburg chapter, had established excellent contacts with the Bismarck family and the private secretary´s office at Friedrichsruh in organizing Bismarck celebrations in Hamburg as early as

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81 See also Gerwarth, The Bismarck Myth; Fraenkel, The Cult of Leadership; and Wolfgang Hardtwig, „Der Bismarck-Mythos: Gestalt und Funktionen zwischen politischer Öffentlichkeit und Wissenschaft,“ in Idem, Politische Kulturgeschichte der Zwischenkriegszeit, 61-90.
82 See Jörg Schilling, „Distanz halten: Das Hamburger Bismarck-Denkmal und die Monumentalität der Moderne (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 36.
four years after Bismarck’s death. When the monumental Bismarck statue in Hamburg was unveiled in the summer of 1906 before more than 1,400 guests, the Bismarck family published an official invitation to the headquarters of the Hamburg chapter as the Pan-Germans had been already licenced with the organization of the Friedrichsruh ceremonies by the Bismarck family one year earlier.

From the turn of the century onward, the League saw itself as the prime heir of Bismarck’s political legacy and festive heritage. Plans to organize a single celebration to honor Bismarck’s 100th birthday on 1 April 1915 were discussed among leading Pan-Germans as early as 1913. While Vietinghoff-Scheel supported cooperation with the Association for the Germandom Abroad, Claß preferred to have the League operate independently in organizing such events at Friedrichsruh. The Bismarck celebration in Hamburg became more powerful as a symbol epitomizing hopes for an enduring and enforced Burgfrieden during the war. In 1917, the Bismarck celebration in Hamburg was organized by Lohmann of the League’s local chapter in cooperation with the German League, the German National Commercial Employees’ Association, and smaller nationalist associations to “defend Bismarck’s heritage.”

After 1918, Bismarck again became an alternative symbol of political power, now in opposition to Weimar. Bismarck celebrations were important to Pan-Germans as a way to advance their claim to leadership within the nationalist milieu and to demand the elimination of the Republic. The first Bismarck celebration after the war, which took place in Friedrichsruh in 1919, was organized by the Pan-Germans in cooperation with the DNVP. A year later Roth from the Protection League was the keynote speaker at Bismarck’s grave, where he demanded a

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83 Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 4 July 1914, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 95, 38.
86 Alldeutsche Blätter, 5 May 1917.
“return to Bismarck” and opposition to the Republic. The immense symbolic value of Bismarck’s contested legacy was unparalleled by the League’s own founding fathers like Hasse and Peters, whose gravesides in Leipzig and Berlin were usually visited every year by only a very small delegation of one to three representatives of the headquarters or the respective local chapter. In 1922, for instance, some two thousand people attended the League’s Bismarck celebrations in Essen, where Klingemann delivered the address.

The Pan-Germans enjoyed no monopoly over the Bismarck-symbol, however, which became clear after the war when the Bismarck celebrations in Hamburg turned into an important rallying point for many nationalist associations. Bismarck served as a central political symbol for the entire Right after the mid-1920s. While the League’s chapter in Hamburg still made annual pilgrimages to Friedrichsruh, the Pan-Germans joined the bigger parades of the Right in front of Hamburg’s massive Bismarck statute and found themselves amid thousands and sometimes even ten thousands of participants—from the DNVP, the German National Bismarck Youth, gymnastics clubs, student fraternities, veterans’ societies, and scouting associations—in the torchlight processions that took place between 1925 and 1929. Especially the Hamburg memorial was highly contested. In 1927, Hitler planned to join the festivities and speak in front of the memorial in Hamburg. One year later, almost 3,000 policemen had to protect the participants in a massive torchlight procession from left-wing demonstrators. After 1929, when bloody clashes with Communists led to a decrease in the number of participants in the parade in front of the Hamburg Bismarck memorial, the Pan-Germans began to advocate holding only smaller-scale celebrations at the mausoleum in Friedrichsruh with less than 100 members. They

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87 See Schilling, Distanz halten, 326-329.
88 Alldeutsche Blätter, 17 June 1922.
89 See Hamburger Echo, 1 April 1926; Hamburger Nachrichten, 1 April 1926; Hamburger Fremdenblatt, 1 April 1927; and Hamburger Volkszeitung, 27 March 1929.
retracted to more intimate confines to celebrate along with the DNVP and other local middle-class nationalist associations, such as the Protestant League (Evangelischer Bund). 90

This retreat emphasized the fact that there was no other locus classicus of the Pan-German League. Since 1916, the League’s small headquarters was centrally located in Berlin-Tiergarten (similar to the headquarters of the League in Graz and Vienna), but Claß resided with the League’s staff in the building’s unfashionable Hinterhof. Fritz Schillmann, who chaired the Berlin district, could only make a virtue out of the League’s lack of appeal and resources when he called the League’s headquarters the “grey house” at the Lützowufer 5a in which the Pan-German leaders immersed themselves in analyzing Germany’s future with their “grey concerns.” 91 Headquarters, therefore, had neither representative charm nor symbolic value for the League’s members who despised the capital as exhausting and filled with politicians embracing mass politics. The Bismarck memorials throughout Germany, on the other side, were open to everyone and were now extremely contested spaces. Bismarck’s mausoleum in Friedrichsruh thus became a fitting kind of memorial for the Pan-Germans themselves, filled with lingering symbolic value and political meaning.

One of the most vital centers of Pan-German activity was not in Berlin or Hamburg, but Dresden, for instance. Here the League continued to exercise power over the city’s nationalist festivities. It organized annual Bismarck celebrations for the 143 associations that were affiliated with the United Patriotic Associations of Germany. 92 The city offered several sites for these events, including a Bismarck memorial near the Rathaus. The festivities in Dresden stressed

90 Hamburger Nachrichten, 2 April 1928; Hamburger Nachrichten, 4 April 1932; and Hamburger Nachrichten, 3 April 1933.
91 Welcome speech by Fritz Schillmann before the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 5 September 1930, in Alldeutsche Blätter, 22 September 1931.
culture and education more than military pomp. The organizers eschewed torchlight marches and other paramilitary activities, directing participants from the local Vereinshaus to the extravagant Künstlerhaus, which the Pan-Germans regarded as a suitable symbol of the League’s cultural authority. Festivities also took place frequently in the „Italienisches Dörfchen,“ a famous inn in the cultural heart of the city, situated among the Semper Opera, the Royal Cathedral, and the Zwinger Palace. Booking the concert hall of the pompous exhibitions hall for Bismarck Celebrations in 1926 underlined the League’s role in Dresden for the local Bildungsbürgertum.93 The next year, the Bismarck celebrations were held in the well-known restaurant, the “Wendenschlösschen” and the exclusive “Parkhotel Weisser Hirsch” for some hundred local participants, which had hosted Europe´s cultural luminaries such as Thomas Mann, Kurt Tucholsky, Franz Kafka, and Zarah Leander.94 In 1931, programs for the Dresden celebrations were ordered by the local chapter for 300 to 500.

The choreography of the Bismarck celebration had become routinized and was similar to those of previous years: educational slide shows and lectures by local writers accompanied the performance of organ music, choral singing, and modest marching music presented by the local orchestra of the Stahlhelm. The Pan-Germans’ Bismarck celebrations in Dresden thus retained their appeal to the nationalist Bürgertum and their appeal was replicated in every bigger town in Saxony, where the League´s chapters were active. Still in 1930, Pan-German Bismarck celebrations in Saxony had a significant appeal to the nationalist Bürgertum with 300 people attending these events in Greiz and Saalfeld, for instance, while in Riesa a stable audience of 600 to 700 people showed up every year between 1927 and 1930.95

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95 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 24 May 1930, 10 May 1930, 14 May 1927, 12 May 1928, and 26 April 1930.
The Pan-Germans had deep reservations about mass parades as indicated in the trends in Hamburg and Claß made no secret of his contempt for mass rallies. Vietinghoff-Scheel dismissed them as empty populist spectacle, complaining about the poor quality of the speakers, especially from the Stahlhelm.\(^{96}\) Thus the Pan-Germans increasingly lost influence in the nationalist realm, as the DNVP and the NSDAP took over organizing such symbolic events not only in Hamburg, but also in smaller towns. However, modern styles of mass parades as organized by the NSDAP and the Stahlhelm, for instance, certainly made an impression upon the Pan-Germans from a distance and they also tried to participate in organizing selected mass-demonstrations and paramilitary marches like the “German Day” in Plauen, which attracted 25,000 people in 1924.\(^{97}\) The “German Day” (introduced by the Protection League in 1920), which was a significant inter-associational festival that included the Pan-German League, the SA, the NSDAP, the Young German Order (Jungdeutscher Orden), paramilitary groups like the “Bund Wiking,” and local chapters of various völkisch groups.\(^{98}\) The increasing military character of these “German Days” presaged the campaigns of the National Socialists, who took over the organization of these events and moved the location from Central German cities like Weimar (1920) and Detmold (1921) to Bavarian cities such as Coburg (1922) and Nuremberg (1923) after the Protection League was dissolved.

The Pan-Germans also increasingly lost influence in organizing local festivities to the DNVP and the NSDAP as they took over the venues in Germany’s smaller towns like in Detmold, which had become another rallying point for the radical Right. In October 1921, the League hosted a gathering at the nearby Hermann memorial (which had become a gathering point

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\(^{97}\) See Reichskommissar für die Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, 1 December 1924, BA-B, R 1507, vol. 25, 32.
for nationalist movements since its opening in 1875) a torchlight procession, a festive
performance at the Landestheater in the evening.99 By September 1929 the memorial in Detmold
had already become the venue for a rally organized by the the Pan-German League, DNVP,
NSDAP, and other nationalist organizations with more than 10,000 participants.100 Mass
gatherings and public celebrations like these were not an invention of the Weimar era. These
forms of patriotic demonstration had been in evidence before the war. The German Association
for the Eastern Marches organized military events (Heerschauen), which attracted 30,000 to
40,000 people in 1911.101 However, the National Socialists used these demonstrations to break
into the realm of bourgeois associational culture and to splinter the Lebenswelt of conservative
and middle-class radical nationalists like the Pan-Germans.102 The Pan-Germans were neither
willing nor able to exploit the militant sociability that brought mass following to Germany´s sport
societies, paramilitary associations, and veterans’ associations.103 The League went only as far as
to employ local Stahlhelm marching bands at their national conventions and to co-organize local
celebrations that turned into militant festivities once other nationalist organizations took over the
leadership.

99 See also Andreas Dörner, Politischer Mythos und symbolische Politik: Sinnstiftung durch symbolische Formen am Beispiel des Hermannsmythos (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1995).
100 Deutsche Zeitung, 2 September 1929 and Hamburger Nachrichten, 4 September 1929.
101 See Ilges to von Tiedemann Seeheim, 1 August 1911, GSTA I HA, Rep. 195, No. 228, 4 and Tiedemann Seeheim to Ilges, 30 July 1911, GSTA I HA, Rep. 195, No. 228, 1.
The Pan-Germans preferred more intimate surroundings. Itinerant speakers like Grube, Bang, Wrangel, and Feldmann usually attracted between a dozen and some hundred people in the chapters. Pan-German gatherings with 1,000 to 1,500 attendees, which took place in Frankfurt Oder, Chemnitz, Bamberg, and Dresden between 1920 and 1922, had become rare after 1923 and Sonnenwendfeiern like the one in Teuteburg, which was organized by the League district leaders in 1921 and mobilized 4,000 people, had become an exception. Selected lecture tours by Brockdorff and Goltz still attracted close to a thousand people in smaller towns like in Hamm, Plauen, and Riesa when the Pan-Germans cooperated with the NSDAP and the DNVP at the end of the Weimar Republic. But leading Pan-Germans like Claß, Lohmann, Gok, and Bang often gave lectures to smaller organizations, such as the Nationaler Herrenclub, Deutscher Offiziersclub, Politisches Kolleg in Berlin, Nordischer Ring, teacher’s associations, and local gymnastic clubs. However, joint membership in these exclusive nationalist and educational organizations, as well as occasional cooperation, also had ambiguous consequences. The relationship between Claß and Best, who joined the NSDAP in 1922, represented a good example of this problem. Best asked Claß to attend meetings of the Nationaler Herrenclub in Mainz, where he chaired the club. Despite the respect between the two men, competition between the NSDAP and the Pan-German League was not eased through their contacts at the local level.

Additional rivalries with other nationalist associations that turned into serious enmity (as it happened with Ludendorff’s Tannenbergbund, Mahraun’s Young German Order, and Wulle’s DVFP after he had left Claß’s inner-circle) provided another source of frustration for the Pan-Germans. Their inability to keep up with new movements in the realm of mass politics was the main problem. Roeder argued in 1922 that other nationalist organizations were only of value if

104 Alldeutsche Blätter, 17 January 1920, 18 January 1921, 17 December 1921, 11 March 1922, 6 May 1922, and 23 July 1921.
105 Alldeutsche Blätter, 8 June 1929, 12 October 1929, and 26 April 1930.
they were led by Pan-Germans.\textsuperscript{107} More characteristically, local Pan-German activists were politically overwhelmed by the competition. In the early 1920s, the chairman of the chapter in Frankfurt Main, the old Studienrat Horn, for instance, was exhausted by the daily workload and joined the League’s executive committee instead. The chapter remained in shambles for years, forcing Roeder to admit that the NSDAP appealed more effectively to broader constituencies, particularly to younger people.\textsuperscript{108}

After 1928, the National Socialist invasion of the bourgeois associational culture became massive. The Pan-Germans reacted by denigrating the value of the “front experience.”\textsuperscript{109} So they retreated into semi-public spheres of sociability and politics, but these had become irrelevant in the era of mass politics. By the end of the Weimar Republic, the League had become a niche of retreat (if not an idyll of bourgeois authenticity) for its members. The competition with the mass organizations of the Right over authority and leadership was an uneven contest and the Pan-Germans retreated to exclusive forms of sociability and festivity celebrating their former political vanguardship. Unlike the Stahlhelm and other veterans organizations, the League represented itself as a bastion of bourgeois sociability, which resisted the National Socialist invasion of Germany’s associational infrastructure. Instead, the Pan-Germans tried to bridge the gap between bourgeois Honoratiorenpolitik and mass politics by negotiating compromises and alliances with mass organizations. The rallies against the Young Plan in 1929 and at Bad Harzburg in 1931 were examples of this tactic. Participation in these mass rallies represented compensation for the Pan-Germans’ decline in importance. The League’s enemies on the Right regarded it with contempt because of its disdain for the masses and, in fact, all of the League’s rhetoric of

\textsuperscript{107} Geschäftsstelle des ADV to Amtsgerichtsrat Oehring, 7 December 1922, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 208, 505.
\textsuperscript{108} Geschäftsstelle des ADV to Herr Hildebrandt, 7 December 1922, BA-B, R 8408, vol. 208, 506-507.
\textsuperscript{109} See Alldeutsche Blätter, 28 May 1927 and 17 September 1927.
Volksgemeinschaft could not disguise the fact that the bürgerliches Individuum remained an essential element of Pan-German ideology.
VII. Illusions and Delusions: Anti-Weimar Campaigns and Legal Radicalization, 1929-1933

The strategy of using legal means to overthrow the Weimar Republic led to the Pan-German League’s strategic and fateful commitment to right-wing party politics. The most effective result of this strategy was Hugenberg’s elevation to the chairmanship of the DNVP. The further radicalization of the Right and Left thereafter led to another phase of political destabilization and more talk of civil war. High levels of unemployment and diplomatic negotiations with the Allies over reparations convinced Claß and Hugenberg to initiate a *Sammlung* of the entire radical Right, including the NSDAP. The Pan-Germans hoped that the economic and political crisis would convince Hindenburg to hand over power to a dictatorial government led by Hugenberg.

The period after October 1928 brought further internal crisis to the DNVP, as Hugenberg forced the party to decide on a political strategy.1 The political aspirations of Claß and the Pan-German caucus within the DNVP depended on Hugenberg’s success in this venture. The radicalization of the DNVP under Hugenberg’s leadership turned the party increasingly into a splinter group, as electoral support decreased and agrarian lobbyists fled the party, along with trade unionists and moderates around Westarp. Opposition to the Republic alone was no longer sufficient to hold together the German-nationalist milieu and the constituencies in whose name the Pan-Germans claimed to speak. The decline of the DNVP between 1928 and 1933 revealed the failure of the attempt to turn the the party into a vehicle of Pan-Germanism, so the Pan-

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German League could not profit from Hugenberg’s succession to power in the party. The DNVP could not appeal to a large enough constituency to give credence to the leadership pretensions of Claß and Hugenberg.

The dilemma of the Pan-German League lay in its own function as an advisory body to the DNVP, which itself became dependent on its partners in the so-called “national opposition.” This “national opposition,” however, soon turned into a vehicle for Hitler. Claß realized the fragility of this last attempt to create a nationalist Sammlungsbewegung, to unite broad constituencies, including NSDAP workers, the nationalist Bürgertum, large parts of the war veterans, and Germany’s most powerful agrarian interest groups. Hugenberg’s political naiveté, his failure to control the challenges posed by the rise of the NSDAP in local and national elections, heralded the downfall of both the DNVP and the Pan-German League.

“National Opposition” Apart: The Anti-Young-Plan Campaign

The elections of 20 May 1928 resulted in a six-percent loss of votes for the DNVP. The party’s profile changed after Hugenberg’s takeover, as he sought to bring the party’s factions in line with his radical policy of opposition to the Republic. The elections led to a “Grand Coalition” of the SPD, DVP, DDP, Center Party, and the BVP in the Reichstag, but this government had no secure majority, for Müller did not enjoy sufficient confidence among these parties. The retention of Stresemann as foreign minister in Müller’s cabinet caused the usual suspicions among the radical Right, including Hugenberg whose leadership of the DNVP was just ratified at the party’s convention in December 1928 by eighty percent of the members, although Claß reported that his position was not yet that of a “dictator.” The party’s parliamentary fraction still combined different interest groups, especially the more pragmatic agrarian camp, while several moderates remained prominent in the Reichstag fraction, which
Westarp still led. Hugenberg’s success in tightening control over the party depended on his success in winning over the party’s agrarian activists, who sympathized with the nationalist agrarian Landvolk, the Reichslandbund (Germany’s biggest agrarian interest group still under Schiele’s leadership), and the Christian National Peasants’ Party (Christlich-Nationale Bauern- und Landpartei/CNBLP), which had taken 10 seats from the DNVP during the election in May 1928. In December 1928, Claß demanded that Hugenberg embrace the agrarian activists around Schiele, while the Pan-German League promoted cooperation with the CNBLP. The League’s lack of resources and members, however, limited its power within the DNVP. Still, in 1929 Claß began to receive the official correspondence of the DNVP’s headquarters. He also received invitations to joint-meetings of the DNVP’s Bismarck Youth, the Reich Women’s Committee, the Arbeitsamt of the DNVP students’ organization, and the German Völkisch Reich Committee. But Hugenberg did not listen to Claß, and even Freytagh-Loringhoven, who was the most important representative of the Pan-German League within the DNVP, was unimpressed by Claß’s occasional suggestions about how to streamline the party.

In the wake of the elections, Claß sought to cooperate with the NSDAP, which had likewise fared badly. Tensions between the Pan-German League and the NSDAP first arose following the Hitler-Putsch, when Hitler prohibited co-membership with other movements and organizations. Complaints by Pan-German members arrived at the League’s headquarters in early

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3 See also Jones, „Die Krise des deutschen Konservatismus,“ 109-146; Dieter Gessner, „’Grüne Front’ oder ’Harburger Front’: Der Reichslandbund in den letzten Jahren der Weimarer Republik zwischen wirtschaftlicher Interessenpolitik und nationalistischem Revisionsanspruch,” in Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte 29 (1981): 110-123; Merkenich, Grüne Front gegen Weimar; and Manfred Kittel, Provinz zwischen Reich und Republik: Politische Mentalitäten zwischen 1918 und 1933/36, Munich 2000, 566-646.
6 See Leicht, „Heinrich Claß,“ ch. 4.3.
1927. Hertzberg contacted Goebbels, whom he had met in Bayreuth recently, to intervene in favor of Pan-German members, who wanted to keep their joint-membership with the NSDAP. Arthur Dinter, NSDAP district leader of Thuringia, helped negotiate a pact that temporarily lifted the ban of double membership with the Pan-German League. In spite of his lingering distrust of the National Socialist leader, Claß advised Hugenberg to cooperate with Hitler. Bang, who was now one of Hugenberg´s closest DNVP advisors in the chairman´s struggle to strengthen his leadership position within the party, initiated first contacts with Hitler and Hugenberg. Bang and Hitler had mutual friends in Berlin and he met with Hitler at the latter´s house on the Obersalzberg near Berchtesgaden shortly before Hugenberg met with Hitler in Wegener´s home in Bad Kreuth. It helped that Hitler was listening to Goebbels, who saw in Bang and Freytag-Loringhoven credible politicians, whom he admired for their economic expertise and political skills.

Hitler agreed to participate in a propaganda campaign against reparations, but he remained cautious about joining a new Sammlungsbewegung, because doing so would violate his strategy of building electoral successes solely upon the NSDAP movement. Between the summer of 1928 and the end of 1929, Hitler reorganized the NSDAP, reenforced the hierarchy of party leadership, making himself the only source of decision-making, and turned the district leaders into executors of orders issued at headquarters in Munich. The party founded a Rednerschule in 1928, which was soon training more than 2,000 speakers to spread the party´s propaganda, especially in rural

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9 See Kruck, Der Alldeutsche Verband, 200 and Hering, Konstruierte Nation, 150.
10 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936].
areas and small towns. The NSDAP´s propaganda office, which had been founded in 1926, centrally directed party organization at the grass-roots level. All these political strategies, however, recommended cooperation with other elements of the “national opposition,” so Hitler could present himself as a leader of the radical Right. The NSDAP developed a mass following and an infrastructure that overshadowed the DNVP´s but the NSDAP also lacked a political cause that could thrust it into the limelight.

The issue of reparations then presented this cause. The Stahlhelm took the initiative in calling for a National Committee for the German People´s Opposition to the Young Plan (Reichsausschuss für das deutsche Volksbegehren gegen den Young Plan) to organize a referendum against continued reparations. Talks between the Stahlhelm and the Pan-German League took place in November 1928 in the National Club in Hamburg, as well as in similar nationalist agitation clubs elsewhere. Gebsattel was also a member of the German Club in Augsburg, while Vietinghoff-Scheel was an activist of the National Club in Berlin, and Dr. Wildgrube had joined the National Club in Saxony. These clubs were watering holes for activists from right-wing organizations. They were affiliated with the VVVD, which helped organize the propaganda for the referendum and were often in the hands of local Pan-German Honoratioren like Beutel, who served as second chairman of the Dresden VVVD. Bang´s service at the VVVD´s presidium secured for the Pan-German League the cooperation of Goltz, who had become a well-known guest speaker at local Pan-German Bismarck celebrations and was a regular invitee to the Pan-German conventions. The joint membership of several leading Pan-German DNVP deputies in the Stahlhelm (such as Bang, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Schmidt(-

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Hannover), and Graef) helped form an important additional alliance with the country’s largest veterans’ association.

Claß hoped to make the Pan-German League visible as a “leader and vanguard” of the campaign against the reparations. To this end, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Gebattel, and Wildgrube were elected as members of the coordinating committee of the *Reichsausschuss zum Volksbegehren* in the winter of 1928. All three Pan-Germans then served on the executive committee of the referendum initiative, which was set up in January 1929 parallel to the first meetings of the independent expert commission that negotiated the settlement that became known as the Young Plan.\(^{15}\) Local committees were founded in all German states to channel propaganda from the national to the local level, and leading Pan-Germans served in these committees. Gebsattel worked in the executive committee in Bavaria, for instance, as did *Amtsgerichtsrat* Niederstein in Bochum and Kretschmar, Dr. Panse, and Dr. Reyher in Dresden.\(^{16}\)

The NSDAP joined this campaign but pursued its own interests in negotiating its participation. The negotiations soon turned into a battleground for leadership. The leaders of the *Stahlhelm*, Franz Seldte and Duesterberg, wanted to lead the campaign but needed resources from other parties. Hugenberg used his own media empire to dominate the propaganda, so Duesterberg proposed that the “storming DNVP be tamed and other organizations like the DVP be included.”\(^{17}\) In actuality, the new *Sammlungsbewegung* included the *Stahlhelm*, the DNVP, the VVVD, the National Club, the aristocratic and exclusive *Herrengesellschaft*, the Pan-German League, and the NSDAP. It was clear to all participating organizations in the referendum that

\(^{15}\) See Claß to Ortsgruppenvorsitzende des ADV, 5 February 1930, STA Dresden, 13.1., vol. 12, 150-151.
\(^{17}\) Theodor Duesterberg to Siegfried Wagner, 27 September 1928, BA-B, R 72, vol. 44, 69.
they were working towards overthrowing the government by legal means. The *Stahlhelm* hoped that a successful referendum would lead to a change in the constitution, limit the power of the Reichstag, and strengthen the role of the executive. All these moves troubled Hindenburg, who attempted both to appoint stable governments and to secure Germany a strong place among the powers. In a meeting with Duesterberg, Seldte, and Hugenberg on 23 February 1929, he was assured that they sought to change the constitution by legal means. They also stressed that the *Stahlhelm* were aware of their oath to Kaiser Wilhelm II and that their actions reflected a desire to serve as reliable servants of the state.

Even before the Young Committee presented its plan in June 1929, Hugenberg and Claß had been informed of the Allies’ expectations by Hjalmar Schacht, the Currency Commissioner and President of the *Reichsbank*, who led the German delegation to the reparations talks in The Hague. Schacht had close ties to the DNVP leadership after he had left the DVP as a member, especially to Quaatz and Hugenberg. Quaatz, who was forced by Westarp to resign from the DNVP’s Foreign Affairs Committee, tried to establish himself as Hugenberg’s economic advisor and his ties to Schacht helped to enforce this image. Schacht had already told Quaatz shortly after the elections of 1928 about his strategy if he became chairman of the delegation. Schacht indicated that he would only sign an agreement with the Allies if the annual outlay did not exceed 1.25 billion Mark, while experts in the U.S. Treasury Department and Wall Street expected an agreement of total requirements of 2 billion Mark per annum instead. In December 1928, Schacht reiterated his position on the reparations negotiations at an informal meeting with

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22 See also diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 25 October 1928, in Weiβ and Hoser, *Die Deutschnationalen*, 52-53.
Hugenberg.23 Schacht met Hugenberg several times to explain details about the demands of the Allies and the opposition of leading representatives of German heavy industry to the reparation scheme.24

Meanwhile, Hugenberg sought to strengthen his position in the DNVP, for his standing as DNVP leader was still fragile. Several chapters suffered from bankruptcy as a result losing members. The district leader of Danzig, Dr. Hoppenrath, begged Hugenberg to wire additional funds to keep the district office running, nearly all of whose 1,500 members had joined the rival chapter of the Young German Order.25 Hugenberg failed to mobilize new members, keep old members in agrarian districts, or to ensure stable funding of the local chapters. In addition, Hugenberg’s supporters continued to quarrel with Westarp’s supporters at the local level. Kretschmar faced serious intrigues in the Dresden chapter when he tried to run as the chapter’s candidate on the DNVP list for the federal elections in Saxony. He complained that the chairman of the Dresden DNVP was not in line with Hugenberg’s course of streamlining the party and hoped to remove Kretschmar from the local leadership.26

Although he had resigned as chairman of the DNVP in October 1928, Westarp still served as the leader of the party’s delegation to the Reichstag. He ensured that majority of DNVP deputies (14 to 13) voted in favour of the Kellogg-Briand Pact in February 1929 which was ratified in 1928 with more than 60 countries committing themselves to outlaw war as a legitimate means for the state to expand its territory or deal with diplomatic conflict.27 As war remained a

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23 See diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 12 December 1928, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 60-61.
27 See diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 6 February 1929, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 64.
stable column in the Pan-Germans’ world view, Hugenberg redoubled his efforts to purge the
city of remaining moderates. In a speech to the party’s Reichstag delegation on 9 April 1929, he
convinced the deputies that it was necessary to combine the offices of the federal chancellor and
the Prussian minister president. He also demanded that ministers no longer be answerable to the
Reichstag, that state governments be independent from the federal diets, and that the Ministries of
Labor, Transportation, and Economics be combined.\(^{28}\) Without saying so explicitly, Hugenberg
suggested himself as a suitable minister if this merger took place. Therefore, Hugenberg wanted
to use the referendum against the Young Plan to install himself as the leader of the Right, which
would also solidify his position within the DNVP. Weiss from DNVP headquarters became editor
of the referendum-committee’s circular Reichsausschuss Rundbriefe, and Ewald von Egan-
Krieger became the executive manager (Hauptgeschäftsführer), in which capacity he promoted
propaganda in Hugenberg’s interests. When Hitler retreated from his promise to join the
Reichsausschuss in April 1929, it gave Hugenberg the opportunity to carve out a leading position
for himself in Hitler’s absence.\(^ {29}\) To assist Hugenberg, Vietinghoff-Scheel recruited leading Pan-
Germans to mobilize support from different interest groups for the referendum. Among them
were General von Möhl and Lieutenant Colonel Schwendy, Landgerichtsdirektor, Rieck, Kirdorf,
Möllers, Bang, and Vowinkel. Klingemann, Salm-Horstmar, and Hertzberg were added to the
list—Hertzberg, who owned a large estate in Mecklenburg, as a spokesman of agrarian
interests.\(^ {30}\) The broad variety of speakers in the Reichsausschuss für das Volksbegehren seemed
to unite the most important right-wing organizations. By May 1929, the Stahlhelm, the DNVP,
the Pan-German League, and the VVVD had convinced the leaders of the CNBP and Schiele’s

\(^{28}\) See Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger, 10 April 1929 and Deutsche Zeitung, 14 April 1929.
\(^{29}\) Berghahn, Der Stahlhelm, 126.
\(^{30}\) Vietinghoff-Scheel to Rüdiger von der Goltz, 16 April 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 261, 32.
Reichslandbund to join the initiative. The campaign against the Allied Reparations Commission gained momentum when the terms of the Young Plan were announced on 7 June 1929.

Still, this “national opposition” remained weak. Resentments, distrust, and competition over leadership remained sources of suspicion and disunity. Hugenberg used every chance to present himself as the leader of the “national opposition,” while the executive editor of the Stahlhelm, Hans Brauweiler, complained about his behavior, particularly his efforts to initiate talks with Hitler behind Seldte’s and Duesterberg’s backs. For Hugenberg the struggle for power entered another stage during the early summer of 1929. Attempts to consolidate his leadership within the DNVP reached a critical point in May. Pragmatic cooperation between Hugenberg and Westarp came to an end when Westarp tried to secure the autonomy of the DNVP deputies from Hugenberg’s interventions. At a special meeting of the deputies in early May, Westarp mobilized agrarian, industrial, and labour elements within the delegation to block Hugenberg’s motion to give the chairman veto powers over the DNVP’s strategy. Meanwhile, Oberfohren, Quaatz, and Graef—all members of the Pan-German caucus—spoke out for Hugenberg. The result of the vote was close as Westarp gained only 34 out of 73 votes. Hugenberg eventually dethroned Westarp in this confrontation on 15 June 1929 by a margin of only one vote, but the crisis in the party, which had led to Hugenberg’s coup in October 1928, continued and put the referendum at the center of Hugenberg’s party politics. Although Westarp

33 See Jones, “German Conservatism at the Crossroads.”
34 See diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 2 May 1929, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 70.
35 See diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 18 June 1929, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 72.
supported the referendum, Hugenberg kept him out of the working groups that coordinated the campaign.36

Claß acted cautiously in the DNVP meetings about the reparations in early 1929, in order not to complicate debates over Hugenberg’s leadership, but the Pan-German League itself began speaking out more strongly against the reparations plan in the summer of 1929.37 Claß not only condemned reparations, but he also pursued the main objective of the “national opposition,” the abolishment of the Weimar Republic. He gave a bombastic speech at the meeting of the League’s district representatives from Baden in June 1929, while from headquarters Brockdorff published several pamphlets about the devastating effects of the Dawes and the Young plans.38 The Pan-German League’s support for Hugenberg came through the Pan-Germans in the party. Internal negotiations over Hugenberg’s position were the business of party members, although an exchange of ideas and information took place between the League’s headquarters and the Pan-German DNVP deputies. While Freytagh-Loringhoven organized Pan-German support for Hugenberg within the DNVP, Feldmann spoke on Hugenberg’s behalf at Pan-German meetings throughout 1929. When the Reichsausschuss met for the first time on 8 July 1929, the Pan-Germans acted on behalf of the DNVP. The meeting represented an effort by the radical Right to act as a single Sammlungsbewegung. The Reichsausschuß incorporated the NSDAP once Hitler finally agreed to cooperate, albeit in hopes of using the Committee as a platform to his own political ends. The DNVP, the Stahlhelm the VVVD, the Pan-German League, the Reichslandbund, the Landvolk, the CNBP, and several nationalist splinter groups now

36 Westarp to Oberfohren, 2 August 1929, Nachlaß Kuno Graf von Westarp/Böblingen-Stuttgart, Familienarchiv Freiherren Hiller von Gaertringen, Bestand I, VN 102, No. 17; Westarp to Hugenberg, 11 July 1929, in ibidem, VN 122, No. 6; and Westarp to Hugenberg, 19 August 1929, in ibidm.  
37 See diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 8 March 1929, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 67.  
38 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 22 June 1929; Alexander Graf Brockdorff, Der Dawes Plan und seine Wirkung (Langensalza: Beyer, 1928); and Idem, Amerikanische Welttherrschaft? (Berlin: Albrecht, 1929).
participated. The Pan-German members of the Committee included Claß, Gebsattel, Möllers, Wundt, and Claß’s close friend, Otto von Below. 39

Claß was appointed to draft the referendum and the supplementary “Freedom Law,” which called for the punishment of officials who signed the Young Plan on Germany’s behalf or helped implement the reparations agreement. The “Freedom Law” was in fact the heart of the initiative. Claß sought advice from several legal experts to ensure that the executive could not block the law if the referendum passed. 40 He contacted Rudolf Smend at the Berlin University, who had engaged in extensive discussions with the law professor Carl Schmitt over the boundaries of the Weimar constitution and the nature of a legal Staatsnotstand. 41 Smend’s recommendations were central to Claß’s draft of the “Freedom Law.” In a series of newspaper articles, Claß announced that Germany’s economic crisis and parliamentary stalemate demanded that a dictatorial government fundamentally change the constitution as these crises created real state emergency (wahrer Staatsnotstand), which demanded a new legal framework for a change of the constitution (rechtsschöpfender Staatsnotstand). This argument reflected Smend’s understanding that the state was to create political order from above, in order to integrate the Volk once traditional concepts of political order had been challenged by modern mass politics. 42 Schmitt, on the other side, had argued that only the sovereign Volk could legitimate new forms of government (e.g. dictatorship, monarchy, or democracy) through acclamation. Consequently, a change of the constitution could only be accomplished through constitutional means – even when the ends themselves were unconstitutional. Schmitt, therefore, saw Article 48 as the only legitimate way to legalize dictatorial emergency politics executed by the Chancellor and the

41 Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936].
Reich President. Smend rejected Schmitt’s “antique” Catholic premises of a given stable ontological world order and saw the integration of the state and the Volk as a dynamic process in which the state has the legal power to create political homogeneity. Since Claß had long since lost faith in voluntary political compromises on a völkisch basis, he was impressed by Smend’s understanding of the powerful role of the state once traditional concepts of god-given political order had been seriously challenged by the war and the revolution.

