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0521809290 - Allianz and the German Insurance Business, 1933-1945

Gerald D. Feldman

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Allianz and the German Insurance Business, 1933–1945

Gerald Feldman's history of the internationally prominent insurance corporation Allianz in the Nazi era is based largely on new or previously unavailable archival sources, making this a more accurate account of Allianz and the men who directed its business than was ever before possible. Feldman takes the reader through varied cases of collaboration and conflict with the Nazi regime with fairness and a commitment to informed analysis, touching on issues of damages in the Pogrom of 1938, insuring facilities used in concentration camps, and the problems of denazification and restitution. The broader issues examined in this study – when cooperation with Nazi policies was compulsory and when it was complicit; the way in which profit, ideology, and opportunism played a role in corporate decision making; and the question of how Jewish insurance assets were expropriated – are particularly relevant today given the ongoing international debate about restitution for Holocaust survivors. This book joins a growing body of scholarship based on free access to the records of German corporations in the Nazi era.

Gerald D. Feldman is Professor of History and Director of the Institute of European Studies at the University of California at Berkeley. His book, *The Great Disorder* (Oxford, 1993), received the DAAD Book Prize of the Association of German Studies and the Book Prize of the Conference Group for Central European History of the American Historical Association. He was an invited expert at the London Gold Conference in December 1997 and at the U.S. Conference on Holocaust Assets (Washington, DC) in December 1998. He serves on the Historical Commission of Deutsche Bank and is Chairman of the Historical Commission of Bank Austria.

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GERALD D. FELDMAN

University of California, Berkeley



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Preface

In the spring of 1997, the Board of Management of the Allianz AG commissioned me to write this history of Allianz in the National Socialist period and to do so as an independent historian accountable only for the completion of the study according to the standards of my profession. The immediate reasons for their decision to promote such a study at that time were very clear. On the one hand, Allianz – along with a number of other German and European insurance companies – was charged in class actions in United States courts with failure to properly discharge their obligations toward Jewish policyholders. Allianz thus had the problem of explaining what had happened to the policies of its Jewish customers, and this involved explaining not only how Jewish assets were expropriated by the National Socialist regime but also the postwar restitution policies. On the other hand, Allianz found itself confronted with press reports¹ about insuring SS-owned factories in the concentration camps, among them factories in Auschwitz. The revelations inevitably lent new importance and significance to what had previously been known but unappreciated or neglected. One example is that of Kurt Schmitt, the general director of Allianz between 1921 and 1933, who had been Hitler's second Reich Economics Minister in 1933–1934 and regularly appeared in an SS uniform while in office. Another example concerns an Allianz director, Eduard Hilgard, who had led the Reich Group for Insurance between 1934 and 1945 and had also participated in the infamous meeting of November 12, 1938, summoned by Hermann Göring in the Reich Air Ministry following the Pogrom unleashed against the Jews on November 9. Exactly what all this added up to was impossible to say, at least for the ideologically unpre-disposed, since there was no adequately researched and accurate account of the Allianz in the Third Reich. An understanding of Allianz's history during that period was unlikely to emerge by simply stumbling from one unpleasant and damaging press revelation to another. Also, the adoption of a bunker mentality (as was attempted by some firms and concerns inside and outside Germany) was not deemed an acceptable solution by those managing Allianz. In practical terms, one cannot defend or explain a historical record if one does not know what is in that record. The company's situation was like that of a number of other concerns and firms taking a similar posture who have sought the help

¹ See "Das 'Wagnis Auschwitz'," *Der Spiegel*, Heft 23 (June 1997), pp. 50–63.

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of historians practiced in the fields of economic and business history and with knowledge of the period and conditions under which businessmen operated between 1933 and 1945.

The significance of this revolutionary situation in the status of business history – and of the relationship between some enterprises and historians – deserves some brief comment and reflection here in order to place this book in its context. Until recently, historians like myself with an interest in economic and business history have formed a small and somewhat isolated group in the profession. Historians, like most intellectuals, have often taken a somewhat dim view of the object of our interests – namely, business – which they have treated either with intellectual disdain or with profound suspicion and even hostility. Prior to the end of the Cold War, the subject of business history, especially in Germany, was caught up in ideological debates about the purported responsibility of business for bringing Hitler to power and the question of whether the Nazi regime could be viewed as an instrument of big business. Neither of these positions can be seriously maintained today, but the question of what the actual relationship was between big business and National Socialism has only been made more pressing and important by now being considered and answered in different terms. Indeed, the role of business is more important than ever before, and it still remains for practitioners of business history to assert – and for general historians to recognize – the centrality of the modern corporation and the business community to our understanding of the modern world.

