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V.K. Berghahn: America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe

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From Nashua and Berlin to Pearl Harbor

ALTHOUGH THIS book is not a biography, its analysis of European-American relations during the Cold War from a cultural-political perspective follows the life and career of one individual, Shepard Stone. Accordingly, his social background and intellectual development are important not only for an understanding of Stone's mind and attitudes toward the world but also for entering the milieu in which he lived and worked.

NASHUA (NEW HAMPSHIRE) AND DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

Shepard Stone was born on 31 March 1908 as Shepard Arthur Cohen into a family of Jewish immigrants who had come to the United States from Lithuania in the 1880s.¹ Like so many other Russian Jews, his grandparents and their children had crossed the Atlantic looking for economic improvement and an escape from the violent anti-Semitism that was rampant in the tsarist empire. His parents had met in Boston, where they got married in 1895 before moving to Nashua, New Hampshire, a small textile- and shoe-manufacturing town northwest of the New England metropolis. Shepard's father, Simon Cohen, for whom this was his second marriage, began to earn his living as a peddler selling haberdasheries. Working very hard, he eventually accumulated enough capital to open a small shop in the poorest part of the town and later moved up to become the owner of a local department store.

In all there were seven children in the family, the two eldest from Simon's earlier marriage. Shepard was the Benjamin in whom his parents, having come into greater prosperity, invested much of their pride and hopes for the future. His father was "Jewish-Orthodox" but—as Shepard stated in his unpublished memoirs—in a "practical" way. Their youngest son, resentful at being sent to Hebrew school, apparently rebelled against an Orthodox upbringing. For a while he seems to have tried to "enlighten" his parents but soon abandoned this effort. Much more appealing was the fact that his father was an admirer of Woodrow Wilson, and the political liberalism and internationalism to which Shepard was ex-

CHAPTER 1

posed as a teenager exerted a crucial influence on his own world view, to which he adhered till the end of his life.

It is more difficult to say how well integrated the Cohens were in Nashua society. They were complete newcomers to a town of some twenty thousand people in the 1920s, a good many of whom traced their roots back to the colonial period; the rest were mainly of French Canadian, Irish, and Polish extraction. There were some sixty Jewish families in town, a few of whom had achieved a measure of affluence. As elsewhere in this part of the world, it was also a solidly Christian community, and the WASPs ran the place politically. Anti-Semitism, while not violent and physical as it had been in Russia, existed in various covert forms; but there was also friendly interfaith contact. Thus his sister Lillian remembered many years later that “on Christmas Eve, Mrs. Duval blest [*sic*] a candle at the St. Patrick’s Church” for young Shepard.² Indeed Shepard, having an outgoing personality and being a good mixer, apparently found it easy to overcome whatever social barriers there were. He spent much of his free time with the boys of the Sargent, Whitney, and Marcus families. Phil Sargent, the son of Nashua’s mayor (who once also ran for the governorship on a Democratic ticket), was a particularly close friend.

At Nashua High School, Shepard was a popular teenager, though not a model student academically. His membership on the school baseball team was definitely more important than his homework, and he also played the saxophone. However, education was highly valued by his parents. Ten years earlier, his eldest brother had gone to Dartmouth College, the Ivy League institution where the New Hampshire elites traditionally sent their young men. Another brother was accepted by Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. So, there was an expectation that Shepard would go to an elite college. But as he was to recall in later years somewhat mockingly, “Mr. Nesmith tried to make some of us worthy of Dartmouth, but the material he had to work with was inadequate.”³ There was also Mrs. Mae Sullivan, who for two years attempted “to knock German grammar” into his head but who nevertheless “stimulated an interest in the language” in the youngster. So, even if Shepard was not an outstanding scholar, he turned into a “fanatic reader” and was “most alert on current events,” including international affairs.⁴

It was apparently on account of his intellectual liveliness and social skills that he got into Dartmouth at a time when personal contacts and patronage counted for more than certified academic excellence. Still, it must have taken some pushing, and he had to take “a special exam in Math” in order to enter the prestigious college in Hanover.⁵ Dartmouth

proved to be considerably more challenging than Nashua High. As Stone wrote in one of his memoir fragments, the four years in Hanover were a satisfying though not a particularly exciting experience. He majored in American History and made Phi Beta Kappa in the final semester of his senior year. Beyond these tidbits, he remained rather terse about his life as an undergraduate. There is merely a menu card from *SS America*, dated July 1952 by John J. McCloy, his later mentor and friend, who also came from a humble background and had gone to Amherst College in Massachusetts. It was dedicated, rather ominously, “To the underdog of Dartmouth.”⁶

Whatever his experiences, Stone remained a loyal alumnus, conscious not merely of the privileged education he had received but also of the support he was given by one of his professors and the college’s president when he began to launch himself into a career in journalism in 1933. As Andrew Hacker put it in his 1997 study of wealth in America, “the years at college and graduate school pay off because they burnish students’ personalities. The time spent on a campus imparts cues and clues on how to conduct oneself in corporate cultures and professional settings.”⁷ Although Hacker probably overstated his case, becoming part of a world of patronage and mutual help was an aspect of Stone’s years at Dartmouth that he came to rely upon later. Here he learned about the importance of networking. As he himself put it to the son of a friend some twenty-five years later, who, while studying at Exeter, was thinking about where to get his college education: “I really don’t think you would make a mistake if you chose any one of the outstanding private Eastern colleges. As a Dartmouth man I hope you go to Dartmouth where you will find some fine professors, a magnificent library and, of course, a wonderful countryside around Hanover. John Dickey, the President of Dartmouth, is my classmate. Princeton has an excellent faculty, proximity to New York and Washington. Harvard is, of course, one of the greatest institutions in the world, with an exciting faculty and student body. I don’t know Duke, though I am sure it is a fine university.”⁸

The teacher who took the warmest interest in young Shepard was Ambrose White Vernon, a Princeton-educated minister who had moved to Dartmouth from Carleton College in Minnesota in 1924 and whose official title was “professor of biography.” Shepard apparently came to his attention when he submitted a number of good essays to him. It was Vernon who alerted his protégé “to the complexities of the human character, to the drives and hopes, the meanness, selfishness and capacity for greatness in men.” According to Shepard, “he invigorated an interest in

