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Herbert Blankenhorn in the Third Reich

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The early career of Herbert Blankenhorn (1904–1991) illustrates important trends in the transition from Nazi Germany to the Federal Republic. During the 1930s and 1940s he served as a diplomat in the German Foreign Office and also joined the Nazi Party in 1938. After 1945 he would play a very public role in the creation of a new political culture in West Germany. Konrad Adenauer thought that the exceptional political sense of his young personal assistant, who also served as Secretary General of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in the British Zone, helped him become chancellor of the Federal Republic in 1949.[1] Through the mid-1950s Blankenhorn remained one of Adenauer's most intimate advisors, especially on matters concerning foreign policy. From late 1949 to mid-1950, he also oversaw the creation of what became the West German *Auswärtiges Amt* (Foreign Office), and thereafter he was the head of its Political Division and deputy to State Secretary Walter Hallstein until 1955. He went on to serve as West German ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (1955–1958), France (1958–1963), Italy (1963–1965), and the United Kingdom (1965–1970). After retiring from the diplomatic service in 1970, Blankenhorn functioned as the West German representative in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Executive Council until 1976.

By studying Blankenhorn's early life, we can gain insight into the processes that transformed western Germany into a functioning democracy and that revolutionized its foreign policy after World War II. Much work has been done on the life histories of "perpetrators" during the Third Reich who managed to reestablish themselves due to their upper-class *habitus* and connections after the war.[2] But Blankenhorn represented those German career officials who

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[1]Horst Ferdinand, "Herbert Blankenhorn," in *Baden-Württembergische Biographien*, ed. Bernd Ottnad (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1999), vol. 2, 48–54, here 49.

[2]For two outstanding examples, see Ulrich Herbert, *Best. Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernuft, 1903–1989* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), and Norbert Frei, ed., *Hitlers Eliten nach 1945* (Munich: DTV, 2003).

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had served the Nazi state below the highest-ranking positions and who were neither active resistance members nor Nazi Party enthusiasts. This was the group that came to dominate the upper echelons of the Federal Republic's ministries. As Curt Garner commented in 1995, we still know relatively little about it or its experiences under National Socialism.[3] Other scholars have focused on how groups of German elites created collective and, indeed, selective memories that disassociated themselves and their institutions from National Socialism and ultimately aided their integration into the Federal Republic's new political culture.[4] This process was clearly at work among Blankenhorn's old colleagues from the Auswärtiges Amt, as Hans-Jürgen Döscher has illustrated in two major studies.[5] Norbert Frei extended this idea to the societal level by arguing that compromised West German elites helped to set the conditions for their own rehabilitation. The Federal Republic's democratic parties initially depended on votes from a population that had supported Hitler just a few years previously.[6] Blankenhorn's case demonstrates that the return of the elites to government service was a complicated phenomenon. Their experiences during the Third Reich promoted after 1945 a sense of solidarity with colleagues and a desire to reinvent the past for careerist reasons, but at the same time could provide positive impulses for the Federal Republic's political system.

Moreover, major questions remain about Blankenhorn's career before 1946. In 2006 Birgit Ramscheid published an extensively researched biography of Blankenhorn that clearly recognizes the problems facing anyone who wants to write about his life. For example, documentation on or by Blankenhorn from before 1945 is relatively scarce.[7] In general, as she notes, he was known for being hard to pin down—"Sich festzulegen, war in vielerlei Hinsicht

[3]Curt Garner, "Public Service Personnel in West Germany in the 1950s: Controversial Policy Decisions and Their Effects on Social Composition, Gender Structure, and the Role of Former Nazis," *Journal of Social History* 29, no. 1 (Fall 1995): 25–80. See also, however, Philipp Gassert, *Kurt Georg Kiesinger 1904–1988. Kanzler zwischen den Zeiten* (Franfurt am Main: DVA, 2006).

[4]Michael R. Hayse, *Recasting West German Elites: Higher Civil Servants, Business Leaders, and Physicians in Hesse Between Nazism and Democracy, 1945–1955*, Monographs in German History (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Jay Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens: Former Wehrmacht Officers in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945–1955*, Studies in War, Society, and the Military (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2002); S. Jonathan Wiesen, *West German Industry and the Challenge of the Nazi Past, 1945–1955* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Patrick Wagner, *Hitlers Kriminalisten. Die deutsche Kriminalpolizei und der Nationalsozialismus zwischen 1920 und 1960* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2002), 152–185; Alaric Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949–1959* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003).

[5]Hans-Jürgen Döscher, *Das Auswärtige Amt im Dritten Reich. Diplomatie im Schatten der "Endlösung"* (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1987), and Döscher, *Verschworene Gesellschaft. Das Auswärtiges Amt unter Adenauer zwischen Neubeginn und Kontinuität* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995).

[6]Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik. Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1996).

[7]Birgit Ramscheid, *Herbert Blankenhorn (1904–1991). Adenauers außenpolitischer Berater*, Forschungen und Quellen zur Zeitgeschichte 49 (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2006).

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keine hervorstechende Eigenschaft Blankenhorns."[8] While perhaps a useful characteristic for a diplomat, this elusiveness explains the vastly different reactions that both contemporaries and scholars had (and have) toward him and represents a major obstacle for biographers. As a result, her study relies heavily and sometimes uncritically on the testimony of Blankenhorn's associates about his activities during the Third Reich. Moreover, it also tells us little about how he came to support Adenauer's *Westbindung*, which was fundamentally at odds with prevailing traditions in German foreign policy before 1945.

Indeed, much of the available evidence on Blankenhorn's relationship with National Socialism is problematic.[9] Two key sources on his early life are his 1980 autobiography, *Verständnis und Verständigung*, and the report of the Bundestag's Investigative Committee 47 (UA-47) of June 18, 1952, on the West German Auswärtiges Amt's personnel policy.[10] UA-47 relied heavily on testimony from Blankenhorn and his associates both to it and to the former president of the Cologne Court of Appeals (*Oberlandesgericht*), Dr. Rudolf Schetter.[11] These sources contradict each other in at least one fundamental way. UA-47 found Blankenhorn suitable for continued service in the Foreign Office not least because his former associates had made clear "that Blankenhorn belonged to the driving forces in the resistance group of July 20, 1944."[12] Blankenhorn's autobiography, however, matter of factly recounts where he served during the Third Reich and mentions the horror of living in Berlin during the last years of the war but makes no mention of the German

[8]Ibid., 65.

[9]Blankenhorn's personnel file in the Auswärtiges Amt will not be available for researchers until 2021. According to information kindly provided by Dr. Gerhard Keiper of the ministry's *Politisches Archiv* [hereafter cited as PA/AA] to the author on September 5, 2005, only his pay records (*Besoldungsakten*) survived an Allied bombing attack on Berlin in November 1943. Curiously, no substitute questionnaire (*Fragebogen*) is in his files, either (or in the microfilmed captured records of the German Foreign Ministry in the National Archives in Washington), even though the Auswärtiges Amt in 1944 had its employees fill one out to replace destroyed *Personalakten*.

[10]Herbert Blankenhorn, *Verständnis und Verständigung. Blätter eines politischen Tagebuchs 1949–1979* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1980), 30–43. Deutscher Bundestag, Untersuchungsausschuß-47, *Schriftlicher Bericht des Untersuchungsauschusses (47. Ausschuß) gemäß Antrag der Fraktion der SPD betreffend Prüfung, ob durch die Personalpolitik Mißstände im Auswärtigen Dienst eingetreten sind*, June 18, 1952, 1. Wahlperiode 1949, Drucksache Nr. 3465, reprinted in Wilhelm Haas, *Beitrag zur Geschichte der Entstehung des Auswärtigen Dienstes der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn: H. Köllen, 1969), 282–423, here 291–294. See also Ferdinand, "Herbert Blankenhorn," 48–51, who relies heavily on these sources, and the entry for Blankenhorn in Maria Keipert and Peter Grupp, eds., *Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes 1871–1945* (hereafter cited as *Handbuch*), vol. I (A-F), ed. Johannes Hürter, Martin Kröger, Rolf Messerschmidt, and Christiane Scheidemann (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2000), 173–175.