However, much of the suspicion aimed at business history, as well as its neglect, must be laid at the door of the business community itself. The old response of German business to liberal and left-wing critics was that business was a victim of National Socialist anticapitalism and totalitarianism – a simplistic explanation of a complex relationship that was implausible from the start. It was left unproven because closed business archives and inaccessible archives in the communist East acted as a barrier to serious historical investigation. Previously, with very few exceptions, industrial firms commissioned journalists or historians to write celebratory volumes on the occasion of some major anniversary, and very often the most important contribution of the volumes thus produced were the pictures. The authors of such works certainly were not invited to deal with the darker sides of company histories and were often discouraged from doing so. At the same time, independent historians had a difficult time getting firms to open their archives about matters pertaining to even the nineteenth century, let alone the National Socialist period. Indeed, many important companies did not even have an archive. Also, serious business and economic historians were unwilling to subject themselves to censorship or to engage in self-censorship. Only a few enterprises were prepared to permit scholars unfettered use of their documentary materials or to encourage serious business histories. Therefore, the present situation – in which one enterprise after another has been establishing archives, opening their archives to historians, and supplying them with substantial resources and assistance to facilitate dredging up details of their history during the

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National Socialist period – constitutes a major breakthrough for business historians and for the field of business history.² One should, of course, guard against euphoria. There is no guarantee that the present “boom” will not turn to “bust,” and that the increased interest in business history will not be mostly confined to the Third Reich, or that its practitioners will not be marginalized once again. Also, it is always possible that archives will be closed and that companies will return to the production of slick anniversary volumes lacking in serious content. Nevertheless, it is my hope that the lessons learned from recent experience include these two: ignorance is not bliss; and the promotion of critical business history is a public responsibility and a wise policy as well. The business community can only benefit from a sober appreciation of its own history. At the same time, it is essential that historians pay more attention to business history as a crucial area of general history in the modern age, since they do, after all, have some responsibility to their students and the general public to explain the real world in which we live.

This said, the author of such a study faces certain serious methodological and practical problems that deserve mention. Scholars producing a study in political, diplomatic, or cultural history have the benefit of a substantial body of literature in their fields upon which they can rely for background and for the definition of the questions they seek to answer. Ideally, the work now being done on the business history of the Third Reich should be done in the context of business biographies, general literature on the role of business in modern German history, and a well-developed general business history literature of carefully researched and sophisticated corporate histories based on open archives and written by independent historians. For the reasons already stated, this is not how things are. This is especially true of the insurance business, which (in contrast to banking or iron and steel) suffers particularly from a dearth of modern historical literature dealing with the industry as a whole and with individual enterprises. There are, to be sure, some useful works at hand, but a study such as this – which concentrates on a particular period and on certain special issues – must suffer from the absence of a well-developed secondary literature.³

² The Deutsche Bank pioneered such studies and then continued after the business history of the Third Reich became a public issue. See Lothar Gall et al., *The Deutsche Bank 1870–1995* (London, 1995), and Jonathan Steinberg, *The Deutsche Bank and Its Gold Transactions during the Second World War* (Munich, 1999). Other illustrations are in Johannes Bähr, *Der Goldhandel der Dresdener Bank im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Ein Bericht des Hannah-Arendt-Instituts* (Leipzig, 1999). See also Hans Mommsen & Manfred Gieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf, 1996); Werner Lotz, *Die Deutsche Reichspost 1933–1945. Eine politische Verwaltungsgeschichte*, Bd. 1: 1933–1939 (Berlin, 1999); and Gerd R. Ueberschär, *Die Deutsche Reichspost 1933–1945. Eine politische Verwaltungsgeschichte*, Bd. 2: 1939–1945 (Berlin, 1999).

³ Ludwig Arps, *Aufsicheren Pfeilern. Deutsche Versicherungswirtschaft vor 1914* (Göttingen, 1965), and Ludwig Arps, *Durch unruhige Zeiten. Deutsche Versicherungswirtschaft seit 1914*, Bd. 1: *Erster Weltkrieg und Inflation*, Bd. 2: *Von den zwanziger Jahren zum Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Karlsruhe, 1970 & 1976). See also Eckhard Wandel, *Banken und Versicherungen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* [Enzyklopädie Deutscher Geschichte, Bd. 45] (Munich, 1998).