CHAPTER 1

international affairs, stimulated originally by my father who had never had a chance to go to school in the country.” No less important, he “encouraged graduate study in Germany” rather than law school in the United States, which Shepard apparently contemplated. The two men stayed in touch until Vernon’s death in 1951, at which point Shepard admitted that he had had “the greatest influence on my time as a student and the years thereafter.”⁹ The professor was not just a good prophet of things to come in Europe; he also had a variety of connections with Germany. He had studied at Halle University and was married to a German woman. Himself fascinated by German high culture and learning, Vernon told his graduating student: “Go to Germany. In a few years European and world politics will be made there.”¹⁰

This advice struck a responsive chord in the young man, who had continued to pursue his high school German and had also taken a number of courses on the culture of Central Europe at Dartmouth. Being a Wilsonian, New England was becoming a bit too provincial for him. He wanted to see the world, not become a lawyer or, like his eldest brother, a businessman. It was apparently also this brother who, in an attempt to make his Jewishness less obvious, changed his name from Cohen to Stone, and other family members, though not his sisters, followed suit. And so Shepard Stone set off for Europe on 13 September 1929 on board SS *Bremen*, the recent winner of a Blue Ribbon. Eight days later, he got off a train at Berlin’s Friedrichstrasse railroad station, not far from the glitter of Kurfürstendamm—“inexperienced, ignorant, and hazy about what the next step might bring.”¹¹ While his reading knowledge of the language was probably not bad, his spoken German was “fragile to non-existent.”¹² Exhausted and overwhelmed, he spent the first night at a seedy hotel.

STUDENT IN WEIMAR GERMANY

The next day he quickly found a small room with Dr. and Mrs. Julius Lewin in Motzstrasse 63 around the corner from Nollendorf Platz. It was a district in the center of Berlin full of prostitutes and homosexuals, and his parents would no doubt have been shocked if he had told them. On the other hand, the Lewins were a “kindly old” couple who took him in as a paying guest, which included breakfast and a cold German-style supper. Lewin was a medical doctor, “whose patients came up from the streets below.” The Lewins “were Jewish, proud of Germany and Berlin and would not believe that in the country of Goethe and Schiller, Hitler could

ever come to power.”¹³ They were a cultured family whose daughter Eva Lewin-Bacher likewise held a doctorate. Writing to him from Jerusalem in 1975, Eva remembered him “as a rather saucy young man—frisch, frech, frei, who learned German with my mother.”¹⁴ With the Lewins, he also talked about books, music, and life in general, though he avoided politics for most of the time.

Shepard Stone was lucky in other ways. Keen to begin his studies at Berlin University, he went to the main building where he ran into a German student in front of the bulletin board who initiated him into the complexities of registration and academic life. Also across the hall from the Lewins’ apartment lived two American students with whom he quickly became friends. One of them was James Morgan Read, the son of a Methodist minister from New Jersey who was writing his Ph.D. thesis in modern European history. Thenceforth Stone’s new life improved very quickly. With the help of his two neighbors, he joined a university society for foreign students where he met Edward Teller, John von Neumann, Leo Szilard, and Raymond Aron. Albert Einstein once came to one of their meetings to give a talk.¹⁵

He began to enjoy Berlin’s rich cultural offerings. On his first Sunday, he went to the reduced-price morning rehearsal of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. As Stone recalled, he “had never before heard a full symphony orchestra in a concert hall or for that matter on radio.”¹⁶ He had not heard Brahms’s Symphony No. 1 before, and after the concert he went “floating through the nearby Tiergarten near Brandenburg Gate, enchanted by what [he] had heard.” And so he became a regular concert and opera goer, seeing the great conductors of the time, among them Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, and Erich Kleiber. He heard Wagner’s “Walküre” and Brecht’s “Dreigroschenoper,” and because he had never been to an opera, his first night proved to be “unforgettable.”

To him the opera houses of Berlin became “temples of music” and in his view “no city in the world compared with Berlin in the quality of its musical life, on a high level, and, as I was later to know, in the cabarets and bars on a low” one. Indeed, it was “intense [and] vivid.” He came to revere “the high culture of the upper middle class, a culture combining the best of the German and Jewish traditions. Here literature and music flourished, the arts flourished with new ideas and creativity. Science, philosophy, and music thrived. In homes, institutes, theaters and concert halls, museums and in the countryside—life was full.” Given this fascination with the big city, barely two months had passed when Stone “began to feel like a Berliner.” He explored the neighborhood and socialized in

cafés where “one could sit forever without being told to move along.” There was a serious side to his life when, sitting in the Prussian State Library, he “learned to associate great books and manuscripts . . . with the hardest wooden benches ever designed.” Although he later also remembered the images of mass unemployment, poverty, and growing political radicalism and violence, these positive experiences of German society will have to be borne in mind when, in later chapters, we consider Stone’s attitudes toward Germany, toward “high” and “low” culture and the European-American culture wars in which he participated.

But there was also the social life for a young American in Berlin. While night clubs at first were as strange to the small-town lad from Nashua as the opera, he also became more savvy about the city’s “low cultural” scene after, on one occasion, he and his friends just avoided getting fleeced in one of those establishments. In fact, for a while, before the start of the semester, there was a danger of his becoming more fascinated by “the present, in the streets, cafés, and bars” than by his proposed study of history, of “becoming an Ishmael character.” But there was “the family investment” in him to be considered, and he resolved to concentrate on his studies. Not altogether, though.