Claß’s draft of Article 4 of the “Freedom Law,” which demanded imprisonment of leaders who signed the reparations plan or participated in implementing it, had the support of Hugenberg and Hitler, but it immediately divided the Reichsausschuss into two camps: those who supported Claß’s draft (Pan-German League, DNVP, and NSDAP) and those who feared a break with Hindenburg (Stahlhelm, Reichsandbund, and CNBLP). Hindenburg was an honorary member of the Stahlhelm, which made it difficult for Duesterberg and Seldte to support his imprisonment if he were to sign the Young Plan. Schiele, who chaired the Reichsandbund, also opposed to the “Freedom Law,” complaining that he had not been consulted prior to its publication. Schiele and the Stahlhelm had long been uneasy about the DNVP’s efforts to lead the campaign for the referendum. Brauweiler from the Stahlhelm claimed that opposition to Hugenberg within the committee had increased and that Hugenberg had managed only to increase disunity within the Sammlungsbewegung. When the “Freedom Law” with Article 4 passed the Committee on 10 September 1929 after continued discussions about the exact wording of the referendum, the text went to the media. The leaders of the Reichsandbund, the CNBLP, and the Stahlhelm still opposed Article 4, and Hugenberg was under pressure to prevent the Committee from breaking

43 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 8.7 and also Carl Schmitt, Volksentscheid und Volksbegehren (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1927); Idem, Verfassungslehre (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1993 [1928]); 61-121. Idem, Der Begriff des Politischen (Munich/Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1932), which Schmitt began to work on in the winter of 1927.
up.\footnote{See Major Nagel to Generalmajor Holl, 17 September 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 263, 89-91 and Reichslandbund to Westarp, 13 September 1929, Nachlaß Kuno Graf von Westarp/Böblingen-Stuttgart, Familienarchiv Freiherrn Hiller von Gaertringen, Bestand I, VN 122, No. 3.} On the other hand, Hugenberg and Claß realized that the NSDAP would leave the Committee if the Article 4 were dropped. Hugenberg nevertheless opted to appease the Reichslandbund and the Stahlhelm, because he saw no chance for the DNVP to lead the committee and the referendum with the support of Hitler alone.\footnote{Hugenberg to Major Nagel, 15 September 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 263, 62-66 and Hugenberg to Seldte, 16 September 1929, in ibidem, 67-69.}

Meanwhile the Reichslandbund formally rejected Article 4. It argued that the punishment clause for state officials had no legal foundation, since Germany had signed the Versailles Treaty, committing itself to paying reparations.\footnote{„Erklärung Reichslandbund,“ 17 September 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 263, 100-104.} Article 4 would also scare away Germany’s state officials and limit the broader political appeal of the referendum. Bang immediately crafted a counterstatement, which taught the Reichslandbund a lesson in subverting the Rechtsstaat. According to Bang, the referendum had to be passed before the Young Plan was formally ratified. It would then be illegal for the government to sign. For Bang, international treaties, such as the ones signed by Stresemann at Locarno, had been ratified without acknowledging the opposition parties in the Reichstag. Therefore, they were only individual agreements, not the act of the Volk.\footnote{Declaration Paul Bang, 18 September 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 263, 106-108.} Bang’s interpretation reflected not only his own, but also Claß’s and Hugenberg’s ideas, according to which German interests took precedence over international law and the premises of the Rechtsstaat.

Another meeting of the committee, on 19 September 1929, resulted in compromise and division. Hindenburg was to be exempted from Article 4, and state officials who signed the treaty were not be punished by imprisonment for accepting the war-guilt clause of the Versailles Treaty. Vietinghoff-Scheel, Freytagh-Loringhoven, and Lohmann were representing Claß and defended...
his draft of Article 4 but because the representatives of the NSDAP did not participate in the debate, having left the meeting after an hour, the Committee avoided dissolution that day.\textsuperscript{49}

The compromise passed but it was hollow. Claß predicted further disputes within the Committee, since Schiele would continue to pursue his own efforts to form a moderate bloc and to bolster his prospects for joining the government.\textsuperscript{50} At the same time, while the \textit{Reichslandbund} and the CNBLP opposed Article 4, even in its compromise form, they still supported the referendum. The Pan-German League, which had tied its fate to the success of Hugenberg in establishing himself as the leader of the radical Right, promoted the referendum in its local chapters. Headquarters made it mandatory for local leaders to participate in the campaign. Headquarters sent out its finest speakers—Brockdorff, Roeder, Reith, and Grube—who were accompanied by the League’s chairman of the Allied-occupied Ruhr district, Kautzsch from Essen. The number of lectures presented by these five speakers doubled from 73 in 1928 to 149 in 1929.\textsuperscript{51} Brockdorff, Grube, Reith, and Roeder all were elected members of the executive council in August 1929, so they carried the League’s propaganda from the national leadership directly to the local chapters.\textsuperscript{52} On occasion, the lectures turned into mass events. Brockdorff’s talk on “Facing Another Inflation?” in Munich in March 1929 attracted 1,300 people.\textsuperscript{53} Competition among elements of the “national opposition” drained efforts to cooperate, however. When Reith spoke to the Bensheim chapter of the League in May 1929, three other events took place the same night in this small Hessian town, and only 20 people showed up.\textsuperscript{54} The propaganda of the Pan-German League was mostly aimed at the traditional audiences of League members, their friends, and families.

\textsuperscript{50} Claß to Kilmannsegg, 23 September 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 263, 126.
\textsuperscript{51} See appendix Figure 19.
\textsuperscript{52} See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 30 August 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 159, 13-14.
\textsuperscript{53} Ortsgruppe München to Ortsgruppe Dresden, 13 March 1929, STA Dresden, 13.1., vol. 68, 5.
Still, the DNVP badly needed the Pan-Germans’ propaganda, because the party faced major problems in selling the campaign to its own constituencies. Westarp complained about the disastrous implications of Article 4 for the campaign. He also warned that Article 4 had divided the DNVP in several districts and that the opposition of the Stahlhelm and the Reichslandbund had found resonance. Westarp also predicted problems in promoting the referendum in the Reichstag. Quaatz meanwhile pointed to the party´s lack of mass appeal in campaigning, noting that once Hugenberg left the stage, the DNVP propaganda usually worked “in the usual complicated manner.” The perils of radicalism paired with his lack of charisma to make it difficult for Hugenberg to compete with his rivals in the “national opposition.”

When Schacht left the negotiations over the Young Plan in The Hague and then published a declaration against the plan in December 1929, it seemed that the referendum might appeal to broad segments of German society, who feared for their job security and opposed higher taxes to fund both reparations and social welfare. The economic situation had worsened during the winter of 1928, and the heavy industry demanded independence from the labor unions and a new social contract in the “Ruhreisenstreit” of November/December 1928, which was Weimar´s biggest lockout by entrepreneurs in the Ruhr valley with more than 200,000 workers prevented to work. The lockout had broader political implications because the Ruhr magnates also used the occasion to demonstrate the end of cooperation with the Social Democratic Government in Prussia, which sought to continue the social contract between labor unions and entrepreneur that was introduced since the war through the system of agreed wages and mediation in times of conflict between both parties. The expansion of Weimar´s social security system through new unemployment

56 Diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 4 November 1929, in Weiß and Hoser, *Die Deutschnationalen*, 86.
benefits in 1927 caused a serious budget crisis as Germany’s economy had slipped into recession by early 1929, with more than 1.3 million unemployed (and almost 3 million unemployed by the end of the year). The collapse of the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929 led to a withdrawal of extensive U.S. loans and investments from the German economy, which, for the Pan-Germans, only underlined the necessity of reducing German dependence on U.S. capital. In December 1929, the Reich Association of German Industry issued a declaration condemning the entire economic and fiscal policy of the past few years and the Müller Cabinet was only able to postpone the conflict in the Reichstag over the new budget until the signing of the Young Plan. Furthermore, the sudden death of Stresemann in October 1929 led the “national opposition” to hope that the loss of Germany’s most respected diplomat fighting for international reconciliation would lead to a resurgence of nationalism at the Foreign Office.

Quaatz and Bang made extensive use of Schacht’s criticism of the Young Plan and justified the campaign against it as an act to “overcome Germany’s lack of will” to defy the Versailles Treaty. The “national opposition” was not, however, able to mobilize sufficient popular support. Only 10 percent of all voters signed the initiative (Volksbegehren), which came to a popular vote on 22 December 1929. Turnout for the vote (Volksentscheid) was only 13.8 percent so that the referendum had clearly failed, although Claß hoped that the 5.8 million votes against the Young Plan would convince the government to accept the referendum as legally binding. Hindenburg, however, rejected it. Nor should official opposition to the violent language of the Freedom Law have come as a surprise to Claß and Hugenberg. On 30 November 1929, after Article 4 of the Freedom Law had become public, the Social Democratic Minister of the Interior, Carl Severing, and the Center Party Minister of Justice, Theodor von Guérard, proposed a Law to Protect the Republic, which stipulated that verbal attacks on the president or chancellor

would be punishable by imprisonment; it also prohibited denunciations of the Republic in public meetings and membership in anti-Republican associations. Gok and Claß now feared that even a single word of opposition to the Republic would lead to imprisonment if this new law were to pass the Reichstag (although a first attempt had failed in June 1929).

60 Thanking Westarp for his cooperation in organizing support of the DNVP’s rank-and-file during the referendum in early November 1929, Hugenberg revealed similar fears but certainly added his initial doubts about the rivalry within the Committee: “The risk of the initiative was greater than one might have thought.”

Highest support for the referendum (29.4 to 36.3 percent) came from the voters in agrarian DNVP constituencies like Pommerania, East Prussia, and Mecklenburg, while Pan-German strongholds, such as East Hanover, Magdeburg, Merseburg, and Thuringia, came out slightly less in favor of the referendum (23.1 to 28.0 percent). To judge from parliamentary elections that were held during the campaign against the Young Plan, the real beneficiary was the NSDAP. In state elections in Baden, the NSDAP vote in October 1929 rose from less than 2 percent (1925) to 7 percent, in Lübeck to 8.1 percent in November, and from 3.5 percent (1927) to 11.3 percent the following month in Thuringia, where the NSDAP joined the state government and Wilhelm Frick became Germany’s first National Socialist minister. The increase in votes for the NSDAP opened some eyes in the DNVP to Hitler’s ability to court DNVP voters.

60 See Gok and Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 7/8 December 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 160, 45 and 46.
63 See Kolb, Die Weimarer Republik, 122-123.
Freytagh-Loringhoven complained that the NSDAP was fishing in the DNVP’s pond and that the relationship between the two parties should be clarified as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{64} At the meeting of the League’s executive committee in early December 1929, Claß expounded upon the lessons of the referendum campaign. He predicted serious problems for Hugenberg in maintaining his role within the “national opposition.” According to Claß, the fate of the DNVP was linked to its desire for leadership of the “opposition front.”\textsuperscript{65} The Pan-German League, which had tied its fate to Hugenberg’s, felt pressured to broker an arrangement between Hugenberg on one hand and Hitler, Schiele, and the leaders of the CNBLP, on the other. As Claß recalled, the “transition of leadership to Hugenberg had cost a lot of energy and came with a lot of compromises, boundless patience, and self-restraint.”\textsuperscript{66} Vietinghoff-Scheel nonetheless concluded that the referendum had been a success with more than 28 million leaflets published and 40 district committees of the \textit{Reichsausschuß} organizing the campaign, of which 10 districts had “done quite a good job,” although there were insufficient resources.\textsuperscript{67} Several speakers from the \textit{Stahlhelm} were not qualified to speak to large crowds, Vietinghoff-Scheel remarked, and many DNVP chapters did not participate sufficiently, especially in the Prussia’s Catholic provinces in the West. Hilpert admitted that DNVP propaganda in Bavaria had also been unsatisfactory, so the local \textit{Landbund} had mobilized most of the voters, while the NSDAP chapters organized their own propaganda.\textsuperscript{68} Junghans from the League’s headquarters expressed

the wish that the Pan-Germans could afford more speakers and organize events as well as the NSDAP had done it through an efficient bureaucracy.  

The Pan-Germans invested a lot of energy in keeping the referendum committee alive after the vote, because they had used the campaign to engage “in dynamic politics after ten years of political trench warfare,” as Vietinghoff-Scheel put it. In early 1930, the remaining actors in the committee included the Pan-German League, the DNVP, the NSDAP, the Stahlhelm, and the VVVD. Oberfohren and Klostereibesitzer Heine from the League´s executive committee were elected new members of the Reichsausschuß presidium. They accompanied several Pan-German members who were the League´s most credible local and national leaders. Claß, Vietinghoff-Scheel, and Gebsattel, while Bang, Bacmeister, Feldmann, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Graef, Hertzberg, Klingemann, Kloß, Lehmann, Quaatz, Wundt, Möllers, Brockdorff, Beutel, Itzenplitz, Kirdorf, Liebert, Korodi, Kretschmar, Lohmann, Petzold, Viereck, Walbaum, Schlüter, Salm-Horstmar, Calmbach, Pickel, Pogge, and Winter from the executive committee had also joined the referendum committee. This was in addition to close supporters of Claß and the League like Schmidt(-Hannover), General Lieutenant Oskar Freiherr von Watter, Dommes, and Behrendt. In January 1930 the committee condemned the Young Plan, which, they claimed, compelled Germany to continuing paying reparations and would allow France to secure permanent control over the Saar and the Rhineland in a longer perspective. The Reichstag nevertheless passed the Young Plan by a comfortable majority on 12 March 1930. Hindenburg signed the treaty the following day, even though Hugenberg intervened personally in an attempt to persuade the president otherwise. In early April 1930, Hitler followed Schiele and left the

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71 See Germania, 8 January 1930.
72 See Reichsausschuss für das Deutsche Volksbegehren, „In die Bewegung“ [30 June 1929], Deutsche Zeitung, 12 July 1929; Der Stahlhelm, 14 July 1929; Deutsche Zeitung, 26 July 1929; and Deutsche Zeitung, 2 August 1929.
Committee because of Hugenberg’s unwillingness to challenge Hindenburg over his acceptance of the treaty. 74

Hugenberg’s lingering attachment to the president, coupled with his desire to play a leading role within the radical Right, put him in an awkward position. Hindenburg had himself considered appointing a dictatorial cabinet under Article 48 of the constitution, but Hugenberg was not on his list for the chancellorship. The DNVP was too divided, and Hugenberg did not enjoy a special place in Hindenburg’s heart. Westarp had already assured Hindenburg that under Hugenberg’s leadership the DNVP would not participate in any new coalition government. 75 Hindenburg believed in any case that pragmatic conservative politics would not prevail under Hugenberg’s leadership. 76 The results of the 1928 election no longer reflected the balance of power within the radical Right. The NSDAP proved to be the beneficiary of the transformation of right-wing politics. The anti-Young Plan campaign enabled the NSDAP to secure respect and credibility as a partner of Germany’s largest and most influential conservative nationalist organizations. Nor did the failure of the referendum harm the NSDAP, because Hitler had not initiated the campaign. While the Pan-Germans kept losing members and Hugenberg was consumed with cementing his hold over the DNVP, Hitler emerged stronger from the campaign. This fact proved vital in the wake of the “Black Friday” in 1929, when economic crisis began to set the radical Right’s political agenda.

74 See Der Nationale Sozialist, 4 April 1930.
76 See Claß to 5 February 1930, STA Friedberg, NL August Gebhard, No. 8, vol. 4, n.p. and also Pyta, Hindenburg, 541-553.
Crisis and Secession: Pan-German Limits of Mobilization and the Effects of Radicalizing the DNVP

The Pan-German League’s efforts during the referendum campaign could not hide the organization’s struggle with its own ageing and lack of energy. Hugenberg and even Bang had sought convalescence every year in spas like Bad Kreuth, while local chapter leaders, such as Beutel in Dresden, were absent from office repeatedly because of overworked nerves. Claß began to retreat from active politics after assisting Hugenberg’s takeover of the DNVP. The influence of the Pan-German declined because of Claß’s health problems and a loss of members. Claß now suffered from a chronic sleeping disorder, and after 1931, from diabetes and arrhythmia. Between 1929 and 1931, he spent almost four months a year in spas. In 1930, blood poisoning and cardiac arrest were added to his list of ailments so that he had to take cures in spas in the Glottertal near Freiburg and Bad Brambach. In 1929, he was absent from politics in January from mid-February to the beginning of March, in May, from mid-August till election-day in mid-September, and again from the beginning of November until Christmas. At the end of 1930, he was even temporarily unable to read books or meet political figures.

Claß’s frequent absences sometimes worked in his favor, as in 1930, when he was ordered to testify at court after the Müller government sued Goebbels for libel. In April 1931, he missed a meeting of the executive committee for the first time since the war because of his health. Hertzberg warned Hugenberg about Claß’s weak nerves and bad health, and he demanded that

77 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 8.8 and also Leicht, „Heinrich Claß,“ ch. 4.3.
78 See Hauptleitung des ADV to Egon von Pflügl, 2 January 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 216, 3; Hauptleitung des ADV to Dr. Schoeneich, 13 February 1930, in ibidem, 47; Gebbattel to Claß, 15 March 1930, in ibidem, 66; Claß to von Levetzow, 11 August 1930, in ibidem, 167; Roeder to Lehmann, 13 November 1930, in ibidem, 240; Roeder to Dr. Bartmann, 13 November 1930, ibidem, 241; Roeder to Arnold Ruge, 15 November 1930, ibidem, 246; Roeder to Lehmann, 23 December 1930, in ibidem, 287; and Petzoldt to Claß, 12 May 1930, in ibidem, Vol. 219, 70; Petzoldt to Claß, 14 May 1930, in ibidem, 72-73; and Geschäftsstelle des ADV to von Möhl, 24 November 1930, in ibidem, Vol. 163, 11.
80 Deutsche Zeitung, 27 April 1931.
Hugenberg provide additional resources to the League’s headquarters. The staff did not increase, however. Meanwhile, leading activists in the League passed away. Between 1929 and 1930 several members of the executive council died—Jacobsen at the age of 68 in the spring of 1929, Karl Horn from the Frankfurt Main chapter at the age of 75 in June, and Justizrat Gissing from the Duisburg chapter at the age of 74 in December. The executive committee lost another member when Pogge passed away after long physical suffering in April 1930. In February 1931, the former chairman of the Gießen chapter, Liebig, had also passed away at the younger age of 56. Death and sickness among the Pan-Germans continued to cut deep into the League’s leading bodies. The League’s Baden district lost its chairman Amtsgerichtsrat Weeber after years of service. In July 1932, one of the most devoted activists, Pezoldt from the Plauen chapter, died after serving on the executive committee since 1900. Gebsattel died in 1932, although he had resigned as deputy chairman in early 1929 after he was unable to travel due to his chronic asthma, to be replaced by Möllers, who, like Gebsattel, was one of the League’s few “nationalist Catholics.” When the honorary chairman of the Pan-German League in Austria, Hertle, died in May 1931, his successor Geiser bemoaned that the Pan-Germans had lost another activist who was not a mass leader giving rousing speeches but rather had run the League in a sober and hard-headed fashion. Men born between 1860 and 1880 continued to dominate the executive committee.

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81 See Leicht, „Heinrich Claß,“ ch. 4.3.
82 Alldeutsche Blätter, 25 May 1929, 4 January 1930, and 5 July 1930.
83 Alldeutsche Blätter, 26 April 1930.
84 Alldeutsche Blätter, 28 February 1931.
85 Alldeutsche Blätter, 21 October 1932.
86 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 13 August 1932.
88 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 6 June 1931.
89 See appendix Figure 16 and 17 and Table 10.
The ageing of Pan-German activists added to the limits of their political appeal to the masses. New members were in short supply. Membership declined regularly after 1923/24, and those who remained tended to be older. In 1929, the League numbered 15,500 members and the *Alledeutsche Blätter* had an estimated readership of 18,000. Vietinghoff-Scheel admitted that headquarters had failed to employ enough speakers to halt the decline of the League. The structural crisis in the Pan-German League was accompanied by Hugenberg’s failure to resolve the crises over his leadership of the DNVP. The referendum initiative did not relieve opposition to his intransigent politics, and by the spring of 1930 his struggle for control led to the final secession of moderate members whom Hugenberg had been challenging since October 1928. Although Westarp supported the referendum against the Young Plan, he realized that Hugenberg wanted to continue to streamline the party behind his course of fundamental opposition to the Republic. The Christian-Social faction of the DNVP faced similar problems; it represented the party’s working-class and white-collar constituencies, who had formed their own Christian-Social Reich Association (*Christlich-Soziale Reichsvereinigung*) in August 1928. Westarp knew that scaring away Schiele would hand over the DNVP’s most valuable constituencies in the rural provinces east of the Elbe to Schiele’s *Reichslandbund*, the CNBLP, and the NSDAP. Westarp tried everything to persuade Schiele and the Christian-Socials to stay in the DNVP, but his own reservations about Hugenberg made cooperation almost impossible. Treviranus, one of Westarp’s most loyal supporters in the DNVP, privately advocated an alternative party to pursue moderate conservative politics if Hugenberg were to remain party chairman. In response Hugenberg’s supporters, including Bang and Quaat, tried to expel Treviranus from the DNVP.

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90 See appendix Figure 1.
92 See also Jones, “German Conservatism at the Crossroads.”
The voting on the “Freedom Law” exacerbated the conflict in the DNVP. On 30 November 1929, the thirteen delegates from the DNVP, including Treviranus and Lindeiner-Wilder, abstained from the parliamentary vote, while ten additional delegates stayed away from the voting session altogether.\(^4\) Twelve DNVP deputies thereupon left the party, including Keudell, Schlange-Schöningen, Lambach, and Treviranus, as Westarp resigned as chairman of the DNVP Reichstag delegation.\(^5\) Oberfohlen, the Pan-German supporter of Hugenberg, replaced him. These secessions reduced the DNVP to its radical core.

Meanwhile, the NSDAP set out to tighten its own infrastructure to take over leadership of the Right and leave the DNVP behind in upcoming elections. As part of a strategy to infiltrate and dominate established associations, the party turned toward the now-radicalized agrarian interest groups, the *Reichslandbund*, the CNBLP, and the Green Front (*Grüne Front*).\(^6\) As part of Hitler’s strategy, Heß issued a decree in the spring of 1930 prohibiting dual membership of NSDAP members in other associations, including the Pan-German League.\(^7\) Although the ban was lifted shortly thereafter, the fragmentation within Germany’s Right became increasingly apparent. The DVP also turned more radical after Stresemann’s death, when his successor Ernst Scholz demanded a strict anti-Social Democratic course. When Ludwig Kaas succeeded Wilhelm Marx as chairman of the Center Party in December 1929, the Catholic *Sammlungspartei* increasingly spoke an anti-parliamentarian language and demanded authoritarian political leadership in Germany.

In March 1930, the Müller Cabinet resigned after it lost a working majority in the Reichstag. Hindenburg’s concern over the inability of the Reichstag to produce a stable cabinet

\(^4\) See also Jones, “German Conservatism at the Crossroads.”
\(^6\) See also Pomp, *Bauern und Großgrundbesitzer*.
\(^7\) See Major Eisenstecken to Hitler, 29 March 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 232, 84; Rudolf Heß to Major Eisenstecken, 25 March 1930, in ibidem, 85; Rudolf Heß to Major Eisenstecken, 8 April 1930, in ibidem, 89; and Major Eisenstecken to Vietinghoff-Scheel, 12 April 1930, in ibidem 95.
opened the door for Heinrich Brüning of the Center Party, whom Hindenburg appointed chancellor on 30 March 1930. Brüning had full authority from the President to use Article 48 to govern without the consent of the Reichstag. Brüning had planned from the beginning to exclude the SPD from his government and to persuade Hugenberg to join the cabinet. This idea proved unrealistic. Brüning was unappealing to the Pan-Germans because of his Catholicism and his willingness to work within the Weimar Constitution, albeit by the means of Article 48. Instead, the Pan-Germans tried to keep the Reich Committee active, and Claß demanded that the League continue to serve as a “honest broker” between the DNVP and the NSDAP.98

Although Claß denounced Hindenburg as a puppet of his Junker advisors (who included Claß´s close friend, Oldenburg-Januschau) and his son Oskar von Hindenburg, he understood the power of the agrarian lobby. He demanded that the Pan-German League support the Osthilfe for indebted estates, which Schiele’s Reichslandbund and the CNBLP had demanded for years.99 Hugenberg also felt compelled to compromise on agrarian matters, and he, Oberfohren, and Schiele delivered a petition to the Reichstag, which called for rescheduling bad farm loans and transferring 200 million Mark to farmers.100 However, pressure to pacify the agrarian wing of the DNVP raised opposition in the Pan-German League, especially in Northern Bavaria, where Pickel, the district’s chairman, pursued the League´s politics in competition with the NSDAP, which used the agrarian crisis in its propaganda against the Republic.101

Hugenberg came under additional criticism during the vote on Brüning´s plan to combine the Osthilfe into a budget that included an increase in consumption taxes. On 3 April 1930,

100 Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger, 28 March 1930.
Brüning survived a motion of no-confidence because Westarp and Schiele convinced Hugenberg not to side with the SPD, which had initiated the motion. Hugenberg nevertheless criticized the proposed budget for postponing fundamental changes in Germany’s dependence on foreign loans, as well as the restructuring of the economy along autarchial lines.\textsuperscript{102} The Pan-Germans in the DNVP believed that promoting an efficient agrarian sector and reducing unemployment was only possible through a fundamental change of the political system, the establishment of an authoritarian dictatorship on lines laid out in Vietinghoff-Scheels “\textit{Grundzüge des völkischen Staatsgedankens},” which had sold 15,000 copies by 1930.\textsuperscript{103}

On 12 April 1930, under Westarp’s leadership, 31 of 54 conservative deputies defied Hugenberg and voted for Brüning’s tax bill, and they continued to do so over the following days on the matters of legislation.\textsuperscript{104} Hugenberg now mobilized the party districts that were under the influence of his supporters. On 25 April 1930, he demanded full authority for the chairman and the head council to make binding decisions on the Reichstag deputies. Westarp announced that he and 28 deputies would resist Hugenberg’s instructions.

Bonhard wrote in the \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter} of the need to remove Schiele and Westarp, who were willing to support any government that served agrarian interests: “May the decisions to be made in the near future serve our task of rebuilding and regenerating the German-National Party and provide the party’s \textit{Führer}, Dr. Hugenberg, support in his political struggles.”\textsuperscript{105} The Center paper \textit{Germania} called Hugenberg’s moves to corner Schiele an “open declaration of war.”\textsuperscript{106}

Headquarters of the Pan-German League echoed the contempt for Schiele’s \textit{Realpolitik}, stating in

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\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{103}] See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 15 March 1930.
\item[\textsuperscript{104}] See also diary entries Reinhold Quaatz, 12 April 1930 and 14 April 1930, in Weiβ and Hoser, \textit{Die Deutschnationalen}, 109-110.
\item[\textsuperscript{105}] \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 26 April 1930.
\item[\textsuperscript{106}] \textit{Vorwärts}, 26 April 1930 and \textit{Germania}, 29 April 1930.
\end{itemize}
reference to Schiele’s name (which translates as “to squint”) that “schielen is very unhealthy,” whereas “Hugenberg would offer a straight view with his agrarian politics.”\textsuperscript{107}

Claß sensed that the disputes within the DNVP were damaging Hugenberg and that “one was wrong to assume that Hugenberg was a unifying figure to the DNVP’s Reichstag delegation.”\textsuperscript{108} The agrarian lobbyists would destroy the “national opposition” to Brüning from within the DNVP. In these circumstances Claß reconsidered the League’s support for the DNVP and its cooperation with the NSDAP. He demanded that Hugenberg settle his rivalry with Hitler. Pickel, however, complained about Claß’s new strategy, which, he believed, would put both the League and the DNVP at the mercy of the NSDAP. Other Pan-German DNVP deputies, such as Feldmann, were also stunned by Claß’s move. In fact, within the League’s executive committee a clear majority opposed Claß’s ideas about an approach to the NSDAP. After Vietinghoff-Scheel declared that support for Hugenberg should be the focus of the League’s efforts, and Bang endorsed this position, the members of the executive committee voted in May 1930 to support only Hugenberg.\textsuperscript{109} Nevertheless, Claß remained skeptical about Hugenberg’s power, so he kept an alternative alliance with Hitler in mind. At a meeting of the executive committee of the Austrian Pan-German League in Linz on 23 June 1930, he proclaimed the independence of the League from party politics, but he reassured the audience that the League would cooperate with any right-wing movement that was trustworthy and fought against the Republic.\textsuperscript{110}

Westarp and 25 DNVP deputies, including Treviranus, Lambach, Lejeune-Jung, Lindeiner-Wilder, Westarp, and Rademacher from the Saxon party district, formally left the DNVP on 18 July 1930 and founded the Conservative People’s Party (\textit{Konservative Volkspartei}) five days later. Westarp only concluded a wave of secessions, which had started as early as in

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\item \textsuperscript{107} Hauptleitung des ADV to \textit{Rittergutsbesitzer} Hartwig, 28 April 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 216, 105.
\item \textsuperscript{108} Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 17 May 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 162, 5.
\item \textsuperscript{109} See Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 17 May 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 162, 7-10.
\item \textsuperscript{110} See \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 5 July 1930.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
December 1929 and had already brought Hugenberg’s opponents to the Christian-National People’s Service (Christlich-Nationaler Volksdienst) and the CNBLP, which cooperated closely with the Reichslandbund and Landvolk.\footnote{See Deutsche Zeitung, 24 July 1930.} Westarp’s actions left Hugenberg with only 38 deputies in the summer of 1930.\footnote{See Friedrich Freiherr Hiller von Gaertringen, “Die Deutschnationale Volkspartei,” in Erich Matthias and Rudolf Morsey (eds.), Das Ende der Parteien 1933: Darstellung und Dokumente (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1984 [1960]), 543-652 and also Germania, 20 July 1930.} It also strengthened Hugenberg’s power, especially once Schiele left the DNVP in July for the CNBLP.

In the elections that followed Brüning’s dissolution of the Reichstag, the DNVP faced several traps. Hugenberg had to present the DNVP as a radical alternative to Brüning, yet make certain that the DNVP looked like a reservoir of respected political activists for a future dictatorial cabinet. Also, the loss of many young people from the DNVP increased the pressure to put younger members on the party’s national election lists, in order to appeal to the front generation.\footnote{See Germania, 24 July 1930 and 26 July 1930.} With Kretschmar, Gok, and Feldmann served in the League’s executive committee and Dommes in the executive council, the League supported the DNVP. It sent speakers out from headquarters at a greater rate than in 1929.\footnote{See appendix Figure 19.} Claß, however, complicated matters in July 1930 with instructions that local Pan-Germans support trustworthy candidates from either the DNVP or the NSDAP.\footnote{See Claß to members of the Hauptleitung and Geschäftsführenden Ausschuss des ADV, 22 July 1930, STA Dresden, 13.1., vol. 12, 256-257.} After discussions within the executive committee, Claß retreated and endorsed the League’s support for DNVP candidates, which resulted in several Pan-German DNVP members’ placement on the party’s election list.\footnote{Claß to Ortsgruppenvorstände, 24 July 1930, STA Dresden, 13.1., vol. 12, 258-259.} Oberfohren appeared on the election list in Schleswig Holstein. New elections to the DNVP’s head council and the executive committee on 18 August 1930 wiped out the last opposition to Hugenberg – aided by local activists. The Pan-German
caucus of the Saxon DNVP purged the party to prepare for Hugenberg’s electoral success.

Beutel reported to Claß that, of the 11 members of the Saxon party’s head council, 9 were Pan-Germans, while of the 46 members of the extended executive council (Weiterer Vorstand) 25 were devoted members of the Saxon Pan-German League. Altogether 52 Pan-Germans served in the greater executive council (Grosser Ausschuss), which numbered 137 members.\textsuperscript{117} Shortly before the election, Beutel reported to Claß that in Saxony the DNVP election list had been designed to serve Pan-German interests.\textsuperscript{118} The purges of local DNVP districts seemed also necessary to appease the Pan-German membership. Pezoldt from Plauen warned Beutel that many Pan-German voters in Saxony would rather vote for the NSDAP than moderate DNVP candidates.\textsuperscript{119} Headquarters of the League, therefore, came out for both DNVP and NSDAP candidates, in order to guarantee that only candidates supporting Hugenberg’s radical course were elected or, if moderate DNVP candidates were on election lists, that NSDAP candidates were elected as the lesser evil.\textsuperscript{120}

The national elections in September 1930 increased the political stalemate in the Reichstag. The NSDAP won an astounding 18.3 percent of the vote, the KPD increased its share to 13.1 percent; although the SPD retained its status as the largest party, with 24.5 percent, its share dropped by 5.3 percent. Finally, the DNVP’s vote was cut in half, from 14.2 percent in 1928 to 7.0 percent. The party fared poorly across Germany, both in rural and urban areas. In Pomerania, a traditional stronghold, the DNVP vote dropped by almost 27 percent, in Schleswig Holstein by 17 percent, in Breslau by 14 percent, and in Franconia, where the NSDAP was

\textsuperscript{117} Georg Beutel to Claß, 9 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 216, 194-195.
\textsuperscript{118} Georg Beutel to Claß, 9 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 216, 194-195.
\textsuperscript{119} Petzoldt to Georg Beutel, 25 July 1930, STA Dresden, 13.1., vol. 12, 266.
\textsuperscript{120} See Aldeutsche Blätter, 2 August 1930, Geschäftsstelle des ADV to Käthe Heintz, 16 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 216, 200, Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19 September 1930, in Aldeutsche Blätter, 27 September 1930.
especially prominent, it dropped to an insignificant 2.3 percent. Even in the Potsdam II district, which had been under control of Hugenberg’s supporters, the DNVP share fell from 21.4 percent to 14.9 percent. The results were equally dispiriting in industrial areas like Düsseldorf, Chemnitz-Zwickau, Leipzig, and Dresden-Bautzen. In Merseburg, the party lost almost two-thirds of its votes. Hugenberg was able to send a modest 41 DNVP delegates to the new Reichstag; three more than he had before the elections.

The elections of 1930 revealed a dramatic political realignment, as well as a continued political fragmentation, and signalled the volatility of the bourgeois electorate. Every third DNVP voter in 1928 voted for the NSDAP two years later. More alarming was the NSDAP’s success in establishing itself in Protestant northern and central Germany. The middle classes and large numbers of civil servants, as well as the self-employed voted for the NSDAP. These had been the prime constituencies of the DNVP and the Pan-German League. Farmers and estate-owning Junkers also increasingly turned to Hitler, reducing the DNVP’s success in its traditional strongholds east of the Elbe. The elections of 1930 also marked a turning point for the Pan-German League and the DNVP. It represented a shift within the Right in favour of the National Socialists, previously a junior partner to the DNVP. Claß realized that both the DNVP and the Pan-German League were now dependent on Hitler’s NSDAP.