[11]Schetter was commissioned by the ministry in late 1951 to review its personnel policy in response to a critical series of articles in the *Frankfurter Rundschau* authored by Michael Hinze-Mansfield. On the controversy surrounding the Auswärtiges Amt's personnel policy in 1951–52, see Döscher, *Verschworene Gesellschaft*, and Thomas W. Maulucci, Jr., "The Creation and Early History of the West German Foreign Office, 1945–1955" (Ph.D. diss, Yale University, 1998), 258–270.

[12]Haas, *Beitrag zur Geschichte*, 294.

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resistance.[13] Although this silence is consistent with the recollections of one of his postwar colleagues, who noted that Blankenhorn was very reluctant to speak about his experiences during the Nazi era, it seems to require explanation if Blankenhorn indeed had been deeply involved in the opposition.[14]

Moreover, not much is known about his foreign policy views or how they evolved through 1945, which is puzzling due to his later association with Adenauer.[15] Hans-Peter Schwarz writes, "Blankenhorn's significance for shaping Adenauer's foreign policy cannot be underestimated." Not only was he important because of his knowledge of foreign affairs, his contacts with Allied authorities, his interpersonal and organizational skills, and his political sense, but also as a Badener and an adherent of Gustav Stresemann's *Verständigungspolitik* "he strengthened Adenauer's determination to shift the focal point of German political life to the West."[16] Blankenhorn's associates Michael Thomas, a German émigré who returned as a member of the British Occupation forces after the war, and CDU-politician Eugen Gerstenmaier concurred that he had exercised great influence on Adenauer foreign policy.[17] Yet Arnulf Baring, while acknowledging Blankenhorn's "creative political imagination," added that he was "adaptable to the point of disloyalty [*anpassungsfähig bis zur Illoyalität*]."[18] Although Baring's view is critical and even cynical, Blankenhorn's prominent position clearly depended on Adenauer's continued favor. Exactly how and why did he become a disciple of Westbindung in the late 1940s?

Blankenhorn's First Years in the Foreign Service, 1929–1935

Blankenhorn was born in Mühlhausen in Alsace in 1904, the oldest of three children in an upper-middle class family from Baden. His father, Erich, was a cavalry officer in the Imperial German Army. In 1913 Erich Blankenhorn was reassigned to the German General Staff in Berlin, and Herbert therefore spent the entire First World War with his family in that city. His mother's side of the family was especially well connected, and one of his maternal uncles, Hans Heinrich Dieckhoff, later served as a German ambassador. The Blankenhorns returned to Baden in 1920,

[13]Blankenhorn, *Verständnis*, 38–41.

[14]Rolf Pauls (Blankenhorn's personal assistant in the Foreign Office during the early 1950s), interview with the author, May 7, 1993, Bonn.

[15]On the need to learn more, see Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 176.

[16]Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Adenauer. Der Aufstieg, 1876–1952* (Stuttgart: DVA, 1986), 565–569, quotes 566, 569.

[17]Michael Thomas, *Deutschland, England über alles. Rückkehr als Besatzungsoffizier* (Berlin: Siedler, 1984), 183; Eugen Gerstenmaier, *Streit und Friede hat seine Zeit. Ein Lebensbericht* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1981), 294, 607.

[18]Arnulf Baring, *Außenpolitik in Adenauers Kanzlerdemokratie. Bonns Beitrag zur Europäischen Verteidigungsgemeinschaft*, Schriften des Forschungsinstituts der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik 28 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1969), 15–16.

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where Erich Blankenhorn became head of that state's *Schutzpolizei*. Adversely affected by the hyperinflation of the early 1920s, the family had to sell property and assets to stay afloat. Nonetheless Herbert completed his *Abitur* in Karlsruhe in 1923 and between 1924 and 1928 studied law at Heidelberg, Munich, and Paris. He also completed two semesters at the London School of Economics in 1925–26 thanks to financial support from his maternal grandfather, a former high-ranking civil servant. After passing the *Referendarexam* in 1928, he became an attaché in the German Foreign Service the following year. Blankenhorn credited the intervention of his old schoolmate in Berlin, Wolfgang Stresemann, son of the Foreign Minister, for this appointment (only nine of 600 candidates in Blankenhorn's group survived the entrance exam). Blankenhorn says he admired Gustav Stresemann and had often been in his house as a schoolchild, and he formed part of the honor guard at Stresemann's funeral in October 1929. On April 25, 1932, he passed the Diplomatic-Consular exam and officially joined the diplomatic corps.[19]

After spending the rest of April and May as part of the German delegation to the League of Nations in Geneva, Blankenhorn served at the German mission in Athens, Greece, from August 1932 to August 1935. While there he applied for membership in the Nazi Party in 1934. He told the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) while in American custody in Germany in 1945 that the Foreign Office had ordered all members serving abroad to join by submitting their applications to the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei's* (*NSDAP's) Auslandsorganisation*.[20] He claimed the NSDAP rejected him, however, because he had condemned its Jewish policy in a confrontation with the *Gauleiter* of Mecklenburg, Friedrich Hildebrand, who was on a visit to Athens. Unbeknownst to Blankenhorn at the time, Hildebrand filed a report with the Auslandsorganisation "asking for stern measures against me."[21]

We have reason to doubt some aspects of this story. The Nazi Party membership files formerly housed in the Berlin Document Center and now in both the

[19]Blankenhorn, *Verständnis*, 30–38; Ferdinand, "Herbert Blankenhorn," 49–50; Keipert and Grupp, eds., *Handbuch*, vol. I, 174; Ramscheid, *Herbert Blankenhorn*, 25–36.

[20]Herbert Blankenhorn, "Autobiography of Herbert Blankenhorn, German Diplomat and Attaché at German Embassy, Washington, from 1935 to 1939," May 9, 1945, 9 pages, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C., RG 56, FBI HQ: Investigative Reports, Classified Subject Files Released Under the Nazi and Japanese War Crimes Disclosure Acts, Classification 105: Foreign Counterintelligence, 105–7863-sec. 1 (Herbert Blankenhorn) (hereafter cited as Blankenhorn FBI files).

[21]Ibid. See also "Vernehmungsniederschriften Dr. Schwarzmann und Blankenhorn" (Schetter investigation), October 4, 1951, PA/AA, NL Haas, vol. 1, 5 pages, here 3–5, and Theo Kordt's statement for Blankenhorn's de-Nazification, which claims that the Auswärtiges Amt's *Personalabteilung* defended Blankenhorn against Hildebrand's accusations; "Zeugnis des früheren Botschaftsrates in London Theodor Kordt," May 4, 1946, Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Bestand 221-11 Staatskommissar für die Entnazifierung und Katagorizierung, Misc 5154: Blankenhorn, Herbert (geboren 15.12.1904).

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United States National Archives and the Federal Archives in Berlin (BDC) contain no record of an application by Blankenhorn in 1934. It is still possible he applied (the BDC Records are not complete);[22] however, the extant files do confirm a successful application in 1938, when the influence of the Auslands-organisation within the Foreign Ministry was far greater than in 1934. In addition, if the otherwise unconfirmed clash with Hildebrand occurred, its consequences were not sufficient to prevent Blankenhorn's promotion to the rank of *Legationssekretär* in June 1936.[23] Above all, we may be certain that in 1934 Blankenhorn was not under explicit orders from the Auswärtiges Amt to join. Foreign Minister Konstaintin von Neurath had indeed sent out an "order" (*Erlass*) about the desirability of NSDAP-membership for officials serving in the missions on June 28, 1933, but he stressed that this decision was "naturally purely personal."[24] As Blankenhorn himself admitted to Schetter in 1951, "the head of the ministry [*Behördenchef*] thought it important in the foreign missions that all colleagues joined the party, even though the pressure exercised varied considerably."[25]

Blankenhorn in Washington, 1935–1939

In August 1935 Blankenhorn was restationed to Washington, where he would stay until August 1939. For a time he served as private secretary and "right hand" to Ambassador Hans Luther, who held that post until 1937 and was, according to Blankenhorn's postwar recollection, "already very fossilized [*verkalkt*]" and forgetful.[26] If his relationship with Luther was close and trusting, Blankenhorn appears not to have liked his successor, his own uncle Hans Heinrich Dieckhoff. He considered Dieckhoff talented but unduly ambitious and thought that his aunt, whom he said followed Hitler "with blind devotion," reinforced his uncle's worst tendencies. Even worse were his relations with the *SS-Standartenführer* and *Gesandtschaftsrat* Dr. Herbert Scholz, who represented NSDAP-interests in Washington and also was in charge of cultural affairs at the embassy.[27]

While in Washington he applied for membership in the Nazi Party on September 20, 1938, and this time was accepted on December 1 of the same year.[28] During the Foreign Office personnel controversy of 1951–52, he claimed that he acted on Scholz's recommendation. Scholz stated that

[22]NARA, Berlin Document Center Records.
[23]Keipert and Grupp, eds., *Handbuch*, vol. I, 174.
[24]The document is reprinted in Ulrich Sahm, *Rudolf von Scheliha, 1897–1942. Ein deutscher Diplomat gegen Hitler* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1990), 44–45.
[25]"Vernehmungsniederschriften."
[26]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; Thomas, *Deutschland, England über alles*, 182.
[27]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography." On Scholz, see Döscher, *Das Auswärtige Amt*, 47, 141–144.
[28]His membership number was 6,997,147. NARA, Berlin Document Center Records.