Jimmy Read had been dating a young woman who was a lodger with a well-to-do family in Meineckestrasse off Kurfürstendamm and who, in turn, had befriended her landlord’s daughter, Charlotte Hasenclever-Jaffé.¹⁷ One evening, he arranged a double date and, although Stone and Charlotte did not hit it off immediately, they would meet again and eventually become lovers. By the summer of 1931, they were deeply involved with one another. Indeed, for a girl of good middle-class background it was quite daring to spend some long nights with Shepard in Weimar, registering at the Erbprinz hotel as his wife.¹⁸ Her mother, herself a née Jaffé, had been married to Alfred Hasenclever, scion of a wealthy industrial family hailing from Aachen where they owned a landed estate, Gut Merberich. After the death of Alfred, she had married a distant relative, Joseph Jaffé, who—born in Russian Poland—had opened a successful practice as a dermatologist in Berlin. Another distant relative was the well-known intellectual and writer Walter Hasenclever, not to be confused with Charlotte’s brother of identical name.

If the relationship between Shepard and Charlotte had been love at first sight, it is doubtful that he would ever have left Berlin for one semester to study at Heidelberg. Although this town with its *Schloss* ruins overlooking the Neckar River had many romantic connotations, it was also a world-famous center of learning in the social sciences and humanities.

Stone signed up for the lectures of the sociologist Alfred Weber, the jurist Gustav Radbruch, and the philosopher Karl Jaspers. Witnessing the economic crisis and polarization of German society, he had developed an even stronger interest in politics, and this, together with his fascination for Berlin, may explain why he returned to the German capital. In another of his memoir fragments he described this attraction which he retained for the rest of his life: “Berlin in the late 1920s and early thirties was one of the most bubbling, exhilarating cities in the world. New York, Paris, London, like Berlin, exhausted by the world depression, were gloomy and listless. Berlin was mad, a place where anything goes. Brutality in politics, culture and daily life went hand-in-hand with romance, sentiment, adventure and living life to the full. One could live to the limits and limits far beyond anything you imagined before you got there. On the streets, in the subways, on the hiking paths around the town you turned away from the fat, the overweight, the ugly, the thin and hungry, faces too red, too sullen, and there were young women, faces and figures of extreme beauty.”¹⁹ It was a view which he cherished throughout his life and which explains, at least in part, his strong attachment to Berlin after 1945.

If Stone had been interested in current affairs since his high school days, Germany politicized him further. In terms of the American political spectrum, he is probably best circumscribed as a left-of-center Democrat and Wilsonian internationalist. In Berlin he regularly read the liberal *Vossische Zeitung*. Having wandered about for a year, he developed into a serious student after his return to Berlin, regularly attending seminars and lectures. It was probably in one of those classes, or perhaps through his friend Jimmy Read, that he caught the eye of Hermann Oncken, a well-known professor of history, who, unlike many of his arch-conservative colleagues, supported the Weimar Republic.²⁰ He had once held a visiting professorship at the University of Chicago, which may have helped Stone in becoming one of his doctoral students. Stone responded to the challenge and thenceforth buried himself in the sources relating to German-Polish diplomacy during the 1920s.

In November 1932 Stone submitted a 326-page thesis entitled “Deutschland, Danzig und Polen, 1918–1932,” the last third of it written in English. It may be that he was under pressure to finish as the dark clouds of a possible Nazi seizure of power hovered over Berlin. Awarding the thesis a *valde laudabile*, Oncken judged it “a valuable attempt” to write the history of German-Polish relations “on the basis of thorough and careful primary research (including [work] with official materials from Berlin, Danzig, and Warsaw).” He felt that it was written “from the

objective viewpoint of a neutral person.” To be sure, no one would expect this manuscript simply to “represent ‘the’ German viewpoint, but it shows so much genuine understanding of the German side of the struggle that one can only wish that it will find many readers also with us.” Above all, Oncken concluded, “it is to be hoped that Mr. Stone’s call for justice will find a lively echo in the neutral part of the world.” The second examiner was the much more conservative-nationalist historian Otto Hoetzsch, who read the thesis with “great pleasure.” Writing to Stone in his best, though slightly Germanic English, he added that “it is very well built up upon a solid scientific base and is well and objectively written.” Hoetzsch hoped that it would be published in English, arguing that it made a contribution to an understanding of a major problem of the present and future and also wondering whether there “can be a durable peace in Eastern Europe with a situation like that between the German and the Polish State?” Writing very contemporary history on a topic of this kind was certainly something highly political. Stone passed his *Promotionsprüfung* on 15 December 1932 and was given a “*cum laude*” for his efforts.²¹

It is possible that the young American doctoral student did not realize until later how his mentors were evidently trying to exploit his work to buttress the German revisionist case against Poland.²² In early 1933 Dartmouth president Ernest M. Hopkins learned from Vernon that “Stone’s work was considered an extraordinarily fine performance and that the [German] Foreign Office stood ready to publish it as a governmental publication if Stone would make a few minor modifications of his argument.”²³ But, to his credit, Stone declined to change the text.

If one reviews the first twenty-five years of Stone’s life, several points emerge that are important to bear in mind for his future career and intellectual development. First of all, he came from a family that had achieved a high degree of upward mobility. At least as far as their sons were concerned, the Cohens gave them the best education they could get and two of them succeeded professionally. Shepard found it easy to connect with people, and he learned to use networks both for his own career advancement and for the causes close to his heart. At the same time, he never seems to have made much of his Jewish background. The name change of 1929 tended to cover it up, but it is probably significant that his first social contacts in Berlin were with Jewish families. Even if he did not talk much politics with the patriotic Lewins, by 1930 Hitler’s struggle against the Weimar Republic and the political and cultural values it stood for could no longer be played down as irrelevant. Stone who had a long-standing interest in current affairs, read the Berlin press, listened to fellow

students, saw the posters, and witnessed the escalating civil war in the streets of Germany. He apparently even got involved in fistfights with Nazi students and showed sympathy for the Social Democrats.

He knew and learned to abhor Nazism from firsthand experience and later joined the U.S. Army with the avowed purpose of wanting to help defeat Hitler. After 1945 the eradication of the remnants of Nazism and the creation of a democratic Germany were his top priorities when he was an occupation officer in the U.S. zone, then a journalist at the *New York Times*, and finally Public Affairs director at the U.S. High Commission. But his reaction to the horrific news that emerged in 1945 about the camps and the Holocaust was not one of blanket condemnation and hatred of all Germans—feelings that were quite widespread in the circles in which he moved in New York. One reason for this more subtle response may have been that he had met too many people who did not fit the stereotype and who had opposed Hitler just as much as he had. He learned to differentiate and gained a more sophisticated understanding of what it means to live through a major social crisis and a brutal dictatorship.