The new DNVP delegation to the Reichstag had several Pan-Germans in its ranks—Hugenberg, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Graef, Oberfohren, Bang, Quaatz, Schmidt(-Hannover), and

121 See appendix Figure 20.
125 See Claß, *Politische Erinnerungen*, addendum [1936].
Georg Schiele, as well as Claß’s friend Oldenburg-Januschau. The elections also took their toll, however, on Pan-Germans who were not elected by the voters. Gok, who ran as a candidate in Hamburg with financial support for the local DNVP, lost his seat. Meanwhile the Hamburg chapter of the DNVP lost 2,000 to 2,500 of its members, about a third of the membership, thanks to the secessions from the party.\textsuperscript{126} Also Dommes and Hahn, who had figured prominently on the DNVP’s \textit{Reichsliste}, were not elected in their districts in Potsdam and Berlin.\textsuperscript{127} Other deputies entered the Reichstag only after severe disputes with the \textit{Stahlhelm}. Friedrich Everling, who had joined the Reichstag in 1924 and was a member of the Pan-German League, made it only because he was pushed by Hugenberg against the interests of headquarters of the \textit{Stahlhelm} in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, which feared too much dependence from the DNVP in placing their own candidates for the Reichstag on DNVP election lists.\textsuperscript{128} Schmidt(-Hannover), on the other side, was tolerated by the \textit{Stahlhelm} in Hanover because he had been in friendly relations with the veterans´ associations in the past.\textsuperscript{129}

Hugenberg’s purge of the party and recruiting of new personnel resulted in the election of 16 new deputies who often had excellent business relations with Hugenberg’s media business such as Hergt, who had known Hugenberg since 1904. The remaining deputies came from the Pan-German caucus or had a long history with Hugenberg: 4 delegates including Bang had been elected in 1928, 8 delegates in 1924 including Freytagh-Lorninghoven, 5 delegates in 1920 including Graef, and 5 had already served in the \textit{Nationalversammlung} in 1919 including

\textsuperscript{127} See DNVP Reichsliste [1930], BA-B, R 8005, vol. 70, 21.
Among Hugenberg’s supporters were also the Catholic historian Martin Spahn, who was in the Reichstag since 1924, Johannes Wolf, whose *Pommerischer Landbund* was financially supported by Hugenberg, Wilhelm Laverrenz, who served as a deputy since 1919, and Herbert Rudolf von Bismarck, who helped secure support for Hugenberg in the Bismarck Youth as the organization’s Reich Youth Leader. The majority of the new DNVP deputies were, like the old ones, *Honoratiorenpolitiker*; they had previous experience as political activists in the DNVP or other nationalist organizations like the Pan-German League, the VVVD, or the *Stahlhelm*. Most of them had also served as local politicians in municipal government or the federal *Landtage*.

 Claß was pleased with the DNVP’s results, as the election was the first test of the party under Hugenberg’s leadership. He ignored the party’s loss of votes, calculating that the votes of the entire Right, including the NSDAP, had increased. The ambivalences in Claß’s mind about the League’s support for Hugenberg were resolved again during the election in favor of Hugenberg. However, Claß still kept an eye on the NSDAP, and Hugenberg himself had to account for Hitler’s demands in his plans for the “national opposition” in the future. Claß predicted further rivalries between the DNVP and the NSDAP. He was in fact astonished by the electoral success of the NSDAP and complained that Hitler’s movement had so many more resources and devoted members and suggested at one point that the League dissolve itself rather than continue operating with such scant resources.

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133 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 163, 23.
The League’s leadership pondered the significance of the election during a meeting of the executive committee in December 1930. As much as Claß hoped for a lasting alliance between Hugenberg and Hitler, he could not overlook Hitler’s unreliability and the unpredictable strategies of the NSDAP. So he called for steady, sober [sachlich] cooperation with no emotionalism or loss of nerve. Bang reminded his fellow activists that, for the first time since the foundation of the League forty years before, working through the parliament had become the only way to pursue Pan-German policies. For Bang, the 41 DNVP delegates in the parliament were a “tool” of the Pan-German League. Bang was also confident that efforts to “teach Hitler sachliche politics” would bear fruit, although the NSDAP was “unfortunately not the pawn” of the League that the DNVP seemed to be. Hitler, he suggested, needed to be shielded from the radical left wing of his own party. Bang also predicted that amending the constitution through Article 48 would soon be feasible: “We will have a dictatorship of the middle soon!” It would rest on cooperation among agrarian interest groups, the Stahlhelm, the VVVD, the DNVP, and the NSDAP.

The rivalry between the DNVP and the NSDAP and the frailty of the “national opposition” required the Pan-Germans to define their own position to their rank-and-file. The NSDAP’s programmatic pirouettes between socialism and nationalism and the strong anti-Capitalist outlook of the party program had been critically discussed within the League since 1920. In 1929, Freytagh-Loringhoven stated that the DNVP followed the NSDAP in all of Hitler’s revisionist foreign-policy demands, but that the NSDAP’s domestic politics, especially

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its position on the restoration of the monarchy, were as nebulous as was its economic program.\textsuperscript{137} A year later, Reith from the League´s headquarters wrote a systematic analysis of the programs of the DNVP and the NSDAP.\textsuperscript{138} According to him, the parties agreed about the revision of Versailles, the return of Germany´s former colonies, the reintroduction of conscription, the promotion of a strong middle class, the enforcement of rural settlements, the provision of welfare protection to German mothers, and greater indoctrination of Germany´s youth. More significant were the differences. Reith noted that the NSDAP appealed to Wilson´s right of national self-determination, while the DNVP was more concerned about protecting ethnic Germans abroad. Hitler advocated the predominance of Germans in German politics and curtailing the rights of minorities. The DNVP, on the other hand, only called for an end to immigration into Germany. Reith applauded the DNVP for its support of the “monarchical idea.” The DNVP also supported local self-government and fiscal austerity, while the NSDAP desired a strong state to break the power of “financial interest slavery” and to nationalize private companies, which was an anathema to the DNVP and in fact laid the groundwork for serious disagreement over the political design of \textit{Volksgemeinschaft} in the future.

Pan-German members pressured headquarters of the DNVP to sharpen the party’s program to compete with the NSDAP. Preliminary drafts of a new program, which were composed in 1930, included references to the “eradication of unwanted” citizens through sterilization, the breaking of the “Jewish-Marxist tax systems” in Germany, and the introduction of a program of “comprehensive racial hygiene.”\textsuperscript{139} While this program embraced the monarchy, promoting agriculture over industry, and the centrality of Christianity in German society, the DNVP’s adoption of racial language like the NSDAP’s signified the party’s radicalization.

\textsuperscript{137} Freytagh-Loringhoven at DNVP Parteitag in Kassel, 21 November 1929, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 219, 158.
\textsuperscript{139} See „DNVP Programmentwurf“[transcript], 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 219, 176-224.
However, the DNVP was already limping behind the NSDAP in both membership and voting numbers, as events in 1931 dramatically showed.

*Competition and Cooperation: The Bad Harzburg Campaign and Presidential Elections*

The Pan-German League was in serious financial difficulties at the beginning of 1931. Expenses exceeded revenues by 60,000 Mark, so fees and special collections took on added importance. Only an additional 56,000 Mark from the *Betriebsschatz* made it possible to “survive” that year, as Vietinghoff-Scheel bluntly stated.\(^{140}\) Claß was frustrated by the League’s chronic lack of financial resources and again threatened to dissolve the League on its 40\(^{th}\) anniversary in 1931. Claß did not want the League to “keep painfully agonizing in Berlin”; the complained that in comparison to the National Socialists, who sacrificed much more than the League’s members, the Pan-Germans could hardly be motivated in the local chapters, despite their noble intentions.\(^{141}\)

The financial strains kept the League’s headquarters in distress. Annual membership fees increased from 8 to 12 Mark, but the failure of the local chapters to collect the fees or wire them to Berlin remained a problem. In early 1931, Vietinghoff-Scheel attempted to reintroduce a limited membership for 1 Mark, which had been abolished in 1915 when new members were joining in thousands to show their patriotism during the war; it had been reserved for students and women who wanted to join the League without receiving the *Alldeutsche Blätter*.\(^{142}\) Vietinghoff-Scheel was aware that such a limited membership would result in decreased membership fees and an increase of *Karteileichen*. The plan never materialized, after test runs failed in Dresden, Erfurt,

\(^{140}\) Vietinghoff-Scheel at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 163, 28.
\(^{141}\) Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 19 September 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 163, 29.
Gera, Wiesbaden, Celle, Güstrow, and Gelsenkirchen because of bureaucratic reasons and because only a few took advantage of this offer. Requests for limited membership had initially come from leaders in the new districts, which were refounded in 1929/30 after the French government prepared to withdraw troops from the Rhineland and the Ruhr. The League’s district “Rhein-Main” was refounded in June 1929, shortly before the Allied troops left. The search for a chairman and members in the district reflected the caution of former members, who had been threatened for ten years with imprisonment by the Allied forces. Paul Alt, who had become district leader in 1929 and was himself deported from the Rhineland in the past, complained repeatedly about Germany’s “lame Bürgertum” and that members who once joined the League had joined other organizations and parties, became inactive politically, or died.\footnote{Paul Alt to Karl Ernst, 24 January 1930, in HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 32, vol. 3, n.p.; Paul Alt to Geschäftsstelle des ADV, 28 May 1930, in ibidem; and Paul Alt to Karl Ernst, 13 August 1930, in ibidem. See Paul Alt to Karl Ernst, 10 September 1929, in HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 31, vol. 1, n.p. and report Paul Alt, 7 March 1930, in HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 32, vol. 4, n.p.}

Claß’s own nephew declined the chairmanship of the refounded Mainz chapter, because he had nightmares about the French and feared his own imprisonment.\footnote{See Karl Ernst to Hauptgeschäftsstelle des ADV, 9 August 1930, in HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 31, vol. 5, n.p.} The refoundation of the Mainz chapter, which had up to 600 members before 1914, was postponed and never met the expectations of mobilizing similar membership when Lucius finally served as the chapter’s chairman.\footnote{See also circular Ortsgruppe Mainz, 2 January 1934, in HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 31, vol. 5, n.p.}

The reluctance of the League’s former constituencies to join up again in 1929 presented a pretext to deflect the League’s inability to compete with its rivals. While Paul Alt complained about the headquarters’ incompetence in helping him to collect funds, Alt himself had neither the energy nor the time to lead a district organization.\footnote{See Karl Ernst to Hauptgeschäftsstelle des ADV, 7 February 1930, HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 32, vol. 4, n.p. and Paul Alt to Karl Ernst, 19 January 1931, in HSTA Darmstadt G 12 B, No. 32, vol. 3, n.p.}

Jungans from headquarters in Berlin urged him to set up chapters and recruit activists, but the lack of resources prevented the expenditure of money (even to purchase stamps, invitation cards, and envelopes) for areas in which it was hard
to find suitable personnel.\textsuperscript{147} The result was “miserable” conditions in the chapters, where few could be reactivated or mobilized as new members like in Frankfurt Main or Darmstadt.\textsuperscript{148} To acquire funds, Alt was one of the few district leaders who introduced an attendance fee.\textsuperscript{149}

While the Pan-German League continued to muddle through, the \textit{Stahlhelm} proposed another referendum, which provided another opportunity to test the cohesion of the radical Right. A day after the Reichstag reconvened on 3 October 1930, Seldte announced a referendum to dissolve the \textit{Landtag} in the state of Prussia, where the SPD governed, since this body no longer represented the will of the people after the recent national elections.\textsuperscript{150} The Pan-German League, the VVVD, the DNVP, the \textit{Reichslandbund}, and the DVP (which was no longer a party of any significant consequence) joined the initiative, as did dozens of other right-wing associations and parties, including the Association of the Eastern Marches, the Kyffhäuser Association, and the CNBLP. Hitler found himself in the same situation as he had during the anti-Young Plan campaign. The NSDAP could only join, but not lead the initiative. The NSDAP therefore only came on board shortly before the first meeting of the referendum’s executive committee. The ambivalence of the NSDAP illustrated that the “national opposition” was deeply fractured, as the DNVP, NSDAP, and \textit{Stahlhelm} all pursued their own self-interest. Claß was already skeptical about the prospects of the initiative. At least 13.5 million votes were necessary for the referendum to be successful and another failure would be a “disgrace.”\textsuperscript{151} More surprising was the participation of the KPD, which regarded the SPD as one of the major obstacles to a Communist takeover of Germany. Viertinghoff-Scheel spoke for the executive committee of the

\textsuperscript{151} See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6/7 December 1930, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 164, 35-36.
Pan-German League when he observed that the referendum would fail without the support of the KPD, but he remained skeptical whether the referendum would succeed in any event. The biggest problem remained the competition between the DNVP and the NSDAP, which Seldte and Duesterberg feared would undermine the independence of the Stahlhelm, who would have to choose sides. Claß had similar fears. He remained skeptical whether a dictatorship of the “national opposition” was feasible in Prussia as long as the NSDAP and Stahlhelm competed with the DNVP over leadership. Hitler had already displayed his power when he canceled repeatedly his attendance at meetings of the referendum’s executive committee.

The Stahlhelm’s relationship with the Pan-German League and the VVVD was cordial, but Seldte and Duesterberg needed to find broad support for their initiative. This imperative took grotesque form when Wagner from the headquarters of the Stahlhelm praised the propaganda strategies of the Pan-German League as an example of how the committee should proceed with limited resources. The Pan-Germans enjoyed such hollow compliments and, in return, thanked the Stahlhelm and sent two of their DNVP deputies, Quaatz and Everling, to the training-course scheduled by the Stahlhelm for their own speakers at forthcoming rallies.

Tensions between the NSDAP and the Pan-German League over Hitler’s course made cooperation difficult. The League complained widely in the press about Hitler’s cautious management of the revolt of SA leaders around Walter Stennes, who had challenged Hitler’s leadership and criticized him for his cooperation with the “national opposition.” Hitler was furious about the League’s suggestion that he tame the radical left wing of the NSDAP to make

155 See Deutsche Zeitung, 17 April 1931 and “Stahlhelm Lehrgang Rednerausbildung für Volksbegehren,” 6 March 1931, BA-B, R 72, vol. 301, 47.
cooperation within the “national opposition” work. The biggest problem for the Pan-Germans was that Hitler had to manage disparate elements in the NSDAP. The enforced resignation of Stennes as the leader of the Berlin SA in March 1931 bred discontent in the SA rank and file, and only Hitler’s personal intervention prevented further disruptions. The Deutsche Zeitung depicted the rivalries over leadership within the NSDAP as childish and dangerous to the common course of the “national opposition.” Such criticism led Hitler to observe to Lehmann, who had joined the NSDAP in 1931 but remained the League’s most important publisher, that the splitting of the NSDAP into different camps would do little to aid the struggle against the Republic.\textsuperscript{156} Hitler also warned Lehmann about supporting Pan-German criticism of the NSDAP, and stated that he himself would be unwilling to continue talks with the Pan-German League under such circumstance. Hitler also noted that many of his close comrades in the party had long questioned the NSDAP’s cooperation with these bourgeois organizations. Hitler then clarified the differences between the Pan-German League and the NSDAP to his followers.\textsuperscript{157} At a convention of the National Socialist Students’ Association (Nationalsozialistischer Deutsche Studentenbund) on 2 May 1931, he stated that when in 1919 there had been two ideological alternatives of radical nationalism - the one was völkisch and “deeply intellectual,” the other “embraced violence and being mindless” - he chose the latter.\textsuperscript{158}

Doubts about Hitler’s leadership persisted among leading Pan-Germans, even as thousands of new members flocked to the NSDAP. Almost 36,000 members were joining the NSDAP every month.\textsuperscript{159} The party increased its membership from 360,000 in September 1930 to

\textsuperscript{158} Adolf Hitler, „Rede auf der Führertagung des NSDStB in München“ 2 May 1931, in Goschler, Hitler. Reden, Schriften, Anordnungen, 350.
\textsuperscript{159} See Adolf Hitler to Julius Lehmann, 13 April 1931, in Goschler, Hitler: Reden, Schriften, Anordnungen, Vol. I/IV, 290-292.
about 500,000 in May 1931. It employed young district leaders, who had usually been born between 1890 and 1900; and the Völkischer Beobachter had 165,000 readers in May 1931.\(^{160}\) The meteoric rise of the party astonished the Pan-Germans, who kept losing members and struggled to raise resources. Before the Hitler Putsch, the Pan-German League, which had around 52,000 members in Germany and Austria in 1922, was able to match early NSDAP membership; the party had issued 55,737 membership cards until 9 November 1923.\(^{161}\) But this picture had changed dramatically over the years and left the Pan-Germans wonder about Hitler’s mass appeal. In spite of their doubts, the Pan-Germans decided to back Hitler for the time being in view of his political success and the NSDAP’s superiority over the DNVP when it came to political mobilization.

The initiative collected almost 6 million signatures and came before the Reichstag on 8 and 9 July 1931, when the SPD, the Center Party, and the DDP voted against it. The right-wing opposition worked well together. The NSDAP, the DNVP, and the Wirtschaftspartei joined forces with the KPD in favor of dissolving the Prussian Diet. With this action the Reichstag determined that the referendum would take place on 9 August 1931. Brüning’s second emergency decree of June 1931, which stipulated severe cuts in social welfare, and the announcement of the so-called “Hoover Moratorium,” which suspended Germany’s reparations payments to the Allies, reinforced the determination on the Right to break with Brüning’s government. Vietinghoff-Scheel called Brüning’s rule by decrees a “clear coup d’état” and Brüning’s compromise with the Allies on reparations only a postponement of Germany’s economic downfall and political instability.


\(^{161}\) See appendix Figure 11 and Detlef Mühlberger, The Social Bases of Nazism, 1919-1933 (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 39.
collapse—the prelude to the takeover of power by the “national opposition.” The Pan-German League mobilized its last resources to promote the referendum. More than 130 lectures were organized by headquarters in 1931 and 36,000 brochures were distributed. Still, the NSDAP seemed to dominate the propaganda of the radical Right. Despite all the efforts, the referendum fell more than 3 million votes short of the total required.

In September 1931, in the aftermath of this vote, Claß faced significant criticism of his leadership for the first time since the end of the war. Cautious criticism of his dependence on Hugenberg, his withdrawal from politics, and the increasing insignificance of the League in national politics had reached headquarters after 1928. This criticism was mild in tone and came from the fringes of the League’s strongholds. After the refoundation of the Rhein-Main district in June 1929, the district’s chairman, Alt, was angry over headquarters´ timid support. Frustrated with letters from Vietinghoff-Scheel, Brockdorf, and Reith that the headquarters had to act in full knowledge of the repression of the League in the past, Alt offered his resignation as district leader of the Rhein-Main Gau with the remark that he never “aspired to this office” in the first place. Alt stayed as district leader until 1939, but others were more determined in their criticism. The chairman of the League’s district of North Bavaria, Pickel, protested against Claß’s gradual withdrawal. At a meeting of the executive committee in September 1931, he repeated his frustration over the League’s close connection to the DNVP. He stressed that the Pan-German League itself was the first priority before any alliance with the DNVP and the Stahlhelm; the NSDAP ranked last, and it required a strong effort by the Pan-German local chapters to contain

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163 See appendix Figure 19 and Alldeutsche Blätter, 18 July 1931.
164 Paul Alt to Karl Ernst, 14 April 1930, in HSTA Darmstadt G12 B, No. 32, vol. 4, n.p. and Paul Alt to Karl Ernst, 16 April 1930, in ibidem.
the Nazis’ efforts to infiltrate the bourgeois associational milieu.165 He demanded more active assistance from the League’s headquarters in mobilizing members and challenging the NSDAP, especially in Bavaria where, in 1926, the League had failed to found a second district in the South and never made any efforts to establish presence in Bavaria’s predominantly Catholic areas there. When Claß justified his reluctance to “step out of the trenches” and fight the NSDAP, Pickel was furious.166 He was joined by Schillmann from Berlin and by Müller from the head council in calling for the League to adopt a more aggressive public stance. All three agreed with Claß that sober policies were necessary, but they rejected Claß’s belief that a frontal populist attack on the Republic would be the League’s “suicide.”167 Pickel condemned Claß’s political “asceticism” and his suspicions of populism, and he demanded more dynamism. Furthermore, he demanded that Claß take the lead in shaping the League’s politics locally by appointing the best candidates for local jobs and that he write all the editorials in the Alldeutsche Blätter, in order to demonstrate his presence. Pickel’s criticism was aimed at Claß’s heavy engagement in the Deutsche Zeitung and his relegating the editorials in the Alldeutsche Blätter to the staff at headquarters, especially to Brockdorff and Roeder.

Although even Hertzberg agreed with Pickel that the League failed to recruit talented characters as political leaders who were able to manage the complex political debates after the war, Claß replied to the attacks by referring to the League’s distinguished history and its role in shaping politics since the turn of the century.168 He, too, was aware of the League’s limited appeal to the masses and its chronic financial problems, but he would not accept complaints

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about the League as a whole, for he believed that it had to act cautiously, especially in view of its small size.\textsuperscript{169} Claß also disagreed with Pickel’s suggestion that a personal oath of allegiance be required from the district and chapter leaders. Claß conceived of the League primarily as a movement to promote alternative ideas for political leadership and to reeducate the people. Furthermore, he claimed that he was actually pulling strings in the “national opposition,” because he was able to lead people with his social skills and his instinct to judge people. He also explained that he would rather write articles than engage in the arduous work of everyday politics, which was a “pain on the nerves.”\textsuperscript{170} Claß could not have put his contempt for the hard work of organizing mass support more bluntly. While the debate put forward frustrations that had grown not only in Pickel’s mind, there were no objections to Claß’s statement from the head council, from those 26 members of the executive committee present, or from the headquarters staff. Claß’s defense of his own position convinced his colleagues, because everyone knew of the League’s mobilizational dilemma, which sprang from its not being a party or a lobby group, like the Stahlhelm or the Reichslandbund, with clearly defined interests.

Another opportunity to sharpen the League’s profile came in the fall of 1931. After the negotiations for a custom union between Germany and Austria failed in September 1931, Hugenberg went forward with plans to hold a mass rally against Brüning and Hindenburg.\textsuperscript{171} Claß supported this idea, which Hugenberg had developed in the spring of 1931. After Frick relayed the plan to him, Hitler also agreed to participate. Accordingly, the Pan-German League, the DNVP, the NSDAP, the VVVD, the Reichslandbund, and the Stahlhelm gathered for a mass rally at Bad Harzburg on 11 October 1931. The committee that was established to organize the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[171] See Claß, \textit{Politische Erinnerungen}, addendum [1936].
\end{footnotes}
rally consisted of Schmidt(-Hannover) from the DNVP, Duesterberg of the Stahlhelm, and Frick from the NSDAP. The announcement of the rally provoked world-wide media interest in the event, especially in the speeches planned by Hugenberg and Hitler. Hitler was to speak about current affairs, while Seldte would demand rearmament, and Claß would speak on foreign affairs. Jockeying for power among the leading participants was in full swing amid controversies over the chairmanship, which Hugenberg coveted. Goebbels noted in his diary that Hugenberg’s call for the Harzburg rally was nothing more than an attempt to supplant the NSDAP and make himself the leader of the “national opposition”:

I warned Hitler that everything depends now on the meeting with Hindenburg. If he succeeds with the President, then we will try the ultimate solution. He will take over the entire mess and the rest will be decided by throwing dice. If that does not work, Hugenberg and Frick will be delegated to Hindenburg as our couriers. Ministry of the Interior, Defense, and Foreign Affairs are our aims. Now we have to keep cool nerves.  

Claß was far from keeping his nerves cool. He arrived at Bad Harzburg together with his headquarters´ staff and leading members of the head council. Hugenberg immediately asked him to join a meeting that Hitler had set up at his hotel. Claß, Hugenberg, Schmidt(-Hannover), Duesterberg, Seldte, Elhard von Morosowicz from the Stahlhelm, and Goltz were in attendance, but no one knew why Hitler wanted to meet before the rally. With considerable difficulty due to the SA hordes and members of the Hitler Youth that gathered around Hitler´s hotel, Claß made it into the meeting room, which was full of smoke from SA and SS personnel surrounding party leaders such as Strasser, Frick, and Konstantin Hierl. Hitler himself was nowhere to be found. After two hours of waiting, Hugenberg demanded an explanation, so Frick and Strasser finally agreed to speak for Hitler. The NSDAP leader was demanding changes in the declaration of the “national opposition” that was to be distributed to the press the next day and sent to Hindenburg.

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According to Strasser, the declaration did not satisfy the NSDAP`s call for additional social-welfare measures. Hugenberg complained that the declaration had been crafted weeks earlier and was ready for distribution, so the vote for the declaration would only be a formality. Claß realized that the changes demanded by Strasser were a veiled attempt to seize leadership over the rally. The meeting lasted until 2:30am, as the participants attempted to find a compromise. Claß silently left, so consumed with rage that he became ill when he returned to his hotel room and had to rush to the bathroom. He could barely sleep that night and after Claß got up very late the following morning, to clear his head, he went for a walk and missed all the paramilitary parades that were going on. Friends told him that the joint-parades of the SA and the Stahlhelm were marred by distrust and even some small clashes. Then the scheduled lunch for the leading speakers was cancelled, after Hitler decided to eat alone in his hotel. Shortly, however, the entire Kurhaus was packed with two camps: SA on one side and Stahlhelm on the other. Two seats for Hugenberg and Hitler at the head table were empty, while they debated behind the stage over who would speak first. Rumors swirled that Hitler would not participate at all. Claß was appalled in view of the likely humiliation before the world press. Hundred journalists from America, Great Britain, France, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Italy, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark had announced their presence at the rally. As the crowd became unruly, Albert Scheibe, the DNVP`s treasurer, decided that he had enough and approached both Hugenberg and Hitler in their private rooms within the hall. When the two leaders did finally enter the hall, the crowds cheered wildly. Claß remembered that there was competition between the SA and the Stahlhelm, as the one cheered “Heil Hitler,” the other “Heil Hugenberg.” This spectacle convinced Claß of the unbridgeable antagonism between the NSDAP and the DNVP with the Stahlhelm.

174 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936].
175 See Unsere Partei [DNVP], 17 October 1931.
176 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936].
Hugenberg spoke first and introduced the declaration, which incorporated changes agreed to with the NSDAP. To the cheers of his supporters, Hitler spoke next and launched into a tirade about the power of history in general, followed by attacks on the Brüning government. He then unexpectedly demanded that Schacht also speak. In return, the Stahlhelm demanded now that Duesterberg speak, too. Given so many speakers, Hugenberg informed Claß that his speech would be shortened. Claß realized that the rally had turned into a playground for the paramilitary mass movements, and that he, as the leader of the Pan-German League, was no longer a factor of any consequence. In the event, he had only five minutes to speak about German sovereignty and rearmament, the revision of Versailles, and Germany’s liberation from Allied control. His truncated speech made no impression and Claß was likewise left with the impression that his presence was of no major political relevance.

The National Socialists were also dissatisfied with their performance. Goebbels noted in his diary that the convention had made clear that “we wild beings are much better people” than Hugenberg and the DNVP. He complained that Hitler was in bad shape when he delivered his speech enraged, his “face white as chalk,” while Claß’s lecture was poor. The results “nauseated” Goebbels, who concluded that no further such joint-rallies should be held. Best also recalled how out of place Hitler seemed among all the Bildungsbürger politicians at Bad Harzburg:

One could see how he was intimidated, which did not improve the quality of his speech. Perhaps he even lost confidence in himself and his mission in the presence of all of these critical and rational people with their beards, glasses, and academic or military titles. He looked like an outsider amidst all these routiniers and he felt uncomfortable in such a surrounding and wished himself far away into a stadium, where 10,000 people from the Volk would open his soul. I was especially disappointed by Hitler because I was familiar with the milieu of the ‘Harzburg Front’ only too well from my ten years of political activities, and I only knew too well that it would have cost nothing to show superiority to

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177 See Unsere Partei [DNVP]. 17 October 1931.
these ‘reactionary petrefacts’. But this provided that one felt equal to them in education and political knowledge and superior in youth and vitality.\footnote{Quoted in Ulrich Herbert, Best: Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung, Vernunft 1903-1989 (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 1996), 107.}

The media coverage of the event nonetheless depicted a united “national opposition” under Hugenberg’s leadership. The participation of Schacht, Seeckt, and Prince August Wilhelm von Preußen (the Kaiser’s son and a member of the SA) contributed to the public view of Harzburg as a powerful rally of the “national opposition,” which had found broad support among the country’s monarchists and leaders of finance and the army.

However, competition and suspicion among the participants were the real hallmarks. Even before the rally was over, Hugenberg’s attempt to talk to Hitler again about their quarrels failed. Two days after the rally, Hugenberg told Claß about his discussions with Hitler during the rally. Hitler had feigned outrage over mistreatment of the NSDAP at the rally. When Hugenberg asked for specific examples, Hitler could offer none. Hitler, Hugenberg recalled, came to his senses only when Hugenberg reminded him of the public humiliation that would follow if the rally were cancelled. Seldte and Duesterberg also complained about Hitler’s behavior in Bad Harzburg, especially because he left the paramilitary parade the next day without a notice.\footnote{See Franz Seldte and Theodor Duesterberg to Adolf Hitler, 23 November 1931, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 271, 27.} Hitler played down his behavior but made clear that he had more important things to take care of in Berlin the night before, he hated having official lunches with anyone in general, and he would not attend any paramilitary marches that were not organized by the SA or the SS.\footnote{Adolf Hitler to Franz Seldte and Theodor Duesterberg, 1 December 1931, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 271, 29-32.} The Stahlhelm also came away from Bad Harzburg unhappy. They feared for their credibility as Germany’s most important veterans’ association, after they were outmuscled by the SA at the rally. The last-minute addition of Duesterberg to the list of speakers spoke to the insecurity of the Stahlhelm’s leadership vis-à-vis the NSDAP. The bipartisan image of the Stahlhelm, which was symbolized in
the membership of Duesterberg and Seldte respectively in the DNVP and the DVP, seemed to be in danger; and they feared that Hugenberg would absorb the Stahlhelm in order to create a rival to the SA.182

Ultimately, the only party to benefit from the rally was the NSDAP. During the elections in Hesse on 15 November 1931, the NSDAP emerged as the strongest party, and by the end of 1931, the NSDAP numbered 700,000 members.183 Success in mobilizing voters and members encouraged leaders of the NSDAP, including Best, to prepare a putsch. Claß’s involvement in this project is unclear. But best had been in friendly contact with him.184 Although headquarters of the NSDAP denied any connection to documents that were found in Best’s home in November 1931, the Vorwärts depicted the so-called “Boxheimer Dokument” to be the offspring of Claß’s plans for a dictatorship of 1926.185 The public stir that followed the publication of the “Boxheimer Dokument” was similar to the one that followed the putsch allegations of 1926/27. The major difference was that in 1931 Best composed the documents as a preliminary study to be discussed with Hitler. Hitler, Goebbels, and the editors of the Völkischer Beobachter all expressed surprise over his zealous activities.

The Harzburg rally clearly encouraged political radicalization and marked another step toward the destruction of the Weimar Republic. Shortly after the rally, Salm-Horstmar tried to persuade Hindenburg to appoint a right-wing cabinet before Claß and Hugenberg could be discredited again.186 The rise of the NSDAP had also mobilized the Right’s opponents, who were well aware of the risks posed by events such as the Harzburg rally. The Social Democratic

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183 Völkischer Beobachter, 3 December 1931.
184 See also Herbert, Best, 112-119.
185 See Deutsche Zeitung, 26 November 1931, Berliner Tageblatt, 27 November 1931, and Deutsche Zeitung, 27 November 1931.
186 See Vossische Tageszeitung, 14 November 1931, Vorwärts, 15 November 1931, and Berliner Tageblatt, 16 November 1931.
Reichsbanner founded the Iron Front (*Eiserne Front*) in December 1931, which united several Social Democratic and labor organizations under the leadership of Otto Wels.

The Pan-Germans were increasingly helpless in these quarrels over leadership of the Right and the competition that followed. Claß concluded that the events at Bad Harzburg had demonstrated that the “national opposition” was in shambles. The League’s loss of relevance further encouraged Pickel’s opposition to Claß’s leadership. At a meeting of the executive committee of December, he demanded the creation of a “Führer council” to mobilize a Pan-German mass movement (*Volksbewegung*). Pickel argued that now was the time for the Pan-German League to become the leader of the “national opposition.” Schillmann reminded him that the League remained an “aristocratic” movement. Instead of appealing to the masses, the League had to remain a small organization with Claß as the “monarch,” while the mobilization of the masses was delegated to the DNVP. Since competition with the NSDAP made centralizing the leadership urgent, Müller demanded that incapable chapter leaders should be fired forthwith. Vietinghoff-Scheel agreed with Schillmann that the League’s message would never reach large parts of German society, especially since members no longer engaged in politics in the local chapters, while headquarters kept investing its dwindling resources in political campaigns. Vietinghoff-Scheel had a case. The local chapter lectures rarely drew more than a few hundred people, and the League lost an additional 2,400 members between September 1930 and December 1931, thanks in part to the increase in the annual fees from 8 to 12 Mark.
Claß nevertheless made it clear that he would not expand the scope of his activities. He defended his own inability to play the role of a Pan-German Führer and lauded the decentralized structure of the League. In fact, however, these were grave liabilities. Claß had appointed devoted followers as local leaders, and the attempts of these men to support Claß had made the local chapters unable to meet the challenges of political radicalization on the local level. Vietinghoff-Scheel’s efforts to increase the League’s mobilization made him an exception at headquarters, for he was among the few remaining activists who devoted all of their energy to the League. Pickel’s criticism of Claß had thus touched the most delicate problems of the League. It betokened the relations of power in the organization that the executive committee reprimanded him in February 1932. Schillmann, who had defended Claß against Pickel, was rewarded not only with election to the executive committee and the League’s honorary court, but also with appointment as deputy chairman of the head council in June 1932. Claß’s acolytes made it into the inner circles of the League to assist him in leading the League into insignificance. Their position was Claß’s: the Pan-Germans were to work as the “silent inspiration” of the radical Right.

Meanwhile, Hitler decided to run for the presidency himself. While Hertzberg encouraged Claß to help “put the squeeze” on Hitler, Hugenberg invited Hitler in early February 1932 to talks about the role of the “national opposition” during the upcoming elections, as well as a common strategy to get Hindenburg out of office. The Pan-Germans tried to convince the President to appoint Hugenberg as chancellor, so Hindenburg would not lose face in the Right’s struggle for power. Salm-Horstmar employed his personal relationship to Hindenburg to promote Hugenberg’s name. Salm-Horstmar complained bitterly about the failure of the Brüning

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194 See also Roeder to Salm-Horstmar, 10 February 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 454, 95.
Government and praised Hugenberg as the better statesman.\textsuperscript{196} He told Hindenburg how disunited the Right was and that Hitler’s political course was unpredictable. Drawing upon his position as the chapter leader of the Masonic Johanniter Order (\textit{Johanniterorden}), Salm-Horstmar even tried to sway Hindenburg (who was also a member of the chapter) by telling him how every single member in the Johanniter chapter wondered why Hindenburg wanted to run for second term.\textsuperscript{197} Further negotiations took place in early February 1932 among Hugenberg, Duesterberg, Seldte, Hindenburg, and Schleicher from the Reichswehr, but the negotiations had no effect, except to leave Hugenberg in a complicated position, as he tried to keep the “national opposition” working with Hitler while aspiring without success to serve himself as chancellor.\textsuperscript{198}

Hugenberg and Hitler agreed that Hindenburg should be pushed out of office. Hitler was determined to run for President, but Hugenberg was reluctant to become a candidate himself. After the President again refused to appoint Hugenberg as chancellor, Claß was not averse to watching Hitler, Duesterberg, and Hugenberg all run for the office, so Hindenburg could be crushed from many different sides. However, having several candidates run for the presidency weakened the “national opposition.” Hugenberg, whom Claß favored, had withdrawn his candidacy in order to ensure peace with the \textit{Stahlhelm}, who were determined to see Duesterberg run for office. Duesterberg was now the preferred candidate of the Pan-German League, the DNVP, the VVVD, and the \textit{Stahlhelm}.\textsuperscript{199} Duesterberg and Seldte had become increasingly uneasy about their role in the “national opposition” since Bad Harzburg. Support for either Hitler or Hugenberg would have put them in a difficult position, since Hindenburg was still an honorary member of the \textit{Stahlhelm}. At the same time, they were unhappy with Hindenburg’s politics.