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There are some scholars in the field of business history who would view this as a fatal barrier to a satisfactory study and would indeed go so far as to argue that one can properly deal with the history of Allianz (or any other company) only in the context of a corporate history based on subordination of their accounts to questions of “the internal economic logic of entrepreneurial action.”⁴ In its most extreme form, business historians taking this position would argue that business history is, in effect, a subordinate field of economics and economic history and that the analysis and judgment of business behavior can only take place once it has been analyzed from an economic perspective. In this view, the writing of histories of firms in the Third Reich should wait upon the production of their economic histories, since “[w]ithout the prior appropriate analysis of the real conditions under which businessmen act, all premature assessment ... easily takes on the odor of cheap moralizing.”⁵

There is a strong tendency in Germany for methodological debates to take on a doctrinal character in which positions are inflexibly defended and maintained at the expense of common sense. This is not the place for such exercises. The amount of information at our disposal is always imperfect, and it would be absurd for those working on business history in the Third Reich to enter into a state of suspended animation and wait upon the analyses of those seeking to unravel the “economic logic” of the concerns in question before coming to judgment about various aspects of their histories. And while it is instructive and important to study business history from a purely economic perspective, it is no less important to examine the political and moral economy of entrepreneurial behavior – as this study seeks to do. Furthermore, as will be shown throughout this book, the individuals running Allianz and the insurance industry were compelled to conduct their business in the context of a regime that powerfully influenced or increasingly dictated decisions about investments, products and markets, and industrial relations in ways that to a substantial degree did not conform to any “economic logic” previously known to them. Finally, “economic logic” does not exist independently of business ethics and basic moral standards. National Socialism challenged all of these qualities of what one can consider appropriate business (or even human) behavior; it is quite legitimate, indeed necessary, to approach business history from these perspectives. Hence this study, while holding fast to traditional methods of historical analysis and certainly eschewing armchair anticapitalism, seeks to arrive at some clear

⁴ “[D]ie innere ökonomische Logik unternehmerischen Handelns”; Toni Pierenkemper, “Was kann eine moderne Unternehmensgeschichte leisten? Und was sollte sie tunlichst vermeiden,” *Zeitschrift für Unternehmensgeschichte* 44/1 (1999), pp. 15–31, quote on p. 20; Manfred Pohl, “Zwischen Weihrauch und Wissenschaft? Zum Standort der modernen Unternehmensgeschichte. Eine Replik auf Toni Pierenkemper,” *ibid.*, 44/2 (1999), pp. 150–63; Toni Pierenkemper, “Sechs Thesen zum gegenwärtigen Stand der deutschen Unternehmensgeschichtsschreibung. Eine Entgegnung auf Manfred Pohl,” *ibid.*, 45/2 (2000), pp. 158–66.

⁵ “Ohne eine vorausgehende, sachgerechte Analyse der realen Handlungsbedingungen der Unternehmer gerät alles vorschnelle Bewerten m.E. sehr leicht in den Ruch wohlfeilen Moralisierens.” Pierenkemper in *ibid.*, 44/1, p. 31.

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conclusions that contain moral judgments about business behavior under National Socialism.

This study relies heavily on primary source material, which might at first sight seem surprising in view of the almost total destruction of the Allianz archive in wartime bombing raids. In fact, the most difficult and frustrating research problem faced in completing this study was that most of the original Allianz archive – and especially the papers of its board of management – were destroyed in bombing raids during the war. This has imposed severe constraints on subjects about which I would have wished to say more. For example, the inability to discuss middle management and to present information about the political activities and party membership of Allianz employees has been a constant disappointment. In many cases, I was forced to depend heavily on postwar interrogations and denazification proceedings. Obviously, such materials must be used with caution, and yet they were often the only sources at my disposal. The remnant of the original Allianz materials, however substantial and significant in many respects, is what Allianz employees managed to take with them for whatever reason, or what has been found at other companies or branches in the concern, or in the private possession of the families of former Allianz managers. The papers of Kurt Schmitt, for example, have proven an invaluable source for this study. These materials have been gathered together to form the core of the Allianz archive, but the bulk of the materials used in this study came from public and private archives and collections to be found not only in Germany but also in places stretching from Paris to Moscow and from Milan to Tallinn. The management of Allianz not only supported but also encouraged me and my research team to go wherever we felt significant material might be found.