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membership would clarify his relations with the party, which allegedly had been clouded by Hildebrand's report.[29] In the "Autobiography" he prepared for the OSS in 1945 and in a 1949 résumé in Konrad Adenauer's files, however, Blankenhorn stated simply that he applied for membership in 1938 in response to pressure from the Foreign Office's Personnel Division.[30] In yet another résumé and account of his life he provided to help Gerstenmaier write a statement about him for the British Zonal Advisory Council in 1946, party membership became a mask for Blankenhorn's unspecified "subversive" (i.e., anti-Nazi) activity in the United States. He added that he had joined because he needed to keep his job to support his family and also because he did not want to endanger his parents further. His father had been removed from his position as police chief in Baden in 1933 and briefly been imprisoned by the Nazis.[31] Horst Ferdinand, author of a short biography of Blankenhorn, suggests still another reason. "Under the impression of Hitler's foreign policy successes Blankenhorn, like many of his colleagues, joined the NSDAP on December 1, 1938."[32]

While it may be impossible to sort out his exact motivations, several comments seem in order. Herbert Scholz was a party activist, so an appeal from him to join probably was a matter of course. Conversely, since Scholz was a loyal Nazi and an SS member as well as a so-called "outsider" in the diplomatic corps, perhaps it was an obvious strategy for Blankenhorn to cast him in sinister terms after 1945. In any case some of the other reasons mentioned by Blankenhorn ring far truer. In particular, by 1938 party circles were interfering increasingly in the Auswärtiges Amt's personnel policy (Joachim von Ribbentrop became foreign minister on February 4 of that year), and the Foreign Office Personnel Division had started to encourage diplomats to join party organizations in order to make their re-stationing and promotion less complicated.[33]

Yet what relationship did his application have to his views on Nazism? Blankenhorn's claims that he had a critical attitude in the 1930s seem credible. As mentioned above, the National Socialists had persecuted his father. He also

[29]"Vernehmungsniederschriften"; Haas, *Beitrag zur Geschichte*, 291–292.

[30]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; "Personaldaten Herbert Blankenhorn," 1949, 2 pages, Stiftung-Bundeskanzler-Adenauer-Haus, Rhöndorf (StBKAH), 07.04.

[31]"Daten aus dem Lebenslauf Blankenhorn," apparently composed by Blankenhorn, Feb. 2, 1946, 1 page, and a five-page text entitled "Lebenslauf," in Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik, St. Augustin (ACDP), I-210 NL Eugen Gerstenmaier, vol. 35, 1; on Erich Blankenhorn, Ramscheid, *Herbert Blankenhorn*, 38.

[32]Ferdinand, "Herbert Blankenhorn," 51.

[33]The U.S. State Department reached this conclusion after analyzing the captured German personnel files. Walter J. Mueller, Lucille M. Petterson, and John A. Conway, "Personnel Policy and Politics in the Foreign Office under the Third Reich," 3 pages, enclosure one to HICOG (Frankfurt) report 672 to State Department, Aug. 31, 1951, NARA, RG 466, Records of the Executive Director, Security-Segregated General Records, 1949–52, 361.2 General 1949–1952. Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *Nationalsozialistische Aussenpolitik 1933–1938* (Frankfurt am Main: A. Metzner, 1968), 465–477, confirms the increasing pressure exercised on the ministry after 1936.

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was colleagues with Theo Kordt in Athens and Ernst Wilhelm Meyer in Washington. Kordt belonged to the "circle of friends" around Foreign Office State Secretary Ernst Freiherr von Weizsäcker and attempted to warn the British government about Hitler's intentions in 1938 and 1939. Blankenhorn later served as Kordt's permanent deputy as head of the *Schutzmachtabteilung* (Division of Foreign Interests) in Berne, Switzerland.[34] Meyer decided to leave the Foreign Service in 1937 and remain in the United States (his German citizenship was revoked the next year), only returning home a decade later. Both of these men apparently encouraged Blankenhorn's belief that Nazi attempts to expand German power in Europe would come to a bad end.[35] Philippe Mottu, who was attached to the Swiss General Staff at the start of World War II, confirmed this when he recalled that Blankenhorn told him in 1940 that Germany would lose the war.[36] A critical attitude was not the same as resistance activity, however. Since Blankenhorn on several occasions mentioned that he did not follow Meyer's example and remain in the U.S. out of fear for his parents and also because he needed his job to support his family, it is highly unlikely that he was engaged in any kind of active oppositional activity during this time.[37]

In addition, many American politicians and government officials as well as foreign diplomats in Washington deeply mistrusted him. Members of the State Department thought that he was the most "pro-German" official at the German Embassy in the late 1930s, while French diplomat Jacques Dumaine recalled that he got on people's nerves due to his *"großdeutsches"* attitude.[38] When Blankenhorn arrived in Paris in spring 1945 to undergo interrogation by American officials, the State Department telegraphed the American Embassy there that while Blankenhorn was stationed in Washington in the late 1930s, he had been "an active and aggressive propagandist" and an "ardent and convinced Nazi." Moreover, it claimed that he had been a member of the SS.[39]

To what extent did these assertions rest on solid evidence? To deal with the most sensational of them first, Blankenhorn never belonged to the SS; however, evidence suggests that confusion on this point persisted for several years after the war. For example, notes written on a check slip at the Berlin Document Center from mid-1949 during an Allied background check indicate that researchers mistook him for someone with the same surname who had been born on April

[34]Information provided to the author by Dr. Gerhard Keiper, PA/AA, September 2, 2005.

[35]On his talks with Meyer in Washington, see Blankenhorn, "Autobiography," and Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf." En route to Helsinki in August 1939, Blankenhorn spoke with his friend Kordt in London. Both men shared a gloomy view of "European crisis"; Blankenhorn, "Autobiography."

[36]Giles MacDonogh, *A Good German: A Biography of Adam von Trott zu Solz* (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1992), 276.

[37]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf."

[38]Ramscheid, *Herbert Blankenhorn*, 45–46.

[39]State Department (Stettinius) tel. 1595 to Robert Murphy/Paris, April 19, 1945, 1 page, NARA, RG 59, Decimal Lot File 862.00, 4–1945.

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26, 1912, in Mannheim.[40] More serious were charges about Blankenhorn's propaganda activities in the U.S. The 1940 report of the House Special Committee on Un-American Activities covering "Nazi Organizations and Individuals in the United States" had cited his correspondence as head of the German Embassy in Washington's press desk with individuals associated with the Transocean News Service. This was a German wire service that the National Socialists had converted after 1933 into their own news agency for the Western Hemisphere. Starting in late 1938 Wolfgang Zapp attempted to increase its prominence in the United States. Blankenhorn had corresponded with Zapp about arranging visits to Germany for Americans sympathetic to Nazism and also with other German diplomatic missions in North America about Transocean's activities. It cannot be said that the three letters reproduced in the report that involved Blankenhorn contained anything particularly damning. But they did help to make the case that Transocean was supported by the German government, and Blankenhorn closed his letter of November 30, 1938, to Zapp with the unfortunate formula "with kind regards and Heil Hitler."[41]

Moreover, Blankenhorn's relations with Dieckhoff were better than he let on. By November 1938, his uncle had appointed him head of the political desk at the Embassy. This move may have been precipitated by Franklin Delano Roosevelt's recall of the American ambassador to Germany after the anti-Jewish pogroms in that country on November 9, 1938, which led the German government to order Dieckhoff home in retaliation. In December 1938, Hans Thompsen, chargé d'affaires in Washington, wrote to Dieckhoff in Germany that Blankenhorn had "very much proved his worth" in his new position, and the ambassador agreed that the leaders of the various embassy desks should stay "as I have determined."[42] The next summer Thomsen praised Blankenhorn's work ethic, competence, and independent judgment and hoped that his upcoming transfer to Helsinki, Finland, would lead to his promotion.[43] Blankenhorn conceded that his uncle was limited in his ability to influence Germany's foreign policy and also had reported accurately about developments in the United States.[44] Through the summer of 1939, however, he himself was helping to shape the embassy's political reports, and American officials must have noted his function.