\textsuperscript{196} Salm-Horstmar to Hindenburg, 5 January 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 454, 80-83.
\textsuperscript{197} Salm-Horstmar to Hindenburg, 6 February 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 454, 93-94.
\textsuperscript{198} See also Carsten, \textit{The Reichswehr and Politics}, 335-338.
\textsuperscript{199} Circular Bundeskanzler Wagner, 24 February 1932, BA-B, R 72, vol. 296, 10-14.
When the President’s office refused to talk to them, Duesterberg decided to run for Presidency but he tried to make sure that Hindenburg would not resign from the *Stahlhelm.*

Claß feared that the election would turn into a disaster for the DNVP. Hindenburg would remain in office because of the split in the right-wing vote. Even worse, Hitler might win. In the end he and Hugenberg both threw their support to Duesterberg. In any case, the presidential elections of 1932 eliminated any pretense of a unified “national opposition.” The NSDAP carried on its own events and rallies independently, as it had since the anti-Young-Plan campaign. This competition led to disorganization in the management of public events, which was usually at the expense of the League’s efforts and investments. When Grube spoke to the Darmstadt chapter of the Pan-German League in February 1932 only 100 people showed up, because the local NSDAP staged a mass rally at the same time and when Alt had sent out 2,000 invitations for a public lecture by Frantz in Wiesbaden one year earlier only 130 people attended.

The relationship between the DNVP and the *Stahlhelm* had been strained over the last couple of months and the *Stahlhelm* now even cancelled their service for the local DNVP chapters as paramilitary protection squads. Both, the DNVP and the *Stahlhelm,* needed each other’s infrastructure and resources, but competition over a clear distribution of power contributed to the weak appearance of both organizations within the “national opposition” as the struggle over the placement of candidates on the DNVP’s electoral lists remained a source of conflict. While Quaatz noted that the former Harzburg allies had ceased to cooperate, Claß also lamented the fracturing of the “national opposition,” whose fortunes were damaged by Hugenberg’s

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rejection to run for President and Hitler’s chronic need for mass attention and independence.\textsuperscript{203} The military pomp of the rally in Bad Harzburg was for Claß nothing but a superfluous show of paramilitary power by both the \textit{Stahlhelm} and the SA when, instead, Hugenberg and Hitler should have been engaging in serious \textit{sachlich} politics by crafting a “parliament of the Right.”\textsuperscript{204}

The first ballot in the election on 13 March 1932 did not produce a winner. Claß, Hugenberg, Goltz, and Duesterberg chose to support Hitler in the run-off with Hindenburg. Claß’s support for Hitler was an indication of his determination to oust Hindenburg. The fact that the only candidate who ran against Hindenburg and Hitler was the Communist Ernst Thälmann made Claß’s support for Hitler easier. Hugenberg did not pressure the DNVP to support Hitler, hoping that elections in Prussia two weeks later would put the DNVP in a stronger position to form an alliance with him.\textsuperscript{205} Claß also hoped that the Prussian elections would give Hugenberg a comfortable basis for negotiations with Hitler. Claß continued to misunderstand the attractiveness of the NSDAP. He closed his eyes to the criticism of his and Hugenberg’s failure to mobilize the masses without Hitler’s assistance. Claß demanded that the League’s executive committee “accept current political circumstances for what they are” and continue to cooperate with Hugenberg. Marching ahead toward isolation, Claß encouraged activists in the League to continue on the path “until either we have reached our goals or the bitter end had arrived.”\textsuperscript{206}

Claß’s analysis was shared by the executive committee. Möhl, who had recently joined the executive committee, complained that the League’s support for Hitler during the run-off election had been hard to sell to members in Bavaria, who could not understand why Claß was promoting


\textsuperscript{204} See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 9 September 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 171, 10.


a man who lacked education, social standing, and character. Gok spoke for the majority when he declared that cooperation with Hitler was pointless.\textsuperscript{207}

*Sachlichkeit* became the keyword as Claß distanced himself from the National Socialists, highlighting his expertise in the art of politics. Hugenberg, for his part, urged on Hitler the need for “moderation” and “playing the political game” correctly, because “politics cannot be shaped according to the motto ‘Everything or Nothing’.”\textsuperscript{208} Headquarters of the League endorsed Hugenberg’s attempts to maintain contact with Hitler: “This move does not result from political or tactical considerations but rather from the conviction that the Nazis have to learn that they have to respect their political partner in such a union so that honest cooperation would be possible.”\textsuperscript{209} Hitler, however, continued to play according to his own rules.

*Between Resignation and Path-Dependency: The Failure to Tame Hitler*

When Brüning’s government resigned in May 1932, Claß still hoped for a right-wing “national” cabinet. However, Hindenburg appointed Franz von Papen from the Center Party as chancellor. Papen never ruled with the consent of the Reichstag, which was dissolved shortly after his appointment in early June. It seemed possible that the government of Papen was only a caretaker until Hitler came to power.\textsuperscript{210} Papen’s appointment challenged the League’s and the DNVP’s plans to seize power legally together with the NSDAP through elections. Claß had no contacts to Papen, whom he held in contempt. Nevertheless, he encouraged Salm-Horstmar to


\textsuperscript{209} Hauptleitung to Hopfen, 5 April 1932, BA-B R 8048, vol. 392, 287.

\textsuperscript{210} Westarp to Rademacher, 7 June 1932, Nachlaß Kuno Graf von Westarp/Böblingen-Stuttgart, Familienarchiv Freiherrn Hiller von Gaertringen, Bestand I, VN 106, No. 22.
advise him not to include Hitler in his plans.\textsuperscript{211} Claß did not want to see Hugenberg or Hitler serve under Papen, and he still hoped that Hitler would realize that his own success depended on cooperation with Hugenberg. As Claß put it, the “national opposition” had been successful in the past because the “stormy and forceful spirit of the National Socialists was combined with the rational behavior of the DNVP leaders.”\textsuperscript{212}

Papen’s government of the “national concentration” included three ministers from the DNVP, Magnus von Braun, Franz Gürtner, and Wilhelm von Gayl. To underline the neutrality of the cabinet the three left the DNVP, but stayed in contact with their former party friends and advisors.\textsuperscript{213} Their presence made it more difficult for Claß to oppose the new government. The participation of these three ministers in Papen’s cabinet, however, also signified Hugenberg’s loss of influence as the DNVP’s chairman. Hindenburg had rejected him. Aware of his own growing irrelevance, Hugenberg decided to support Papen in the hope that he would establish a long-term dictatorship. The \textit{Preußenschlag} of June 1932, in which Papen evicted the Social Democratic government of Prussia nurtured Claß’s and Hugenberg’s hopes that Papen would even appoint Hugenberg as minister after the next election. The Pan-Germans greeted Papen’s authoritarian style of governing as a progressive and “promising” step toward dictatorial rule.\textsuperscript{214} But Claß’s contempt for Papen made him regard any alliance with the Center Party as “suicide” for the “national opposition.”\textsuperscript{215} Claß’s slogan for the election campaign was simple: “Only if the Center Party is first defeated Marxism can be fought effectively.”\textsuperscript{216}

\textsuperscript{211} See also Leicht, “Heinrich Claß,” ch. 4.3.
\textsuperscript{212} Claß at the national convention of the Pan-German League in Austria, 9-11 June 1932, in \textit{Alldutsche Blätter}, 18 June 1932.
\textsuperscript{214} See also \textit{Alldutsche Blätter}, 5 November 1932 and 3 December 1932.
\textsuperscript{215} \textit{Alldutsche Blätter}, 4 June 1932.
\textsuperscript{216} Claß at the national convention of the Pan-German League in Austria, 12 June 1932, in \textit{Alldutsche Blätter}, 2 July 1932.
During the elections, the Pan-Germans tried to expand their presence in the DNVP by placing candidates on DNVP election lists (like Porembsky and Graef in Thuringia) and supporting DNVP rallies, such as the Reich Leader Convention, where Wundt and Freytagh-Loringhoven spoke before 1,500 participants. Bang, who again ran as candidate for the Dresden and Leipzig constituencies, catered to the interests of the Saxon electorate, demanding a government independent of Berlin, although at the same time he supported Papen’s Preußenschlag to help dismantle the Braun government. The elections of 31 July 1932, however, had disastrous results. The DNVP’s share of the vote dropped from 7.0 percent in 1930 to 5.9 percent, while the NSDAP gained an astounding 37.3 percent. The NSDAP’s success underlined the inability of the DNVP to compete with the NSDAP. Additionally, the increase in the Communist vote to 14.3 completed the paralysis of the Reichstag, allowing Papen to continue in office with Hindenburg’s backing to rule with Article 48. The Pan-German caucus, however, remained stable after the elections after the alliance between the DNVP and the League became closer since May 1932 with several Pan-Germans of the DNVP such as Bang, Lohmann, Kloß, Moellers, and also Dommes, who had joined the League recently, being elected to the League’s honorary council. Graef, Bang, Gok, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Oberfohren, Quaatz, Schmidt(-Hannover) remained in the DNVP’s Reichstag delegation, which counted 38 deputies. Some confidents of Claß and Hugenberg like Oldenburg-Januschau left office also because of his age (he was born in 1855).

Papen’s government of the “national concentration” included three ministers from the DNVP, which made it more complicated for Claß to oppose the cabinet. Braun, Minister for Food and Agriculture, Franz Gürtner, Minister of Justice, and Wilhelm von Gayl, Minister of the

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218 See Deutsche Zeitung, 28 July 1932.
219 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 21 May 1932.
Interior, were appointed, however, on the basis of personal factors.\textsuperscript{220} Like Papen, Gayl and Braun had both served in the \textit{Potsdamer Garderegiment}, which had brought together Prussia’s political and aristocratic elites in Imperial Germany, while Gürtner had served as a Bavarian officer during the war.\textsuperscript{221} The participation of these three ministers in Papen’s cabinet, however, signified Hugenberg’s loss of influence as the DNVP’s chairman. Hugenberg was repeatedly rejected by Hindenburg as a quantité negligeable and the frustration over Hindenburg’s neglect led Hugenberg even consider to end his political career in 1932.\textsuperscript{222} Aware of his own increasing irrelevance, Hugenberg decided to support Papen in the hope that he would undermine the Republic and establish a long-term dictatorship that resulted in the dissolution of the Weimar Republic.

Politics had gone completely off the rails for Claß. The DNVP seemed condemned to a bystander-role. Claß himself published his own thoughts about a dictatorship.\textsuperscript{223} He discussed his ideas with Gayl once he learned that Gayl was in contact with Carl Schmitt. Claß had condemned Schmitt’s approach to using Article 48 within the confines of the Weimar Constitution. For Claß, Schmitt was trying to legalize the “kommissarische dictatorship” of first Brüning and now Papen by justifying emergency decrees as necessary for securing political order. Claß saw things differently. For him, the political stalemate, which had paralyzed Germany for years, demanded fundamental change of the constitution by the executive. It was imperative, Claß believed, that neither the DNVP nor the NSDAP go into a coalition with the Center Party.\textsuperscript{224} Gayl appeared to share these beliefs. In August 1932, he had condemned the Republic’s legal framework as unfit for German society and demanded age restrictions to the general vote, introduction of a tiered

\textsuperscript{220} Lagebericht des ADV, 3 June 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 551, 84.
\textsuperscript{221} See also Magnus von Braun, \textit{Weg durch vier Zeitepochen} (Limburg/Lahn: Starke, 1964), 228.
\textsuperscript{222} See Leopold, \textit{Alfred Hugenberg}, 115-116.
\textsuperscript{223} See \textit{Alledeutsche Blätter}, 27 August 1932 and Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 10/11 September 1932, in \textit{Alledeutsche Blätter}, 24 September 1932.
\textsuperscript{224} See also diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 31 May 1932, in Weiß and Hoser, \textit{Deutschnational in Weimar}, 192.
voting system, and the creation of a Ständekammer independent of the parliament.\textsuperscript{225} All these demands resembled elements of Claß´s and Vietinghoff-Scheel´s own reform plans.

Meanwhile, negotiations between Hitler and Hindenburg over the NSDAP´s participation in the government had broken down in August, as Hitler refused to accept anything but the chancellorship. Hitler claimed that “we want to make no compromises in politics and do things only with half the result and we want to pursue bold politics and proceed to action.”\textsuperscript{226} Hitler´s propaganda only revealed part of his strategy, which Goebbels laid out in his diary: “We stick with the three solutions, 1. presidial, 2. coalition, 3. opposition.”\textsuperscript{227} Hitler added that his goal was dictatorship with the support of the masses and that his movement did not owe “anything to the patronizing support of old and dying characters of our political life.”\textsuperscript{228}

The NSDAP moved even further away from the DNVP when Papen lost a motion of no confidence, with only the DNVP and the DVP against it. After the Reichstag was dissolved again on 12 September 1932, the split between Hitler and Hugenberg deepened as Hitler seemed willing to talk to almost any political party. The NSDAP´s strategy for the election campaign was to attack every political opponent, including the DNVP. The game left everyone confused, including Claß. Hitler´s negotiations with the Center Party infuriated him, and he argued for a public break with the NSDAP. In September he reminded the executive committee that he had been a supporter of the NSDAP before Hitler betrayed the League during his trial in 1924.\textsuperscript{229} Afterwards Claß had again supported the NSDAP´s participation in the anti-Young-Plan campaign, but Hitler had frustrated all efforts to form a unified radical Right, drawing maximum

\textsuperscript{225} See also Winkler, Weimar, 510.
\textsuperscript{226} Völkischer Beobachter, 17 August 1932.
\textsuperscript{228} Der Angriff [SA], 16 August 1932.
\textsuperscript{229} See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 9 September 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 171, 6-9.
political benefit from the appearance of cooperation by “skimming the cream.” Hugenberg had showed “the patience of a saint” in dealing with Hitler, and Claß called for maintaining “strong nerves,” while the Pan-Germans had a hard time managing their own clear-headedness. Claß was willing to risk a complete break with the NSDAP. He would rather see the Pan-German League lose half its members than place it at the mercy of the NSDAP. However, because he also knew that the DNVP could not seize the power on its own, he was reluctant to call for the break. He complained that there were no experts in the NSDAP who knew “how to build a state”; hence they were a “source of danger” to the radical right, so the Pan-German League could not pursue its own policies “without nervousness.”

Almost all the participants at this meeting agreed with Claß, although radicals like Hertzberg and Lehmann pleaded for restraint in criticizing the NSDAP. Pickel repeated his demands that Claß take the leadership of the radical Right more seriously, and he encouraged Claß to think about banning joint-membership in the League and the NSDAP. Claß, however, rejected Pickel’s suggestion and tried to keep his options open. There were some wings and camps in the NSDAP that supported the Pan-German League, such as the party chapter in Stuttgart, and they would not allow an open break with the party at the moment. Instead, Claß hoped that the DNVP could collect disaffected members of the NSDAP as soon as the masses realized that Hitler was unable to lead the country, although realistically, the League could only hope to attract Nazi elites because the League had never been a mass movement. On 18 September and 15 October 1932, Claß issued declarations to clarify the situation. They were

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230 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 9 September 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 171, 10.
231 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 9 September 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 171, 9 and 10.
233 Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 9 September 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 171, 16-19, 12 and 17.
published in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* and sent to the local chapters as a pamphlet.\(^{234}\) He underlined his disappointment over the NSDAP’s penchant for pseudo-parliamentarianism, then forbade the League’s membership to support the NSDAP, and called Hitler simply “the biggest rogue in Germany.”\(^ {235}\)

The election campaign that the DNVP ran with the assistance of the Pan-German League was again hindered by financial problems. Difficulties in Hugenberg’s business empire, as well as his leadership style, limited the resources available for the campaign. The lack of funds remained a source of constant concern, particularly since many in the party’s rank and file had supported Hugenberg because they assumed that he would stabilize the party’s finances.\(^ {236}\) Gayl, who had left the DNVP for his appointment as Minister earlier, however, showed serious concerns over Hugenberg’s party leadership. A motion of no confidence to force Hugenberg to resign was supported by Gayl and Reusch, who was crucial in the distribution of funds from the *Ruhrlade*.\(^ {237}\) Reusch, who used to be a member of the ADV and the DVP, blocked any financial support for the DNVP in 1932 as long as Hugenberg was chairman and he rather supported Papen.\(^ {238}\) Claß jealously assumed that Reusch was simply channeling money to the NSDAP instead, and Quaatz complained in March 1932: “The industry is platonically for us, including Reusch. But money goes only to Hitler.”\(^ {239}\) Any contribution from Pan-German pockets would have been negligible. The Pan-German League was in dire straits itself. The *Deutsch-Österreichische Tageszeitung* lost money every day, while the *Deutsche Zeitung* had to be put up for sale (it was even offered to Papen). Members of the League struggled to raise enough funds to

\(^{234}\) See *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 24 September 1932 and 21 October 1932.

\(^{235}\) Quote in diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 1 August 1932, in Weiß and Hoser, *Die Deutschnationalen*, 199. See also Leopold, *Alfred Hugenberg*, 123-125.

\(^{236}\) See also diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 2 May 1931, in Weiß and Hoser, *Die Deutschnationalen*, 134-135.

\(^{237}\) See also Leopold, *Alfred Hugenberg*, 116-117.

\(^{238}\) See Bähr and Banken and Flemming, *Die MAN*, 265.

\(^{239}\) See diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 16 March 1932, in Weiß and Hoser, *Die Deutschnationalen*, 184.
attend national conventions like the one in September 1932, which took place “despite the terrible lack of resources” of its members.240

Hugenberg increasingly isolated himself as former Pan-German supporters joined the chorus of complaints about Hugenberg. Since the presidential elections, relations between Claß and Hugenberg had suffered because of the League´s tepid support for Hitler´s candidacy (instead of staying neutral as Hugenberg had demanded). Claß had to invest substantial efforts to assure Hugenberg of the League´s undivided support.241 While Hugenberg complained about a “stab in the back” by the Pan-German League, Claß had to deal with endless complaints from his own friends about Hugenberg´s leadership style.242 Hugenberg, like many of his advisors and Pan-German friends, assumed that the NSDAP had reached its peak the summer of 1932 and that Hitler could not mobilize any more voters. In August 1932, the Pan-Germans´ envoy, Salm-Horstmar, explained to Papen that the NSDAP would probably suffer major political losses, especially in the eastern provinces because of debates over the Osthilfe and farmers´ concerns about the radical anti-governmentalism of both the DNVP and the NSDAP. Meanwhile, Vietinghoff-Scheel wrote a circular to the League´s local chapters in September, predicting that the composition of the Reichstag would not change after elections in November, since none of the parties were either able to negotiate with one another on the basis of pure Sachlichkeit.243

Hugenberg fought the campaign with support of the Stahlhelm, the Pan-German League, and the VVVD. Despite the leadership disputes between the DNVP and the Stahlhelm, which

240 Alldutsche Blätter, 24 September 1932.
242 Quote in diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 23 March 1932, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 185. See also diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 29 October 1931, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 160 and Idem, 13 December 1931, in ibidem, 167.
erupted in the districts over the placement of the *Stahlhelm* on election lists, the majority of the rank-and-file of the *Stahlhelm* voted for either the DNVP or the DVP. The cooperation between the DNVP and the *Stahlhelm* this time resulted in a small gain of votes for the DNVP (to 8.3 percent) and a significant loss of votes for the NSDAP (to 33.1 percent), which seemed to vindicate the hope of many Pan-Germans that Hitler had reached the limits of his political appeal. The DNVP’s delegation to the Reichstag counted 52 deputies with a stable Pan-German caucus. Graef, Bang, Gok, Freytag-Loringhoven, Oberfohren, Quaatz, and Schmidt(-Hannover) had won their re-elections, for instance, while Alfred Möllers from the League’s head council entered the Reichstag as freshman member.

The elections also showed that the only possible constellation for a radical dictatorship lay in an alliance of the NSDAP and the DNVP. However, the new Reichstag was unworkable. Papen’s resignation on 17 November 1932 was welcomed by all parties. Hindenburg now turned to Hugenberg to create a stable government. Hugenberg warned the president about including Hitler in such a government, asking instead for a non-partisan cabinet under his own leadership, which would prevent the NSDAP from exerting control. Hugenberg’s assessment accorded with Claß’s. Both then learned that Hindenburg was willing to hand over the chancellorship to Hitler, although the President insisted on major limitations to the chancellor’s power. Hindenburg also demanded that any right-wing government enjoy a stable majority in the Reichstag, which would require the participation of the DNVP. As he had in August 1932, Hitler turned down the offer because he was too obsessed with independence. So Hindenburg now opted to use the constitution’s emergency law as favored by Gayl and Schmitt.

\[244\text{ See Winkler, *Weimar*, 544.}\]
The main character in the drama now became Schleicher—the politically active chief of the Reichswehr, whom Papen had appointed to his cabinet. Schleicher first convinced Hindenburg to abandon any thought of reappointing Papen, since the Reichswehr could not maintain order if civil war broke out as Papen ruled on with a weak “Kampfkabinett.” Hindenburg thereupon appointed Schleicher as chancellor on 2 December 1932. Neither Claß nor Hugenberg had any illusions about Schleicher. Claß had already warned of his intrigues in early 1931, predicting that he would attempt to seize power for himself, much as Seeckt had in 1923. Claß also worried that Schleicher would accept the need to work within the confines of the Weimar Republic and would seek mostly to achieve the goals of the Reichswehr. To Claß, Schleicher’s “Querfront politics,” which aimed at appealing to the interests of various political groups, from the labor unions to the NSDAP, resembled Bethmann Hollweg’s “politics of the diagonal.” Schleicher’s acceptance of the logic of Stresemann’s policy of cooperating with the Allies and his devotion to preserving Germany’s international security added to Claß’s concern. Claß now even spoke well of Papen. For Claß, Schleicher’s chancellorship meant nothing but a “relapse into parliamentarianism” and political “horse trading.” Claß still considered Hitler the second-most important figure behind Hugenberg in any future dictatorship, acknowledging the limited value of the DNVP and the need to cooperate with Hitler. As much as Claß built his hopes for a right-wing cabinet on the NSDAP, he denounced the party as hopelessly divided, full of opportunists and radicals who would doom the party. The NSDAP had

247 See also Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 8.7.
no experts who were qualified for state leadership, and its huge membership would defect if the party’s fortunes suffered. Claß therefore concluded that the DNVP alone had the competence to govern Germany.

Against the background of Claß’s remarks on the political situation, the executive committee voted in December to publish its own “emergency program.” Bang, Hertzberg, Vowinckel, and Möllers formulated the League’s economic demands, Schillmann its cultural politics, and Lohmann the Pan-Germans’ plans for legal reform. The “emergency program” called for a presidential dictatorship, promulgation of a state of emergency, prohibition of the KPD and labor strikes, media censorship, and the creation of an expert advisory council to the President (Grossrat). Such determined plans, however, fell victim to the League’s centralized power structure, which made the League so dependent on Claß that it could not function without him at times when right-wing competition for leadership had become a matter of days and hours. Claß again took ill after he felt increasingly drained. Therefore, the publication of sections concerning immediate political measures had to be postponed because Claß as one of the main authors was suffering from influenza and the first part of his political program was published in the Alldeutsche Blätter as late as on 31 December 1932. Another bout of gastric flu forced him to leave for a cure until mid-February 1933, so he was not even in Berlin when Hitler became chancellor on 30 January 1933. There was more than symbolic significance to his absence. The Pan-Germans were mere bystanders in Hugenberg’s negotiations in connection with Hitler’s

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250 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 10/11 December 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 172, 43-44.
251 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 10/11 December 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 172, 44.
254 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 31 December 1932.
255 See Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, ch. 8.7.
seizure of power. Looking to protect his political future, Hugenberg entered discussions with Hindenburg in December 1932 about taking over a new ministry, which would combine the existing Ministries of Economics, Finance, Labor, and Food. The negotiations were complicated by the growing rivalry between Schleicher and Papen, for Papen had pretensions of regaining power. German politics were caught in a “labyrinth of talks and combinations,” as the Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung noted. At the center of discussions was the question of how to create a government that would include the NSDAP and enjoy public legitimacy but would also put controls on Hitler. For Papen and Hugenberg, the issue was how to ensure their own power while making it appear as if the electorate had chosen the government. Hindenburg’s reservations about appointing either Hugenberg or Hitler made the party leaders dependent on one another. Papen himself met with Hitler several times in January 1933, and Schleicher talked to Hugenberg on 11 January. Hugenberg regarded participation in a Schleicher government as an opportunity to avoid an alliance with Hitler. Hugenberg’s demands for a government independent of the Reichstag were, however, unacceptable to Schleicher. So was Hindenburg’s call for the merger of the Ministries of Economics, Food, and Labor, which was opposed by heavy industry and the Reichslandbund.

Following the collapse of discussions between Hugenberg and Schleicher, the DNVP on 21 January 1933 withdrew its support for Schleicher’s government. Six days later, Hugenberg discussed the possibility of a putsch with Hitler. These negotiations went nowhere, because Hitler wanted to keep his options open. Meanwhile, rumours of a joint putsch by the DNVP and the NSDAP dominated public speculation about the composition of a new government. Consequently, Schleicher urged Hindenburg to appoint a minority government, including the DNVP but not the NSDAP. Hindenburg, however, wished to appoint a government that reflected

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256 *Berliner Tageblatt*, 2 December 1932.
the majority in the Reichstag. He was democratic enough to respect the vote of the electorate, but he was too authoritarian not to appoint a dictatorial cabinet under Hitler. Hindenburg’s offer to Papen to organize a government on 28 January 1933 finally produced cooperation between Hitler and Hugenberg. The negotiations that followed were difficult. Seldte made his participation dependent on his own appointment as Minister of Labor, while Duesterberg found himself attacked by the NSDAP press because his grandfather was Jewish.\textsuperscript{258}

On 30 January 1933, the day of Hitler’s appointment, Hugenberg still wanted to ensure that there would be no new elections for some time, so the government would not be affected by the likely loss of DNVP votes. For Hitler, on the other hand, new elections following his appointment were essential in securing a popular mandate. While Hindenburg was waiting to swear in the new government, Hugenberg tried to pull out at the last moment. He only stayed after Hitler assured him that new elections would not change the composition of the government, freeing Hugenberg from anxiety over the outcome. Hugenberg agreed to Papen’s suggestion that he should trust Hitler, for Hitler was a “respectable German man.”\textsuperscript{259} Hugenberg was also appeased with the thought that the Conservative forces of the Center Party, the DNVP, and the Stahlhelm could join a coalition bloc during the next elections. Although he was shortly to recognize that “I committed the greatest stupidity of my life,” Hugenberg joined the cabinet with Hitler because of his desire for power and in the naive belief that he and the other Conservatives could tame Hitler while using the political power of the NSDAP to pursue their own policies.\textsuperscript{260}

Hugenberg and Claß had worked for a dictatorial seizure of power for years, and the Pan-German League’s headquarters had organized an astounding 170 lectures in 1932 to convince

\textsuperscript{258} See Berghahn, \textit{Der Stahlhelm}, 239-245.
\textsuperscript{259} See Winkler, \textit{Weimar}, 592.
people of the need for a right-wing dictatorship. The DNVP´s performance in the Reichstag between the fall of 1928 and the last parliamentary session in December 1932 gives a clear picture of the resistance of Hugenberg´s DNVP to cooperate in long-term politics and how leading members of the Pan-German caucus helped bring the Weimar Republic down. Between Hugenberg winning of the DNVP chairmanship and the collapse of the Schleicher government, the Reichstag was in session only 272 times. Hugenberg himself tried to remain in the background as a speaker and delivered speeches only twice between 1928 and 1932. But the dangers of an alliance with Hitler had been well known. In a DNVP circular from early 1932, the German Nationals revealed their awareness that a “lack of nerves”, the “heavy barrage of competitive negotiations for power,” the fear “to abandon the path of radicalism,” and to follow the “damned arduous endeavor of moderation and democratic compromise” might complicate Hugenberg´s course of radical opposition in the future.

The DNVP, however, could not profit from the radicalization of politics as the NSDAP chose to pursue its own independence. Goebbels´ intervention during the Reichstag sessions made that clear when he shouted that Hugenberg´s speeches were of no interest for the NSDAP at all, while the DNVP deputy Dr. Erich Schmidt tried to praise Hugenberg´s social policy program in the parliament. Repeated calls especially from the NSDAP (“Führer? Schriftführer!”) questioned Schmidt´s addressing of Hugenberg as Führer and marked the isolation of the DNVP with their political program and performance within the radical Right.

These outbreaks of rivalry concerned the DNVP and the Pan-German League. Their activists now tried to analyze their political programs and compare both ideologies more

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261 See appendix Figure 19.
systematically. Leading Pan-German activists in the DNVP had studied the differences between the DNVP and the NSDAP in great detail. Several pamphlets from 1932 expressed unease over the NSDAP program, Hitler’s unreliable character, and the violence of the SA. The “Freedom Program,“ written by Quaatz and Bang for the DNVP head council in 1932, stated that the DNVP would oppose any form of Socialism, which would only lead to Kulturbolschewismus and a state-planned economy, while their envisaged authoritarian state would be based on Christianity and the selection of elites by the means of university education. Such ideas stood in sharp conflict to the National Socialist program, unchanged since 1920, which combined propaganda of racial and meritocratic Volksgemeinschaft with the socialization of private property, especially banks. Quaatz and Bang embraced the concept of Volksgemeinschaft but only as an ideal of racial and cultural unity, while the DNVP presented itself in this brochure as a suitable candidate for a coalition with the NSDAP by supporting unification with Austria, the return of Germany’s colonies, rearmament, völkisch family politics, pro-natalist policies, and military training for youths. Scheibe, DNVP treasurer and friend of Claß, also published a pamphlet listing differences and commonalities of the DNVP and the NSDAP. Scheibe noted that both parties agreed about the necessity abolishing Germany’s left-wing and liberal parties, while the DNVP, however, unlike that of the NSDAP, was based on upon the sanctity of private property and the reduction of social welfare benefits.

Ideological differences in regard to the design of Germany’s domestic politics and the meaning of Volksgemeinschaft, which already predicted future conflict, could not prevent either Claß or Hugenberg from continuing to cooperate with Hitler. The rise of the NSDAP after the

264 See Paul Bang and Reinhold Quaatz (eds.), Das Deutschnationale Freiheitsprogramm (Berlin: Deutschnationale Vertriebsstelle, 1932), 7-29.
elections of 1930 was a testament not only to the determination of the National Socialists but also of the fecklessness of the DNVP, which served as the vanguard *Sammlungspartei* of Conservative and Pan-German nationalism between 1918 and 1930. Quaatz spoke to the frustration of the Pan-Germans when he observed how the NSDAP had poached in the DNVP’s constituencies, as well as disembowling the associational milieu that the Pan-German League once dominated together with other nationalist associations in Central Germany’s mid-sized towns and cities when he stated in May 1932 that Hitler “had taken the lead of the Right in almost every regard.”

The downfall of the DNVP under Hugenberg paralleled the decline of the Pan-German League, which must have numbered 10,000 to 15,000 members in 1932. The Pan-Germans’ narrow social and economic class loyalties only helped the National Socialists to appeal to the masses and present themselves as the true unifying force of the German people. Now, however, competition and conflict would be replaced by conformity and enforced participation – concepts that appealed to the Pan-Germans in their bourgeois desire for order, authority, and political homogeneity. The possibility that Hitler’s aspirations to create a *Volksgemeinschaft* might also harm the Pan-German League and the DNVP had been apparent for a long time, but Claß and Hugenberg had become victims of their own ideology as radical nationalists and Wilhelmine *Bildungsbürger*, opponents of liberalism, parliamentarianism, and the complexity of cultural and political life. The Pan-Germans´ retreat into the polemics of *Sachlichkeit* revealed the intellectual inconsistency of segments of Germany’s nationalist *Bürgertum*, which venerated order and efficient governance, while criticizing Weimar’s institutions and despising the violent political attacks of the NSDAP at the same time. Despite their fears that Hitler’s appointment as chancellor could spell the end of the Pan-German League and the DNVP, Claß and Hugenberg

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266 Diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 8 May 1932, in Weiß and Hoser, *Deutschnational in Weimar*, 188.
267 See appendix Figure 1.
welcomed this development in the hope that Hugenberg would rule Germany, using the NSDAP as a vehicle for power, and that Hitler would be tamed by Conservative forces in the cabinet. It is well-known that these expectations soon turned out to be illusory, as Hitler was determined to generate popular support for his regime, to establish a dictatorship of the NSDAP, and to render the DNVP and the Pan-German League powerless.
VIII. The Pan-German League and the National Socialist Dictatorship, 1933-1939

The Pan-Germans entered the Third Reich with an ambivalent attitude toward the new regime. They approved the abolition of the *Rechtsstaat*, because it promised the establishment of an authoritarian dictatorship. But this dictatorship soon turned against the League as well, as the National Socialists solidified their own power and promoted their own political elites. As a self-styled vanguard of the old *Honoratioren* of the Right, the League had no place in the *Volksgemeinschaft* envisaged by the NSDAP, which sought to monopolize the ideological and symbolic heritage of organized bourgeois nationalism. During a speech at the Bismarck memorial in Berlin (Müggelberge) at a celebration of Bismarck’s birthday in April 1933, the new Propaganda Minister, Goebbels, stressed that the “heirs of Bismarck were not worthy of his heritage,” but that the Reich was now safe in the hands of the National Socialists, who would defend and protect it from another downfall.¹ This criticism was aimed at organizations like the Pan-German League, which soon suffered in the regime’s efforts to crush political organizations that offered alternative centers of authority.

Under Hitler’s rule, supervision of the League by the secret police started immediately in 1933, after the NSDAP’s secret police had occasionally surveilled the League since 1931 once Heinrich Himmler sought to extend the SS’s powers with a new secret service to protect the party from political spies in the SA and the SS.² The rivalry among the Gestapo, the SA, and several NSDAP district leaders posed a dilemma for the League, because polycratic institutional competition created a vacuum of power, in which the Pan-Germans could hardly defend themselves against attacks by NS-activists who sought revenge for Pan-German criticism before

¹ *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, 2 April 1933.
1933 or simply wished to exercise their power as new local executives. After 1933, the League withdrew into secrecy, as its members cultivated alternative structures of communication and sociability. Increasing retreat of the Pan-Germans from the public was a response to the chaos, disorder, and insecurities caused by Hitler´s seizure of power after 1933, which had striking similarities for the Pan-Germans with the Revolution of 1918.

The NS-regime handled the League after 1933 by distinguishing Pan-Germanism from the Pan-German League. Because the state had adopted Pan-Germanism, with its ideology of territorial expansion and ethnic homogenization, the League lost its *raison d´être*. The more Pan-Germanism became separated from the League, the less was Claß able to justify the continued existence of the organization. As the NSDAP and its associational sub-branches dwarfed the Pan-German League, the contradictions between the Pan-Germans´ elitism and the NS-*Volksgemeinschaft* became untenable. The regime´s promises—revision of Versailles, territorial expansion, ethnic and political homogeneity, and a *Leistungsgesellschaft* based on merit and talent—represented a convincing alternative for the masses, as well as for large segments of Germany´s *Bildungsbürger* so that by 1933, the Pan-German League had been immediately deprived of access to the master discourse of radical nationalism. The NSDAP sought to control the traditional conservative and nationalist constituencies of the League, as well as the symbolic and ideological legacy of the Pan-Germans.