Although a list of the archives visited by myself and my research team will be found at the end of this book, certain aspects of our research effort deserve special mention. One of the major reasons it has been possible to secure so much archival material about Allianz and insurers generally is that insurance was a regulated industry subject to the control of the Reich Supervisory Office for Insurance, and this authority was subordinate to the Reich Economics Ministry. The papers of the Reich Supervisory Office at the German Federal Archives were a tremendously rich source for this study. An especially critical source were the papers of the Reich Economics Ministry dealing with banking and insurance. As it turned out, this enormous collection was to be found in the so-called Special Archive in Moscow, and it has played a major role not only in this study but also in the work of colleagues investigating the banking history of the Third Reich and other important questions related to Holocaust assets. We take special pride in the fact that we were among the first to use these papers systematically for the business history of the Third Reich and so helped to inform the research of our colleagues who worked there subsequently.⁶

⁶ Barbara Eggenkämper, Marian Rapp, & Anna Reichel, “Der Bestand Reichswirtschaftsministerium im ‘Zentrum für die Aufbewahrung historisch-dokumentarischer Sammlungen’ (‘Sonderarchiv’) in Moskau,” *ibid.*, 43 (1998), pp. 227–36.

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There are two other important archival collections that deserve special mention at this point because of their relation to the content of this study. These include the documents of the Munich Reinsurance Company (Münchener Rückversicherungs-Gesellschaft AG or Münchener Rück). As we shall see, “Munich Re” and Allianz were closely related both by formal contract and in their activities during this period. The Munich Re collections made a substantive contribution to this study at practically every point. Of similar importance for the writing of this book were the papers of the Reich Association for Private Insurance and the Reich Group for Insurance in the archive of the present-day Association of German Insurers. Allianz was the largest and most dominant concern in the German insurance business and played an especially active role in the major organizations of the industry. This does not mean that the history of the other German insurance companies can be dismissed as more or less miniature histories of Allianz. On the contrary, it will be very important to have histories of those companies – all of which have their own peculiar characteristics and interests – if we are ever to attain a satisfactory understanding of the insurance business. Nevertheless, as noted earlier, the German insurance business was government regulated and, especially during the National Socialist period, had to deal with the government in a collective manner. This was done through the Reich Association for Private Insurance and the Reich Group for Insurance, created in 1934, both of which were led by an Allianz manager and dominated to a significant extent by Allianz and Munich Re managers. In this respect, this is not only a history of Allianz during the Third Reich but also of the politics of the private insurance business in that period.

It has been gratifying to have had access to so many archives within and outside Germany, and this testifies to the new openness about the history of the National Socialist period and the problems of Holocaust assets. It is also necessary to record, however, that certain archives remained unavailable to us. In the case of the Polish government archives in Wrocław (Breslau), the papers of the Allianz branch in that city became unavailable when the archive flooded in 1997. Many precious materials were in need of restoration, and the papers of interest for this study were unavailable in time for the completion of this work. One can only hope that these documents will be in condition to be evaluated at some future date. Despite many requests, we were repeatedly denied access to the archives of the Powszechny Zakład Ubezpieczeń S.A. (PZU), successor company to the previously nationalized Polish insurance organization and which we believe to have papers of liquidated German insurers that had operated in Poland. We were constantly told that the archives were being “reorganized.” It strains my credulity to believe that some accommodation could not have been made for research pertaining to this project. Certainly the account of Allianz activities in occupied Poland would have benefited from access to these materials.

One may hope that such archival sources are opened at a future date, and one may be certain that some new documents and information will turn up over the years. Nevertheless, I am reasonably confident that this book presents a full and

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accurate account of the history of Allianz and its daughter companies in the National Socialist period. There will, of course, always be differences of interpretation, and from this perspective no historical work can be definitive. One of the conditions of my undertaking this project was that the documents I used be made available to other researchers so as to satisfy the scholarly requirements of replication and falsification – as well as to open the doors to further research. I have tried to provide enough evidence to enable other interpretations of the difficult questions dealt with in the text.