[40]See Kurt Rheindorf's notes on Blankenhorn's BDC records in BA Koblenz, NL 263 Rheindorf, vol. 78, 123–124.

[41]U.S. Congress, House Special Committee on Un-American Activities, *Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States. Appendix—Part II: A Preliminary Digest and Report on the Un-American Activities of Various Nazi Organizations and Individuals in the United States, Including Diplomatic and Consular Agents of the German Government*, 76 Congress, 3rd sess., 1940 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1940), 968–1382, here 977, 1035–36, 1131, 1264–1266.

[42]Hans Thomsen to Dieckhoff, December 29, 1938, 3 pages, PA/AA, NL Dieckhoff, vol. 5, 004–007; Dieckhoff to Thomsen, January 16, 1939, 5 pages, ibid., 012–014.

[43]Thomsen to Dieckhoff, July 28, 1939, 2 pages, ibid., 105–106.

[44]Ramscheid, *Herbert Blankenhorn*, 42–43; Sylvia Taschka, *Diplomat ohne Eigenschaften? Die Karriere des Hans Heinrich Dieckhoff (1884–1952)*, Transatlantische Historische Studien 25 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006), 162–191.

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Michael Thomas remarked that after the war there were many unsuccessful attempts to prove that Blankenhorn had been a Nazi sympathizer while stationed in Washington.[45] In particular, the House Special Committee on Un-American Activities investigation haunted him for years to come. One American group that later attacked him for this reason was the "Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League" of New York City, which expressed its concerns to Harry S. Truman on December 5, 1949.[46] In response to another letter from the group dated March 13, 1952, U.S. High Commissioner in Germany John J. McCloy replied that he had the impression

> that as a young career officer [Blankenhorn] felt it wise to line up with the Nazis, not out of any deep conviction, but because many of his colleagues were doing the same thing, and he thought it was the way to get along. This is not a very noble approach, to be sure, but I would not suspect him now of desiring either openly or secretly the return of the Nazis to power.[47]

Yet other official circles in the United States remained more skeptical. On May 18, 1953, two weeks before Blankenhorn was scheduled to arrive in Washington with a sensitive message from Adenauer for the Eisenhower administration, J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI reminded the State Department that Blankenhorn had been named in the 1940 House Subcommittee investigations.[48] Heinz Krekeler, the first West German ambassador to the United States, remembered that Blankenhorn was "not very *persona grata*" in that country during the 1950s. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in particular could not stand him. One very important reason was Adenauer's habit of sending him as a sort of private ambassador to Washington, often just in time to crash important meetings. Krekeler also felt that Blankenhorn did not understand the American mentality well compared to that of continental Europeans. He added that he did not know about Blankenhorn's past ties with the Nazi Party, but he assumed that the Americans did.[49]

Blankenhorn in Berne, 1940–1943

In July 1939 Blankenhorn was reassigned to the German mission in Helsinki, where he began work on September 11. That December he experienced a severe case of rheumatism of the joints. This forced him to convalesce in bed in Berlin for five months, while his mother nursed him back to health. On

[45]Thomas, *Deutschland, England über alles*, 182.

[46]Herman Hoffman (Chairman) and James H. Sheldon (Administrative Chairman) to Harry S. Truman, December 5, 1949, 4 pages plus enclosures, NARA, RG 59, 740.00119 Control (Germany), 12–549.

[47]John J. McCloy to Sheldon, March 25, 1952, 2 pages, NARA, RG 466, McCloy Classified General Records 1949–1952, D(52)769.

[48]J. Edgar Hoover to John W. Ford (Director, Office of Security, State Department), May 18, 1953, 2 pages, Blankenhorn FBI files.

[49]Heinz Krekeler, interview with the author, May 15, 1993, in Bad Salzuflen-Holzhausen.

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May 20, 1940, four days after being promoted to Gesandtschaftsrat, he received a new assignment in Berne, Switzerland. In both *Verständnis und Verständigung* and the "autobiography" he wrote for the OSS in 1945, Blankenhorn made clear that he was sent to Switzerland primarily to recuperate further, as he at first could only walk with difficulty.[50] If the reassignment was part of a larger "regroupment" organized by Weizsäcker to put dependable people in countries where they could easily contact Allied diplomats in order to aid the German resistance, as several of his colleagues asserted after the war, Blankenhorn either did not know about or did not see fit to mention this point.[51]

When asked by American officials in August 1945, Blankenhorn's former mission chief Otto Köcher was straightforward about his subordinate's responsibilities in Berne. Until 1942 he was the *Kulturreferent*, in charge of both cultural and propaganda matters under Köcher's supervision.[52] Blankenhorn freely admitted as much to the OSS in 1945 but emphasized that he did not think the propaganda material he received from Berlin was very effective. He said that conflicts arose over this issue with Foreign Office State Secretary Martin Luther. Köcher supported Blankenhorn's position, and several times the mission burned the material rather than distributing it. He also claimed that *Botschaftsrat* Sigismund Freiherr von Bibra increasingly interfered in his work. Bibra had been one of the first career diplomats to join the NSDAP (on May 1, 1933) and went on to hold high-ranking positions in that party, including that of NSDAP-*Landesgruppenleiter* in Switzerland.[53] In his testimony to the OSS, Blankenhorn credited the "mischievous and prevaricative" [*sic*] Bibra along with Georg Ashton, a *Reichshauptsicherheitsamt* (*RHSA*) representative stationed at the Zurich Consulate General, with trying to set up a Nazi underground in their host country. He speculated that Bibra also might be a member of the RHSA's *Sicherheitsdienst* (*SD*), the Nazi intelligence service. Blankenhorn said he was very relieved when the Foreign Office reassigned him to the economics section of the mission in late 1942.[54]

[50]Blankenhorn, *Verständnis*, 40–41; Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; Keipert and Grupp, eds., *Handbuch*, vol. I, 174.

[51]For this story, see Harold C. Deutsch, *The Conspiracy Against Hitler in the Twilight War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1968), 43–44, esp. footnote 8, and Klemens von Klemperer, *German Resistance Against Hitler: The Search for Allies Abroad, 1938–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 68 note 52, 268, 299 note 16.

[52]N.a., "Report on Dr. Otto Koecher," August 30, 1945, 3 pages, NARA, RG 59, Special Interrogation Mission to Germany, 1945–1946 (Poole) (Microfilm Publication 679), reel two, frames 380–382.

[53]On Bibra, see Keipert and Grupp, eds., *Handbuch*, vol. I, 151–152, and Günther Lachmann, "Der Nationalsozialismus in der Schweiz, 1931–1945. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Auslandsorganisation der NSDAP" (Ph.D. diss., Free University of Berlin, 1962), 66–91 passim.

[54]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; X-2 Branch, HQ and HQ Department, OSS, European Theater of Operations, "Interrogation of Mr. Blankenhorn, Attaché of the German Embassy in Washington, D.C.," May 14, 1945 (the document is incorrectly dated March 14), 9 pages, Blankenhorn FBI files; Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf."

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Like Herbert Scholz in Washington, Bibra and Ashton were easy targets to attack due to their Nazi connections. Even worse, Bibra had been a career diplomat who, from the perspective of many of his colleagues, therefore should have known better. Diplomat Reinhard Henschel, also stationed in Berne, called him the only pro-Nazi who worked at the mission.[55] In a sworn statement he wrote for Blankenhorn's de-Nazification in 1946, Theo Kordt confirmed that Bibra had tried by all means to get his subordinate Blankenhorn reassigned to some other part of the consulate because relations between the two men had become strained, although he did not specify why.[56] When Bibra asked for help with his own de-Nazification a year later, Kordt accused him of poor judgment and impulsivity during the war. In particular, he deeply resented the fact that Bibra was implicated in the arrest and imprisonment of their colleague, Erich Heberlein, and his wife by the Gestapo after the Heberleins refused to return from Spain to Germany in 1944. Nonetheless, Kordt was willing to write a terse statement attesting that Bibra had been involved in 1942 in an attempt to extend peace feelers to British diplomats stationed in Switzerland. In their correspondence he never made any accusations about Bibra harboring pro-Nazi sympathies.[57] Clearly, Kordt continued to view Bibra as a member of the fraternity of German diplomats, albeit an errant one due to the Heberlein incident.