Last but not least, he had been exposed to German high culture and had come to love and admire it for the rest of his life. He also encountered, not least from his mother-in-law, European criticism of America as a country that lacked *Kultur*, and he may even have agreed with it. It was only later that he discovered the importance of American art and music.²⁴ Until the 1960s he also retained a high opinion of the German university system and of German scholarship, although his own exposure to an Ivy League education also convinced him that the best institutions fared well in any comparison with Germany. Later, as will be seen, he also included Oxford and Cambridge in this layer of top universities to be supported by the Ford Foundation, but only after years of extolling the superior virtues of the universities of Berlin and Heidelberg.²⁵

Having completed his Ph.D. with Oncken in December 1932 and with the Weimar Republic by then in a state of civil war, Stone decided to go back to the United States. His career plans were still rather nebulous. While still preparing his thesis, Stone had become convinced that he “was not cut out for an academic career.”²⁶ Given his strong interest in international affairs and his knowledge of Germany, he explored, during his last weeks in Berlin, the idea of joining the diplomatic service. On his return home, he apparently prepared himself for the foreign service exams. He also visualized himself as a European correspondent for a major American newspaper.

CHAPTER 1

REPORTING ON EUROPE AND HITLER

Dartmouth had taught him how to go about his job search. He traveled to Hanover and paid a visit to Dartmouth president Ernest M. Hopkins. Hopkins promptly gave the alumnus a letter of introduction to Joe Gannon, “a Dartmouth graduate in charge of advertising censorship on the *New York Times*.” Attached to this letter was another one, which Hopkins had “just written to Walter Lippmann in regard to a very promising young Dartmouth boy who has got a high degree of intelligence, a fine background and a definite ambition to get into newspaper work.” The president continued that he had told Stone “that you would unquestionably be glad to do anything you could as from one Dartmouth man to another.” He left it to Gannon “whether to give him helpful advice for which he is looking or whether this should come from some of the editorial staff.”²⁷

When Stone met Lippmann in early April, he realized that it was “supremely important that I make a good impression and name now.” It is not certain how much help Lippmann, in fact, offered. Gannon was not too useful either, referring Stone to one of the managing editors, who told him that there was a glut of reporters. He also made disparaging remarks about Stone’s useless Ph.D. Nevertheless, if an opening arose in Europe, he promised to send for Stone. The budding journalist was not discouraged and began to write for *Current History* and the *New York Times* on a freelance basis. He apparently established a good rapport with Lester Markel, the editor responsible for the paper’s Sunday edition, who asked him to submit analytical pieces on such thorny international questions as the Polish Corridor. It was Stone’s “first big opportunity,” which also enabled him to make “a start in getting my name established.” Because payment for his efforts took some time to come through, his family, and his brother Lou in particular, sent him some money, which, as he wrote to his sister Lillian Cohen, helped “a great deal.” It was a frugal time, which apparently also led him again to make inquiries about a placement with the State Department; but success in journalism was just around the corner.²⁸

Proudly Stone sent his articles to Hopkins, who had meanwhile also received a reply from Gannon, expressing—as he informed Stone—“the pleasure he had had in meeting you and further expressing the hope that he had been of some service to you.”²⁹ That this helpful link continued emerges from the response by Hopkins’s secretary to another article Stone had written in *Foreign Policy*. The president, she told Mildred Wertheimer, “is following Dr. Stone’s work with keen interest.”³⁰ To keep

afloat in difficult times, the young doctor also began to give lectures on the European situation. Thus, as early as February 1933 he had given a luncheon speech at the Nashua Lion's Club, trying to enlighten local notables about Germany. According to the *Nashua Telegraph* he warned that the March elections for the Reichstag "will and must be watched with cool anxiety, for the success of the present cabinet may lead to disquieting developments on the European continent."³¹ He gave a similar lecture on the rise of Hitler to the Kiwanis in nearby Lowell. Later there followed speaking engagements at Dartmouth and Princeton. Moreover, he became involved with expert discussion circles on foreign affairs. He traveled up and down the East Coast in pursuit of various projects. *Current History* was interested in getting articles on Europe from him, and anxious not to miss his chance, he wrote to his family to send him his books and newspaper articles together with his collection of documents on Polish-German relations.³²

Even though he did not join the *New York Times* as a member of staff until May 1934, he continued to garner assignments. In early May, Marel sent him on a trip to Washington where he met the counselor at the Polish embassy, who told him "many interesting facts."³³ The Polish ambassador also gave him half an hour of his time. Later he went to the State Department to speak with Jay P. Moffat, the chief of the Division of Western European Affairs. While he was reporting for the *New York Times*, Stone's trip to Washington apparently also yielded two articles for *Current History* on "The Polish-German Dispute" and "Anglo-American Economic Issues." As the editorial preface for the second piece put it, "Dr. Stone, since his return from Europe where he was engaged in investigating international problems, has been in Washington studying various aspects of American foreign policy."³⁴

Finally, during this period he was planning for another important event in his life: his marriage to Charlotte Hasenclever, whom he had left behind in Berlin six months earlier. The wedding was held on 15 August 1933 and the couple spent their honeymoon on a trip to Prague and other Eastern European cities. However, the ten weeks he spent in Europe were also hard work. Having established himself as an expert on Europe, not only the *New York Times* and *Current History* but also the *Boston Herald* and *Vanity Fair* had signed him up. His itinerary included the World Economic Conference in London and visits to Prague, Vienna, and Budapest. Armed with letters of introduction from the *New York Times* and *Current History*, he also tried to gain an interview with Hitler. He failed but was able to talk to Dr. Achim Gercke, an expert in the Reich Interior Ministry, who