The organization of this book is designed to illuminate the most important aspects of the relationship between Allianz and National Socialism. The first chapter tries at once to provide essential background on the history and organization of Allianz, especially in the Weimar Republic, and to deal with the important contacts between leaders of Allianz and National Socialists – primarily Hermann Göring – prior to 1933. The next three chapters deal with the relationship of Allianz and the insurance industry organizations with the regime in the prewar period. Thus, Chapter 2 discusses the initial adaptation of Allianz to the regime and the appointment and policies of Allianz's general director, Kurt Schmitt, as Reich Economics Minister. Chapter 3 examines the extent of Nazi-fication within the concern and especially its policies toward Jewish employees and its role in "Aryanizations." Chapter 4 explores Eduard Hilgard's role as leader of the Reich Group for Insurance, the politics of the insurance business and its internal conflicts, and the struggle between Nazi leaders of the publicly chartered insurance companies and leadership of the private insurance industry.

The next two chapters are more topical in character and focus on events and issues of both historical and current significance. Chapter 5 is concerned with the role of the insurance industry in dealing with the problems created by the Pogrom of November 1938 – a sorry story at once dramatic and complicated – in which problems of liability and business ethics are explored in depth. Chapter 6 deals with the question of the expropriation of Jewish insurance assets, which is obviously the issue of greatest concern in the recent lawsuits against Allianz and other insurers. Its purpose is to explain the various processes by which Jews lost their assets between 1933 and 1945 and to describe the behavior of Allianz toward its Jewish customers. It is worth noting here that the purpose of my work has never been to discover unpaid Jewish insurance policies, which is the task of auditors, but rather to treat the problem historically.

The two subsequent chapters take up various issues of importance to the history of the concern between 1938 and 1945. Chapter 7 deals with the role of Allianz in Germany's prewar expansion into Austria and Czechoslovakia and its continued struggles with the publicly chartered companies. Chapter 8 discusses the expansion of Allianz in the West and the East in German-controlled Europe, its implication in various business operations connected with the crimes of the regime, and its efforts to stay afloat as Germany headed toward defeat. The final chapter of the book examines two themes of the post-1945 period: the denazification at Allianz and the restitution of Jewish assets between 1945 and 1960.

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I think it important to conclude this portion of the preface by returning directly to the question of my position as a historian commissioned to undertake this work. At no time during the entire course of this project has the management of Allianz sought in any way to influence my findings or interpretations. Because of the complexity of the insurance business, I have turned to various persons in the concern for technical information, and I have also pressed for clarifications where further information was needed. Such information was always supplied generously and patiently. Furthermore, the management of Allianz gave me every conceivable assistance in my research. It graciously accepted the fact that the study could not be finished in the time originally expected and would not be as short as initially desired, and it also extended the contracts of my research team when this proved necessary.

In short, Allianz's management did everything possible to facilitate my work. At the beginning of the project, it was agreed that my study would be submitted to a group of historians chosen by me to review what I had written and make criticisms and suggestions. Such a meeting was held in May 2000 with eight historians.⁷ The work had not been finished at that time, but chapters were sent out to some of these historians subsequently, and the entire manuscript has been vetted by readers. The historians involved reviewed my manuscript at the same time as the management of Allianz received it, so that the findings were made known simultaneously. The comments and questions of the colleagues who read the manuscript have been extremely valuable and have contributed to the final product in many positive ways. The manuscript has never been vetted by Allianz. Needless to say, the sole responsibility for this book rests with myself.

This does not conclude the question of my independence, however, since various persons have challenged the idea that a historian paid to produce such a work can truly be independent. I must confess that I find this attitude a curious one. All professional experts are paid for their services and are expected to provide clients with full, accurate information and unbiased judgments, for which they are professionally accountable. Manifestly, some professional experts are paid to argue a case as best as their expertise and the available evidence permit. In the case of a historian, it is unethical to accept compensation to argue a case, and it would be unethical for a client to ask him or her to do so. I see no reason, however, why historians should not be compensated for their work as independent scholars – especially when their expertise has been built up over a long professional life – or why reasonable compensation will make them less honest. More importantly, I can imagine no sum worth my personal and scholarly reputation, and I think that the colleagues I work with in this field feel the same way. There are always those ready to criticize a historian committed to the free market system who is working on such a topic. Yet part of that commitment is to be highly critical of those businessmen who – through whatever combination

⁷ The historians, aside from members of my research team, were Johannes Bähr, Avraham Barkai, Ingo Böhle, Harold James, Stefan Karlen, Hans Mommsen, Dieter F. Stiefel, and Dieter Ziegler.