*Seizing and Losing Power: The DNVP, Pan-Germans, and the NSDAP*

When Hitler became chancellor, Claß was recuperating in Schwarzeneck in Thuringia on his doctor´s orders and he did not return until mid-February.³ Although he had been absent from the negotiations among Papen, Hindenburg, Hitler, and Hugenberg, the result appeared to be the

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dictatorship that the Pan-Germans had advocated. The pressure that had been put on Hugenberg, however, left Claß “ashamed” and he concluded that the coalition with Hitler was wrong.⁴ He noted in his memoirs that Hugenberg, not Hitler, had been tamed once Papen and Seldte agreed to Hitler’s demand for new elections: “With this move Hugenberg faced decisions that changed the entire cabinet alliance. He had the choice to resign from office right away, even before the cabinet was appointed, but he did not know if the Reich President would have changed the entire composition of the cabinet or would only replace Hugenberg. This breach of contract and the insecurities that resulted from it created a situation that Hugenberg called ‘imprisonment’.”⁵ Claß wanted full acknowledgement of Hugenberg’s efforts to work with Hitler in the past. He also wanted acknowledgement of the Pan-Germans’ role in helping Hitler into power. However, he did not see himself as Hitler’s Steigbügelhalter, but rather as a “Wegbereiter of the national opposition.”⁶ Both Claß and Hugenberg still hoped to play a central role as political experts in shaping Hitler’s policy. The Pan-Germans admired Hitler for attempting to overcome the political divisions within German society, but they condemned the regime’s promise to appeal to the masses. Claß continued to hope that the NSDAP would provide the political dynamism while the elites in the League and the DNVP ran the country in a comfortable division of labor, overcoming the tensions that had plagued the radical Right in the past. At the 25th anniversary celebration of his chairmanship, Claß again insisted that the Pan-German League still serve as a “spiritual general staff,” the experts who advised the government and educated the public.⁷

Immediately after his appointment as Chancellor, Hitler dissolved the Reichstag and announced new elections for 5 March 1933. Hugenberg now found himself in the awkward position of justifying the continued existence of the DNVP to the voters. Hitler had already

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⁴ Diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 7 March 1933, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 238.
⁵ Claß, Politische Erinnerungen, addendum [1936].
⁶ Deutsche Zeitung, 9 February 1933.
⁷ See Deutsche Zeitung, 27 February 1933.
stated behind closed doors that he was not willing to tolerate political opposition and that the NSDAP should take over political leadership of the entire government:

The only goal of our politics: reacquisition of political power. The entire government has to work with this goal in mind (all government offices!) Domestic. Complete turnover of the political situation in Germany. No tolerance for any ideology that contradicts our goal (Pacifism!). Who does not want to obey has to be broken. [...] Death penalty for high treason. Most ruthless governance. [...] ⁸

An emergency decree in early February 1933 had already limited the freedom of the press and the right of parties and associations to organize public meetings. After the parliament passed the Enabling Act (Verordnung zum Schutz von Volk und Staat) on 28 February 1933, in the wake of the Reichstag fire, political parties became even more vulnerable to state-sponsored coercion. During the election campaign, the DNVP, the Center, and the Stahlhelm formed the “Battle-Front Black-White-Red.” Cooperation with the Center Party was an unusual strategy for the DNVP, but it seemed to be the only way to survive, as Conservative constituencies, mostly in Germany’s northern and eastern provinces, provided electoral gains to the NSDAP. Hugenberg’s loss of power became clearer every day. In April 1933, Hermann Göring became Minister President of Prussia, taking over responsibility for Prussian economic policy and creating a competing power-center to Hugenberg’s ministry. Hugenberg also had to deal with the fact that most of the political contributions of big industry now went to the NSDAP, once Hitler promised industrialists that he would not pursue radical economic policies. The DNVP received not even a fifth of the total of 3,000,000 Mark.⁹ The DNVP could still rely on Hugenberg’s media empire, but the party’s efforts to present itself as the protector of Christian values and farmers’ interests, as well

implicitly as a check on the NSDAP, sparked the hostility of the NSDAP and the SA.\textsuperscript{10} A wave of violence against DNVP chapters and activists demonstrated the limits of the NSDAP-DNVP partnership.

The anomalies of Hugenberg’s being in power together with Hitler´s NSDAP suppressing its own alliance partner could hardly be resolved. At the Bismarck celebration in Dresden in March 1933, which was organized by the Pan-German chapter, the DNVP deputy Everling addressed the tensions when he spoke of Bismarck’s politics as an alternative to the street violence of the SA and the regime’s pressure for coordination. He explained that Bismarck had always had a fine feeling for tact and sensibility. While the elimination of left-wing opposition in Germany through \textit{Gleichschaltung} was to be welcomed, Everling deplored as nothing more than “\textit{Gleichmacherei}” the National Socialists’ promises to incorporate all \textit{Volksgenossen} into the party’s mass organizations.\textsuperscript{11}

The elections of 5 March 1933 resulted in a narrow majority for the NSDAP and the DNVP. The DNVP contributed 8 percent of the votes. Pan-Germans complained that the NSDAP campaign had “hypnotized” voters by means of “a masterful employment of the arts of mass populism. The brutal power of the will always impresses, especially the masses. The fanatical will is always stronger in political struggles than educated modesty.”\textsuperscript{12} Hitler´s swearing-in by Hindenburg at the so-called “Day of Potsdam” on 21 March 1933, where almost all the \textit{Honoratioren} of the state and armed forces were present, represented a changing of the guard. While Claß was again absent visiting a spa, Hugenberg attended as a member in Hitler´s cabinet. Quaatz remembered the ceremony in the \textit{Garnisonskirche} as a dignified act, except for the


\textsuperscript{11} See \textit{Dresdener Zeitung}, 29 March 1933.

\textsuperscript{12} Lagebericht des ADV, 8 March 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 552, 31.
swastika flags, which had replaced the old Imperial flags. At the meeting of the executive committee in Potsdam two years before, Claß had still reminded the attendees that Potsdam stood for everything that the Pan-Germans had advocated; a strong army, Prussian dominance, and authoritarian government. But it too had now fallen to the Nazis.

The attempts of the NSDAP to seize full power over the organization of political consent through Gleichschaltung and over the symbolism of nationalism by absorbing traditions of Conservatism had broader implications for the entire nationalist Bürgertum as the rivalry with the NSDAP resulted in continuous competition over the realm of mobilization. In early May 1933, the DNVP changed its name into German-National Front (Deutschnationale Front) in hopes of increasing its public appeal. This strategy failed, as it only raised suspicions among leading National Socialists. The party’s Fighting Leagues (Kampfbünde), which had been founded a year earlier to provide guards at the party’s rallies, were forced to dissolve in June 1933. The Gestapo searched the offices of Oberfohren in Berlin and Kiel after his phone has been tapped by the Gestapo when he spoke out against the Enabling Act in March. Oberfohren was then found shot dead in his Kiel apartment, but his death only accompanied a series of violent attacks against leading DNVP activists.

The isolation of the DNVP frustrated Hugenberg, who retreated from political conflict in the cabinet by engaging himself fully in his ministerial duties. Hugenberg himself did not last long in office. The World Economic Conference in London in May 1933 brought an end to his ministerial career, as well as to any lingering illusions he might have had about Hitler. He became the object of international and domestic derision after he gave a speech demanding

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13 Diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 22 March 1933, in Weiß and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 243-244.
14 See Deutsche Zeitung, 19 May 1930.
15 See Beck, Fateful Alliance, 283-293 and also Lagebericht des ADV, 15 June 1933, BA-B, R 8048, Vol. 522, 82.
16 Schumacher, M.d.R., 1088. See also Heinsohn, Konservative Parteien, 224, Hiller von Gaertringen, Deutschnationale Volkspartei, 592-596, and Fritsch to Diels, 30 March 1933, BA-K, N 1211, 76.
classical Pan-German objectives—colonies, living space in the east, a decrease of foreign
investment, and special import tariffs for Germany. At this point, these goals were too
provocative. Hitler wanted initially to adopt a more cautious foreign policy and Hugenberg´s
economic program of combining agrarian and industrial interests in a grand scheme of economic
efficiency and fiscal Conservatism as a precondition for autarky had been fully supported by the
Pan-German League but ran counter to the regime´s plans of rearmament at all costs.\(^\text{17}\) Hitler still
tried to keep Hugenberg for political convenience, but the running of his ministry effectively fell
into the hands of his state secretary, Fritz Reinhardt.

Before June 1933, the DNVP delegates in the Reichstag approved the NSDAP´s
emergency laws, decrees, and announcements, which aimed at the political and ethnic
homogenization of Germany. The DNVP was trapped by the desires of its own constituencies to
join rival NS-organizations such as the Reichsnährstand, which had infiltrated the
Reichslandbund by 1933. The professionals and entrepreneurs who had supported the party were
likewise enticed into NSDAP associations. The DNVP´s deputies were torn between applauding
the endless stream of NS-propaganda in the parliament and keeping their skepticism toward
Hitler´s rule to themselves.\(^\text{18}\) In addition to the regime´s political constraints, Hugenberg´s
leadership increasingly suffered under the constraints of Gleichschaltung. Quaatz complained
about Hugenberg´s lack of leadership, as the chairman acted increasingly without advice from his
closest friends. As he turned 68 in 1933, Hugenberg battled health problems that caused him to
miss important party meetings. He had no clear successor or deputy who could replace him. Even
Bang complained that he himself had no regular access to Hugenberg anymore. Although
Hugenberg still valued the advice of Schmidt(-Hannover), he employed him as a private

\(^{17}\) See Lagebericht des ADV, 15 June 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 552, 85 and Lagebericht des ADV, 12 June 1933, in
ibidem, 88-94.

secretary, not as a party official. Quaatz wondered if the management of the party, the Ministry of Economics, the Scherl-Verlag, and the UfA were simply too much for Hugenberg. The Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger characterized Hugenberg as early as in 1931 as an expert politician, who was complicated to deal with if his audience expected a charismatic populist and charmeur: “Dr. Hugenberg is not a man to make concessions to his audience. He cannot help but despise cheap rhetoric due to his compulsive character. [...] He expects engagement and astute comments.”

Quaatz realized that such an attitude was a liability when dealing with such skilled political operators as the National Socialists. Hugenberg’s loss of influence in the government presaged his loss of influence in the DNVP. The Deutsche Zeitung commented in April that he had established the Führerprinzip in the DNVP, but that the party was falling apart, as chapters and districts joined the NSDAP. In Baden, for example, the entire Landesverband joined the local NSDAP in early May. Hugenberg resigned from the government on 26 June 1933, and the DNVP/DNF was dissolved a day later. Most of its Reichstag deputies were absorbed into the NSDAP. Ian Kershaw has concluded that by “playing with fire, Hugenberg, along with his party, the DNVP, had been consumed by it.”

Between the March elections and the new Reichstag’s dissolution on 14 October 1933, Frick organized a unitary parliament (Einheitsparlament), inviting representatives of the DNVP, the Center Party, and the BVP to join the effort. Frick compiled a “unity list” of deputies and 22 “guests” of the NSDAP faction. These guests included Bang, Claß, Hugenberg, Feldmann, and

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19 Diary entry Reinhold Quaatz, 28 February 1933, in Weiss and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 237.
21 Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger, 20 September 1931.
22 Diary entries Reinhold Quaatz, 6 March 1933 and 18 March 1933, in Weiss and Hoser, Die Deutschnationalen, 238 and 243.
23 Deutsche Zeitung, 12 April 1933 and 4 May 1933.
24 See Fricke, Die bürgerlichen Parteien in Deutschland, Vol. 1, 749.
25 Kershaw, Hitler, 290.
Gok, even though they had not applied for the honor. As a result of the November election, Freytagh-Loringhoven, Gok, and Feldmann won seats representing their respective constituencies in Breslau, Hamburg, South Hanover/Brunswick, while Claß, Bang, and Hugenberg were now appointed as “guests” through the government’s Reichswahlvorschlag.\(^{26}\) They served no purpose, however, other than to represent the remaining Honoratioren of the non-existent DNVP and the Pan-German League. At least the representatives of the League had received some acknowledgement of their role in securing Hitler’s elevation to the chancellorship. Moreover, they had been appointed without having been pressured to affirm publicly their support for the NSDAP.\(^{27}\)

The liaison continued over the years, but served only the symbolic purpose of granting the old Honoratioren a place of honor. Gok, however, was not re-appointed as “guest” in 1936, Feldmann had left office in 1939, and Freytagh-Loringhoven died in 1942. Hugenberg, Bang, and Claß remained as “guests” in the Reichstag until 1945. Sickness prohibited Claß and Hugenberg from attending many sessions, which served no other purpose than to provide an audience for Hitler’s propaganda speeches. Nor did they participate in the NSDAP’s social events for the Reichstag deputies, such as the annual “beer evenings” for the NSDAP faction, which took place at the beginning of each year. Poor health now served as an additional excuse to abstain from these events like in 1938 when Claß did not join the NSDAP’s Bierseligkeit because of his chronic stomach pain.\(^{28}\) Hugenberg repeatedly excused his absence because of his stays in

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\(^{26}\) See also „Verzeichnis der Mitglieder des Reichstags,“ 12 December 1933, BA-B, NS 46, vol. 47, 23-30 and also Heinrich Claß, „Eidesstattliche Erklärung,“ 29 February 1947, in NL Heinrich Claß - collection Friedel Dürrschmidt/Wolfrathshausen.

\(^{27}\) See Lagebericht des ADV, 30 November 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 552, 144-145.

Bad Kissingen and other spas.\textsuperscript{29} Claß and Hugenberg were not the only ones to suffer from their poor health and frustration. In May 1933, Schmidt(-Hannover), who had finally been appointed of the DNVP delegation to the Reichstag (for only four weeks) after Oberfohren had become isolated in his opposition to the NSDAP violations of the \textit{Rechtsstaat} and was found dead in his apartment, suffered from severe nervous attacks and disruptions of his heart system. As a result, Schmidt(-Hannover) became ill and had to leave Berlin for a cure on doctor´s order.\textsuperscript{30}

Along with the DNVP, the Pan-German League made itself increasingly irrelevant to national politics. Claß and Hugenberg now symbolically administered their Pan-German achievements. Claß received honorary membership in the League in February 1933, becoming a \textit{Honoratioren} of the League like Peters, Bismarck, and Hasse before him. Hugenberg followed as the League´s fifth honorary member in May shortly before his resignation as Minister of Economics. While Claß and Hugenberg retreated from public life, Hitler reminded NSDAP deputies on 30 January 1939 that Germany´s “bourgeois party leaders were incapable of overcoming their attitude” in the past and that “real history had always been made by those talents who stood outside of the old, calcified, closed circles of power.”\textsuperscript{31}

\textit{Gleichschaltung, Racism, War, and Autarky: Ideological References and Conceptual Differences}

The Pan-Germans, however, thought of their expert vanguardship as their most stable currency. Shortly after Hugenberg´s resignation as minister, Brockdorff still hoped for a leading role of the Pan-German League:

\textsuperscript{29} Hugenberg to Frick, 27 January 1939, BA-B, NS 46, vol., 28, n.p. and „NSDAP-Reichstagsfraktion Einladungsliste,” n.d. [January 1939], in ibidem, n.p. and Hugenberg to NSDAP Reichstagsfraktion, 4 May 1942, BA-B, NS 46, 44/1, 120.
\textsuperscript{30} Terhalle, \textit{Deutschnational in Weimar}, 370.
The time is now ripe for the realization of all those demands that the Pan-German League had put forward for decades, and which had been rejected as utopias and phantasies. The most important book is the “Kaiser-book” of 1912. The destruction of the Weimar system has been realized. Still necessary, however, is the abolition of the Versailles system, the reorganization of the state according to völkisch principles, the suppression of internationalist forces, the rescue of the economy and the state’s finances. These are tasks of immense importance that have to be handled in times of immense threats and difficulties.\textsuperscript{32}

In this light, the Pan-Germans chose to regard the Third Reich as the continuation of the authoritarianism that had been abandoned following the breakdown of the Burgfrieden. The First World War had made possible Hitler’s rise to power, but the Pan-Germans continued to see themselves as the vanguard that had paved the way for Hitler’s rule.\textsuperscript{33} Furthermore, Hitler’s seizure of power after January 1933 represented the realization of several demands that Claß had put forward in his “Kaiser-book” of 1912. The racial laws, anti-Semitic decrees, and the suppression of the Communists all reflected Claß’s demands for radical reform after 1912.

The Pan-Germans, therefore, supported much of the regime’s new legislation, which seemed to correspond to the Pan-Germans’ own racist ideology. Anti-Semitism took on new significance for the Pan-Germans after the Nazi seizure of power. The League’s anti-Semitism was its most valuable ideological asset after 1933, the last residue of propaganda left to it by the regime. The League welcomed the new racial laws, which excluded Jews from rights that had been granted to Staatsbürger. The League had advocated these restrictions for decades, and Vietinghoff-Scheel repeated them in his expanded pamphlet on the völkisch state, which was reprinted in the summer of 1933 and build upon notes that he had made between 1921 and 1923.\textsuperscript{34} Like Claß’s demands in his “Kaiser-book,” Vietinghoff-Scheel’s concerns focused on the cultural power exercised by German Jews and he demanded that Jews not be allowed to vote or hold public office. Vietinghoff-Scheel’s program of a völkisch state also limited the rights of

\textsuperscript{32} Lageberichte des ADV, 12 June 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 552, 95.
\textsuperscript{33} Alldeutsche Blätter, 28 July 1934.
\textsuperscript{34} Vietinghoff-Scheel, \textit{Vom Wesen und Aufbau}, 96-100.
female voters to engage in “male” realms of politics, as well as he right of young people to vote before they were thirty. He envisaged a four-tiered electoral system. Three years of occupational experience would give a voter two additional votes, while higher education would bring a fourth vote.35

Claß embraced the regime’s anti-Semitic policies. He repeatedly spoke of the “Schicksalskampf” against the Jews, who still had designs on world power.36 The cultural separation of Jews from Germans was the prerequisite to excluding Jews from power. The regime’s concept of citizenship, which included all ethnic Germans and excluded ethnic minorities and other undesirables, accorded with the Pan-Germans’ ideal of a homogeneous German Volk. Late in 1933 a renewal of the “Arierparagraph” prohibited membership in the League to anyone of Jewish or non-German descent.37 The League’s statutes were modified again in November 1934, in order to finally do “away with Jewish influence.”38 The League then welcomed the Nuremberg laws of 1935 as they promised to prevent “Überfremdung” and “Entartung” of the German people.39

The Pan-Germans also endorsed eugenics as an objective means of biopolitics, the corollary of the connection between biological descent and cultural behavior. While the National Socialists adopted eugenics as a means to homogenize the German Volksgemeinschaft and to make the German “master race” fit for war, the Pan-Germans saw in eugenic policies also the means to strengthen the elite status of the educated classes. Auslesepolitik provided the Pan-Germans with a discourse in which they endorsed biological and ethnic homogeneity while

35 Vietinghoff-Scheel, Vom Wesen und Aufbau, 100-103.
36 See Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 2 September 1933, in Alldutsche Blätter, 9 September 1933 and Claß at the Sitzung des Weiteren Rats des ADV, 10 May 1936, in Alldutsche Blätter, 16 May 1936.
37 Statutes of the Pan-German League, December 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 4, 93a.
39 Alldutsche Blätter, 24 February 1934 and 30 November 1935.
defending the privileged social and political status of the educated bourgeoisie. Vietinghoff-Scheel in particular, who became the League´s leading spokesman on eugenics, used the phrase “aristocratic leadership” to define how Germany should be governed by an elite of experts, who would replace traditional aristocratic elites. Vietinghoff-Scheel in particular, who became the League’s leading spokesman on eugenics, used the phrase “aristocratic leadership” to define how Germany should be governed by an elite of experts, who would replace traditional aristocratic elites.40 The League’s aim of providing expert political advice to the government and political education to the people resembled several traits of aristocratic leadership of Germany’s nobles, who had lost their power of governance to the Bürgertum during the 19th century.41 Education and expertise had become the markers of legitimate political power of secular aristocratic elites, whose political thinking and cultural convictions were shaped by rational Sachlichkeit and technocratic ordering of society according to ideals of class difference and the primacy of the educated character.42 Vietinghoff-Scheel proposed to introduce a “passport” for every German, which listed racial qualities and ranked individuals according to their racial abilities, which revealed the close proximity between Pan-German elitism and the Primat der Persönlichkeit on one side and the racial bias of ethnic homogenization that was inherent in the concept of NS-Volksgemeinschaft.43 Similarly, the Pan-Germans embraced the sterilization law of 14 July 1933 as a first step toward the management of social relations on racial grounds. In their eyes, “Ausmerze” of the unfit meant the “Aufartung” of

40 See Vietinghoff-Scheel, Vom Wesen und Aufbau, 126-127 and Alldutsche Blätter, 17 December 1932 and 5 May 1934.
43 Alldutsche Blätter, 9 September 1933 and 2 December 1933.
the strong and cultivated. As the League’s itinerant speaker from the Kiel chapter, Gerd Horenkohl, put it: “Politics remain an aristocratic business.” Such an understanding of politics, however, created severe contradictions and Hänsch, who left the League because of his contempt of Pan-German ideas of monarchism, wrote to Claß that the Pan-Germans should have offered a comprehensive social program to the working classes, and, while the need to include the masses was realized by Hitler and his movement, the Pan-Germans were simply “incapable to comprehend the problem in its entirety.” Claß could only respond that Hänsch’s departure would show how complicated it was to keep an “aristocratically led flock” together.

While the Pan-Germans welcomed the regime’s first wave of legislation, their support rested on the hope that abolishing the Rechtsstaat would not affect the rights of the League and the DNVP themselves. They also assumed that the regime would become more moderate once it accomplished its initial objectives. Claß believed that the stabilization of the new regime would take years, and he tolerated bureaucratic centralization, as well as the laws to purge the state bureaucracy of political enemies. But significant skepticism remained about the power of the NSDAP. Both Hugenberg and Claß wanted the DNVP to remain an independent actor, but the survival of the party could only be legitimized through elections. This conflict between authoritarian leadership and the need to court mass support did not go unnoticed by the National Socialists, who remained suspicious about the DNVP’s respect for basic elements of the Rechtsstaat. Claß’s interventions at the Ministry of the Interior to save the League from arbitrary harassment by local NS-activists betrayed his own frustration over both the ruthlessness of the

48 See Heinrich Claß, „Grundlegende Stellungnahme des Führers der Aldeutschen,“ in Deutsche Zeitung, 23 April 1933.
49 Claß at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6 January 1935, in Alldeutsche Blätter, 12 January 1935 and Heinrich Claß, „Nach Jahr und Tag,“ in Alldeutsche Blätter, 10 February 1934.
NS-regime and the inability of the League to deliver alternatives. The retreat into a defensive rhetoric of stability also reflected the helplessness of the League to come to terms with the dynamism of the new regime.

Despite its concerns about the violence of the regime, in 1934, the League welcomed the brutal purge of the SA in the “Night of the Long Knives” as an act to reestablish order, in spite of the fact that it claimed numerous Conservative victims.\(^5^0\) During a meeting of the Würzburg chapter in September 1934, the Pan-German Oberst Kayser observed that Hitler now had four years to draft a new constitution and a new electoral law, which would save the power of the authoritarian forces, reestablish elements of the Rechtsstaat, and safeguard legal security and civil rights for Germans who were eligible.\(^5^1\) However, the continuation of censorship and the threat of imprisonment worried the Pan-Germans, because such measures could be directed against them as well.\(^5^2\)

The Pan-Germans, however, were most concerned with economic and foreign affairs, because they had little to contribute in domestic matters. Their biggest concerns were the revision of Versailles and Germany’s return to the ranks of the great powers. In this regard, they greeted the dissolution of the party system, for it would allow the government to reach decisions like the reintroduction of the conscription in 1935, the establishment of an air force, and the increase of the defense budget, for instance, without parliamentary hurdles.\(^5^3\)

With Hitler’s regime in power, the Pan-Germans had four major foreign-policy demands: the revision of the Versailles Treaty, unification with Austria, breaking French influence over

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\(^5^3\) See Alldeutsche Blätter, 28 July 1934.
German foreign and economic affairs, and German settlement in the east. These demands caused no spectacular surprises, but Hitler’s initial tactic of fulfilling his diplomatic demands through appeasement, like the regime’s efforts to rearm at a quick pace, did surprise the Pan-Germans. Still, they welcomed the withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933, the return of the Saarland from French occupation in 1935, and the remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1936. The League’s propaganda on behalf of comprehensive rearmament made use of the rhetoric of war and allegories of encirclement by France, Great Britain, and now Poland. Prominent in this propaganda was hatred of France, Germany’s “arch-enemy.” Nevertheless the Pan-Germans professed that they “did not want a war, but rather the steady long-term reconstruction” of Germany. Shortly before the Nazi seizure of power, Brockdorff had expressed the ambivalence in the League’s attitude toward war:

These days, older people, who were become adults before the war, see in the prewar years a lost paradise. They see a temporary break of a straight path and hope that there would be a way back. […] Younger people, who were born during the war or even later, neither know political stability nor do they wish for it. They wish for tensions, sensation, fights, in short: everything dramatic and exciting […]. We recall the war with pride and uplifting thoughts, but we are also reminded of the military capitulation and the complete spiritual and moral breakdown of our people in November 1918. We look at the war through the lense of failure, disaster, and shame and with a hardened sense of reality rather than jingoism.

But the Pan-Germans had learned some lessons from the First World War. One was that Germany needed domestic stability and a proper alliance system, since the next world war would have new total dimensions. The rise of Italian Fascism was treated with skepticism because of

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54 See Hertzberg at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 6 May 1934, in Alldeutsche Blätter, 19 May 1934 and also Alldeutsche Blätter, 5 September 1938.
55 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 25 August 1934 and 3 October 1936.
60 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 20 April 1934 and 5 November 1937.
the model role it played for Hitler but also for its violent aestheticism and the subsequent aspirations of Mussolini’s regime to become a new world power. Mussolini’s enforced attempts to strengthen Italy’s political and economic influence in Austria only added to their opinion that Mussolini cannot be considered a suitable ally for Germany.\textsuperscript{61} The influential role of Catholicism and the monarchy in Fascist Italy fueled skepticism about the reliability of the Italians. The Abyssinian War in 1935/36 demonstrated the Italians’ imperial dreams, which would compete with Germany’s quest for great-power status and threaten Germany’s strategies to get the Saarland back and the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia. Consequently, between 1933 and 1936 Feldmann and Gok travelled widely to the League’s chapters, warning against an alliance with Mussolini.\textsuperscript{62} Pan-German rhetoric changed in 1936, following the return of the Saar and the successful remilitarization of the Rhineland, which seemed to signal that Hitler aspired to reverse the verdict of 1918 peacefully for the time being by the means of forceful diplomacy. Hitler’s successes evoked widespread support and enthusiasm not only among the Pan-Germans who now supported the Rome-Berlin Axis Treaty in October 1936, although suspicions still remained.\textsuperscript{63} Some prominent Pan-Germans advocated instead a turn toward the “Nordic states” – a demand that was repeatedly made by speakers over the next years.\textsuperscript{64}

Anti-Bolshevik stereotypes also continued to exercise a great influence over the Pan-Germans´ worldview.\textsuperscript{65} Their views on the Soviet Union were confirmed by the Stalinist “show


\textsuperscript{63} See also MacGregor Knox, “Expansionist Zeal, Fighting Power, and Staying in the Italian and German Dictatorship,” in Richard Bessel (ed.), \textit{Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: Comparisons and Contrasts} (Cambridge. CUP, 1996), 113-133.


\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, 28 November 1936.
trials,” the general poverty of the people, and the use of slave labor during industrialization. Some in the League took a more benign attitude toward the Soviet Union. Reith and Horenkohl praised the stability of the regime under Stalin when they spoke at chapter meetings. They stressed the difference between the Russian people and the Bolshevik regime. While not all the Russian people had embraced Bolshevism, and many shared racial attributes with the German people, the Soviet state had done much to improve the country’s infrastructure and order. Therefore, the Pan-Germans argued, the Soviet Union was a credible alliance partner for the Third Reich and cooperation would recall Bismarck’s alliance with Russia.

The Pan-Germans voiced fear over diplomatic and economic encirclement, but they also criticized the regime’s economic centralization and autarchical policies, which could not compensate for Germany’s shortage of finances, gold, and raw materials; instead, these policies financed rearmament through increased international debt. The regime’s bureaucratic control of prices and wages, its attempts to increase Germany’s worldwide arms exports, and its negotiation of bilateral barter-exchanges of goods sparked doubts about Hitler’s economic and political competence. The next war would, the Pan-Germans feared, be decided not only by technological advances, but also by economic resources and the support of the civilian population. Rearmament in Great Britain and France in response to Germany’s Four Year Plan of 1936 added to the Pan-Germans’ anxieties. The Pan-Germans wanted to make Germany ready for war at a slower pace than Hitler. They advocated long-term recovery and armament expenditures that were financed entirely by taxation and they believed that increased state investment in rearmament to prepare for war and decrease unemployment would hinder recovery and create business uncertainty. Only

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68 See Lagebericht des ADV, 26 October 1938, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 557, 123-125
a strong domestic economy and a healthy trade surplus could free Germany from dependence on foreign investment. The Pan-Germans sought order and stability, as well as German autarky within a Capitalist system of efficient economic production and financial independence from foreign investment.

After 1936, however, these ideas ran counter to the regime´s economic policy, which concentrated on developing Germany´s military position, to the detriment of the civilian economy, the budget, and trade balance. The Four Year Plan nevertheless increased Pan-German hopes for economic recovery. Horenkohl gave a series of lectures about Germany´s need for autarky, particularly in oil, which had become the new “white gold” of capitalism. The dependence on foreign capital during the 1920s caused too much trauma for the Pan-Germans to embrace transnational flows of capital as a means to boost economic investment. As Brockdorff put it: “A Völkisch economic policy is not a policy of debt.”

Henceforth, the Pan-Germans evaluated major foreign policy endeavors on the economic merits. Although he praised the annexation of Austria in April 1938 as the most important step toward völkisch consolidation that the Pan-Germans had demanded since 1918, Claß was concerned about German military and economic security. For this reason, he lauded the Anschluss and the reserves that flooded into the German treasury, but he complained about Austria´s high rate of international debt, which placed additional burdens on Germany.

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troubled the Pan-Germans that the regime´s policy was financed after 1936 by massive deficits. Gearing industrial production to military armament led Brockdorff to complain that “Germany´s economy had become a means of armament policy.” Schacht, who served as a loyal Minister of Economics from 1934 to 1937, voiced similar concerns. At first he supported the regime´s armament spending, but he became increasingly skeptical about armament exports and finally opposed Hitler´s request to print money and left office. The Pan-Germans supported Schacht’s opposition to increased state spending on the armament program and demanded more efficient systems of production. The destruction of unions and the decline in unemployment won their approval, for they had long been among the loudest opponents of both free-market liberalism and socialist Zwangsbewirtschaftung. In the League’s view, the Persönlichkeit of the worker should be rewarded by means of individual income and social benefits, not by collective bargaining and equality of income. The demand that entrepreneurs administer their own businesses was not consistent with the regime´s efforts to centralize the industry and labor service (Arbeitsdienst). Bang and Brockdorff, therefore, worried that the decrease in unemployment was nothing more than Konjunkturpolitik. They argued that government spending on social programs smacked of socialism and that economic centralization would only reward NS-activists. Hertzberg poked fun

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76 Alldeutsche Blätter, 27 January 1934, 10 February 1934 and 24 March 1934.
77 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 31 December 1932 and 27 January 1934.
at the German Labor Front (Deutsche Arbeitsfront), which he described as an old-fashioned labor union Bonzentum.79

As these complaints emphasized, the NS-Volksgemeinschaft was in fact far from egalitarian. Bourgeois principles of recruiting privileged state personnel and rewarding NS-activists according to the principle of achievement was strikingly similar to the primacy of character as advocated by the Pan-Germans.80 Still, the relationship between Pan-Germanism and National Socialism remained troubled by tension between the power of traditional elites and the regime’s attempts to create a new cultural and political elite. Access to higher education for the Bildungsbürgertum and Wirtschaftsbürgertum were untouched between 1933 and 1945.81 The sons and daughters of the Bürgertum who aspired to careers in the NS-Volksgemeinschaft filled leading positions in the NSDAP and the state bureaucracies. The migration of traditional elites to the NSDAP also included Pan-German families. While leading Pan-Germans did not as a rule join the NSDAP, their younger family members often did, including several members of the extended Claß clan in Baden and Württemberg. The same was true of the Gebsattels in Franconia and the far-flung Vietinghoff-Scheel family.82

Despite these individual advances into the power channels of the NS-regime, the NS-state challenged the economic status of traditional constituencies in the DNVP and the Pan-German League. Until 1939, rearmament and the centralization of the economy helped accelerate social

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81 See Michael Grüttnert, Studenten im Dritten Reich (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1995), 492.
and economic change, but they also made large parts of middle-class more dependent of the state’s allocation of resources. Farmers also faced the challenge of state centralization through the *Reichsnährstand*, which coordinated production, prices, and distribution of food. The authority of farmers over their property was protected in the Land Heritage Law of September 1933 (*Reichserbhofgesetz*), but the regime could not prevent loss of 500,000 jobs in the agricultural sector.

The end of the Nazi “revolution” in 1934 did not imply the slackening of pressure on the League. Most NSDAP officials were antipathetic toward the League, given their animosities toward the old bourgeois elite. In 1934, on the eleventh anniversary of the Hitler-putsch, Hitler mocked the inability of Germany’s *Bürgertum* to engage in revolutionary action during the Kapp-putsch in 1920. “The bourgeois world was destroyed by the fact that there was no courage to take responsibility for its actions, that there was no courage to stand up to the judge saying: Yes we wanted that, we wanted to destroy this state, we wanted to expel them, because we wanted to make Germany free.”83 By the time he made this remark, Pan-German criticism of the regime had turned the League into an object of Gestapo surveillance. Reports of the security police showed that the Pan-Germans had never fully subscribed to National Socialism and its ideology. In 1936 Schemmel from Berlin announced at a public meeting that the League had become a refuge for nationalist *Bildungsbürger* who took pride in distinguishing themselves from the NSDAP’s movement. “We are Pan-German, völkisch, and Conservative.”84 But Schemmel was deceiving herself, for the Pan-Germans ultimately proved incapable preserving the League’s autonomy.

83 *Deutsche Zeitung*, 10 November 1934.
To the Margins: Retreat, Silence, and Supervision

The regime tried to keep the League and DNVP under control. As Hitler put it in the summer of 1933, after the disappearance of the political parties, “The former members of these parties have no capacity for activism in the future. The resisting power of their ideology has no power anymore. [...] Where they reappear, however, we have to exterminate them. The idea of a reemergence must be impossible. The extermination of these ideologies and hopes will take some time.” 85 The NS-regime aimed at the dissolution of the Conservative Right and the Communist Left to overcome political class conflict by the promises of social integration in the regime’s Volksgemeinschaft. Goebbels shouted in June 1933, that the NS-movement fought a two-front war against both the “Standesdünkel” on the Right and the “Klassengeist” on the Left. 86 This anti-Conservative and anti-bourgeois rhetoric posed severe threats for the Pan-German League and the DNVP.