CHAPTER 1



Outside the Berlin Registry on their wedding day, 15 August 1933. From left to right: Jimmy Read, Charlotte Stone, Shepard Stone, and Walter Hasenclever. (Courtesy of Margaret Macdonald)

briefed him on Nazi racist policies.³⁵ He was more successful in Prague where he landed a meeting with President Thomas Masaryk.³⁶ Three days later in Vienna, he discussed the European situation with Friedrich Stockinger, the Austrian minister of trade.³⁷

Back in New York, Stone quickly turned his material into articles, some of which earned him praise and were reprinted in *Reader's Digest*. Clearly, this young journalist who pursued his reporting projects aggressively and whose years in Europe, Berlin doctorate, and social skills helped him to get the information he was looking for, was on the way up. In fact, he was so assiduous that Markel felt obliged to put a damper on his reporting. As he wrote to Stone on 5 September 1933: "As for the pieces you are undertaking for us, you realize, of course, that we are getting huge quantities of material out of Germany, and it might be advisable to have an agreement upon subjects before you proceed," which "might save you a considerable amount of unnecessary work." However, he also felt that a "piece on the racial issue sounds especially interesting."³⁸

Eventually the high quality of his articles, his earnest sense of mission, and his tireless activism brought him a permanent position on the *New York Times* news staff. After further solicitations from Markel to write articles for the Sunday edition, Stone moved to the Sunday department, where he held a variety of positions.³⁹ By the time he joined the army in 1942, he was serving as assistant to Markel, the Sunday editor. However, he did not give up writing articles for magazines such as the *Commentator*.⁴⁰ In September 1936 he was in touch with the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) network about a job as "current events commentator of the American School of the Air," for which the director of Radio Talks, Edward R. Murrow, sent him some guidelines on CBS's reporting standards.⁴¹ Not all of his projects were accepted. Nor did he cover only foreign affairs. Back home in Nashua, the local newspaper proudly reported in April 1937 that Stone had "interviewed several Congressional leaders directly following the President's message to Congress."⁴² He spent much of the rest of 1937 on another extended trip to Europe in the course of which he talked to Masaryk again, garnered an interview with Eduard Beneš, and prepared a CBS talk to be broadcast directly from Paris.⁴³

What was the thrust of Stone's reporting on European affairs in the 1930s? It will come as no surprise that overall he was highly critical of the Nazi dictatorship and its domestic policies. But he also subscribed to the reporting ethos of *New York Times* and CBS journalism, which Ed Murrow outlined in 1937 as follows: "We strive, insofar as possible, to present commentaries free from political or religious bias, in a dignified

CHAPTER 1

manner, calculated both to inform and entertain the listener. We attempt to avoid advocacy of any point of view by presenting both sides of a controversial subject; thereby giving the listener the opportunity of forming his own conclusions.”⁴⁴ As to Poland, it may be that, initially at least, Stone remained more sympathetic toward the German position, just as he had been in his doctoral thesis. Thus, the Polish consul general in New York wrote to Raymond L. Buell, the research director of the Foreign Policy Association, in June 1933 that he had read Stone’s article on Polish-German relations with the “greatest interest.” But he also felt that “Mr. Stone’s vast volume of information reflects preponderantly the German point of view.”⁴⁵

Closer scrutiny of Stone’s piece shows that he tried hard to be even-handed and did not shy away from criticizing Germany quite severely for its nationalist condescension and racism toward the Poles, which, he added, injured Germany’s “just claims in the eyes of the neutral world . . . , while Poland’s true strength has been misinterpreted. Imperialistic demands in 1919 and repressive measures against the German minority since then have necessarily affected German sentiment toward Poland.”⁴⁶ He identified “the whole question” of the Corridor as “the fundamental difficulty,” adding: “Until this thorn in Germany’s flesh has been removed in a manner satisfactory to both countries there will be no peace in Eastern Europe.” But he also raised the problem that “if Poland were prepared to discuss the territorial issue with Germany, would not that be the beginning of the end of the Polish State?”

Furthermore, he saw “the danger that a change in the Corridor would release a universal demand from the dissatisfied minorities in all countries” of Eastern Europe. At the same time, “the activities and tendencies of the Hitler government have created a serious barrier to any territorial revision. The experience of many centuries has demonstrated the impermanence of decisions won by force, and a peaceful solution must be reached on the question of the Corridor.” Stone ended on a somber note: “Today neither Germany nor Poland wants war, but for over a decade German-Polish relations have been allowed to drift until they have reached an impasse. Present conditions lend force to the belief that an insignificant border incident would suffice to bring about the disaster which the inhabitants near the frontier await with anxious expectation, with fear and, most tragic of all, with resignation.”

Stone’s pessimism seems to have grown markedly after his visit to Germany in the summer of 1933. In October he published an article that began with the words: “The center of Europe has become an island. A

mental ocean separates it from its immediate neighbors and from the rest of the world.” Hitler, he continued, had consolidated his power and increased his popularity: “There is no organized and effective opposition” to Nazism.⁴⁷ After analyzing the indoctrination of the young and reminding his readers of the roots of the “Hitlerites” in the years of economic crisis, he examined labor relations and the alleged greater independence of German industry. It seems that, like so many other foreigners, Stone was initially misled about Hitler’s foreign policy ambitions. Because the “Führer,” at the beginning of his regime, posed as a “peace chancellor,”⁴⁸ it was easy to assume that no major shift had taken place in 1933 and that Hitler might not last for long. Apparently only after his European tour in the summer of 1933 did Stone become more suspicious of Germany’s power-political aims. By the fall his views on Nazi domestic policy and Nazi diplomacy had instilled in him a sense of ominous foreboding.