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of political short-sightedness, opportunism, and sheer greed – nearly destroyed German capitalism and had co-responsibility for the wreckage experienced by concerns like Allianz in 1945. Finally, I think it worth noting that I am a Jew, and that there have been many times when I have found working on this book depressing and even intolerable. I took this assignment in part because I believed it was high time that I actually researched and not merely taught the history of the Third Reich. I do not regret having done so, but the research and writing of this book have been anything but conducive to the softening of my views and judgments. There are a number of ways to write such a history, and every historian will do it somewhat differently. Whether I have done so fairly and successfully, and whether this book has done anything but let the historical chips fall where they may, is for the reader to decide.

This book owes a great deal to the labor, support, and engagement of many persons. It is no exaggeration to say that this study could have been neither undertaken nor completed without the tireless and enthusiastic efforts of the research team organized by the head of the Center for Corporate History of Allianz AG, Barbara Eggenkämper. She not only led the team but was a major participant in its work and, indeed, in every aspect of this project. I wish to express my appreciation for the rare combination of historical sensibility, organizational and managerial skill, good sense, and cheerfulness she displayed in the course of our work together. I would like to thank Stefan Laube, Anna Reichel, and Stephan Wendehorst for their excellent work surveying and collecting archival materials during the research phase of this project, as well as my assistants at Berkeley: Drew Keeling, for his work at the U.S. National Archives, and Sean McMeekin for helping to prepare the English version of the manuscript. Evelyn Zegenhagen assisted me with my research in Poland and catalogued a substantial portion of the archival materials used in this study. She helped me in numerous other ways during my stays in Berlin and Berkeley; she applied her historical training most effectively to work her way into the very difficult subject matter of this study and went well beyond the call of duty in assisting me. Gerd Modert and Marian Rappl have worked on this project from its inception to its conclusion, and Stefan Pretzlik joined the team for its final three years. All three researched in archives throughout Europe and catalogued the many complicated documents. With their keen sense of detail and wide knowledge of the subject, they painstakingly went through the preparation of the manuscript and helped to edit the German and English versions of the book. They contributed enormously to save me from errors both major and minor and to improve on its clarity and fluidity. Working with these talented young German historians has been both a personal pleasure and an intellectually gratifying experience.

This work was supported by the management of Allianz AG in ways that were more than material. I am grateful to Henning Schulte-Noelle for his friendly reception and expressions of support, and I am especially indebted to Herbert Hansmeyer for his active interest and encouragement of my work, our interesting

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conversations about problems of corporate culture and other issues, from which I learned a great deal, and his gracious hospitality during my visits to Munich. Emilio Galli-Zugaro was enthusiastic and forthcoming in a host of ways, and it was a pleasure to work with him. They all made it possible for me to tap various offices at Allianz AG for information and technical assistance, and they strove to open research opportunities outside Allianz AG that would otherwise have been difficult or impossible to come by. I wish to express a special word of thanks to Walter Neiss of Allianz Lebensversicherungs-AG for clarifying important technical issues connected with life insurance and also to their company for allowing access to files. The importance of the Münchener Rückversicherungs-Gesellschaft AG files has already been noted, and I am most grateful to its management for their cooperation. The head of Corporate Communications of Allianz Elementar Versicherungs-AG in Vienna, Marita Roloff, was most forthcoming during my visit to Vienna and also provided me with the benefit of her historical expertise.

I profited in significant ways from access to other private archives and persons related to or connected with their leadership. In Germany, the archive of the Hamburg-Mannheimer Versicherungs-Gruppe provided valuable material, as did the AXA Colonia Konzern AG. Roland Knebusch, the grandson of Johannes Tiedke, who was general director of Alte Leipziger Versicherung AG, gave me access to important documents and also offered his hospitality and a memorable evening of discussion. Volker Weiß of Alte Leipziger was kind enough to supplement this documentation. The archival materials in the Gesamtverband der deutschen Versicherungswirtschaft were of exceptional importance to this study, and I would like to thank Gabriele Hoffmann, Gloria Neuhaus, and Jörg Fischer for their gracious assistance. In Switzerland, I received access to the rich materials in the archive of the Schweizerische Rückversicherungs-Gesellschaft and wish to express my gratitude to those who made this possible. I would like to thank Peter Spaelti and Silvia Balsiger-Signer of the Winterthur Lebensversicherung for their assistance and Heinz Fehlmann for making available correspondence between his father Heinrich Fehlmann and Kurt Schmitt. An important and fascinating source was the papers of Arnoldo Frigessi di Rattalma in the Banca Commerciale Italiana in Milan; the bank's archivist Francesca Pino informed me of their existence, and I am extremely grateful to her and to the donor, Adolfo Frigessi. I would also like to thank Giulio Baseggio and his colleagues at the Riunione Adriatica di Sicurtà S.p.A. for their hospitality and assistance.