Blankenhorn was certainly correct in stating that Bibra and Ashton had close ties with pro-Nazi "front groups" in Switzerland and tried to disguise their activities through cultural propaganda. In trying to distance himself from them, however, he neglected to mention a few details about the tasks of the Kulturreferent in Berne. Besides coordinating German cultural relations and monitoring the film and radio industry in their host country for the Foreign Ministry's Cultural Division (*Kulturabteilung*), during World War II, cultural attachés supported the work of the Ministry's Information Division (*Informationsabteilung*) by using political and cultural propaganda to promote the German war effort. They also were supposed to enlist the German colony, the "trusted men" of the NSDAP's Auslandsorganisation, and pro-German circles in the host country for that purpose.[58] In order to facilitate his work in Berne, Blankenhorn led an organization called the Information Office (*Informationsstelle*) that had a thirteen-person staff in December 1941, including a printer.[59]

[55]Sahm, *Rudolf von Scheliha*, 139.

[56]"Zeugnis des früheren Botschaftsrates in London Theodor Kordt."

[57]See the correspondence from spring 1947 on Bibra's denazification in Institut für Zeitgeschichte, ED 157 NL Erich und Theo Kordt, vol. 6.

[58]AA telegram 122/2 to Berne (signed Schroeder), Feb. 23, 1940, "Dienstanweisung für die Kulturreferenten bei den Deutschen Missionen im Ausland," 5 pages, copy in PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 3390.

[59]See "Personal- und Gehaltliste der Informationsstelle in Bern," 2 pages, enclosure to Köcher's Report A 1199, "Verzeichnis der Beamten und Angestellten des Kulturreferats," Dec. 30, 1941, 1 page, ibid.

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This role led Blankenhorn to deepen his contacts with Adam von Trott zu Solz, who worked in the Information Division in Berlin.

The Berne mission realized the Swiss public harbored great reservations about Germany. Therefore it had to employ propaganda cautiously and not expect too much from it.[60] Yet contrary to Blankenhorn's claims of failure, the overall effectiveness of the Information Office's activities paralleled Germany's fortunes of war. In the winter of 1940–41, just after the fall of France, Köcher reported that the Office's publications describing life in National Socialist Germany as well as the popular German press were a great success among the Swiss middle and working classes.[61] In April 1941 the head of the Swiss Federal Council's Political Department (the foreign ministry), Marcel Pilet-Golaz, privately warned him that German missions needed to display more caution in distributing propaganda.[62] A year later Swiss opinion toward Germany had hardened considerably, greatly limiting the mission's propaganda work, but even now both Blankenhorn and Köcher believed that the consulate's newsletter (the *Mitteilungen*), German press service reports on life in the occupied territories, and recent anti-American pamphlets were quite successful. At a meeting of the cultural attachés in Berlin in August 1942 Blankenhorn noted that, with the exception of the "so-called intelligentsia," many circles in Switzerland showed "a certain receptivity for portrayals of the German position."[63] Only in August 1943 did Berne report that censorship had become severe, sales of the German press had fallen dramatically, and any activities that could be interpreted as propaganda needed to be avoided.[64]

In addition, a Swiss "renewal movement" (*Erneuerungsbewegung*, i.e., the "front groups") had been active since the early 1930s. Individuals associated with it had distributed anti-Semitic propaganda or defaced public buildings with radical right and anti-Semitic slogans, and others had been involved in intelligence activities for Germany.[65] Stationed in Zurich, Ashton served as the liaison between the movement and the Foreign Ministry's *Abteilung Deutschland*, which provided it with 372,100 Swiss francs ($86,363 in 1941 dollars or $1.18 million in 2006 dollars) between mid-1941 and the first quarter of

[60]Köcher report 5630 to AA, "Kulturpropaganda in der Schweiz," Nov. 26, 1940, 15 pages, PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 3232.

[61]Köcher report 5891 to AA, "Deutsche Propaganda in der Schweiz," Dec. 21, 1940, 2 pages, PA/AA Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 3231; Köcher report 5891/II to AA, "Deutsche Propaganda in der Schweiz," Jan. 8, 1941, 1 page, ibid.

[62]Köcher memo to Blankenhorn, April 1, 1941, 1 page, PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 3533.

[63]Blankenhorn, "Referat über die politische und kulturpolitische Lage in der Schweiz," copy in PA/AA Gesandtschaft Bern, vol 3236; Köcher report 4765 to AA, "Propagandalage in der Schweiz," Aug. 6, 1942, 7 pages, PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 3390.

[64]Karl Klingenfuß report Kult Nr. 1950/II to AA, "Kulturpolitische und auslands-informative Lage in der Schweiz," Aug. 13, 1943, 41 pages, ibid.

[65]Catherine Arber, "Frontismus und Nationalsozialismus in der Stadt Bern. Viel Lärm, aber wenig Erfolg," *Berner Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Heimatkunde* 65, no. 1 (2003): 3–62.

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1943. Some of this money went to the families of Swiss Nazis who had been arrested or forced to flee to Germany as well as to support the movement's propaganda efforts, including the journal *Nationale Hefte* and the Society for the Promotion of Cultural Life (*Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Kulturellen Lebens*).[66]

Some evidence supports Blankenhorn's contention that other diplomats in Berne found these activities counterproductive for Germany's relations with Switzerland and tried to limit them as much as possible. In both March and September 1942 Köcher complained to the Foreign Office that numerous Germans had been arrested by Swiss authorities on espionage charges. As he stated in his March 17 report, the benefits gained from spying "stood in no relation to the risks" for those involved.[67] In September Köcher also sent proposals to Berlin for the "cleaning up [*Bereinigung*]" of Swiss-German relations. Prominent on the list were an end to all military espionage and no further support for illegal organizations (i.e., the "front movements") in Switzerland.[68] Two months later he advised the Auswärtiges Amt that Swiss authorities had warned that Ashton should be recalled, or else he would be placed on trial for treason (Aston left Switzerland that December).[69] Finally, Köcher recommended in July 1943 that open contacts with the "front movements" be suspended to prevent both them and the mission from being compromised should their ties become public.[70] Blankenhorn's own role in formulating these protests is unclear, but Köcher's description of Blankenhorn's activities as Kulturreferent suggests that the two men worked in close cooperation.

Yet, the Berne mission and Blankenhorn's Information Office also had facilitated Ashton's work. The Abteilung Deutschland financed Ashton through Berne. On at least one occasion in summer 1941 Ashton had direct contact

[66]"Aufstellung der zur Unterstützung der schweizerischen Nationalsozialisten vom Referat D III beantragten und bewilligten Gelder," n.d., 2 pages, PA/AA, Inland II g, vol. 17 d. Ashton's Report D P 5 to the Foreign Office's Referat D III, April 5, 1941, 7 pages plus attachments, PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 5818, 331062–331068, provides details on the Swiss "renewal" organizations he had contact with. Lawrence H. Officer, "Exchange Rate between the United States Dollar and Forty Other Countries, 1913–1999," *Economic History Services, EH.Net*, 2002 <www.eh.net/hmit/exchangerates/> (September 7, 2005); Robert C. Sahr, *Inflation Conversion Factors for Years 1665 to Estimated 2015*, 2005, <http://oregonstate.edu/Dept/pol_sci/fac/sahr/infcf16652007.pdf> (September 7, 2005).

[67]Köcher to the Foreign Office, March 17, 1942, *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik* (ADAP) Series E: II (1. März bis 15. Juni 1942) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), 77–79, quote 79; Köcher to the Foreign Office, September 1, 1942, ADAP Series E: III (16. Juni bis 30. September 1942) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), 443–444.