Accordingly, the piece he published in the *New York Times Magazine* in December 1933 focused almost exclusively on the dangerous power of Nazi propaganda and its impact on the Germans. Titled “Hypnotist of Millions,” Stone’s article described Nazi techniques of indoctrination through constant marches, rallies, and exhibitions. “With the aid of this propaganda machine a new German myth has been concocted. In the schools the teachers are doing their duty and at universities professors are propounding the party philosophy. Even newspaper columns devoted to the ‘German woman’ pay due deference, and women are told how to be child-loving and to prepare for their proper place in the home.” The results were distressing, in that Germans were now “living in a Nazi dream and not in the reality of the world.” Worse, possibly “more Germans are happy now than at any time since the war. They like to play soldier, and under Hitler they play it overtime. . . . And the crowds go home elated in the conviction that the Third Reich is the consummation of a divine development.”⁴⁹

On the Sunday before the first anniversary of the Nazi seizure of power, Markel published an article by Stone that examined the situation in Germany just before 30 January 1933 and in the months thereafter. Starting with the setback for the Nazis in the Reichstag elections of November 1932, he argued that at that point Hitler’s accession to power appeared to be “remote, if not impossible.”⁵⁰ He described the intrigues that led to the dismissal of General Kurt von Schleicher, the Reich chancellor, before tracing how Hitler had quickly transformed the country into a one-party dictatorship whose citizens were “now docile.” As in earlier pieces, he spent some time discussing the labor situation, though this time he

stressed the repressive character of the regime. The only positive thing, Stone wrote, that had been achieved was that “although the living standard had fallen in the country as a whole, work has been divided among larger numbers.”

Finally—and significantly, in light of the causes he pursued after 1945—he spoke about the changes that had occurred in the once rich cultural life of Berlin, which he remembered so well from his student days: “Bruno Walter, Klemperer, Adolf Busch, Hubermann and many others have gone to foreign countries, and non-German artists, including Toscanini, Menuhin and Heifetz, have declared their solidarity with the persecuted artists by refusing to appear in Germany.” All in all, “German life has been unified and only the pastors of the Protestant Church have risen in revolt against Nazification.” Worse, “Jewish families which had looked upon themselves as German for centuries are now degraded inhabitants of their native country. Not only have they been forced out of positions where they made generous contributions to German culture, but they have been definitely relegated to an inferior place and their means of existence has been threatened.” Stone concluded: “Hitler is master today and the old President [Hindenburg] only infrequently interferes with the decisions that he makes. Although every German is careful to look behind himself before opening his mouth, Hitler can say truthfully that he has made the German people happier since taking them into the Nazi nursery.” Millions believed in a better future and felt “heroic and important in the petty bourgeois atmosphere of the Third Reich.” Although the state had humiliated some sections of the population and had imprisoned others because they had “put principle above personal safety,” but, “the great majority of the nation” would “join in the fanfares celebrating the first anniversary of the ascension of ‘the Leader.’ ”

A month later, when Stone was interviewed by the *Dartmouthian* about the international implications of these domestic developments, he now saw a “strong possibility of a war.” The interview then turned to the position of Austria, which, in light of the weakness of other politicians, including Benito Mussolini, Stone thought might become a powder keg: “I am afraid that no matter which group gains possession of Austria the situation will only become more strained in Europe. The only solution I can see for the European problem is a Pan-Europe,” but this looked “obviously impractical” to him. For “most of the German youths believe that there is glory in fighting for the Vaterland” and “since they have experienced sorrow and hardship all their lives in a vanquished and impoverished country, the idea of war holds little alarm for them.” To be

sure, “there are many who think that imminent war is improbable because of the poverty of these countries.” But, he added, “a country is rarely too poor to go to war. They figure that if they are victorious they can easily pay their war debts, and if they lose, the war debts won’t matter so much anyway.”⁵¹

The theme of the danger of war and of a desperate move by Hitler continued to preoccupy Stone in subsequent months and years. However, his warnings attained a new sense of urgency after his trip to Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, France, and Britain in 1937. It was mitigated somewhat by Ed Murrow, who welcomed him “to the Continent of Chaos” and commented sarcastically, “if your darling New York Times is any indication, the American press has a war starting in Europe every other day!” Therefore, if Stone agreed with him that “no war is really imminent, it would perhaps be a good idea to say so” in his proposed radio talks from Europe.⁵²

It seems that Stone took these cues. Certainly his CBS talk in January 1938 on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Nazi seizure of power was relatively subdued, focusing on Hitler’s propaganda and general popularity; on his romanticism and on the major changes that had been unleashed. He referred his listeners to Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* to gain a better understanding of what the Führer wanted: “Germany, he believes, has a mission; she must expand in Eastern Europe; she must unite all Germans under one flag, she must dominate the Continent. To do so she must arm, militarize her life and fight, if necessary.” However, because other nations would resist his ambitions, there would be war if Hitler went ahead with his plans.⁵³

Much of Stone’s journalistic effort at this time was devoted to persuading an isolationist American public that it was dangerous to hide its collective head in the sand, and eventually this led him to venture into the field of U.S. naval policy. His article in the *Commentator* of April 1938 was evidently designed to justify a strong navy. Taking a firmly internationalist position, he wrote that if the American people saw no danger in developments in Europe and Asia, then the president’s request for naval rearmament would be unnecessary. Yet, “if we want to trade with the world, to protect our interests in the world; if we want to make sure that non-democratic powers do not extend their influence to this part of the world; if we believe that eventually our own system of government depends somewhat on the survival of democracy in Britain and France; if we believe that no matter what we do, the United States in the Twentieth Cen-

CHAPTER 1

tury cannot take an exit from the rest of the world any more than it did in the days of George Washington—then we do need a powerful Navy.”⁵⁴

Mindful of how difficult it was for Americans to visualize what was happening across the Atlantic, Stone devoted another piece a few months later to the “two Europes—the one of surface beauty and contentment; the other, a hidden element of brutality and force.”⁵⁵ Looking back, he wrote: “Not too long ago I was in Rome, Vienna, Prague, Berlin, Paris, and London and from what I *saw* not one of these cities could have been less peaceful than Boston on a summer Sunday.” But looks, he continued, are “deceiving,” and it is “what you *won’t* see in Europe that really counts, that will be responsible for the great changes which coming years will probably bring.” This hidden face of Europe included uniformed men forcing “their way into a home to murder a political opponent, only to have the newspapers report the next morning: ‘Mr. X committed suicide last night at his home.’ ” Nor would one see “men being shipped to prison islands because they happen to disagree with the political principles of the dictator who rules over them.”