The papers of Kurt Schmitt constitute one of the most important sources for this study, and I am very much in debt to his granddaughter, Vera Krainer, for inviting me to the family home in Tiefenbrunn, searching for them with me, and turning them over to the Center for Corporate History of Allianz AG. The generosity of the Krainer family and their appreciation of the importance of making these papers available for historical study was a memorable moment in my research. I would also like to express my appreciation to Hermann Niemöller for sharing with me his memories of Kurt Schmitt and the Schmitt family and for

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providing some valuable documentation. Two smaller but very useful sets of personal papers were those of Eduard Hilgard and Hans Heß, and I would like to thank Hilgard's grandson, Herbert Schneider, and the family of Hans Heß for their willingness to have the papers copied and placed in the Allianz archive.

The research team and I worked in a host of public archives, and we are grateful for all the assistance received from the archivists and staffs of these institutions. It would be impossible to mention every archive and every person who helped us here, but we would like to express a special note of gratitude to Andrej W. Doronin for all the aid he gave us during our visit to the "Special Archive" in Moscow as well as to Roman A. Matwejew, who patiently pored over the Russian catalogues with us and translated them volume by volume into German. We also wish to record our special appreciation to the hard-pressed staff of the Bundesarchiv in Berlin, which was so forthcoming whenever we descended on the archive.

I benefited greatly from the comments and suggestions of the historians who attended the symposium to discuss my manuscript, and I thank them for their interest and diligence. I would like to add a special word of thanks to Ralf Banken, Ingo Böhle, Stefan Karlen, Andrea H. Schneider, and Dieter F. Stiefel for providing important documents and information arising from their own work and to Peter Hayes and Dieter Ziegler for reading the final version of the manuscript in full.

Even peripatetic scholars like myself need institutional bases during their journeys, and I have been extremely fortunate in this respect. I spent 1997/98 at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin, which was generous in providing me not only with facilities but also with a great deal of intellectual companionship. I would like to thank Meinolf Dierkes for bringing me there and its former President Friedhelm Neidhardt and his colleagues for doing everything possible to make my stay so productive. In 1998/99, I had the good fortune to be awarded a Berlin Prize Fellowship to the newly created American Academy in Berlin. It was exhilarating to participate in the birth of so significant a new institution. The Academy proved a wonderful venue to continue my work and also to begin presenting some of the fruits of my research and my ideas to the stimulating intellectual community in Berlin. I am grateful to Academy Director Gary Smith and his able, helpful, and gracious staff for providing such splendid working conditions. I am most appreciative of the understanding shown by the History Department of the University of California at Berkeley and by the university itself for its willingness to permit me so protracted a stay in Berlin.

This study is appearing in both German and English, and I owe a great deal to my editors and their staffs. Working with Ernst-Peter Wieckenberg of the Verlag C. H. Beck over the past decade is one of the most treasured experiences of my professional life. He is a cherished friend as well as a remarkable editor. From the beginning, he has supported this study with unabated enthusiasm and throughout he has afforded me encouragement in too many ways to mention. Frank Smith of Cambridge University Press has long shown interest in my

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work in general and in this project in particular, and it is a privilege and pleasure to do this book with him. I am extremely grateful to him and to the staff at Cambridge University Press for facilitating the publication of this study in every conceivable way. I would like to add a special word of thanks to Matt Darnell, whose copyediting has improved this book in many ways.

My wife, Norma von Ragenfeld-Feldman, is a never-ending source of strength and inspiration, and her devotion to me and involvement in this project during a period of much personal loss and sadness have been extraordinary. I have been very fortunate.

This book is dedicated to the memory of the Jewish employees of Allianz. Sadly, we do not have a complete record of all of them. As shall be related in the course of this book, some were murdered while others were fortunate enough to survive. They all, however, suffered isolation from and rejection by the society in which they had peacefully lived and productively labored and thus, in one form or another, shared the bitter experience of being cast out.