[68]See Weizsäcker's October 4, 1942, letter to Köcher, ADAP Series E: IV (1. Oktober bis 31. Dezember 1942) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), 18–19, and Under State Secretary Ernst Woermann's November 26, 1942, memo responding to the proposals, ibid., 390–393.

[69]See note two in Köcher's report to the Foreign Office, September 1, 1942, ADAP Series E: III, 444. In November 1942, Ashton was implicated in illegal German purchases of industrial diamonds from Swiss nationals. See Michael MacQueen, "The Conversion of Looted Jewish Assets to Run the German War Machine," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 27–45, here 36–37.

[70]Arber, "Frontismus und Nationalsozialismus," 47.

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with the Information Office when planning his budget.[71] He also relied on the mission in Berne and the Consulate General in Zurich for the names of Swiss who could be trusted to assist him (for example, with his long-term project of a petition drive to modify the Swiss constitution "in the new European sense"). Ashton mentioned that this information ultimately came from the Information Division in Berlin, but as noted, Blankenhorn was entrusted with identifying German-friendly Swiss.[72] Last but not least, by 1942 Blankenhorn had responsibility for the oversight and financial support of the pro-Nazi Turmverlag (publisher of the *Schweizer Journal*) and the Zurich bookstore Buchhandlung Ferber A.G.[73]

After Ashton's departure in December 1942, the cultural attaché in Berne assumed his remaining responsibilities, including maintaining relations with the Swiss "renewal movements" and recruiting volunteers from that milieu for the Waffen-SS and labor service in Germany.[74] In January 1943, Blankenhorn took over the economics desk at the mission after the colleague leading it was transferred to Berlin.[75] His successor as cultural attaché, Karl Otto Klingenfuß (previously active in cultural affairs for the NSDAP-Auslandsorganisation and for several months in 1942 assigned to the desk for "Jewish Questions" in the Foreign Office's Abteilung Deutschland), reported in August 1943 that all pro-Nazi organizations cultivated by Ashton had been broken up by the Swiss authorities. Yet through a Swiss contact, Klingenfuß continued to provide funds to "renewers" who were in financial need and to their lawyers when it became necessary for them to go to court.[76] It is no wonder that Blankenhorn later wrote that "the experiences with von Bibra and Ashton and, on the other hand, the connection with the 'Kulturabteilung' of the Foreign Office in Berlin had given me a spectacular insight into the corruptness and meanness of the spreading Nazi methods."[77] He had first-hand experience with them.

One other incident from the Berne years indicates that Blankenhorn was well aware of the extent of Nazi crimes against humanity. In September 1941 he participated in one of several official two-week tours of the Eastern Front with other Foreign Office cultural and press attachés stationed at foreign missions.

[71]See the materials in PA/AA, Inland II g, vol. 17d, including Aston's July 17, 1941, memo to AA Referat D III, 1 page.

[72]Ashton report D P 5 to Referat D III, April 5, 1941, 7 pages plus attachments, PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 5818.

[73]AA report 5567 to Berne, April 29, 1942, PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 3390.

[74]See the memo "Kulturreferat," n.d. but probably mid-1943, 1 page, ibid.

[75]Köcher to the German missions in Switzerland, Jan. 13, 1943, ibid.

[76]Arber, "Frontismus und Nationalsozialismus," 46–47. On Klingenfuß, see Gerhard Keiper and Martin Kröger, eds., *Handbuch*, vol. II (G-K) (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2005), 556; and Christopher Browning, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1977).

[77]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography."

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The trip was "intended to convey to the participants direct impressions of the accomplishments of the German *Wehrmacht* and of the Bolshevik regime and thereby give [them] a heightened motivation for their work abroad."[78] Blankenhorn's group went to Witebsk and Smolensk in Byelorussia. On the return trip to Germany, it stopped in Warsaw, where it heard a talk from two "eastern experts" about the treatment of Jews and Poles and also took a tour of the Warsaw Ghetto. UA-47 asked Blankenhorn on May 5, 1952, about his trip since photographs had been discovered showing him in civilian clothes with the group in front of an Eastern Orthodox church near Witebsk and also in front of what appeared to be a train car. Blankenhorn, who already knew of the photographs from journalists, told the committee, "I and everyone who thought like me were shaken by what we were shown and told" in Warsaw.[79]

Although Blankenhorn had his advocates in Switzerland, the authorities there took a hard line. The police placed him under observation due to his contacts with the pro-Nazi press and, with some interruptions, Blankenhorn remained until 1952 on a list of persons banned from reentering the country.[80] Blankenhorn's relationship with Köcher has been in the news recently due to charges repeated in public by German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer on September 9, 2004, that Blankenhorn helped to block Fritz Kolbe's return to the diplomatic corps after 1945. Under the alias "George Wood," Kolbe supplied voluminous secret material on Nazi Germany's policies to the OSS in Switzerland during World War II. Blankenhorn, however, supposedly held Kolbe responsible for the Swiss government's decision to expel Köcher from the country after Germany's surrender. Köcher, justifiably of interest to Allied authorities due to the Berne mission's role in coordinating Germany's wartime economic relations with Switzerland, hanged himself in his cell at the U.S. internment camp in Ludwigsberg in December 1945.[81]

[78]*Drahterlaß Multex* 633 from the Foreign Office (signed State Secretary Martin Luther) to Berne, August 18, 1941, 1 page, PA/AA, Gesandtschaft Bern, vol. 2909.

[79]"Diktiertes Protokoll über die 31. Sitzung des 47. Ausschusses am 5. Mai 1952 (nachmittags)," initialed "Gu/Co," May 5, 1952, 9 pages, Parlamentsarchiv des Deutschen Bundestages (Berlin), Deutscher Bundestag, 1. Wahlperiode, 47 Ausschuß, Untersuchungsausschuß zur Prüfung der Personalpolitik im Auswärtigen Amt (hereafter cited as Parlamentsarchiv, UA-47), 25–40 Sitzung, 21.4.52–8.10.52; Haas, *Beitrag zur Geschichte*, 292. In 1961 the German Democratic Republic would twist this episode to attack him. Its Foreign Ministry put out a book entitled *From Ribbentrop to Adenauer* that asserted "this secret inspection mission was aimed at organizing the looting of the occupied territories." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, *From Ribbentrop to Adenauer: A Documentation on the West German Foreign Office* (Erfurt: Druckerei Fortschritt, 1961), 20.

[80]Ramscheid, *Herbert Blankenhorn*, 56 ff.

[81]Joschka Fischer, "Rede von Bundesaußenminister Fischer anlässlich der Gedenkveranstaltung zu Ehren von Fritz Kolbe (1900–1971)," September 9, 2004, <www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/ausgabe_archiv?archiv_id=6111> (August 22, 2005). French journalist Lucas Delattre, *A Spy at the Heart of the Third Reich: The Extraordinary Life of Fritz Kolbe, America's Most Important Spy in World War II*, trans. George A. Holoch, Jr. (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005), 209–211, 221–224,

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In June 1943 Blankenhorn left Berne to work in the Protocol Division in Berlin. He maintained to both Gerstenmaier in 1946 and Schetter in 1951 that he had been restationed for political reasons. Because Bibra found him unreliable, he had been punished with an unimportant assignment. He was even careful to point out to Schetter that "in both years of my activity in the Protocol Division, I had nothing to do with political things. Therefore no one can attack me because of any approval or positions taken toward purely political matters such as the deportation of Jews or deportation for reasons of procuring labor."[82] This reassignment, however, does not seem to have been a demotion in any sense. Blankenhorn may have been disappointed not to have political or economic tasks to work on, but by the end of the war, he had significant responsibilities. In September 1943 he became head of the desk for foreign and German decorations (*Referat Oa und Od/Ausländische und deutsche Orden*). On December 28, 1943, the ministry promoted him once again, this time to *Legationsrat 1. Kl.* By late 1944, Blankenhorn's main job consisted of helping to facilitate the exchange of foreign officials and preparing plans for the evacuation of the diplomatic corps in Berlin.[83] The Foreign Office's organization plan from March 1945 indicates that he had been placed in charge of the four desks in Group II of Protocol.[84] On March 21, 1945, Blankenhorn went to Bad Wildungen to execute one of the plans for evacuating foreign diplomats from the capital. He was surprised, however, by the rapid breakthrough of the U.S. Army on the Main River and fell into American custody on April 2, two days before an unwitting Foreign Office appointed him to lead the Protocol branch in Bad Gastein.[85]