The Pan-German League became the plaything in the polycratic competition between state and NSDAP institutions. For the first years, however, the NS-state had inadequate hierarchies of power at its disposal to organize the NSDAP´s claim for total power efficiently. In many ways these limitations never ceased to exist in a polyarchy of competing centers of power and with authorities claiming to control aspects of political life in Germany but not having the resources to do so. 87 Pan-Germans received varying treatment at the hands of different bureaucracies within the NSDAP, the SA, local Rathäuser, the police, the SD, the state ministries of the interior, and Hitler´s chancellery. All these institutions had at some point to define the

extent to which the activities of the Pan-German League were to be tolerated. Several decrees, orders, and instructions were necessary to carve out a place for the League, whose continued existence remained a source of contention, especially amongst the SA and the SD. From 1933 to 1934, the SA and the SD were struggling for their own position within the regime and the SA, as well as the SD became under the control of the SS since 1934. The revolutionary aspirations of the SA were violently contained with the Röhm-Putsch in 1934 and the arrests, killing, and enforced transfer of SA members into the SS. In April 1934, the control of the Gestapo, which was founded in 1933 as a Prussian agency, was transferred by Minister President Göring to Himmler, while the ambitious Reinhard Heydrich now became new leader of the Gestapo and was filled with aspirations to structure the Secret Service according to military principles of efficiency and hierarchical order to secure efficiency and success in surveilling any potential enemy of the state. In 1936, Himmler merged the Gestapo with the Criminal Police in 1936 to form the Security Police, which acted in concert with the SD, since Heydrich served as Chief of both agencies. Since the Gestapo and the Criminal Police were primarily professional law enforcement agencies, after 1936 the SD was in charge of observing opponents (especially Jews) with thousands of spies, informers, and contact men.88

The League’s local chapters were victims of these jurisdictional conflicts, as well as the expansion and centralization of the Security Police between 1933 and 1936. The disorder and violence that resulted was interpreted by the Pan-Germans as chaos similar to that of the Revolution of 1918. Vietinghoff-Scheel voiced his dislike of such violence and chaos saying “where it is loud one has to be under the impression that something is not in order” and Feldmann

stated that under Hitler, “a new generation had been born, which causes fear and foreboding.”

Wrede, for example, from Silesia was imprisoned in June 1933 for several months because she voiced criticism to the government. Young Nazis broke up local meetings and slapped chapter leaders in the face when they refused to sing the Horst Wessel song (which had become a hymn for the NS-movement for years). Major Wengler, who gave a lecture in Strausberg in 1935, was beaten up. The SD sent observers to the League’s meetings. In Hamburg-Altona Horenkohl was informed that permission for the chapter to hold meetings was subject to case-by-case decisions. In Hesse-Nassau the NSDAP district leader, Jakob Sprenger, prohibited “any ideological education, political, economic, cultural and any other political training and education” that was not under the supervision of the Gau authorities. In Duisburg the NSDAP chapter leader, Wilhelm Loch, forbade all competition from other associations in educating the public about ideological topics, because the NSDAP was now the only party that represented a “valid Weltanschauung.” In Ellwangen, the chairman of the Pan-German chapter was thrown out of the office of the NSDAP district leader and mayor, whom he had tried to congratulate on the seizure of power in January 1933. The chapter was then dissolved in 1934. One of the speakers, Studienrat Dr. Keller, who was denied the right to lecture at a Pan-German meeting,

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92 See Lagebericht Regierungspräsident Potsdam, May 1935, in Ribbe, Lageberichte, 280.
93 Horenkohl to Vetinghoff-Scheel, 14 February 1934, BA-B R 8048, vol. 238, 102-103.
94 Frankfurter General-Anzeiger, 24 January 1934.
95 Nationalzeitung, 4 March 1934.
97 „Auflösung des Aldeutschen Verbandes auf dem Gebiet des Freistaates des Freistaates Anhalt,” 14 December 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 238,
demanded “freedom for my conscience, to support law and justice and the new völkisch state” which, however, had been “dishonoured and violated by a lack of understanding and stupidity.”

The relationship between the Pan-German League and the NSDAP was full of contradictions and paradoxes that stemmed from their rivalry over the realm of symbolic and political power. Often, personal animosities between local party leaders the League’s chapter activists accompanied the bureaucratic containment of local chapters. In Plauen, Müller faced attacks from local NSDAP leaders, because he had represented opponents of the regime in court. The fact that individual members of the League had joined the NSDAP or the SA, especially in rural Mecklenburg, Schleswig Holstein, and Silesia, further complicated the relationship between the League and the NSDAP. Joint membership with the League was permitted by the NSDAP once Rudolf Hess passed a decree to this effect in early 1933, but suspicion among Pan-Germans about infiltration by NSDAP activists bred caution and the same suspicion prevailed toward SA members who joined the League.

Arbitrary local regulations made it necessary for the leaders of the Pan-German League to clarify the situation of the League’s status in the districts and to give advice to those leaders of the local chapters who had reported their confusion and insecurity to the headquarters in Berlin. Pan-German legal experts provided guidelines to local chapters about how to register with the local police and to read the new, more restrictive provisions of the Reichsvereinsgesetz, which

98 Dr. G. Keller to Cläß, 13 January 1934, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 238, 44.
came into effect with the Regulation to Protect the People and the State (*Verordnung zum Schutze für Volk und Staat*) in February 1933.¹⁰²

The Emergency Decree of March 1933 and the Law to Protect the Civil Service of April 1933 were all supported by the League mostly because of the ruthless suppression of the KPD. As it read in one of the League’s reports: “All in all a lot of debris had been removed over the last couple of weeks. The construction site is now clear and the dictatorship can proceed with rebuilding anew.”¹⁰³ At the same time, the Pan-Germans hoped that the decrees that Frick and Göring had passed in 1933 to determine the jurisdiction of SA and NSDAP district leaders on one side and the state agencies such as the police and the Ministry of the Interior on the other side would protect the League from random attacks by local NS-activists.¹⁰⁴ While he was still in office, Hugenberg had already complained repeatedly in the spring of 1933 that he was not willing to tolerate arbitrary interventions into his Ministry by NS-activists. Hugenberg explicitly demanded the protection of “order and the belief in the *Rechtsstaat*, which were the foundations of economic life,” while Brockdorff complained about the very “broad interpretation of *Gleichschaltung.*”¹⁰⁵

In November 1933, Claß called upon Frick to pass regulations to prohibit violence against the League. Frick reassured Gok that police authorities had been told that Pan-German activities were not to be disturbed or prohibited.¹⁰⁶ Frick guaranteed the League’s right to hold public meetings, since the organization was not subject to the Law Prohibiting the New Foundation of

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¹⁰² See also „Kann die Polizeiverwaltung die Angabe aller Mitglieder einer Ortsgruppe des Alldeutschen Verbandes mit Angabe des Geburtstages verlangen?,” 3 February 1934, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 238, 75-80.
¹⁰³ Lagebericht des ADV, 20 April 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 552, 49. See also Lagebericht des ADV, 8 March 1933, in ibidem, 30, and Lagebericht des ADV, 29 March 1933, in ibidem, 40.
¹⁰⁵ Lagebericht des ADV, 12 May 1933, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 552, 64 and 66.
¹⁰⁶ Frick to Gok, 11 June 1934, quoted in Gok to Hauptleitung des ADV, 1 July 1934, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 238, 142.
Parties of July 1933. However, several mayors who were also NSDAP activists ignored this guarantee, forbidding the League to hold meetings in their towns. Additional interventions by Claß in Frick’s office resulted in an additional guarantee, although Frick now asked Claß to refrain from propaganda on behalf of restoring the monarchy. The Kaiser’s telegram to Claß at his 75th birthday had raised suspicion about Claß’s reliability in this matter. Also as a result of Claß’s interventions, Heß instructed local NSDAP not to regulate the local meetings of associations but to pass requests on to state agencies. Even as the Pan-Germans noted with satisfaction that the League was one of the few associations to receive such official toleration, SD supervision continued. The support of prominent officials such as the Minister of War, Werner von Blomberg, did not protect the League from harassment (Blomberg himself fell victim to Hitler’s purge of the army in 1936/1937). The same applied to the Saxon Minister President and former member of the Free Corps, Manfred von Killinger, who had been in contact with the League for several years, and Killinger’s chairman of the Cabinet, Oberlandesgerichtsrat Friedrich Günther, who was a member of the League’s chapter in Dresden. Neither could safeguard the League, especially after they fell out of favour following the purge of the SA in 1934.

The League’s supervision was justified by Hess’s prohibition against “ideological training” by associations other than the NSDAP. By 1937, observation of the League’s meetings by police spies had become so commonplace that members simply assumed that the SD

was present. The SD utilized spies who had an educated and well-mannered appearance, so contacts with local chapter activists could easily be made.\textsuperscript{114} In Jena, SD officials even selected young history professors from the university to recruit suitable personnel for infiltration of the local chapter.\textsuperscript{115} Oftentimes, spies promised to help the chapter mobilize new younger members, and this prospect made Pan-Germans forget about the danger of surveillance.\textsuperscript{116} Junghans from headquarters talked about the falling membership to informants whom he believed to be devoted new members themselves. Spies even gained access to meetings of the smaller council (\textit{Engerer Rat}), which had become the League’s most selective body after 1935, as leading members discussed strategy.\textsuperscript{117}

Surveillance of the League was intensified at the end of 1934 and local SD offices now made regular reports to the SD’s headquarters.\textsuperscript{118} Informants accused the Pan-German League of being a front for old \textit{Bildungsbürger} who could not come to terms with their own political insignificance. Reports noted that the Pan-Germans were retreating from the public eye in order to make surveillance more difficult. In fact, the Pan-Germans increasingly retreated into cultivating residues of sociability and political expression in small circles. The activities of the League remained as exclusive as Reith had demanded it in 1935, when he stated that Pan-Germans “are proud to have rolled up the flag since 1918 and we only unfold it again when a young team is willing to carry on our tradition.”\textsuperscript{119} Local meetings were often camouflaged as

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\item See Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 123 to SD-Oberabschnitt Süd, 21 August 1936, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 567, 70-71.
\item SD-Oberabschnitt Elbe to SD-Aussenstelle Jena, 25 October 1937, BA-B, R 58, vol. 2487, 159.
\item Lagebericht SD-Oberabschnitt Ost, 23 June 1937, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 568, 219-220.
\item Report SD, Abteilung II 123, 28 January 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 569, 90-91.
\item Circular SD-Hauptamt to SD-Abschnitte, 4 April 1936, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 567, 32.
\item Willy Reith in Prenzlau, 1 October 1935, quoted in report Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 123, 28 January 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 569, 91.
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Stammtische, in order to circumvent the requirement that public meetings be approved by the police.  

The retreat of the Pan-Germans made the police more suspicious. Suspicions were well founded that the Pan-Germans were following a strategy to outmaneuver the SD. Sending personal invitations to friends and members of the League was likewise designed to prevent infiltration by informants or interruptions by local NSDAP members. What followed was a guessing-game of interpreting the Pan-Germans’ silence, which made the League seem dangerous “especially because of the things they did not say.” The SD was confused by such tactics, and SD headquarters sent circulars to district branches advising the local police to make sure that there were no associations working in secret, especially after local chapters had been erased from the police’s association register.

The activities of the League thus became even more exclusive. Pan-German political discourse was now increasingly divided into public communication, which took place through the Alldutsche Blätter, and the private political reports (Lageberichte), which Brockdorff and then Claß. The Lageberichte had been compiled as monthly circulars for leading members and the local chairmen since the early 1930s. They now became critical as an alternative means of communication. Their focus significantly narrowed after 1933, however, and they dealt only with economic and foreign affairs. Although they often revealed the League’s skepticism of the regime, they avoided any open criticism and after 1936, the Pan-Germans abandoned all public criticism of the regime. Vietinghoff-Scheel noted in 1937 that everything should be done to avoid

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the dissolution of the League. Pan-Germans were even instructed to greet each other occasionally with “Heil Hitler!” in order to mask hostility to the regime.\textsuperscript{124} SD informants realized that the tone had changed in these meetings, and they complained about the artificial rhetoric that speakers adopted at meetings. They noted that it was hard for informants to differentiate between irony and bigotry. When current political affairs were discussed, speakers failed to describe Hitler as Germany’s great leader, and members failed to sing Nazi songs or put up the swastika.\textsuperscript{125} Other speakers cut comments on current affairs from their lectures, in order to avoid arrest, or announced that they would not reveal their opinions because SD informants might be in the room.\textsuperscript{126} There was also rivalry over national symbols. Pan-Germans wore red-and-black badges at meetings to show their distance from the swastika. Greeting each other with an innocuous “Good Evening” was subversive once the Hitler-greeting became the formal expression of devotion to the regime. When, to the laughter of the audience, a local leader of the League removed a Hitler bust from the desk in a rented room in a pub, which was also used by NSDAP branch organizations for their social evenings and political events, the SD informants left the meeting with great suspicion.

Because they had blurred the line between consent and criticism, the SD suspected that the Pan-Germans were hiding their true identities as Freemasons, who refused to submit to the NS-Volksgemeinschaft. Characterizing the League’s style of speech and habitus as academic and bildungsbürgerlich itself suggested opposition to the dynamism and populism of the regime. The fact that no public discussions followed the lectures fueled the suspicions of SD spies that the real

\textsuperscript{124} Vietinghoff-Scheel, 4 February 1937, quoted in report Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 123, 28 January 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 569, 92.


\textsuperscript{126} See Karl Grube in Mannheim, 23 April 1934 and report SD Mannheim, 24 April 1934, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 568, 94-95 and report SD Offenburg, 1 November 1934, in ibidem, vol. 568, 100-102.
debates were being conducted behind closed doors. Lists that were distributed at meetings for new members to sign often came back with only a few new names on it, increasing the SD’s suspicion that members were recruited in ways unseen.\textsuperscript{127} The fact that no handbook of the League had been published after 1918, made it more difficult for the SD to identify local leaders for surveillance.

   After the Gestapo had made monthly reports from SD-\textit{Oberabschnitte} about the activities of enemies of the regime more coherent with standardized forms of reporting by the districts in 1935, the Pan-Germans found themselves lumped together as “reactionaries and monarchists” with Freemasons, whom the regime now ferociously persecuted.\textsuperscript{128} The charge of Freemasonry became a pretext for the SD to arrest local \textit{Honoratioren} and \textit{Bildungsbürger}, who did not otherwise present grounds for detention. Although the SD was aware that most Pan-Germans were not Masons, several SD districts started counting Freemasons in Pan-German chapters. In the SD’s Western district, ten percent of 240 Pan-Germans were reported to be Freemasons.\textsuperscript{129} After 1936 the SD collected addresses of individual members of the League who appeared to be members of a local Masonic lodge.\textsuperscript{130} The SD’s suspicions were heightened in 1936 when Ulrich Fleischhauer, the infamous author of several Judeo-Masonic conspiracy publications, who had left the Pan-German League after Hitler’s seizure of power, charged that the League functioned like a Masonic lodge.\textsuperscript{131}

   These accusations led the League’s headquarters in Berlin to exercise even more centralized control over the activities of local chapters. The headquarters’ secretaries took care to register chapter meetings with the local police, while most of the former district conventions and

\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Deutsche Zeitung}, 11 September 1934.
\textsuperscript{129} See Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 111 to Abteilung II 123, 29 November 1937, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 565, 3-10.
\textsuperscript{130} Ulrich Fleischhauer to Pickel, March 1936, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 567, 48-51.
meetings of the executive committee were now held at the headquarters in Berlin. The
*Lageberichte*, which were published in editions of no more than 500 copies for distribution
among members only, became an alterantive source of information for the League´s leading
members as the *Alldeutsche Blätter* were published for a wider audience and had always been
accessible for the public reader.132 In January 1935, central power was tightened in response to
the regime´s pressure. The executive committee was replaced by the smaller council (*Engerer
Rat*), with 30 members, and the broader council (*Weiterer Rat*), with up to 100 members who
were appointed for three years. Claß now fully controlled these boards, which also elected him as
chairman.133 In addition, he was now empowered to change the League´s statutes without
consulting the councils.134 Meetings of the smaller and broader council usually took place at
headquarters in Berlin or after the League conventions. These conventions still attracted around
400 activists in Hamburg in 1936, and 550 in Essen in 1937, but they became rarer over the
years. The last took place in Bad Harzburg in August 1938.135

Claß´s position was cemented by personal alliances with the members of the leading
bodies. Almost all the members of these committees had served before 1933.136 Claß used his
power to remove unwanted activists, such as Pickel in Northern Bavaria, who was deposed in
1934 and resigned from the League. After Pickel had struggled to keep the League above the
water in Protestant Franconia, where the NSDAP retreated after 1923 to rebuild the party´s
infrastructure, the district of Northern Bavaria came under the direct supervision of headquarters

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132 Report SD-Oberabschnitt Ost, 20 October 1936, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 567, 83; report, SD-
Oberabschnitt Nord, 9 January 1937, in ibidem, vol. 568, 3; Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 123 to
Abteilung I 313, 8 February 1937, in ibidem, vol. 567, 53; and report SD-Oberabschnitt West, 19 January 1937, in
ibidem, vol. 568, 128.

133 Statutes of the Pan-German League, 6 January 1935, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 4, 115-118; statutes of the Pan-German
League, September 1935, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 568, 20-26; Claß to Gebhard, 30 January 1935, STA
Friedberg, NL August Gebhard, vol. 4, n.p.; and report SD-Oberabschnitt West, 11 December 1934, STA Moscow,
Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 568, 104.

134 See *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 12 January 1935.

135 See *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 5 September 1937.

136 See report SD-Oberabschnitt Ost, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 567, 74-78.
in Berlin. No new district leader was recruited for Northern Bavaria as Junghans concluded from his on-going debates with Pickel that younger members were not trustworthy.\textsuperscript{137}

Several of the League´s districts, such as in the north, east, and Bavaria, declined as headquarters failed to invest resources. As the centralization of power around Claß limited the League´s presence in the public, Claß himself became almost invisible after 1936. Chronic stomach pains and a sleeping disorder plagued him, and he spoke only at meetings of the smaller and broader councils.\textsuperscript{138} He missed the convention in May 1934, and the following year´s convention had to be postponed because of injuries that he had sustained in a car accident.\textsuperscript{139} Claß gave speeches at the national conventions until 1938, but he had nothing to say about the future, for it was no longer in his hands to determine the course of politics. In his lectures he reminded his audiences that the Pan-German League had been the vanguard of the “national opposition” long before 1933 and that the Third Reich was based on the hard work of the Pan-Germans. Hugenberg likewise disappeared from the public spotlight, devoting his time to his remaining media enterprises and his estate in Rohbraken, which he signed over to his four children because he feared the regime´s vindictiveness.\textsuperscript{140} He also declined invitations from Claß to attend League meetings.\textsuperscript{141}

Claß no longer had the time or energy to make full use of his power, so the centralization of the League´s activities accelerated the decay of the movement. After 1933, he tended largely to his own legacy. He was immediately asked by the publisher Koehler in Leipzig to work on a new, 15\textsuperscript{th} edition of his Einhart. The book had to be reduced by 200 pages, and he had to add sections


\textsuperscript{139} Alldeutsche Blätter, 11 August 1934.

\textsuperscript{140} Leopold, Alfred Hugenberg, 164.

on the Third Reich. Claß, however, was not happy about such a “cruel amputation” of his opus magnum and wanted to devote only “marginal space” for the additional chapter covering up to 30 January 1934.142 After considerable doubts about the new layout of his opus magnum, Claß added a new chapter on recent developments to meet the political requirements, but he described the Third Reich as an unqualified success.143 The book was printed with four more editions between 1934 and 1941 and it sold another 40,000 copies. The success of the book was rather negligible as it was not an outspoken bestseller compared to the nationalist and racist mass media of the Third Reich, but Claß could pride himself to have placed his treatment of German history in the canon of NS-literature. His other books were rather a failure in terms of mass circulation.

After his recovery from the car accident, Claß also started to write the second volume of his memoirs, after the first volume, Wider den Strom, had sold a modest 3,900 copies by the fall of 1934 and was never printed in a second edition.144 Completion of the second volume was delayed by revisions, but Claß completed the volume between Easter 1934 and November 1936, when he added the final touches on a long additional chapter, which was never meant for publication and dealt in angry language with his complicated relationship to Hitler and the NSDAP.145 His close friend Schlabrendorff took the manuscript to Switzerland and deposited it into a bank.146 Switzerland had become a haven for the uncensored memoirs of leading politicians of the Right; Brüning also wrote parts of his memoirs there in 1935/36.147 Claß faced trouble with several of his publishers, who were now criticizing the League’s past politics and refused to reissue Claß’s works. Theodor Weicher rejected the League’s request to republish the “Kaiser-book.” The Grimmesche Hofbuchdruckerei printed the book’s last edition in 1935, but only after Claß was

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143 Alldeutsche Blätter, 5 March 1938.
144 See Koehler&Amelang Verlag to Vietinghoff-Scheel, 7 November 1934, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 322, 284.
146 See Schlabrendorff, Begegnungen, 149-167.
forced to write a new preface, cut several “untimely” sections, and reduce the length.\(^{148}\) The Vermögensverwaltung des Alldutschen Verbandes subsidized the last edition of the “Kaiser-book” as it had to step in repeatedly as a financing agent for the publication of the League’s other writings in order to make sure that the Pan-Germans’ legacy was not forgotten.\(^{149}\) While Claß increasingly turned away from the public eye and devoted his time to writing, his birthday in 1938 still retained immense symbolic value for members of the League. Almost 400 people met at the Rathaus Schöneberg in Berlin and collected money for Claß’s political work.\(^{150}\)

Despite the League’s retreat and the centralization of Pan-German activities, the League retained a network of several hundred local chapters. In Saxony, there were 23 chapters in 1935 with active outposts in Leipzig, Dresden, Chemnitz, and Plauen. Württemberg counted 33 chapters two years later, but the League’s influence remained concentrated in Protestant outposts such as Stuttgart.\(^{151}\) In 1936, the SD noted with surprise that although it numbered only 10,000 members, the League had “a local chapter in almost every city and town in Germany.”\(^{152}\) League officials were determined to keep every chapter alive no matter how desperate its situation.\(^{153}\) The League’s strongholds remained in Central Germany, especially in Saxony, Berlin, Hesse, Thuringia, and the provinces of Magdeburg and Anhalt.\(^{154}\) However, the membership continued to age, and few attended the meetings—fewer than 50 people on average in Saxony, fewer still in


\(^{149}\) See appendix Figure 23.

\(^{150}\) See report Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 123, 22 March 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 653, 70.


Württemberg, although in larger cities like Stuttgart and Dresden, up to 100 people gathered for local events. East of the Elbe the League was successful only in cities like Breslau, Stettin, and Danzig. There were only 19 chapters in Silesia in 1937, many of which had become inactive after 1933. This was also the case in Pomerania. Mecklenburg and Schleswig-Holstein had become almost *terra incognita* to the League after 1933; only a few chapters remained. No assistance was provided to these chapters, and no itinerant speakers were sent from headquarters. In the Rhine Province, parts of Westphalia, and the Saar, the League never recovered from its suppression during the Allied occupation. Alt, who still chaired the district *Industriegebiet*, reported that only few chapters held meetings and that most members had left the League after 1933, either because they had died or lacked the money to pay dues. In a few cases, they had joined the NSDAP, because they “were afraid and had no courage” to stay with the League.

The way the headquarters structured the League’s regional districts did not always promote successful mobilization. Claß was responsible for determining the boundaries between districts, but he often did not care about making them congruent with state boundaries. Instead, Claß paid more attention to assign as much responsibility over district chapters as possible to those district leaders, who actively engaged and able to mobilize new members accordingly. The lack of leadership became increasingly a problem like in Berlin, where the old Schillmann still tried his best after years of service as chapter leader, but especially after several district leaders left because of old age, including Beutel in Saxony, who gave up his office in 1933. Excepting

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158 See also appendix Figure 22.
only Munich, especially Southern Bavaria remained troubled territory for the League as the Pan-German mental map still excluded Catholic areas. Despite the NSDAP’s significant turn toward anti-Catholic rhetoric between 1923 and 1933, the League’s own anti-ultramontanism made it difficult to compete with the promises of a National Socialist Volksgemeinschaft that also embraced Catholics.  

Other political groups found in the League an alternative to the regime’s mass politics. A few renegades, who opposed the Gleichschaltung, sought refuge in the Pan-German League, including several hundred former members of the Stahlhelm, who had been forced to join the SA by 1935. The influx of frustrated ex-members of right-wing associations was welcome by the League’s headquarters. Participation in the League’s meetings was by invitation only, and the increased invisibility of the League deprived the chapters of members. Still, membership increased again modestly around 1936. The Rhein-Main district counted 248 members in 1935, 272 the following year. As SD surveillance increased from 1935 to 1936, chapters such as those in Gießen, Wiesbaden, Darmstadt, and Harburg registered a slight increase in membership. According to SD reports, membership increased from 10,000 in early 1936 to 12,000 to 15,000 in the summer of 1937. By 1938, the League had dropped to around 10,000 members again. Finances remained problematic, as headquarters lacked resources even to send out new copies of the statutes to members. Meanwhile, the Alldeutsche Blätter appeared only twice a month after 1933.

The presence of retired army officers, former DNVP members, and Stahlhelm at local meetings nurtured the regime’s fears that the Pan-Germans represented a “reservoir of

160 See also Derek Hastings, Catholicism and the Roots of Nazism (Oxford: OUP, 2011), 143-176 and Puschner, “One People, One Reich, One God.”
162 See appendix Figure 21.
163 See appendix Figure 1, SD-Bezirk 40001 to SD-Hauptamt, 7 March 1936, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 567, 45-46, and report SD Berlin, 23 July 1937, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 569, 5.
disappointed reactionaries” or a “masked retreat of the DNVP.” In Karlsruhe, almost every participant at local meetings wore the badge of the Stahlhelm, and the secret police were concerned in Hildesheim and Hannover that chapters of the Stahlhelm might have collectively joined the local Pan-German League. Even though there was a “lack of verve” at these meetings and the Pan-Germans appeared to be “reactionary” because they seemed to be bitter about the loss of “their influential posts” following Hitler’s seizure of power, the SD feared that the League could mount opposition to the regime among educated elites.

These fears were of course exaggerated, given the League’s limited membership. However, Pan-German activists continued to claim a role as an educational vanguard. Vietinghoff-Scheel reminded the League’s Magdeburg members that the NSDAP was not able to provide the “geistige Form” that its members expected. Occasionally, NSDAP members who attended the League’s meetings observed that Pan-German lectures provided a change of perspective from what they encountered at their party meetings. The SD noted that most of the Pan-Germans were public officials, university professors, pastors, and army officers; it also reported that members of the League might have joined the NSDAP after 1933 in order to retain their positions.

The most striking indication that the League had become a refuge for Bildungsbürger who sought a conservative, nationalist alternative to the NS-regime was the increase in the number of

women who attended meetings and joined the League. At the League’s convention in Hamburg in 1936, Claß called on chapter leaders to increase their efforts to mobilize women in their families and friendship circles. Women had become more visible in leading positions in the early 1930s, but they joined at an accelerated rate after 1933, as they were appointed to important posts, including chairwomen. Schemmel took matters in her own hands in Berlin and organized events in the capital. Porembsky from Rudolstadt was irreplaceable in the Thuringia district, as was Wrede, who struggled to overcome the League’s insignificance in Silesia. The lone women’s group operated in Berlin, still chaired by Schillmann’s wife and now devoted entirely to supporting only an orphanage in Poznan. Although in very small numbers, but women were increasingly appointed significant posts like leading the chapter in Bad Godesberg, for instance.

Bourgeois and middle-class women now saw in the Pan-German League a residue for their political activities that could not be comforted in the regime’s organizations. Available data for selected local chapters of the Rhein-Main district for the years between 1934 and 1937 ascribe a more active role to Pan-German women also on the local level. Between 1934 and 1937, female members in local chapters with small membership like Darmstadt, Offenbach, and Friedberg comprised between 5 and almost 25 percent of the total membership. In 1936, the Hamburg chapter counted 7 percent women, while the district Unterweser had 17 percent women in its ranks in 1935 and Stuttgart even enjoyed the presence of 13 percent of women in 1937. From Württemberg, Baden, Königsberg, and Erfurt, the SD also reported that half of the attendees were women; reports from Bad Cannstadt, Karlsruhe, and Pforzheim noted that one-third of the local

170 Alldeutsche Blätter, 3 October 1936 and 5 March 1938.
172 Alldeutsche Blätter, 3 October 1936 and 5 March 1938.
173 See appendix Figure 18.
174 See appendix Figure 18.
membership was female, probably encouraged by the availability of family memberships at about
a third of the regular dues.\textsuperscript{175}

\textit{Police Surveillance, Anschluss, and “Biertischpolitikasterei”: The Pan-German League’s
Dissolution in Austria and Germany}

The SD’s surveillance of the League intensified in 1936 and Himmler and Heydrich
become determined to control the public entirely. Preparation for war raised the pressure on all
the regime’s potential rivals as the SD had to purge society from the regime’s potential rivals
once and for all in order to secure an homogenized \textit{Volksgemeinschaft}, which would endure the
totality of the next war without breaking apart like the \textit{Burgfrieden} during the First World War. It
was a welcome occasion for the SD to enforce its efforts to prohibit the Pan-German League once
and for all when NSDAP activists severely disturbed chapter meetings of the League in Saxony
and attacks by NS activists in the small towns of Mügeln and Oschatz went out of control in
1936. NSDAP activists harassed chapter meetings in those two cities, where more than 100
NSDAP and SA members invaded the League’s meetings, made several members leave the
League, and caused the chapter leader to resign from office.\textsuperscript{176} These actions reflected the
frustration of local chapters of the NSDAP, whose role was itself increasingly subjected to central
control.\textsuperscript{177} In Mügeln, disturbances of the League’s meetings ended in violence and criminal

\textsuperscript{175} See Gestapo Königsberg, [September/October] 1935, BA-B, R 58, vol. 1579, 482; Lagebericht Staatspolizeistelle
Erfurt, September 1935, in Rupieper and Sperk, \textit{Lageberichte, Regierungsbezirk Erfurt}, 333; report SD-
Oberabschnitt Süd-West, 12 January 1937, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 568, 67 and 70; reprt Gestapo
Pforzheim, 6 July 1834, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 568, 97; and Ortsgruppe Cannstadt des ADV to


\textsuperscript{177} See also Carl-Wilhelm Reibel, \textit{Das Fundament der Diktatur: Die NSDAP-Ortsguppen 1932-1945} (Paderborn:
Schöningh, 2002), 75-85.
charges against the local invaders, as well as the departure of several members of the League’s chapter, including the chairman.\textsuperscript{178}

In November 1936, Claß once again asked Frick’s office to intervene. However, now that Himmler had become head of the German police, Frick lacked the means to protect the Pan-German League. Himmler’s administration of the police and the expansion of concentration camps under the auspices of the SS from the summer of 1936 made the police independent of the Minister of the Interior. The powers of the police were extended and its right to place people in “protective custody” could be used against any suspicious person.\textsuperscript{179} The police were henceforth independent of the ministry of the interior. Still, Frick again promised to clarify the League’s status, but he also asked Claß to consider dissolving the organization.\textsuperscript{180} The SD had itself since 1935 been working toward this end and by 1937 Hess joined the exponents of this solution.\textsuperscript{181}

The SD only needed a superfluous reason to tighten its pressure on the League. Reith had exacerbated the situation when he criticized Hitler’s foreign policy and was banned by the SD from speaking in public.\textsuperscript{182} Reith was shattered to learn about the ban, because he had just planned an extensive tour to Hesse-Nassau and Eastern Prussia, which desperately needed attention from the headquarters´ speakers. Horenkohl, who was one of the remaining itinerant lecturers from the headquarters together with Brockdorff, was not surprised about Reith’s ban as

\textsuperscript{181} See report Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 123, 22 December 1937, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 568, 45 and Stellvertreter des Führers (c/o Witt) to Reichsführer SS, 4 February 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 569, 97.
he knew that he was himself exposed to surveillance by the SD.\textsuperscript{183} While Reith had to consider a full retreat from the League’s politics and sought a job at the Army’s Weapon Agency (\textit{Heereswaffenamt}) or in the iron industry, Horenkohl revised Reith’s lectures because the League could not afford to take any “risks anymore.”\textsuperscript{184} Reith eventually resigned from his post as \textit{Schriftführer} and Horenkohl became his successor.

By 1937, the SD tried everything to discredit the Pan-Germans in order to dispose of the case. The SD was now reporting that leading Pan-Germans were Jewish and that the League even planned an assassination of Hitler.\textsuperscript{185} The suspicions that culminated in these charges were fed by the accumulating reports of anti-Nazi sentiments in the chapters. The SD assumed that the Pan-Germans “were not National Socialists and do not have the intention to become National Socialists […] Exceptions would prove the rule.”\textsuperscript{186} In Plauen Müller reportedly declared that he did “not want to dance to Hitler’s tune” since he “had never been a Nazi and never will become a Nazi.”\textsuperscript{187} Jokes, rumours, and critical comments about individual National Socialists circulated in the local chapters. Goebbels was called a \textit{Schwätzer}, Walther Darré “incompetent,“ who was appointed Minister for Food and Agriculture and so became one of Hugenberg’s successors in 1933. Frick and Blomberg, even Hitler, were criticized.\textsuperscript{188} Pan-Germans were reported to have criticized the mass rallies of the NSDAP, the limitations of Germany’s economic recovery, and

\textsuperscript{186} See report Reichssicherheitsabteilung Abteilung II 123/124, January 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 569, 114; SD-Oberabschnitt Ost to Reichssicherheitsabteilung Zentralabteilung II/1, 12 April 1938, in ibidem, vol. 564, 4-7; and quote in report SD-Oberabschnitt West, 19 January 1937, in ibidem, vol. 568, 121.
the social welfare system of the NS-regime, the *Winterhilfswerk*, to which all Pan-Germans had to contribute, as an “alms institution” for the unemployed.189

The fact that the League enjoyed the public support of Martin Niemöller of the Confessing Church fed the SD’s suspicions.190 Hitler’s attempt to control the Protestant Church and create a unified Protestant *Reichskirche* under NS-control was a full attack on the independence of one of the pillars of Borussian identity.191 Within the League’s chapters, the fate of the Confessing Church had become an important topic. In Saxony, the chairmen of several League chapters urged their members to join the Confessing Church. At the celebration of Vietinghoff-Scheel’s 70th birthday in June 1938, several guests criticized the imprisonment of Niemöller.192 Klingemann in Essen, who had served as *Superintendent* in Essen and had opposed the regime’s second *Kulturkampf* which came in form of the *Gleichschaltung* of the Protestant churches, was a prominent supporter of the Confessing Church and was known in the SD as an “enemy of the National Socialist Weltanschauung.”193

In the winter of 1937, the SD ordered full postal and telephone surveillance of the League’s headquarters. Claß, Hugenberg, Roeder, Reith, Vietinghoff-Scheel, Korodi, Schemmel, and Hertzberg were all on the list. In the spring of 1938 the SD expanded its surveillance to cover Bang and Claß’s private secretary, *Fräulein* von Stopf, after the surveillance of Schemmel and Roeder had not met the SD’s expectations.194 Claß was unable to intervene against these

194 Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung II 123, reports from January to February 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 562, 63-100; Reichssicherheitshauptamt Abteilung I 132 to Abteilung II/1, April 1938, in ibidem, vol. 563, 88; and name list Reichsführer SS, 20 November 1937, in ibidem, vol. 563, 3-4.
measures at Frick’s office. After Claß felt extremely unwell after his birthday celebration in March 1938, he had to leave Berlin for several weeks to go on another cure. As the threat of dissolution put the League in serious distress, Claß had no resources to even try to shield the League and even himself from SD supervision anymore. On the basis of the surveillance, the SD even demanded in 1938 that Bang, Feldmann, and Claß not be renominated as candidates for the Reichstag, which did not carry any weight as they stayed as “guests” in the Reichstag. A year later, the SS listed them as “reactionary” activists of the “right-wing opposition.”