Abbreviations

a. G.	auf Gegenseitigkeit (mutual)
AM	Amtsgericht München, Registratur S
AN	Archives Nationales, Paris
APL	Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (State Archive Lodz)
APP	Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu (State Archive Poznan)
AVV	Allgemeiner Verband der Versicherungsangestellten (General Association of Insurance Employees)
AXA	AXA Colonia Konzern AG, Historisches Archiv
AZLB	Allianz Lebensversicherungs-AG, Archiv Berlin
AZ Wien	Allianz Elementar Versicherungs-AG, Archiv (Vienna)
BAB	Bundesarchiv Berlin
BAK	Bundesarchiv Koblenz
BAR	Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv (Bern)
BCI	Banca Commerciale Italiana, Archivio (Milan)
BEG	Bundesentschädigungsgesetz (Federal Restitution Law)
BGBI	Bundesgesetzblatt (Federal Official Legislative Journal)
Bl.	Blatt (folio)
CABR	Ministerie van Justitie, Centraal Archief Bijzondere Rechtspleging (Ministry of Justice, Central Archive for Special Legal Questions)
CREH	Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes Historiques de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale (Center of Research for Historical Studies of the Second World War)
DAF	Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front)
DAW	Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH
DINTA	Deutsches Institut für Technische Arbeitsschulung (German Institute for Technical Labor Training)
DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei (German National People's Party)
Favag	Frankfurter Allgemeine Versicherungs-AG
FHA	Firmenhistorisches Archiv der Allianz AG (Center for Corporate History of the Allianz AG)
GDV	Gesamtverband der deutschen Versicherungswirtschaft e.V. (General Association of the German Insurance Industry), Archiv

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Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei
GM	Goldmark
HADB	Historisches Archiv der Deutschen Bank
HessHStA	Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv
HM	Hamburg-Mannheimer Versicherungs-Gruppe, Unternehmensarchiv
Hptm.	Hauptmann (captain)
HTO	Haupttreuhandstelle Ost (Head Trusteeship Bureau East)
IfZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte
IG Farben	Interessengemeinschaft Farbenindustrie AG
JRSO	Jewish Restitution Successor Organization
KZ	Konzentrationslager (concentration camp)
MdF	Ministère des Finances, Office des Séquestres (Sequestration Archive)
MR	Münchener Rückversicherungs-Gesellschaft AG (Munich Reinsurance Company – Munich Re) Historisches Archiv
NA	U.S. National Archives
NL	Nachlaß (personal papers)
NSBO	Nationalsozialistische Betriebszellen-Organisation (National Socialist Factory Cell Organization)
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist German Labor Party)
OMGUS	Office of Military Government, United States
ÖstA-AdR	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv - Archiv der Republik
ÖVAG	Österreichische Versicherungs-AG
Pg.	Parteigenosse (Party comrade)
RAA	Reichsaufsichtsamt für Privatversicherung (Reich Supervisory Office for Insurance)
RAS	Riunione Adriatica di Securità
RFM	Reichsfinanzministerium (Reich Finance Ministry)
RGBI	Reichsgesetzblatt (Reich Official Legislative Journal)
RIOD	Rijksinstituut voor Orlogsdocumentatie
RJM	Reichsjustizministerium (Reich Justice Ministry)
RM	Reichsmark
RWM	Reichswirtschaftsministerium (Reich Economics Ministry)
SA	Sturmabteilung der NSDAP (storm troopers)
SD	Sicherheitsdienst der SS (security service of the SS)
SM	Centr Chranenijsa Istoriko-Dokumental'nych Kollekcii [Zentrum für die Aufbewahrung historisch-dokumentarischer Sammlungen – “Sonderarchiv Moskau”] (Special Archive, Moscow)
SR	Schweizerische Rückversicherungs-Gesellschaft (Swiss Reinsurance Company – Swiss Re), Archiv
SS	Schutzstaffel der NSDAP

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VAG	Versicherungsaufsichtsgesetz (Insurance Supervisory Law)
WGÄ	Wiedergutmachungsämter von Berlin (Restitution Offices, Berlin)
WGB	Wiedergutmachungsbehörde Bayern (Restitution Authority, Bavaria)
ZN	Zweigniederlassung (branch)

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