Hidden from view would also be the “executions of alleged ‘spies and traitors’ in the courtyards of prisons”; or “a boy . . . suddenly ordered to leave the sanatorium where he has been convalescing for six months from a malignant disease, because he is ‘racially undesirable’ ”; or “clergymen of all faiths praying quietly for the rule of God in place of Caesar”; or “officials sitting in government bureaus, plotting and arranging and paying for uprisings in a neighboring country so that the ensuing turmoil will benefit themselves.” What, according to Stone, all this amounted to was that Europe was “morally ill.” Specifically naming Italy, Germany, and Russia, he gave further examples of dictatorship and repression. Given these realities in the other Europe “of brutality and force,” Stone concluded darkly, it “may help to explain events which will be occurring in the days yet to come.”

A further illuminating summary of his ideas about Nazi Germany and Europe in the late 1930s is finally to be found in a booklet of just under one hundred pages that he published with Simon and Schuster in 1938. The title gave its basic line away: *Shadow over Europe*. This volume represents, at one level, a rough survey of German history since the Roman period, with an emphasis on the twentieth century. It contains judgments that he picked up during his student days at Dartmouth and in Berlin: “We know today that Germany was not solely responsible for the war. There were many causes: the Slavic-German rivalry; Great Britain’s fear of Germany’s growing navy; the French desire to avenge the defeat of

1871; Germany's ambition to dominate Europe"; and others.⁵⁶ But he also reminded his readers of the treaty that Germany had imposed on Russia in 1918 at Brest-Litovsk and of what Europe would look like if Germany had won the First World War. His assessment of the Nazi dictatorship did not mince words and pointed out that Germans critical of the Nazi regime were thrown into concentration camps that contained not only "Communists and other enemies of the regime" but also, and especially, Jews. Indeed, "owing to Nazi policy, it is rapidly becoming impossible for Jews to live in Germany at all."

This analysis of the domestic situation was followed by an examination of Germany's relationships with its neighbors and of the situation of German minorities in Poland, the Baltic states, and the Soviet Union. He quoted from *Mein Kampf* to highlight Hitler's quest for *Lebensraum* in the East and his willingness to spill blood to obtain more land. At the end of his booklet, Stone raised the inevitable question of where all this might lead. He displayed some optimism but ultimately stressed Hitler's unchanging aims and his continuing persecution of "all people of liberal opinions within the borders of his realm," as well as "his desire to stamp out the Jews of Germany." No less alarmingly, "since he holds Germany in his hands, and there is no organized opposition to him, it seems unlikely that anything but death or war or economic collapse will end his story." Hitler, Stone concluded, had already "harmed the cause of free men everywhere. In an attempt to meet him on his own ground, nations are being forced to regiment themselves as never before. He is forcing men to fight a battle which the western world believed it had won in the American and French revolutions." So, "along with all the good he has done for Germany, he has been responsible for thousands of personal tragedies and for much of the fear of the future which now hangs over Europe and the world."

The booklet found a ready readership. The first edition of 25,000 appeared in October 1938. In December another 5,000 copies had to be printed and a third edition of 10,000 copies was published in July 1939.⁵⁷ Sales dropped off thereafter, but by that time Stone's gloomy predictions had come true. Another book of his, *We Saw It Happen*, had come out in the summer of 1938 and sold 7,500 copies from July to December. This volume, compiled with Hanson Baldwin, a colleague at the *New York Times* who was on the rise as a European correspondent, assembled essays by some thirteen *Times* correspondents and critics who discussed contemporary issues and problems in a variety of foreign countries.⁵⁸ Judging not just from the sales but also from the reviews and readers' responses that

CHAPTER 1

Stone collected, both books were well received and widely noticed. This success encouraged him to think of writing a further study on Germany for which he began to prepare an outline in June 1938, but it was apparently never completed. A wartime book idea also came to naught and so did a plan to bring out a second volume of *We Saw It Happen*.⁵⁹ In the early 1940s, however, he added reviewing books on Europe and Germany to his list of journalistic activities at the *New York Times*.⁶⁰

Several points that are of relevance for later chapters emerge from Stone's career between 1933 and 1942, when he volunteered for the U.S. Army. Firstly, by the beginning of World War II, he had left his mark as a journalist and expert on Germany working in the United States. Looking back on the American press in these years in a speech before the Inter-American Press Association in October 1965, he argued that in general it "left no doubt about what Hitler was doing, where he was going and what the grim implications" would be. "This was reporting in depth, scope and with perspective." Some of "the correspondents covering that story," he continued, "were able to put the complex facts together [and] assess the significance of events. Their reports were brilliant and effective."⁶¹ Although the appeasement-minded papers, such as those belonging to the Hearst press, hardly deserved this kind of favorable evaluation, it did apply to the *New York Times* and also included his own writings.⁶² From the summer of 1933 he had no doubt done his best to unmask the Nazi dictatorship and to raise the specter of war. Time and again he analyzed the power of propaganda and the gullibility of the nationalist German "masses." He described the brutality of fascism in its various guises. He juxtaposed these regimes with Western democracy and its principles, warning his fellow Americans to be on their guard, to abandon their isolationism, and to recognize how dependent their country and its economy was on the rest of the world. Following family tradition, he remained a Wilsonian internationalist who was also suspicious of Stalinism. In domestic politics he leaned toward the Democrats, though it seems that Roosevelt's New Deal interventionism made him uneasy.