The Pan-German League in Austria was sitting between chairs as well as it faced similar political pressure and was threatened by dissolution but for different reasons. The League had been weakened since 1923/24 by severe competition with the Austrian NSDAP, the Heimatschutz movement, and cultural language associations. With the decrease of the Anschluß movement in the mid-1920s the League’s loss of significance was accompanied by a loss of members and devoted leadership personnel in almost all chapters. The chapter in Eisenerz presents a case of how local chapters eroded in small communities: a lack of members had afflicted the chapter since 1926, while the departure of the Obmann to Vordenberg in 1928 brought the chapter’s existence finally to an end. Refounding the chapter through the headquarters in Vienna failed in 1931, and the former Obmann had no information about any activism in Eisenerz after he left. In Styria, new chapters were founded in Judenburg (1929), Birkenfeld, Steinach, and Zeltweg (1931), but the numbers of activists these chapters included were too small to make a major

196 SD-Leiter Zentralabteilung II/1 to SD-Führer Oberabschnitt Donau, 5 April 1938, STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis 3, vol. 563, 89.
contribution, while other chapters like Feldbach, founded in 1923, ceased to exist after 1933.\textsuperscript{199}

When the federal police stations requested information about Pan-German activities in local districts between 1931 and 1934, most of them had ceased to exist.

The Austrian Government, however, levied pressure on the League’s national leadership for its support of unification with Germany. The government of Hermann von Schuschnigg, which came to power in July 1934 following the abortive NS-coup against the Government of Engelbert Dollfuß, wanted to create an “Austro-Fascist” alternative of an authoritarian Ständestaat to the NS-regime in Germany and suppressed the Pan-German League. Local chapters were put under surveillance by the police, who searched the homes of leading activists like Hartmayer.\textsuperscript{200} After the police shut down the League’s headquarters in Vienna in early 1934, the League’s chairman, Julius Neukirch, complained that the government’s accusations that the League propagated treason was ridiculous because unification with Austria had been a major factor in Austrian politics across the political spectrum between 1918 and the failure to create a Austro-German tariff union in 1931.\textsuperscript{201} By 1932, however, it was clear that the Anschlußbewegung had long lost its momentum for Pan-German propaganda after 1923/24, and that competition between NSDAP, Heimatschutzbewegung, and Christian-Socials under Schuschnigg precluded its current resurrection.\textsuperscript{202}


\textsuperscript{201} See Bundespolizei Wien to Aldeutscher Verband Wien, 19 March 1934, in Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv, M.Abtt. 119, a 32, n.p. and Aldeutsiche Blätter, 7 April 1934.

\textsuperscript{202} See Dr. Wildmoser at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, 10/11 December 1932, BA-B, R 8048, vol. 172, 55-57. See also Goldinger and Binder, Geschichte der Republik Österreich, 106-239.
Neukirch and Franz Heim, who was the legal representative (Vertrauensmann) of the League in Austria, begged the local police to re-open the headquarters again to retrieve the membership list in order to invite the head council for a meeting to either change Article 4 of the statutes (in which the League demanded unification with Germany), or consent to the dissolution of the League.\(^{203}\) Heim only succeeded in April 1935 when he declared that the Pan-German League was National Socialist neither in ideology nor outlook. The police gave in to Heim’s promise to clarify the League’s political demands and re-opened the league’s headquarters, with the understanding that the League would either change its statutes or dissolve itself altogether.\(^{204}\) The head council met in October 1935 and decided to rename the League as the Greater Germanic Association in Austria (Germanischer Großverband in Österreich). It also amended the statute concerning unification to read that the new association only promoted the “völkisch union of all Germans.”\(^{205}\) The new statutes were passed in November 1935, but they did not satisfy the authorities and the Pan-German League’s successor organization was dissolved by the police on 5 December 1935.\(^{206}\)

The Schuschnigg Government had become nervous about a revival of the Pan-German movement after Hitler came to power, and his government probably hoped that the dissolution of the League in Austria would help streamline popular opinion and, thereby, preserve Austrian independence. Schuschnigg’s hopes were shattered in 1938 by the successful pressure from Germany and the subsequent Anschluss. Even the NS-regime, however, feared rival propaganda in Austria by the Pan-German League in Berlin, where the Pan-Germans hoped for a re-


\(^{204}\) Bundespolizeidirektion Wien to Bundeskanzleramt, 8 December 1934, in Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv, M.Ab. 119, 32, n.p.; Bundespolizeiamt to Bundespolizeidirektion Wien, 17 December 1934, in ibidem; Bundeskanzleramt to Alldutscher Verband Wien, 17 April 1935 in ibidem.


\(^{206}\) See also Chamberlain, “The Pan-German League in Austria.”
establishment of a new greater German monarchy, and prohibited any public meetings by the
League until after the Austrian referendum on the *Anschluß* on 10 April 1938.\(^\text{207}\)

The *Anschluß* with Austria served the SD well in putting further pressure on the League´s
activities in Germany. In 1938, the monopoly of the SD to serve as Germany´s official secret
service and not only as a branch of the NSDAP had been accepted by Göring´s Ministry of the
Interior, which spurred further expansion of the SD. The SD´s headquarters was re-organized
again between 1938 and 1939, when the SD and the State Police merged under the auspices of
the Reich Security Head Office and the SD was pressured to serve its new monopoly of gathering
surveillance information all over Germany in delivering standardized nation-wide reports that put
together all suspicious activities in the SD districts Reich.\(^\text{208}\) The dissolution of the Pan-German
League came on 5 March 1939. That Heydrich gave the formal order was of some symbolic
significance, for he had been active in the Protection League and symbolized the younger
generation that the Pan-German were not able to mobilize for their own purposes. The League
also fell now victim to this failure. The dissolution itself came not as a major surprise although
leading activists, for instance, had been tolerated by the regime´s writers´ guild like Claß. On 5
February 1938 he had received a license from the Reich Press Chamber, in which all authors had
to register for official permission to publish. Claß´s licence stated that “no facts have been filed
that supported any suspicion against your person and your reliability and capability to pursue
your work.”\(^\text{209}\)

Persuasion, surveillance, and pressure by the regime, however, did not remove the
underlying conflict over generational habitus, political substance of the concept of


Volksgemeinschaft, and liturgical style of how the League presented itself in public in opposite to the NSDAP. There was a continuous skepticism of the state toward extraparliamentary mobilization through Germany’s bourgeois associations that lasted from Bismarck to Hitler. Bismarck despised Germany’s political pressure groups and accepted their power as rival institutions to the government and the parliament after he had left office in 1890. After Bülow had already complained about strenuous Pan-German “Bierbankpolitik“ in 1901, one SD informant from the North district, who reported about the Pan-German League in 1937, was in striking agreement with the former chancellor when he was annoyed by the League’s philistine “Biertischpolitikasterei.”

The ambivalent relationship between the Pan-German League and the NS-movement during the Weimar Republic had turned into an anatgonistic relationship after 1933. While the Pan-Germans spoke to each other about a “Fourth Reich” they were awaiting, the SD assumed that the Pan-Germans “were not National Socialists and do not have the intention to become National Socialists […] Exceptions would prove the rule.” The SD believed that the regime’s tolerance of the League since 1933 had been exploited by the Pan-Germans – exemplars of the “old Bürgertum passively negating everything.” The regime’s resentment for the Pan-Germans even extended to the former Protection League, which served as a base for early NSDAP recruitment of personnel. The former chairman of the Protection League, Roth, who had joined the NSDAP back in 1928 and ran as NSDAP candidate for the Reichstag in 1936, demanded close cooperation of all nationalist associations with their specific constituencies to realize a broad Sammlungsbewegung, which would translate into the realization of a common

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Volksgemeinschaft. This was not in accord with the regime´s demand for total control of Germany´s associational life. Roth, who wanted to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Protection League´s dissolution of 1923, received permission to hold such festivities in several German states - but only for a “one-time reunion” of former members, and on the condition that these gatherings would “not turn into a grand celebration.” The regime wanted to establish its own elites and vanguards and to keep the promise of the Volksgemeinschaft alive; its alternatives and rivals had to be abolished, coopted, or consumed by the regime. The generational conflict, however, which had separated several members of older generational cohorts from the young NS-movement during the Third Reich and led to different group solidarities with the Pan-Germans representing only one of these groups, remains central in explaining the dissolution of the Pan-German League.

Global War and „Volksgemeinschaft“: Pan-German Legacies

The conflict over political and symbolic leadership continued until 1939, while the regime established itself as the heir of the Pan-German ideological tradition. Pan-German media was absorbed into the new regime. Claß´s Deutschlands Erneuerung was seized by the Reichsnährstand in 1937 and the demise of the Deutsche Zeitung came already three years earlier. The end of the Deutsche Zeitung went hand in hand with the transfer of the Verlagsgesellschaft to the Reichsnährstand Verlags-G.m.b.H. and the subsequent dissolution of

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213 See Die Spirale: Unabhängige Deutschvölkische Zeitschrift, 1/2 October 1937, 6.
the managing “board of friends” of the newspaper.\textsuperscript{216} The \textit{Alldeutsche Vermögensverwaltung}, through which the League organized its resources mostly for the management of its books, papers, and pamphlets, was dissolved between 1939 and 1940 and deprived Claß and his former Pan-German activists of any opportunity to finance further publications.\textsuperscript{217} Hugenberg was forced to gradually sell his shares in the UFA to the state after 1933 until the firm was nationalized under Goebbels’ auspices in 1937. The end of Hugenberg’s media empire came in 1944, when he finally sold the Scherl-Verlag for tens of millions of Mark to the state. In 1942 the archive of the Pan-German League was transferred to the Reichsarchiv, after Claß purged the files of material derogatory to the National Socialists. Walter Frank from the \textit{Reichsinstitut für Geschichte des neuen Deutschlands} and the leading historian of the regime wanted the League’s files in connection with a three-volume edition of the works of Carl Peters, who was now monopolized as a vanguard of Imperial Germany’s colonial empire which were to predict the Third Reich’s broader colonial aspirations on the European continent and in the world.\textsuperscript{218}

Otherwise, the Pan-Germans had become irrelevant as former ideological vanguards. Speakers for the training division of the Office of Colonial Policy of the NSDAP (\textit{Kolonialpolitisches Amt}) were not recruited from the Pan-German League but from the Reich Colonial League (\textit{Reichskolonialbund}), which had become the most successful successor of the old Imperial colonial associations with more than two million members by 1943.\textsuperscript{219} The works of Hasse and Claß on colonial policy and war aims were rarely studied in the seminars that trained state officials to administer Germany’s new empire. Still, the regime learned the lessons that Claß

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{217} See Leicht, “Heinrich Claß,” ch. 5.
\textsuperscript{219} See also Reichskolonialbund, „Rundschreiben Nr. 14. Richtlinien für die kolonialpolitischen Referenten,” 20 March 1939, BA-B, NS 52, 50-51.
\end{footnotes}
had gleaned from the failure of Imperial Germany’s colonial policy—the need to expand into central and eastern Europe and to pursue autarky—as it planned for the next total war.\(^{220}\) Although the Pan-Germans had moderated their war aims after 1918 the National Socialists used their prior wartime demands to draw a direct connection between Imperial Germany’s colonial ambitions and the regime’s genocidal program in the east, as exemplified in the *Generalplan Ost* of July 1941, which envisaged the depopulation, enslavement, and murder of tens of million people in Eastern Europe.\(^{221}\) Expanding Claß’s and Hugenberg’s war aims of 1914 and 1915, Hitler aimed for the total political, economic, and racial reordering of Europe. He declared in the Reichstag in October 1939 that the dissolution of Poland would allow for a “new ordering” and resettlement of eastern Europe’s nationalities to “do away at least with parts of the causes of European conflicts.”\(^{222}\) The Pan-Germans sympathized with Hitler’s plans for territorial expansion and the creation of a German-dominated *Mitteleuropa*. But shortly before the League’s dissolution in 1939, the Pan-Germans concluded that Hitler’s rearmament policy and his pursuit of total power over the army presaged a “total war” or a *Völkerkampf*, in which the distinction between civilians and soldiers would be blurred.\(^{223}\) Cautiously, the Pan-Germans criticized ruthless military violence against civilians, as in the Spanish Civil War. Such anonymous mass-killing of civilians would only spark the hatred of other nations.\(^{224}\)

\(^{220}\) See also Ulrich Herbert, „Was haben die Nationalsozialisten aus dem Krieg gelernt?,“ in Krumeich, *Nationalsozialismus und Erster Weltkrieg*, 21-34.


\(^{223}\) *Aldeutsche Blätter*, 20 August 1937.

\(^{224}\) *Aldeutsche Blätter*, 14 November 1936.
The Pan-Germans did not foresee the military successes of the *Blitzkrieg* in Poland and France in 1940. After 1940, German troops occupied territories far beyond the borders of the Greater Germany envisaged by the Pan-Germans. The occupation of Belgium and France in the early summer of 1940 seemed like the final end of the First World War.\(^{225}\) The Pan-Germans agreed. However, Hitler´s military designs went far beyond restoring German greatness and dominating *Mitteleuropa*. Vast population resettlements and the extermination of Jews and Slavs far exceeded anything contemplated during the First World War.

Nevertheless, the Pan-Germans served a useful purpose. Nazi propaganda could craft an ideological link from one movement to the other. Claß’s war-aims program of September 1914, his “Kaiser-book,” and the League’s role in founding the Protection League all secured a place for Claß, a “fanatic fighter for German unification and against the Jews,” in the pedigree of National Socialism.\(^{226}\) Although the Pan-Germans had not advocated or predicted the extermination of 6 million Jews in Europe, they had popularized racism with their “polyvalent” and “flexible” ideology of ethnic homogenization.\(^{227}\) The most apparent legacy of the Pan-Germans’ was the exclusion of unwanted German citizens. Between 1933 and 1939, almost 300,000 Germans were sterilized, 270,000 Jews emigrated, the number of Jewish-owned businesses shrank from 50,000 in 1933 to 9,000 in July 1938, and 20,000 to 60,000 people had been arrested in concentration camps by the eve of the Second World War for a variety of charges.\(^{228}\)

But there were other legacies. Nazi society included a variant of the Pan-Germans’ meritorcratic vision of a *Leistungsgesellschaft*, insofar as it rewarded devotion to the regime and


\(^{226}\) *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, 25 February 1943.

\(^{227}\) See also Walkenhorst, *Nation-Volk-Rasse* and Rohkrämer, *A Single Communal Faith*.

\(^{228}\) See Michael Wildt, *Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus* (Göttingen: UTB, 2008), 110-130.
its aims. Data on the NSDAP’s social composition between 1930 and 1944 suggests a significant decline in the percentage of upper middle-class members and social and cultural elites.\textsuperscript{229} The regime’s promise to open social hierarchies to talent and achievement clashed with the League’s own social composition, which was drawn from the upper and upper-middle classes, while available data of the League’s social composition of the head council, the executive committee, the executive council, and selected local chapters between 1914 and 1937 signals an apparent continuity of personnel in regard to professional background and social status.\textsuperscript{230} The gradual *Entbürgerlichung* of political elites, the employment of lower-class activists, and the image of open personnel selection in the Third Reich left the Pan-Germans ambivalent.\textsuperscript{231} The willingness to support the NS-movement was always there, for the alternatives to the NS-regime appeared to be democracy and Liberalism, which the Pan-Germans rejected.

While Pan-Germans were bitter about the regime’s claim to total power and its populism, there was no serious Pan-German opposition to the regime. Germany’s conservative elites, including those who tried to overthrow the regime in 1944 like Schlabrendorff, had no plans to reestablish democracy and had been involved in the mass killing during the war.\textsuperscript{232} However, it was delusional for the Pan-Germans to assume that Hitler would crush the rights of their enemies while leaving the League untouched. The downfall of the Pan-German League reflected the willful ignorance of the radical *Bildungsbürgertum*, which feared the rise of mass politics and yet clung to the illusion that it could serve as a political vanguard. Hitler’s attempt to


\textsuperscript{230} See appendix Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.


monopolize the intellectual and political legacy of bourgeois radical nationalism left no room for the continued existence of the League.

Many of the League’s leading activists, including Lehmann, Krauß, Geiser, Kirdorf, Stolte, Hartmann, and Grube, had died shortly before the outbreak of the war. Others, like Bang, who died in 1945, ended up in the hands of the Soviets. Hugenberg died without major assets in 1951 in Rinteln in Western Germany. Before his death, a denazification tribunal judged him a “follower” (Mitläufer) of the NS-regime. When his heirs tried to reacquire one of his former estates from the state in Saxony in 2005, however, the court determined that he had been intelligent enough to foresee Hitler’s totalitarian intentions and, because he had helped Hitler seize power in 1933, he was not only a “follower” of the regime but also a partner in crime (Hugenberg’s heirs were, therefore, not entitled to compensation). Claß lost most of his belongings in an air raid of Berlin in 1943. A year later he appointed his daughter Anneliese his legal agent in all private and political matters, including the administration of his memoirs. Claß lived to witness the German defeat, the loss of substantial parts of the German Empire of 1871, the dissolution of Prussia by the Allies in February 1947, and the foundation of two German states two years later. He spent the last years of his life in Jena in the German Democratic Republic. By the time of his death in 1953, Claß had only modest assets but was able to escape major attention of the Ministry of State Security. At Hugenberg’s funeral 1951 and at Claß’s funeral two years later, Otto Meesmann, a close friend of both Pan-Germans, acknowledged that “we stand on the ruins of Bismarck’s Empire.” It was also their legacy that with Hitler’s

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235 See Leicht, „Heinrich Claß,“ ch. 5.
seizure of power and his promise to complete Bismarck’s foundation of the Reich in a second
total war, the Pan-Germans lost not only the League in the regime’s control of National Socialist
Volksgemeinschaft but also their most valued utopia.
Conclusion

Between 1914 and 1939, Germany witnessed a fundamental restructuring of the radical Right as a result of war, revolution, Weimar democracy, and National Socialist dictatorship. This study has examined the Pan-German League’s response to these challenges as the organization struggled to adjust its ideology and strategy to the demands of democracy and mass mobilization. It was between 1914 and 1929 that the Pan-German League evolved from being the vanguard of radical nationalism to a museum-piece of the “national opposition.” The Pan-German League faced severe challenges to its cultural assumptions (values and norms), its social grounding (constituencies and membership), and its political strategies to gain access to power, form alignments, and manage rivalries within the Right.¹ This study has argued that the League faced growing political isolation from the government and within the broader radical Right, particularly after the outbreak of war in 1914 as the Pan-Germans remained tied to a class-based utopia of a Volksgemeinschaft and clung to techniques of mobilization that had been built around the continuing power of Germany’s Bürgertum. Rejecting the active inclusion of the masses, the League had but limited success in mobilizing even members of the educated classes, while a lack of financial resources restricted the League’s ability to make good on its pretensions to speak for all the German people. Instead, the Pan-German League remained tied to its efforts to blunt the challenges of democracy and mass society and to revitalize the authoritarian state.

Chapter one surveyed the rise of the League after its foundation in 1891. The Pan-Germans early laid claim to Bismarck’s political legacy. They wished to emulate Bismarck’s success and to occupy an alternative center of political legitimacy against both the Kaiser’s government and the Reichstag. The claim to speak as educated experts on behalf of the people

¹ See also Dieter Rucht, „The Impact of National Contexts and Social Movement Structures,“ in Doug McAdam and John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, Comparative Perspectives on Social Movement, 185-204.
defined for the Pan-Germans a sense of their own political authority and cultural leadership, which transcended their limited membership and resources. The League called for territorial expansion on the European continent, colonial power, ethnic homogeneity, cultural re-education of the people according to völkisch principles, and enforced political harmony through the suppression of Social Democracy and political Catholicism. Thanks largely to the political stalemate in the Reichstag, which was due to the rise of the SPD between 1903 and 1912, the League’s politics of anti-parliamentarianism radicalized under Claß since 1908. At the same time, the League increasingly advocated war as a means to unify Germany’s political classes in the service of territorial expansion and cultural rebirth. It promoted authoritarianism and war as a means to expand the German Empire and to resolve domestic conflict. The League’s radical rhetoric and exploitation of the media made it a significant force in shaping public opinion, which brought pressure on the government.

The League was neither omnipotent nor autonomous, however. It was affected by broader changes within the German radical Right and, by 1914, it had failed to organize a Sammlungsbewegung of the Right. While relations with the Navy League and the Colonial Association remained cordial and vital on the local level, competition among these and other organizations over cultural and political power prevented the League from mediating the broader mobilization of the Right, anticipating problems that Claß faced between 1914 and 1933. The strategic alliance between the Pan-German League and the Agrarian League in 1913 demonstrated that cooperation was based on sharing resources but not constituencies or leadership – a pattern that determined cooperation as well as competition among the movements of the radical Right since the war.

The second chapter was devoted to the First World War, which provided the most critical period of political changes for the League as it seemed to offer an opportunity for the Pan-
Germans to realize their utopia. Cultural and political unity, territorial expansion, the creation of a Mitteleuropa of nominally independent states under German control all seemed within reach. The First World War was the most significant event in the history of the Pan-German League, during which the concept of a Volksgemeinschaft was challenged by both the erosion of the Burgfrieden and the continuing failure of the Pan-Germans to organize a lasting Sammlungsbewegung of the Right or an enduring civil-military dictatorship. These wartime setbacks, Germany’s military defeat, and the collapse of political and social order traumatized the Pan-Germans and contributed to their sense of political and social dislocation, leaving them few means and avenues to cope with their immense disappointment once the war ended badly and created disorder and instability. The war took an enormous toll on the League’s financial resources, as well as the lives of many members. The exhaustion of the Pan-Germans’ financial capacities frustrated their ambitions to speak for all the people and their claims to transcend their own social and cultural confines.

In the aftermath of the war, which is treated in the third chapter, the Pan-Germans sought to mobilize Germany’s Bürgertum in order to capture the state, to restore Germany’s monarchies, and establish a civil-military dictatorship. Such a dictatorship was supposed to be a bastion of bourgeois power and a vehicle to integrate the working classes into a paternalistic Volksgemeinschaft. Educating the masses about the necessities of the League’s völkisch utopias was the most important avenue for the Pan-Germans. In order to contain the demands of political inclusion they offered economic incentives as the masses were supposed to benefit from a prosperous German Empire dominating Mitteleuropa and becoming a world power with colonial possessions in Europe and overseas. The promise of land for settlers remained a stable element of the League’s program to appease class conflict and redirect German emigration. In this concept, territorial expansion was a precondition for the League’s success and the First World War was
supposed to provide the opportunity to realize these visions. After 1918, the Pan-Germans now faced an additional test in the new paramilitary movements and younger right-wing groups, which also claimed to speak for all the German people as they cultivated a political culture of violence. The Pan-Germans regarded the collapse of Imperial Germany as a crisis of order, culture, and authority. But they also confronted charges that their own ideas about war as a means to achieve domestic unity had led to civil war. In the wake of military defeat and the dissolution of the monarchical order, the Pan-Germans redoubled their efforts to create social order through dictatorship and to secure unification with Austria.

After the war, the Pan-German League mobilized more members than ever before. Success in Austria was even more apparent, where the League mobilized an additional 20,000 members between 1919 and 1924. But increases in membership figures did not translate into a groundswell of enthusiasm among the rank and file. The limited appeal of the League was a major reason why the League’s membership did not stabilize once parliament was accepted as the Republic’s legitimate venue of politics during Weimar’s “stable years” from 1923 to 1930. Until 1923, however, the Pan-German League continued to exercise significant symbolic power. This fact was demonstrated in Claß’s negotiations with military and aristocratic elites, as well as with Free Corps units and the incipient National Socialist movement. The object of these negotiations was to establish a dictatorship, which would reinstitute the monarchy, outlaw undesirable political parties, and tie the parliament to a class-tiered suffrage system. The Pan-Germans failed, however, to take advantage of the radicalization of German politics after the war, while Claß shrunk from identifying the League with violent practices, even as he plotted to overthrow the Weimar Republic.

The beneficiaries of the new paramilitary political culture were radical nationalist movements that spoke to broader constituencies and practiced new forms of political
mobilization, while the Pan-Germans continued to act in the shadow of public politics. This role was epitomized in the foundation of the Protection League, by which the Pan-Germans sought to exploit anti-Semitism to broaden their own appeal to the masses. The Protection League mobilized radical anti-Semitic activists all over Germany, including in the liberal southwest, but it failed to mobilize new members for the Pan-German League. Few members of the Protection League joined the Pan-German League following the dissolution of the former organization in 1922. Exploiting anti-Semitism as an ideology hardly disguised the inability of the Pan-German leadership to move beyond the constraints of their belief that the Bürgertum should exercise ultimate authority.

The era of revolution and putsches, which lasted until 1923 and was analyzed in the fourth chapter, revealed the lack of coordination and cooperation among the constituent elements of the radical Right. As a response to the fragmentation of the Right, the League followed a strategy of engaging in party politics. Chapter five dealt with the League’s response to the fragmentation of the Right and how Pan-German members of the DNVP helped Hugenberg become the party’s chairman, which had served as Weimar’s most prominent Conservative and nationalist Sammlungspartei during the 1920s. Hugenberg’s assuming the chairmanship of the DNVP in 1928 was the crucial development. Here the designs of the Pan-German League played a pivotal role. The Pan-German caucus of the party, particularly the anti-Semitic German-Völkisch Reich Committee under the leadership of Freytag-Loringhoven, was the leading force. Claß then shifted power to Pan-German members of the DNVP, while the League’s local chapters helped purge factions that were hostile to Hugenberg from local Landesverbände of the DNVP. The alliance between the Pan-German League and the DNVP allowed the Pan-Germans to influence

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DNVP politics, but it also robbed the League of its identity as an independent extrapareliamentary actor.

The dependence of the League on the DNVP became apparent as Hitler’s NSDAP gained force in nationalist politics after the party’s refoundation in 1925. The NSDAP met the new demands of nationalist mobilization, appealing to the masses and disdaining the antiquated techniques of political mobilization that had characterized the German Right prior to 1918. The Pan-Germans, by contrast, clung to the hope that social and cultural privileges bestowed by property and education would govern the mobilization of the Right after 1918. The differences of approach were reflected in the dominance of older men in the League and younger men in the NSDAP. The League’s neglect of younger activists and women was especially damaging.4 While the League failed to mobilize these new constituencies, other members of the Pan-Germans’ traditional core of National Liberals and Conservatives grew old, became apolitical, joined other parties, or turned into “Vernunftrepublikaner” (such as Stresemann).5 The young radicals in the League who had supported Claß since 1903, had themselves grown old or left the League, while younger activists (those who were born after 1885) entered leadership positions only in limited numbers under Claß’s centralized regime, but after 1930 they ceased to do so altogether.

The aspirations of the Pan-Germans to create an exclusive organization of informed advisors to the government resulted in sectarianism, which prevented the League from expanding into broader social constituencies. Given his uncompromising ideology of “either-or,” Claß was unwilling to hold political office or join a party.6 In addition, his refusal to modernize the League, in order to contend with the challenges posed by the NSDAP, increased the League’s inflexibility

4 Elizabeth Harvey, „Serving the Volk, Saving the Nation: Women in the Youth Movement and the Public Sphere in Weimar Germany,“ in Jones and Retallack, Elections, Mass Politics, and Social Change, 201-221.
5 For the contested concept see Andreas Wirsching and Jürgen Eder, Vernunftrepublikanismus in der Weimarer Republik (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008).
6 See Alldeutsche Blätter, 20 March 1938.
after 1918.⁷ A strong *esprit de corps* saved the League from dissolution after 1918, but the principal problem remained that it could not durably mobilize a constituency of more than about 10,000 to 15,000 members of which again only 2,000 to 3,000 could be labeled devoted Pan-German activists - on both the national and local level.

The League thus retreated increasingly into itself with smaller circles of power, as Claß and his devoted friends dominated its leading institutions and local chapters. A cultural retreat into traditional, smaller venues of sociability and festivity reflected the Pan-Germans’ discomfort with new forms of mass politics. The League’s embrace of paramilitarism was limited to allowing the *Stahlhelm* to march and perform at conventions. As chapter six had shown, the Pan-Germans remained on the fringes of Weimar politics, meeting in backrooms of pubs rather than presenting themselves at mass rallies. The cultural landscape of the League’s activism was limited to the confines of rather modest forms of mass emotionalism and populist entertainment. They embraced instead a political strategy of *Sachlichkeit*, which produced emotionless debates that contrasted with their rhetoric of populism and radical reform before the war. The power of the League was limited in offering broad enough infrastructures for the mobilization of mass membership. The Pan-German League was integrated into a wide range of local networks of Conservative and bourgeois right-wing sociability, which, however, proved to become highly fragmented during the Weimar Republic. Much like the anti-Semitic German League, the Pan-German League was a *Gesinnungsgemeinschaft* that catered to the fears of Germany’s nationalist bourgeois milieu.⁸ What counted was members’ *Gesinnung*, which entitled them to claim political and cultural dominance.⁹

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⁸ *Alldeutsche Blätter*, 20 March 1936.
The failure of the Pan-Germans to seize political power led to mobilizational crises after 1923. Many middle-class Conservatives, who feared Marxism, Bolshevism, and democracy and had joined nationalist groups like the Pan-German League, moved on to the NSDAP, which penetrated the bourgeois associational infrastructure after 1928 and helped to enforce the political civil war with the Left.\(^\text{10}\) The nationalist Protestant milieu of the DNVP and the Pan-German League came under tremendous pressure from the NSDAP. Neither Hugenberg nor Claß was prepared to keep his supporters on board when their political allegiances were challenged by the rise of the NS-movement.

The dilemma for the Pan-Germans was that they shared their urban constituencies primarily with the former National Liberal Party, while the DNVP had its electoral successes mostly in the agrarian constituencies of the former German Conservative Party. Both the Pan-German League and the DNVP were overwhelmed in their efforts to mobilize these two different constituencies—the former liberal Bildungsbürgertum in the urban centers, on one hand, and the agrarian constituencies of the Conservatives on the other. The DNVP had electoral strongholds primarily east of the river Elbe, which came under pressure by the NSDAP after 1928. The regional strongholds of both the League and the DNVP were highly contested areas. Central Germany was a battleground for the SPD, the DVP, which worked as the successor to the National Liberal Party, and the NSDAP, which expanded here after 1928. The NSDAP also expanded into Prussia’s eastern provinces, Mecklenburg, and Schleswig Holstein, which the

DNVP had dominated before 1930. The DNVP and the League were thus crushed in the fall of their fragmented constituencies to the mobilizational success of the NSDAP. The Pan-German League itself remained surprisingly immune to infiltration by National Socialists, but the League also suffered from the erosion of liberalism and conservatism in the wake of war, inflation, and the Depression. In fact, the conquest of these milieus was the key to Hitler’s success after 1929, especially in Prussia where the League had always had its traditional strongholds.

Chapter seven has shown that both the DNVP and the Pan-German League fell victim to the transformation of the radical Right in light of Hitler’s success. The Nazis’ populist propaganda in tandem with their parliamentary gains rendered futile the Pan-Germans’ attempts to undermine the Republic through the DNVP. Both the League and the DNVP lacked charisma, resources, devoted members, and effective propaganda. The activists in both were old-fashioned Honoratioren, who wanted to become the new Honoratioren of German politics. When Hugenberg and Claß, together with the Stahlhelm, attempted to organize another Sammlungsbewegung between 1929 and 1931, their strategy was to embrace party politics and

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the power of the Reichstag, in order to abolish the Weimar Republic through the “national opposition” in the parliament. However, the radicalization of the DNVP under Hugenberg’s leadership turned this party into a splinter-group, whose electoral support declined as moderates abandoned the party in droves. As the “national opposition” turned into a vehicle for Hitler, Claß finally realized the futility of his strategy of creating a nationalist Sammlungsbewegung with Hugenberg as its leader.15

His own failure to generate mass support persuaded Hugenberg to swallow his doubts about Hitler and the NSDAP shortly before Hitler became chancellor in January 1933. Claß’s contempt for Hitler, which had become open opposition to cooperation with the NSDAP by the late summer of 1932, played no role in Hugenb erg’s decision to join Hitler’s cabinet. Hindenburg’s agreement to appoint a right-wing cabinet with Hitler and Hugenberg seemed to be the last chance for the radical Right to participate in an authoritarian government. Only the NS- movement effectively utilized new forms of political mobilization to offer a compelling vision of political order, socio-economic harmony, and Germany’s return to great-power status. The traditional loyalty of the Pan-Germans to the state, the army, the civil service, and the concept of monarchy clashed with the National Socialists’ conceptions of Volksgemeinschaft. The Nazi promises of social pacification and political unity had a significant appeal to older, Prussian, Protestant, bourgeois constituencies. The National Socialists could present themselves as both National Socialist and Conservative, unlike the activists in the DNVP and the Pan-German League, who now seemed like old-fashioned Honoratioren who represented narrow bourgeois interests and shared a distinct Prussian or Borussian identity.16

The eighth chapter of the dissertation demonstrated how the Pan-Germans entered the Third Reich with a combination of hope, ambivalence, scepticism, and forms of silent resistance. This combination reflected the uneasy relationship between Claß and Hitler during the Weimar Republic. The abolition of the Rechtsstaat after 1933, which the Pan-Germans had themselves advocated, promised the realization of the long-awaited dictatorship. However, the League itself soon encountered the same process of Gleichschaltung that the regime had used to suppress the left-wing opposition. The Pan-Germans became an object of the new regime’s efforts to establish its own political and cultural hegemony. The League’s posturing as an elite vanguard association of old Honoratioren of the Right conflicted with the NSDAP’s efforts to redefine the meaning of right-wing politics. The League had no place in the Third Reich, as the NS-state laid claim to the political and symbolic heritage of organized bourgeois nationalism, including the ideological legacy of the Pan-German League. The regime separated Pan-Germanism from the Pan-German League and took over the basest and most radical goals of Pan-Germanism: territorial expansion and ethnic homogeneity. The Pan-Germans were stripped of their ideological pretensions and dwarfed by the regime’s uncompromising claim to speak for all the German people. The Hitler regime finally outmanoeuvred and undermined the Pan-German League.

Between 1933 and 1939, the League retreated from the public, in hopes of escaping the regime’s supervision and intimidation. In their private meetings, activists bemoaned the National Socialists’ populism, street violence, and disregard for Conservative principles in managing the German economy. After 1936, when the regime stepped up its efforts to make German society ready for the next war by eradicating every niche of potential opposition, the League buckled under the pressure. The Pan-Germans did not openly oppose the regime because they could not. Their resources were limited given their own ageing membership and the broad appeal of the NS-Volksgemeinschaft. The Pan-Germans persisted in hoping that this Volksgemeinschaft might
provide the Bürgertum with an important role in leading the country. The fears of social, political, and cultural dislocation also made the Pan-Germans align with the NS-movement. The dissolution of the Pan-German League in the spring of 1939 brought to a formal end the League’s role as a vanguard of radical nationalism.