In sum, Blankenhorn's career as a diplomat during the Third Reich followed a normal path of assignments and promotions. By 1945 he occupied a leadership position in the Protocol Department, although he later disparaged his activities there as unimportant. Although in his postwar testimony he mentioned frequent personal tensions and problems with Nazis such as Hildebrand in Greece, Scholz in Washington, and Bibra and Ashton in Switzerland, the

226–27, 282, 287–88, first raised these charges in 2003. Rainer Blasius, "Ministerielle Erhebung. Das Auswärtige Amt gedenkt des Hitler-Gegners Fritz Kolbe," *Frankfurter Allegmeine Zeitung*, Sept. 9, 2004, points out that there is no concrete evidence for these charges beyond testimony by one of Kolbe's associates. Ruedi Brassel-Moser, *"Das Schweizerhaus muss sauber sein." Das Kriegsende 1945 im Baselgebiet*, Quellen und Forschungen zu Geschichte und Landeskunde des Kantons Basel-Landschaft 69 (Liestal: Verlag des Kantons Basel-Landschaft, 1999), 101, 115–121, 150, 211, writes that in summer 1945, the Swiss public put tremendous pressure on the government to expel Köcher and other prominent representatives of fascist states in Switzerland.

[82]Blankenhorn, "Daten"; Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf"; "Vernehmungsniederschriften."

[83]Keipert and Grupp, eds., *Handbuch*, vol. I, 174; Blankenhorn, "Autobiography."

[84]ADAP Series E: VIII (1. Mai 1944 bis 8. Mai 1945) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 652.

[85]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; "Lebenslauf"; Keipert and Grupp, eds., *Handbuch*, vol. I, 174.

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available evidence neither confirms these nor indicates that such clashes had any impact on his professional prospects or on his admissibility to the Nazi Party in 1938.

Blankenhorn and the German Resistance

Yet he also claimed after the war to be a part of the German resistance. Once again, his testimony in this regard is contradictory in some key respects. In his May 14, 1945, interview with OSS officials and his October 4, 1951, testimony to Schetter, Blankenhorn did not mention that he played any direct role in the resistance beyond several oblique references to his anti-Nazi contacts in the former statement.[86] As noted above, his 1980 published memoirs make no mention of the German resistance at all. But in 1946, in materials he provided to Gerstenmaier for a letter to help him secure a job in the secretariat of the Zonal Advisory Council in the British zone, he claimed that he had not resisted becoming a member of the Nazi Party in 1938 to "continue his subversive activity abroad."[87] In these documents as well as the 1945 "Autobiography" he prepared for the OSS and the 1949 curriculum vitae in Konrad Adenauer's files, he also contended that he established close contacts with the group around Foreign Office officials Adam von Trott zu Solz and Hans-Bernd von Haeften starting in Switzerland in the early 1940s.[88] Blankenhorn claimed he would have been in charge of the Auswärtiges Amt's Press Division if the assassination attempt against Hitler on July 20, 1944, had succeeded.[89] The State Department put its finger on the problem with such testimony in 1945 when it asserted that OSS reports of Blankenhorn's deep involvement in the plot against Hitler and numerous anti-Nazi contacts, even if true, neither exonerated him nor made him trustworthy. "German officials will obviously now use every means possible to establish themselves as having been anti-Nazi despite continued service to [the] Nazi regime."[90]

As noted above, little evidence suggests that Blankenhorn was involved in any "subversive activities" before he got to Berne. While there, however, he became acquainted with a number of Germans associated with the resistance who were

[86]X-2 Branch, OSS, "Interrogation"; "Vernehmungsniederschriften."

[87]Blankenhorn, "Daten"; Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf."

[88]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; Blankenhorn, "Personaldaten."

[89]Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf"; Blankenhorn, "Personaldaten." In "Daten," he claims that Ambassador Ulrich von Hassel, one of the conservative resistance's candidates to become foreign minister, told him of the pending assignment.

[90]State Department (signed Green) tel. 2039 to Murphy (Paris), May 12, 1945, NARA, RG 59, Decimal Lot File 862.00, 5–1245. This seems to have been part of a much larger skeptical reaction in 1945 by American diplomatic and military circles against individuals identified by the OSS as participants in the German resistance. See Christof Mauch, *The Shadow War Against Hitler: The Covert Operations of America's Wartime Secret Intelligence Service* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 208–209.

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in Switzerland to meet or establish foreign contacts. Blankenhorn said he had long talks with Hans Bernd Gisevius, the German Vice-Consul in Zurich and member of the counter-intelligence service, or *Abwehr*, who became a key conversation partner for Allen Dulles and the OSS in Berne.[91] Another frequent visitor prior to his arrest and execution in late 1942 was Rudolf von Scheliha, a member of the Foreign Service associated with the "*Rote Kapelle*." Scheliha trusted Blankenhorn and asked him to take care of his infirm daughter, who had been in a Davos sanatorium since mid-1942, should anything happen to him and his wife.[92] Gerstenmaier recalled taking a long walk with Blankenhorn in Berne, probably in 1942, during which both men talked about how to get rid of their "*oberster SA-Führer*" (Adolf Hitler, who held that post from 1930 to 1945) as quickly as possible. Blankenhorn outlined plans for an assassination attempt and suggested that reliable south German police forces be won over for it.[93] Here he also established close ties with Trott and Haeften, his contacts in the Foreign Office's Information Division in Berlin, and he claimed they informed him of their plans for securing useful contacts for the German resistance abroad.[94]

What is less clear is whether he actually received an assignment from them or other resistance members. Blankenhorn claimed that Trott and Haeften asked him to assist them in getting prominent foreign personalities interested in the German resistance. He mentioned his repeated conversations with the head of the Swiss police, Heinrich Rothmund; with representatives of what after the war became the World Council of Churches in Geneva; with the head of the Swiss *Handels- und Industrieverein*, Heinrich Homberger; and with Mottu, whom he described as a confident of Pilet-Golaz.[95]

His ties with these individuals and groups apparently went far beyond routine contacts associated with his job as a diplomat. After the war Pastor H. Ehrenström and Dr. Hans Schönfeld of the World Council of Churches emphasized his efforts to support the ecumenical movement in Switzerland, especially in aiding Allied prisoners of war, and also his ties with leading members of the "Christian resistance" in occupied countries such as France, Holland, and Norway. They said Blankenhorn continued his activities after

[91]X-2 Branch, OSS, "Interrogation."

[92]Sahm, *Rudolf von Scheliha*, 174–175.

[93]Gerstenmaier, *Streit und Friede*, 294; see also his comments at the *Rhöndorfer Gespräch* of April 18, 1979, in Rudolf Morsey, ed., *Konrad Adenauer und die Gründung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Rhöndorfer Gespräche 3 (Stuttgart: Bessler Verlag, 1979), 41; "Kurzprotokoll der 31. Sitzung des Untersuchungsausschusses Nr. 47 am 5. Mai 1952," signed Helmut Becker (chair), May 6, 1952, 4 pages, Parlamentsarchiv, UA-47, 25–40 Sitzung, 21.4.52–8.10.52.

[94]He dated the start of these contacts variously from 1940, 1941, or 1942. Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf"; Blankenhorn, "Personaldaten." See also Klemperer, *German Resistance*, 68, note 52. Blankenhorn claims to have meet Trott and Haeften for the first time in Washington; Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf."

[95]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf."

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his return to Berlin in 1943 as well.[96] On the other hand, if he had assumed this role on the request of Trott and Haeften as Ehrenström and Schönfeld claimed, it seems to have been part of a general attempt to build up contacts "with decent and reliable personalities" in foreign countries, especially neutral ones, in order to communicate with the Allied Powers when this became necessary in the future.[97] Moreover, as Kordt's deputy to the Schutzmachtabteilung, Blankenhorn was responsible among other things for prisoner of war affairs. Where did professional responsibility end and resistance activity begin in this case? Blankenhorn also claimed Trott and Haeften asked him to approach Gisevius, through whom they established contact with Allen Dulles.[98] He added, however, that none of the members of the Berne mission had direct contacts with the Americans themselves.[99] What emerges is a picture of Blankenhorn as both a critic of Nazism and an initiated bystander to the German resistance while in Switzerland, but little more.