But given his humble family background and rapid rise into the middle class, not least through his marriage, he also retained his reservations about inherited privilege and an undemocratic elitism. Without this it would be difficult to understand an article he published in the *Commentator* in February 1939 on the British "governing class." At first glance it was directed against London's appeasement policy and the need to get rid of its protagonists. However, the thrust of the argument went beyond this, because to him the appeasers were a small "gang" of upper-class men

NASHUA AND BERLIN TO PEARL HARBOR

who controlled Britain politically and economically and who saw Nazi Germany merely as a bulwark against Bolshevism. They lived in a world that was “not the world of the vast majority of Englishmen or Americans.” Rather it was “a world of privilege; a world which believes in its own prerogatives; a world convinced of its own wisdom and of its right to rule.” With these men at the helm, “the future of Britain does look dark,” though not hopeless; for “forces are stirring in Britain; men and women of ability and power know that something is wrong; that some house-cleaning must be done.” Indeed, “even among the ‘governing class’ there are people who oppose ‘the gang.’” These people would never want to “sign away the Old World to Adolf Hitler.” Stone concluded that “if ‘the gang’ loses power or changes its policy, then Americans will be able to breathe more freely.” The United States would not be able to stand “at the side of a Britain ruled by a ‘gang,’” but of those who represented another Britain.⁶³

These arguments, too, should be borne in mind later on as we move into Stone’s postwar life and try to connect him with the professional and intellectual world in which he operated after 1945. He was not opposed to elitism as such, but it had to be meritocratic and it had to be open to the principles of the parliamentary-democratic systems of the West.

RESCUE FROM THE HOLOCAUST

Finally, his writings of the 1930s invariably mentioned the persecution of Germany’s Jews. To be sure, the culture of the *New York Times* was particularly sensitive to this theme. But Stone was now also personally confronted with this question whenever he visited his parents-in-law or learned about the deterioration of their position through the letters they sent to their daughter.⁶⁴ Although there are but few indications that the Jaffés considered emigration to the United States before 1939, *Mammchen* and *Pappchen* were repeatedly urged to leave Germany.⁶⁵ Charlotte’s brother Walter Hasenclever, with Shepard Stone’s help, found a teaching position at the Andover Academy in 1936; but, although they knew of Walter’s happiness in New England, the elderly couple apparently found it difficult to uproot themselves. Moreover, Joseph Jaffé had problems getting an American visa because of his Polish birth; however, the two elderly people probably also felt that Nazi anti-Semitism had peaked, and they could not imagine that worse was still to come.

CHAPTER 1

After the beginning of the war their predicament inevitably became more and more nightmarish. They had already moved from their large apartment on Meineckestrasse to a small sublet on Kurfürstendamm. As the situation for Jews continued to deteriorate, and it also became more difficult to get into the United States, the Jaffés agreed to emigrate to Venezuela. Charlotte had meanwhile become a U.S. citizen and her mother was therefore eligible for an American entry visa. Yet Joseph came under the quota for Polish immigrants and the length of this list so diminished his chances of getting out that the family decided to try the Venezuela route. Unfortunately, in May 1940 the Venezuelan Interior Ministry began to drag its feet despite the financial guarantees that Shepard Stone had given. By December 1940 the Stones were actively exploring the possibility of the Jaffés emigrating to the Philippines.

Fresh guarantees were given that funds for their maintenance would be available. In January 1941 a deposit of \$1,000 reserved passage from Spain to the Philippines for the Jaffés in the hope that they would be allowed to travel to the United States from there. The *New York Times* correspondent in Madrid helped to book the first sailing from Bilbao in March 1941. Then disaster struck again. On 10 February Charlotte learned that the U.S. State Department “never cabled Berlin to give Mrs. Stone’s parents a visa” and that the whole process was back to square one. Worse, the Philippines had introduced a new immigration law and they had to apply again.

In the meantime the affidavits had expired and had to be renewed in a hurry to be sent to Berlin, this time in the hope that the Jaffés would be allowed to sail directly to New York. The Madrid correspondent of the *New York Times* made another reservation for a ship from Bilbao for early June 1941 and arranged for the issuance of a Spanish transit visa. However, the problem of the American visa for Joseph Jaffé and the Polish quota continued. On 18 April 1941 the *New York Times* correspondent in Berlin telegraphed Stone that the Jaffés had “cancelled [their] passage as [it proved] impossible [to] get [a] visa” for Joseph due to the quota restriction.

It is not difficult to visualize how panicky the Jaffés and Stones must have been by this time. The situation in Europe worsened day by day. The Nazi persecution of the Jews had begun to turn into mass murder. Stone now tried to mobilize the State Department via the *New York Times* in Washington and Joseph Jaffé was put on an emergency list shortly thereafter. On 21 May, Charlotte was informed by the chief of the State Department’s visa division in somewhat cumbersome bureaucratic language

“that although it was not possible to issue a visa to your father as a Polish quota number was not available, favorable action will be taken in the case in the event that any number allotted to any consular office should be returned unused before the end of the month.” Four days later, the Berlin correspondent of the *New York Times* reported that visas had now been promised by 31 May and that the Jaffés were making preparations to catch a boat in June. They arrived in Bilbao by train on 11 June and left on the day before the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, arriving safely in New York at the end of the month.

The case provides a good example of how difficult it had become for Jews after 1939 to leave Germany and how easily one could get caught in a bureaucratic maze. Indeed, it is probably not too farfetched to say that the Jaffés would not have gotten out of Nazi Germany had it not been for the network of journalists and contacts that the *New York Times* was able to provide. To this extent the drama found a happy ending. They had escaped certain deportation and murder. However, the Jaffés life in New York offers a distressing example of what it meant to be forcibly uprooted and to be put into an alien environment. After temporary accommodation, the Stones found them an apartment on West 119th Street. It was, as Shepard Stone recorded in December 1941, “a tiny place, and I felt a bit uncomfortable, seeing them in this cupboard after the luxury of Meineckestr. 26. Mammchen cooked and served Sunday dinner—a bit puzzled by the type of work she had never done.” Later they moved to Liberty, New York.⁶⁶ However, it seems they never felt at home. Now in their early fifties and with Joseph unable to practice, they were virtually at the end of the road. Their unhappiness and stress probably also accounts for their failing physical health. Like so many survivors they were deeply traumatized by what had been done to them. Their lives had been wrecked to a degree that is difficult to fathom some sixty years later.

In the meantime another event had taken place that was to shape Stone’s life very profoundly: on 7 December the Japanese had attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor and, when Hitler declared war on the United States a few days later, America had entered the world war on the Allied side, more or less guaranteeing, thanks to superior U.S. economic and military resources, that the Axis powers would be defeated. It was an effort that Stone joined with conviction.