The Pan-German League had transformed its “beer-hall-politics” from the prewar era into a leading role in the “national opposition” on the eve of the First World War. However, the role of the Pan-Germans in the extraparliamentary radical Right had become questionable by 1917, when the Fatherland Party demonstrated the limits of a Sammlungsbewegung initiated and controlled by the League. The League’s role was then almost destroyed by 1923, as the failure of the Hitler Putsch set the stage for the NSDAP’s rise to power. The First World War thus represented the watershed in the history of the Pan-German League. It resulted in the complete transformation of German politics as well as a fundamental regrouping on the radical Right. The League, however, lacked the generational and cultural resources to adapt to the challenges of democracy and mass society after 1918. In particular, the League could not accommodate the claims to power of both the “front generation” of war veterans and the younger cohorts of the “war-youth generation,” those born between 1900 and 1910, and the “postwar generation” of those born after 1910. The cultural legacy of the “front generation” was administered by the Stahlhelm, while the younger generation was instead represented by the SA troopers. The National Socialists also lost interest in the mobilizational dynamic of the Pan-German League as a former pioneer of radical nationalism shortly after Hitler had met with Claß in 1920. Instead, Hitler increasingly idolized other vanguards – most of all the Fascists movement of Mussolini.

The Protection League, on the other side, was the most important avenue of early right-wing

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mass mobilization after the war, which brought together Pan-Germans and National Socialists in one powerful association. In the end, however, it only worked to transfer anti-Semitism as a mobilizing strategy from the Pan-German League to other movements on the radical Right, including the NSDAP, which profited most from the mobilization of anti-Semitism of the Protection League as the party’s future personnel was socialized there.

Although the war demonstrated the Pan-Germans’ insignificance, they never abandoned their belief that men of education should exercise political, social, and cultural power. Even in 1935, when Claß republished the last edition of his “Kaiser-book,” he demanded, as he had in 1912, that those who were “academically trained should be the geistige Führer of the people, should present the backbone of political life – everyone knows that we are far away from this ideal.” The book was published with the scarce resources of the League’s Vermögensverwaltung and appeared in a cheap paperback edition, but the claim to function as geistige Führer in German politics allowed the Pan-Germans to style themselves as the spiritus rector of the radical Right, as well as the precursor to National Socialism.

This study has argued that the route from the Pan-Germans to Hitler was not as linear as often been suggested in West and East German historiography. The League’s attempts to inspire other organizations, to infiltrate or support them financially, were limited after the war. Even after Hugenberg took over the chairmanship of the DNVP with the help of the Pan-Germans, the party did not become a branch of the Pan-German League. The often-quoted alliance of Germany’s Conservative bourgeois elites with the NSDAP, the Bündnis der Eliten as Fritz Fischer has described it, remained fragile and contradictory. It was nonetheless fateful given the proximity of the right-wing parties’ ideological demands with respect to Volksgemeinschaft, racism, territorial expansion, the abolition of democracy, and the defeat of socialism and

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liberalism. The degree of Pan-German support for the NSDAP was thus no “accident” and National Socialist radicalism was related to the Pan-Germans’ radical nationalism.

The contribution of the Pan-Germans, however, lay mostly in providing their symbolic capital. As Honoratioren of the radical Right they had enjoyed significant symbolic power until the early years of the Third Reich. In addition, their contribution to the rise of National Socialism lay in a mindset that suggested revolutionary elements to the NS-movement. Hitler toyed in private with the image that his movement was “a child of the Pan-German League,” while the industrial magnate and Nazi-sympathizer, Alfred Thyssen, wondered “how many ideas had been adopted by the NSDAP.” At the League’s convention in September 1930, Claß himself summarized the contribution of the Pan-Germans to contemporary political discourse:

Racial theory, as developed by Gobineau, Ammon, Schemann, and Chamberlain, would have been ignored without energetic promotion by the Pan-German League. Today’s intellectual life is dominated by these theories, and the political consequences that arise from them have long been established. The fight against the Jews today and in the past is connected to racial theories. The knowledge that stems from racial theory has transformed our understanding of a völkische Welt- und Staatsanschauung that is about to be realized.

As early as in 1894, the librarian at the University of Freiburg and the Pan-German activist, Schemann, had founded the Gobineau Society, which attracted the attention of Claß, Heydt, Schroeder-Poggelow, and Samassa, who then made the Pan-German League join the Gobineau Society as a corporate member in 1902. In 1913, the society included Carl Caesar Eiffe, Itzenplitz, Fick, Klingemann, Lübeck Senator Neumann as private members, while the entire executive committee of the Pan-German League and the local chapters of Berlin,

19 See Fischer, *Bündnis der Eliten*.
22 See *Deutsche Zeitung*, 22 September 1930.
Düsseldorf, and Hamburg joined as corporative members.\(^{23}\) The influence of the Pan-German League thus lay primarily in the realm of ideology. The Pan-Germans were immensely influential in promoting the primacy of the German *Volk*, the cult of war, and dictatorship, all of which inspired many nationalists beyond the National Socialists. However, as Axel Schildt has noted, “the relationship between Liberalism and anti-Liberalism, imperial visions of *Volk*, Empire, and Nation, as well as concepts of racially homogenized society are complex and oftentimes contradictory.”\(^{24}\) This observation also applies to the relationship among the advocates of these imperial visions.

It was one of many paradoxes in the League’s history that the Pan-Germans were not the beneficiaries of their own efforts. Too central were the differences in style and assumptions between them and the NS-movement, which saw the Pan-Germans too much rooted in a *bildungsbürgerlich* world view that was shaped in Imperial Germany and, therefore, neglecting the new power of charismatic mass politics. The charisma of Hitler and other NS leaders was not only built upon the power of ideology, but upon the power of speech and violence. As Hitler noted in 1941 during one of his monologues in the *Führerhauptquartier*:

> The men of the national opposition were exhausted by their expertise, as is the case if someone has been preaching for decades to deaf ears. When the moment to act arrived, they lost touch with reality. Their character was certainly decent, those *Alteutsche* [sic!], but their field of activity was the field of literature, their readership were some 20,000 people of their kind. They could not speak the language of the people.\(^{25}\)

Hitler had nothing but contempt for the Pan-Germans’ associational milieu. He complained bitterly about the rules and regulations the NSDAP had to follow when the party had to make itself comfortable as an association (*eingetragener Verein, e.V.*), which made the party legally responsible to the state as a *Rechtsperson*. For Hitler, the rituals that came with the bureaucratic


\(^{24}\) See Schildt, „Radikale Antworten von rechts auf die Kulturkrise der Jahrhundertwende.“

demands of the associational law—democratic election of officers and reports to the police—was nothing but a “joke.”

The period from 1914 until 1939 was for the League an era of both ideological power and a loss of significance, as well as illusions and delusions. The Pan-German League remained tied to conceptions and ideology from the Imperial era. The rise of Hitler was only possible given a radical nationalist discourse that the Pan-Germans had helped to shape since the turn of the century. But Hitler’s appeal was also a response to the shortcomings of the radical Right of the Imperial era. The Pan-Germans could not respond to the National Socialist challenge efficiently; their resources were too limited and their mindset too narrow to move beyond the confines of Honoratiorenpolitik. MacGregor Knox has noted the fundamental tension between the League’s claim to speak for all the German people and its limited mobilizational appeal. The Pan-Germans’ dilemma was, he concludes, that they “remained Conservatives by provenance and milieu,” while their assumptions and “convictions increasingly made them revolutionaries.”

This struggle between reaction, reform, and revolution left the Pan-Germans sitting between too many chairs to be successful in the bitter competition over right-wing leadership.

The rise of the NSDAP, therefore, was due in part to the ignorance of the masses and the failure of elite conceptions of leadership among nationalist bourgeois movements like the Pan-German League. The League’s elitist ideal, its pretension to serve as a Geistesaristokratie, gave the NS-movement greater credibility in presenting the long-awaited charismatic Führer to the longing masses. The League’s bourgeois elites failed to isolate Hitler and offer an alternative

26 Jochmann, Adolf Hitler, 257.
27 See also Breuer, Ordnungen der Ungleichheit.
conception of *Volksgemeinschaft* to the populist promises of the NS-movement. The Pan-German League shared Hitler´s ideology of the primacy of the state, the mistrust in democratic parliamentary representation, and racism as a driving force of modern society, but the authoritarian Pan-German *Bildungsbürger* failed to present a political program that featured the masses as an active participating force in society. It also failed to develop alternative centers of nationalist authority for their own benefit. Bismarck had served this purpose between 1890 and 1898. Between 1914 and 1933, however, none of the potential centers, such as Hindenburg or Hitler, was willing to cooperate, and even Hugenberg failed to meet Claß´s expectations as a potential dictatorial successor to Bismarck. With fatal consequences, the Pan-Germans were forced to join in acclaiming Germany´s new *Führer* in 1933, who had been chosen by Germany´s leading elites, including Hugenberg, as well as by the masses.

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Figure 1  Total Membership of the Pan-German League and Readership of the “Alldeutsche Blätter,” 1891-1939

\[\text{Membership Pan-German League (Germany)} \quad \text{Readership "Alldeutsche Blätter"}\]

Figure 2  
Number of Local Chapters and Foreign Chapters of the Pan-German League, 1891-1938

Figure 3  Total Membership in Local Chapters of the Pan-German League in Dresden, 1895-1938, and Hamburg, 1892-1936

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Figure 4  Numbers of Honorary Mentions of Members of the Pan-German League in the “Alldutsche Blätter – Ehrentafel” (Fallen Soldiers and Iron Cross Receivers), 7 November 1914 – 15 April 1916⁴

Figure 5  Distribution of Local Chapter Distribution of the German Fatherland Party, 1918

Compiled according to Vaterlands-Jahrbuch 1919, ed. Deutsche Vaterlands-Partei (Berlin n.d.), 105-128.

Local Chapters German Fatherland Party 1918 (2,220 in total)
Figure 6   Comparison of Numbers of Local Chapters of the Pan-German League, 1917 and 1919

Figure 7  Entry and Exit of Members of the Pan-German League, September 1918 – January 1919\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{7} BA-B, R 8048, vol. 125, 14.
Figure 8  Number of Members Joining and Leaving the Pan-German League, 1917–1921

Figure 9  Total Membership of the German-\textit{Völkisch} Protection and Defiance League, 1919-1922$^9$

Figure 10   Number of Local Chapters of the German-Völkisch Protection and Defiance League with Highest Membership, 1 June 1920

10 „Vorläufiger Geschäftsbericht des Deutschvölkischen Schutz- und Trutzbundes,“ 1 June 1920, FZH, 11/R28
Alfred Roth, Zeitungen, Zeitschriften, Vereinigungen, Sonstiges, n.p. [4].
Figure 11   Total Membership of the Pan-German League in Germany and German-Austria, 1919 – 1927

Figure 12  The “Hugenberg Legacy”: Number of Members Joining and Leaving of the Pan-German League, October 1928 – March 1929

BA-B, R 8048, vol. 158, 146.
Figure 13  The “Hugenberg Legacy”: Number of Members of Selected Local Chapters of the Pan-German League in Saxony, 16 June 1927 – 22 November 1929

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Stadtarchiv Dresden, 13.1., vol. 102, 1.
Figure 14  Number of Members of the Pan-German League Serving in the Reichstag/Nationalversammlung in 1890, 1901, 1902, 1908, 1913, 1917, and 1924\textsuperscript{14}

Figure 15  Pan-German Legacies: Number of Members in the German-Völkisch Protection and Defiance League of Members of the *Reichstag* between 1924 and 1945\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure15}
\caption{Membership in the German-Völkisch Protection League of Members of the Reichstag/Nationalversammlung}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{15} Compilation according to Lilla *Statisten in Uniform* and *Reichstagshandbuch 1933* (Berlin: Reichsdrukkerei, 1934).
Figure 16  The Power of Generations: Attendance Figures for Members of the Executive Committee at the Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses, June 1920-September 1922 and October 1924-September 1927\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{attendance_figures}
\caption{List of 21 members having attended most of the meetings of the Executive Committee (total of 26 Meetings)}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{16} See Sitzungen des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses des ADV, BA-B, R 8048, vols 128-135 and 140-152.
Figure 17  The Power of Generations: Attendance Figures for Members of the Executive Committee at the *Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses*, March 1928-September 1933

List of 21 members having attended most of the meetings of the Executive Committee (total of 21 Meetings)

---


501
Figure 18  Male and Female Membership in Selected Local Chapters of the Pan-German League in Zittau, Radeberg, Bad Schandau, Bensheim, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Bad Cannstadt, and the Unterweser and Rhein-Main District, 1919 - 1938

Figure 19  Number of Lectures Given By Staff Members of the Headquarters of the Pan-German League at Pan-German Conventions and in Local Chapters of the League, 1928-1932\(^9\)

Figure 20  Election Results of the DNVP at the *Reichstagswahlen*, 1928-1933\(^{20}\)

Figure 21   Number of Members in Selected Local Chapters of the Pan-German League in the Rhein-Main District, 1929, 1935, 1936

Figure 22  Number of Members in Selected Local Chapters of the Pan-German League in the Nord and Nord-West District Gestapo/Sicherheitsdienst, 1936

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22 STA Moscow, Fonds 500, opis, vol. 568, 3 and 12.
Figure 23  Number of Copies Printed of Works by Heinrich Claß, 1909-1941\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure23.png}
\caption{Number of Copies Printed of Works by Heinrich Claß, 1909-1941}
\end{figure}

### Table 1  Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League, 1914\(^{24}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
<th>First Leaders of the Gau Chapters</th>
<th>Leaders of the 261 Local Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number (%)</td>
<td>Number (%)</td>
<td>Number (%)</td>
<td>Number (%)</td>
<td>Number (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nobility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(also Military)</td>
<td>2 (33.3%)</td>
<td>2 (10.0%)</td>
<td>(9 = 9.1%)</td>
<td>1 (0.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (33.3%)</td>
<td>1 (5.0%)</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>1 (0.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Junkers, Estate Owner</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (15.0%)</td>
<td>15 (15.2%)</td>
<td>2 (11.8%)</td>
<td>31 (11.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners, Merchants (Kaufmann)</strong></td>
<td>1 (16.7%)</td>
<td>5 (25.0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.1%)</td>
<td>12 (12.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members of Parliament (Landtag)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1 (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privatdozenten (Assistant Professors)</strong></td>
<td>2 (10.0%)</td>
<td>17 (17.2%)</td>
<td>3 (17.6%)</td>
<td>29 (11.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pastors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (0.5%)</td>
<td>4 (4.0%)</td>
<td>10 (3.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Higher Employees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (5.0%)</td>
<td>4 (4.0%)</td>
<td>10 (3.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lawyers, Notaries, Justizräte</strong></td>
<td>1 (16.7%)</td>
<td>4 (20.0%)</td>
<td>5 (5.1%)</td>
<td>1 (0.5%)</td>
<td>19 (7.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medical Doctors, Sanitätsräte</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writers, Artists, Journalists</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engineers, Architects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chemists, Biologists</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Merchants (Kleinhandlern), Independent Entrepreneurs</strong></td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
<td>6 (2.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civil Servants (Mittlere Beamte)</strong></td>
<td>2 (10.0%)</td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>13 (5.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employees (Mittlere Angestellte)</strong></td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
<td>2 (2.0%)</td>
<td>2 (11.8%)</td>
<td>29 (11.0%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lower Civil Servants</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artisans</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pensioners, Privatmänner</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Professions (no Specification)</strong></td>
<td>3 (3.0%)</td>
<td>5 (29.4%)</td>
<td>13 (5.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (0.8%)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
<td>99 (100%)</td>
<td>17 (100%)</td>
<td>261 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2  Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League, May 1916

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
<th>First Leaders of the Gau Chapters</th>
<th>Leaders of the 255 Local Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility (also Military)</td>
<td>1 = 33.3%</td>
<td>1 = 5.0%</td>
<td>2 = 1.6%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td>3 = 1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>(1) = (33.3%)</td>
<td>(1) = (5.0%)</td>
<td>(1) = (0.8%)</td>
<td>(2) = 0.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>1 = 2.7%</td>
<td>1 = 0.8%</td>
<td>22 = 17.6%</td>
<td>2 = 11.8%</td>
<td>44 = 17.2%</td>
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<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td>1 = 33.3%</td>
<td>5 = 25.0%</td>
<td>9 = 7.2%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td>16 = 6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kaufmann)</td>
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<td>3 = 15.0%</td>
<td>8 = 6.4%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td>8 = 3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Parliament (Landtag)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Parliament (Reichstag)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>3 = 15.0%</td>
<td>20 = 16.0%</td>
<td>3 = 17.6%</td>
<td>34 = 13.3%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatdozenten (Assistant Professors)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>1 = 5.0%</td>
<td>4 = 3.2%</td>
<td>12 = 4.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, Notaries, Justizräte</td>
<td>1 = 33.3%</td>
<td>4 = 20.0%</td>
<td>7 = 5.8%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td>20 = 7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors</td>
<td>1 = 5.0%</td>
<td>7 = 5.8%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 = 7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 = 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>3 = 2.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>4 = 3.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 = 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = 1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kleinhändler), Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>3 = 2.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 = 4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (Mittlere Beamte)</td>
<td>4 = 3.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 = 3.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>7 = 5.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>26 = 10.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (Mittlere Angestelle)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 = 5.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 = 2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, Privatmänner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = 1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no Specification)</td>
<td>9 = 7.2%</td>
<td>4 = 23.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11 = 4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>(2) = (1.6%)</td>
<td>(2) = (11.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4) = (1.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3 = 100%</td>
<td>20 = 100%</td>
<td>125 = 100%</td>
<td>17 = 100%</td>
<td>255 = 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League. May 1917

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
<th>First Leaders of the Gau Chapters</th>
<th>Leaders of the 263 Local Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility</td>
<td>2 = 40.0%</td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(also Military)</td>
<td>(2) = (40.0)%</td>
<td>(2) = (1.4)%</td>
<td>(1) = (0.4)%</td>
<td>(1) = (0.4)%</td>
<td>(1) = (0.4)%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>2 = 11.8%</td>
<td>2 = 0.8%</td>
<td>2 = 0.8%</td>
<td>2 = 0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>1 = 3.4%</td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 20.0%</td>
<td>5 = 17.2%</td>
<td>5 = 17.6%</td>
<td>5 = 17.6%</td>
<td>5 = 17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td>1 = 20.0%</td>
<td>3 = 6.5%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kaufmann)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29 = 100%</td>
<td>29 = 100%</td>
<td>29 = 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Parliament (Reichstag)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>5 = 17.2%</td>
<td>20 = 14.4%</td>
<td>5 = 29.4%</td>
<td>34 = 12.9%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatdozenten (Assistant Professors)</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>4 = 2.9%</td>
<td>16 = 6.1%</td>
<td>16 = 6.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>1 = 3.4%</td>
<td>7 = 5.0%</td>
<td>12 = 4.6%</td>
<td>12 = 4.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>1 = 3.4%</td>
<td>1 = 5.9%</td>
<td>17 = 6.5%</td>
<td>17 = 6.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, Notaries, Justizräte</td>
<td>1 = 20%</td>
<td>8 = 5.8%</td>
<td>20 = 7.6%</td>
<td>20 = 7.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors</td>
<td>1 = 3.4%</td>
<td>8 = 5.8%</td>
<td>20 = 7.6%</td>
<td>20 = 7.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
<td>1 = 0.4%</td>
<td>4 = 1.5%</td>
<td>4 = 1.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>4 = 2.9%</td>
<td>7 = 2.7%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>14 = 5.3%</td>
<td>16 = 6.1%</td>
<td>16 = 6.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td>8 = 3.0%</td>
<td>12 = 4.6%</td>
<td>17 = 6.5%</td>
<td>17 = 6.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kleinhändler), Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>1 = 3.4%</td>
<td>4 = 2.9%</td>
<td>8 = 3.0%</td>
<td>8 = 3.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (Mittlere Beamte)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>12 = 8.6%</td>
<td>14 = 5.3%</td>
<td>16 = 6.1%</td>
<td>16 = 6.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (Mittlere Angestellte)</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td>3 = 1.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
<td>6 = 2.3%</td>
<td>4 = 1.5%</td>
<td>4 = 1.5%</td>
<td>4 = 1.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, Privatmänner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no Specification)</td>
<td>4 = 13.8%</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>4 = 23.5%</td>
<td>13 = 4.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>(2) = (1.4)%</td>
<td>(1) = (5.9)%</td>
<td>(7) = (2.7)%</td>
<td>(7) = (2.7)%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5 = 100%</td>
<td>29 = 100%</td>
<td>139 = 100%</td>
<td>17 = 100%</td>
<td>263 = 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 4  Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League, June 1918

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
<th>First Leaders of the Gau Chapters</th>
<th>Leaders of the 390 Local Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility (also Military)</td>
<td>4 = 50.0%</td>
<td>3 = 8.3%</td>
<td>4 = 2.7%</td>
<td>1 = 0.8%</td>
<td>1 = 0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
<td>2 = 25.0%</td>
<td>7 = 19.5%</td>
<td>35 = 23.8%</td>
<td>93 = 24.2%</td>
<td>31 = 8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td>1 = 12.5%</td>
<td>4 = 11.1%</td>
<td>8 = 5.4%</td>
<td>12 = 3.1%</td>
<td>18 = 4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kaufmann)</td>
<td>1 = 12.5%</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>1 = 0.3%</td>
<td>1 = 0.3%</td>
<td>1 = 0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Parliament (Reichstag)</td>
<td>6 = 21.6%</td>
<td>19 = 12.9%</td>
<td>5 = 23.9%</td>
<td>31 = 8.0%</td>
<td>31 = 8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>1 = 12.5%</td>
<td>7 = 4.8%</td>
<td>2 = 9.5%</td>
<td>27 = 7.0%</td>
<td>27 = 7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>3 = 2.7%</td>
<td>4 = 1.4%</td>
<td>6 = 1.6%</td>
<td>6 = 1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>3 = 2.0%</td>
<td>8 = 5.4%</td>
<td>25 = 6.5%</td>
<td>25 = 6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>7 = 11.1%</td>
<td>1 = 4.8%</td>
<td>11 = 7.5%</td>
<td>17 = 4.4%</td>
<td>17 = 4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>5 = 13.5%</td>
<td>11 = 7.5%</td>
<td>8 = 5.4%</td>
<td>12 = 3.1%</td>
<td>12 = 3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>8 = 5.4%</td>
<td>25 = 6.5%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>3 = 2.0%</td>
<td>32 = 8.3%</td>
<td>8 = 2.0%</td>
<td>8 = 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td>4 = 1.0%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>7 = 1.8%</td>
<td>7 = 1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>3 = 2.0%</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td>4 = 2.7%</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td>7 = 1.8%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kleinhandler),</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>3 = 2.0%</td>
<td>7 = 1.8%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>8 = 5.4%</td>
<td>25 = 6.5%</td>
<td>8 = 2.0%</td>
<td>8 = 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (Mittlere Beamte)</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>3 = 2.0%</td>
<td>32 = 8.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>8 = 5.4%</td>
<td>25 = 6.5%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (Mittlere Angestelle)</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td>4 = 1.0%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>7 = 1.8%</td>
<td>7 = 1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, Privatmänner</td>
<td>1 = 2.8%</td>
<td>3 = 2.0%</td>
<td>7 = 1.8%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
<td>5 = 1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no Specification)</td>
<td>5 = 13.9%</td>
<td>13 = 8.8%</td>
<td>6 = 28.6%</td>
<td>27 = 7.0%</td>
<td>27 = 7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>(1) = (2.8%)</td>
<td>(2) = (1.4%)</td>
<td>(2) = (9.5%)</td>
<td>(9) = (2.3%)</td>
<td>(9) = (2.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 8 = 100% 36 = 100% 148 = 100% 21 = 100% 390 = 100%

27 Handbuch des Aldeutschen Verbandes, 22nd ed. (Munich: Lehmann, 1918), 12-59.
Table 5  Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League, May 1919

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
<th>First Leaders of Gau Chapters</th>
<th>Leaders of the 435 Local Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility (also Military)</td>
<td>2 = 40.0%</td>
<td>3 = 8.1%</td>
<td>5 = 3.0%</td>
<td>4 = 1.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>(2) = (40.0)%</td>
<td>(2) = (5.4%)</td>
<td>(3) = (2.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>1 = 2.7%</td>
<td>4 = 2.9%</td>
<td>27 = 19.4%</td>
<td>4 = 19.1%</td>
<td>80 = 19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
<td>8 = 21.6%</td>
<td>9 = 6.5%</td>
<td>7 = 5.0%</td>
<td>2 = 9.5%</td>
<td>16 = 3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td>1 = 20.0%</td>
<td>1 = 2.7%</td>
<td>8 = 21.6%</td>
<td>1 = 2.0%</td>
<td>10 = 2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kaufmann)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Parliament (Reichstag)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>8 = 21.6%</td>
<td>22 = 15.8%</td>
<td>4 = 19.1%</td>
<td>36 = 8.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatdozenten (Assistant Professors)</td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>6 = 4.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>7 = 5.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, Notaries, Justizräte</td>
<td>1 = 20.0%</td>
<td>5 = 13.5%</td>
<td>10 = 7.2%</td>
<td>28 = 6.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 = 6.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>25 = 6.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>3 = 2.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kleinhändler), Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>3 = 8.1%</td>
<td>6 = 4.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 = 2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (Mittlere Beamte)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33 = 7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (Mittlere Angestellte)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27 = 6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, Privatmänner</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no Specification)</td>
<td>7 = 18.9%</td>
<td>12 = 8.6%</td>
<td>6 = 28.6%</td>
<td>80 = 15.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>(3) = (2.2%)</td>
<td>(2) = (9.5%)</td>
<td>(1) = (2.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5 = 100%</td>
<td>37 = 100%</td>
<td>139 = 100%</td>
<td>21 = 100%</td>
<td>435 = 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 6  
Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League, October 1921²⁹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
<th>First Leaders of the Gau Chapters</th>
<th>Leaders of the 502 Local Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility (also Military)</td>
<td>2 = 28.6%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>4 = 2.8%</td>
<td>10 = 2.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>(2 = 28.6%)</td>
<td>(1 = 3.2 %)</td>
<td>(3 = 2.1%)</td>
<td>(9 = 1.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>8 = 1.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
<td>2 = 28.6%</td>
<td>5 = 16.1%</td>
<td>18 = 12.4%</td>
<td>7 = 22.5%</td>
<td>35 = 7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Service Austria (Nationalräte)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td>3 = 9.7%</td>
<td>10 = 6.9%</td>
<td>11 = 2.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kaufmann)</td>
<td>6 = 4.1%</td>
<td>13 = 2.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the Landtag</td>
<td>1 = 14.3%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the Austrian Parliament or Landtag</td>
<td>7 = 22.6%</td>
<td>22 = 15.2%</td>
<td>2 = 6.4%</td>
<td>28 = 5.6%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>3 = 2.1%</td>
<td>1 = 0.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatdozenten (Assistant Professors)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>5 = 3.4%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>29 = 5.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>3 = 2.1%</td>
<td>14 = 2.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, Notaries, Justizräte</td>
<td>1 = 14.3%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>6 = 4.1%</td>
<td>33 = 6.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors, Sanitätsräte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11 = 7.6%</td>
<td>44 = 8.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
<td>4 = 12.9%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>1 = 1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>2 = 6.4%</td>
<td>4 = 2.8%</td>
<td>13 = 2.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>6 = 4.1%</td>
<td>2 = 0.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td>2 = 0.4%</td>
<td>11 = 2.2%</td>
<td>37 = 7.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kleinhändler), Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (Mittlere Beamte)</td>
<td>2 = 1.4%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>7 = 1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>5 = 3.4%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>58 = 11.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (Mittlere Angestellte)</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>10 = 2.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 3.2%</td>
<td>1 = 0.7%</td>
<td>9 = 1.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, Privatmänner</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = 0.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no Specification)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>10 = 6.9%</td>
<td>6 = 19.3%</td>
<td>34 = 6.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Profession/Additional Austrian Representatives (Gau without Leadership)</td>
<td>(2 = 1.4%)</td>
<td>(4 = 12.9%)</td>
<td>(11 = 2.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Local Chapter in “Occupied Territory” / without Vorstand) [Local Chapters abroad]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7 = 100 %</td>
<td>31 = 100 %</td>
<td>146 =100 %</td>
<td>31 = 100 %</td>
<td>502 = 100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7  
Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League, 1924\textsuperscript{30}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility (also Military)</td>
<td>4 = 36.4 %</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>3 = 2.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>(2 = 18.2 %)</td>
<td>(1 = 2.8 %)</td>
<td>(2 = 1.7 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 9.1 %</td>
<td>5 = 13.9 %</td>
<td>20 = 16.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>3 = 8.3 %</td>
<td>6 = 5.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (\textit{Kaufmann})</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 = 0.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Service Austria (\textit{Nationalräte/Abgeordnete})</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>1 = 9.1 %</td>
<td>8 = 22.2 %</td>
<td>19 = 16.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Privatdozenten} (Assistant Professors)</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>1 = 9.1 %</td>
<td>3 = 8.3 %</td>
<td>8 = 6.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>1 = 9.1 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, Notaries, \textit{Justizräte}</td>
<td>1 = 9.1 %</td>
<td>5 = 13.9 %</td>
<td>7 = 5.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors, \textit{Sanitätsräte}</td>
<td>2 = 5.6 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 = 10.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
<td>1 = 0.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>1 = 0.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>3 = 2.5 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (\textit{Kleinhändler}), Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>2 = 5.6 %</td>
<td>3 = 2.5 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (\textit{Mittlere Beamte})</td>
<td>7 = 5.9 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>5 = 4.2 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (\textit{Mittlere Angestellte})</td>
<td>3 = 2.5 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 0.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, \textit{Privatmänner}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no Specification)</td>
<td>1 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>10 = 8.4 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>(1 = 2.8 %)</td>
<td>(4 = 3.4 %)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11 = 100 %</td>
<td>36 = 100 %</td>
<td>119 =100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8: Social Position of Leaders of the Pan-German League, 1936

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>Head Committee</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Executive Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility (also Military)</td>
<td>2 = 28.6 %</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>9 = 7.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>(1 = 2.4 %)</td>
<td>3 = 7.1 %</td>
<td>(6 = 5.1 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>12 = 10.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
<td>2 = 28.6 %</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>8 = 6.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = 2.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kaufmann)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>1 = 14.3 %</td>
<td>8 = 19.0 %</td>
<td>6 = 5.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatdozenten (Assistant Professors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>1 = 14.3 %</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>6 = 5.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>1 = 14.3 %</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>7 = 6.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, Notaries, Justizräte</td>
<td>1 = 14.3 %</td>
<td>7 = 16.7 %</td>
<td>4 = 3.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors, Sanitätsräte</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>15 = 12.7 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 = 0.9 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>2 = 1.7 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>4 = 3.4 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (Kleinhändler), Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>1 = 0.9 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (Mittlere Beamte)</td>
<td>4 = 9.5 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2 = 4.8 %</td>
<td>9 = 7.6 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (Mittlere Angestellte)</td>
<td>6 = 5.1 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 0.9 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, Privatmänner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no Specification)</td>
<td>4 = 9.5 %</td>
<td>11 = 9.4 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>(1 = 2.4 %)</td>
<td>(5 = 4.2 %)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 7 = 100 % 42 = 100 % 118 =100 %

---

Table 9  Social Position of Members of the Hamburg Chapter, the District Unterweser, and the Stuttgart Chapter of the Pan-German League, 1936 and 1937\textsuperscript{32}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation, Social Status</th>
<th>\textit{Local Chapter Hamburg (1936)}</th>
<th>\textit{District Unterweser (1936)}</th>
<th>\textit{Local Chapter Stuttgart (1937)}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobility (also Military)</td>
<td>2 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>(1 = 1.1 %)</td>
<td>(4 = 2.9 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>1 = 1.4 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 = 1.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junkers, Estate Owner</td>
<td>6 = 4.3 %</td>
<td>1 = 1.1 %</td>
<td>25 = 18.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Civil Servants</td>
<td>2 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>2 = 2.2 %</td>
<td>5 = 3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs, Factory Owners</td>
<td>24 = 17.1 %</td>
<td>17 = 18.9 %</td>
<td>15 = 10.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>3 = 2.1 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = 2.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Privatdozenten} (Assistant Professors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>2 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>1 = 1.1 %</td>
<td>7 = 5.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Employees</td>
<td>5 = 3.6 %</td>
<td>2 = 2.2 %</td>
<td>10 = 7.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers, Notaries, \textit{Justizräte}</td>
<td>3 = 2.1 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 = 7.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Doctors, \textit{Sanitätsräte}</td>
<td>5 = 3.6 %</td>
<td>11 = 12.2 %</td>
<td>11 = 7.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists, Apothecaries</td>
<td>9 = 6.4 %</td>
<td>3 = 3.3 %</td>
<td>1 = 0.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, Artists</td>
<td>2 = 2.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers, Architects</td>
<td>3 = 2.1 %</td>
<td>2 = 2.2 %</td>
<td>11 = 7.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemists, Biologists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (\textit{Kleinhändler}), Independent Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>1 = 1.4 %</td>
<td>2 = 2.2 %</td>
<td>2 = 1.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servants (\textit{Mittlere Beamte})</td>
<td>7 = 5.0 %</td>
<td>15 = 16.7 %</td>
<td>5 = 3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 = 1.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (\textit{Mittlere Angestelle})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 = 0.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Civil Servants</td>
<td>1 = 1.4 %</td>
<td>1 = 1.1 %</td>
<td>3 = 2.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers (including \textit{Meister})</td>
<td>2 = 2.8 %</td>
<td>5 = 5.6 %</td>
<td>5 = 3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners, \textit{Privatmänner}</td>
<td>1 = 1.4 %</td>
<td>1 = 1.1 %</td>
<td>2 = 1.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions (no specification)</td>
<td>52 = 37.5 %</td>
<td>14 = 15.6 %</td>
<td>3 = 2.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a Doctoral Degree)</td>
<td>(13 = 9.3 %)</td>
<td>(1 = 0.7 %)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>9 = 6.4 %</td>
<td>13 = 14.4 %</td>
<td>16 = 11.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Teachers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4 = 2.9 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 140 = 100 %  90 = 100 %  139 = 100 %

Table 10  Centralization of Power: Attendance Figures of Members of the Head Council at the *Sitzung des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses*, April 1914-February 1934\(^{33}\)

|  | A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | H  | J  | K  | L  | M  | N  | O  | P  | Q  | R  | S  | T  | U  | V  |
| A) Heinrich Claß (1868-1953) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| B) Alfred Breusing (1853-1914) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| C) Eduard von Liebert (1850-1934) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| D) Georg von Stoszel (1856-1924) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| E) Carl Itzenplitz (1870-1945) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| F) Alfred Keim (1845-1926) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| G) Konstantin von Gelsattel (1854-1932) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| H) Emil Kirsdorf (1847-1938) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| J) Max von Grapow (1861-1924) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| K) Theodor Thomsen (1840-1932) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| L) Gertzlaff von Hertzberg (1880-1945) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| M) Paul Bang (1879-1945) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| N) Alfred Krauß (1862-1938) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| O) Otto Fürst zu Salm-Horstmar (1867-1941) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| P) Hans Knirsch (1877-1933) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Q) Joseph Hertle (-1931) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| R) Otto Heine (1893-1956) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| S) Alfred Möllers (1883-1969) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| T) Karl Klingemann (1859-1946) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| U) Ritter Arnold von Möhl (1867-1944) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| V) Heinrich Calmbach (1867-) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

|   | IV/1914 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | VIII/1914 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | VIII/1914 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | X/1914 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | II/1915 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | IV/1915 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | VI/1915 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | IX/1915 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | X/1915 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | I/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | III/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | IV/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | VI/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | VIII/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | IX/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | X/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | XII/1916 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | I/1917 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | III/1917 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | IV/1917 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | VII/1917 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | X/1917 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | XII/1917 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

\(^{33}\) See BA-B, R 8048, vols 94-175.
<p>| Year   | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V |
| III/1918 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| IV/1918  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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