After arriving in Berlin in June 1943, his attitude toward the resistance remained very cautious at best. As he told the OSS in May 1945, "my first impressions of the opposition groups in Berlin were not very comforting. Too many different opinions seemed to oppose each other. A common basis had not been found yet." In particular, the older group of conservative resisters associated with Carl Goerderler and Ulrich von Hassel were not yet working closely with the Trott-Haeften group. In his somewhat stiff English, Blankenhorn wrote that "only very shortly before the 20th of July these two groups, strengthened by vast military circles, joined each other in order to avoid at the last minute the menacing general catastrophe by quick action."[100] The so-called "Berlin diaries" of Foreign Ministry employee Marie Vassiltchikov, which need to be used with great caution since they may have been written well after the war, corroborate this impression of a hesitant Blankenhorn. The entry for June 21, 1944, states "he is interesting to talk to and completely independent-minded, but one has the feeling that he is awaiting the collapse before venturing to put his hand to the tiller. In this he is very different than Adam Trott, which perhaps explains their friendship."[101] In his defense, prudence was the order of the day when he arrived in Berlin. As Trott himself told the SD after his arrest, his colleagues in the Foreign Service had become

[96]H. Ehrenström and H. Schönfeld (secretaries, Section d'études, World Council of Churches, Geneva), "Gutachten," May 1, 1946, 1 page, ACDP, I-210 NL Eugen Gerstenmaier, vol. 35, 1.

[97]Quoted in Blankenhorn, "Autobiography"; see also Blankenhorn, "Lebenslauf."

[98]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography." Hans Bernd Gisevius, *To the Bitter End*, trans. Richard and Clara Winstone (London: Jonathan Cape, 1948), however, does not mention this channel.

[99]X-2 Branch, OSS, "Interrogation."

[100]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography."

[101]Marie Vassiltchikov, *Berlin Diaries 1940–1945*, reprint edition (New York: Vintage, 1988), 181. On the problems with this source, see Henry A. Turner, Jr., "Two Dubious Third Reich Diaries," *Central European History* 33, no. 3 (2000): 415–422.

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much more cautious in making any type of comment about the regime, after several of their coworkers had been taken into custody by the Nazis in fall 1943.[102]

Another practical reason may help to explain Blankenhorn's distance from the resistance—he frequently was away from Berlin. On April 1, 1944, Trott wrote his wife Clarita that "besides Haeften [Blankenhorn is] the most capable and sympathetic of the younger colleagues I have found in the office. Sadly he is permanently in Krummhübel."[103] Krummhübel (Karpacz), in the *Riesengebirge* in Silesia, was one of a number of locations where the Auswärtiges Amt transferred personnel and documents after the severe Allied bombing raids on Berlin on November 21, 1943.[104] Blankenhorn participated in discussions held at Trott's apartment in Berlin as well as in talks of the "Kreisau Circle" at the Borsig estate outside that city.[105] Yet, the fact that he worked in Krummhübel from February until at least September and also was frequently on the road trying to find alternative quarters for foreign diplomats in Germany made him of limited use for assisting in a coup attempt against Hitler.[106]

In all likelihood, Blankenhorn found himself in a position similar to that of his colleague Wilhelm Melchers, who led the desk for Middle Eastern Affairs in the Foreign Ministry's Political Division from 1939 to 1945.[107] When pressed by members of UA-47 on February 22, 1952, about his actual role on July 20, Melchers said, "Herr von Trott had asked me to make myself available to him in the Auswärtiges Amt while the revolution was taking place [*für die Zeit des Umsturzes*]. Therefore it was not my job to do anything at all, but instead to stand by and then to act with him further the moment the matter was settled."[108] He remembered hearing Trott and Haeften speak about Blankenhorn on July 20 while in the Wilhelmstraße and concluded that he not only had been initiated into the plans but also had played a role in preparing for the assassination while in Berne.[109] Blankenhorn called the week after July 20 "terrible" due to the arrest of his friends.[110] According to Melchers, he met

[102]SD report of September 5, 1944, on the July 20 movement, in Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, ed., *"Spiegelbild einer Verschwörung." Die Opposition gegen Hitler und der Staatsstreich vom 20. July 1944 in der SD-Berichterstattung. Geheime Dokumente aus dem ehemaligen Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1984), vol. I, 350–356, here 356.

[103]MacDonogh, *A Good German*, quote 272.

[104]On Krummhübel, see Michael Bloch, *Ribbentrop* (London: Abacus, 1992), 425.

[105]Ramscheid, *Herbert Blankenhorn*, 66–67.

[106]See the materials in PA/AA, Protokoll, vols. R 119144 and R 119153a.

[107]On his career through 1952, see Haas, *Beitrag zur Geschichte*, 319–320.

[108]"Stenographisches Protokoll über die 11. Sitzung des 47. Ausschusses am 22. Februar 1952," signed "Dr. Gü/L," February 22, 1952, 47 pages, Parlamentsarchiv, UA-47, 7.–11. Sitzung, 14.2.52–22.2.52, here 37.

[109]Wilhelm Melchers, "Darstellung der Teilnahme von Dr. Melchers an der Widerstandsbewegung," February 28, 1946, attachment 2/XIV to UA-47's report, in Haas, *Beitrag zur Geschichte*, 388–408, here 403.

[110]Blankenhorn, "Autobiography."

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with Blankenhorn a few days after Trott's arrest on July 25. Both men sat in troubled silence for some time. Then Blankenhorn mysteriously expressed concern that his name appeared on "certain lists" that were in the hands of the military, which, however, noted Melchers, "had no direct connection to the affair [*Sache*]."[111] What he was referring to is unclear. Once again, however, we get the impression of Blankenhorn as an initiated bystander who felt, rightly or wrongly, that he had come uncomfortably close to arrest himself due to his friends' activities.

How, then, did UA-47 reach the conclusion that Blankenhorn had "belonged to the driving forces in the resistance group of July 20, 1944"? Besides Melchers's testimony, including a February 1946 written account of his recollections of July 20, one of its own members played a key role: Eugen Gerstenmaier. After Blankenhorn testified on May 5, 1952, about his post-1945 role in the creation of the West German Foreign Service, Gerstenmaier told the group in closed session of their 1942 talk in Berne. The committee then concluded on the basis of Melchers's and Gerstenmaier's statements that Blankenhorn had belonged to the resistance. "Because [the committee] views these things as true, it therefore forgoes hearing the witness, *Min[insterial] Dir[ektor]* Blankenhorn, about them."[112]

Blankenhorn's contacts with opposition circles were by no means invented. Nonetheless, not just his associates but also he himself was sometimes guilty of exaggeration, especially in his 1946 accounts for Gerstenmaier and his 1949 résumé in Adenauer's files. The silence about participating in the resistance in his memoir *Verständnis und Verständigung* may well reflect his own decency in light of the death of friends such as Trott and Haeften, but in 1980 he also no longer needed to establish a career.

Blankenhorn and Westbindung

After six months in American internment, Blankenhorn made his way to Hamburg, where he began work in the city administration. In March 1946 he joined the Chancellery of the Zonal Advisory Council in the British zone. According to his memoirs, he owed his job to the "intercession [*Fürsprache*] of good friends."[113] On November 22, 1946, he was de-Nazified in Group V (exonerated), and the British military government headquarters in Hamburg gave final approval of his catagorization on January 8, 1947.[114]

[111]Melchers, "Darstellung," 405–406; "Stenographisches Protokoll über die 11. Sitzung des 47. Ausschusses," 40.

[112]"Kurzprotokoll der 31. Sitzung des Untersuchungsausschusses Nr. 47 am 5. Mai 1952," here 3.

[113]Blankenhorn, *Verständnis*, 42.

[114]British Liaison Staff of Zonal Advisory Commission, Special Branch, "Fragebogen/Action Sheet," January 8, 1947, Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Bestand 221–11 Staatskommissar für die Entnazifizierung und Katagorizierung, Misc 5154: Blankenhorn, Herbert (geboren 15.12.1904).

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According to his memoirs, Blankenhorn met Konrad Adenauer for the first time on March 1, 1946, in Hamburg, even before Hamburg Mayor Rudolf Petersen formally proposed him as a member of the Chancellery. Adenauer was in town for the first meeting of the Zonal Council, due to take place on March 5, in which he would participate as chairman of the British-zone CDU. Besides talking about the council and Adenauer's criticism of its relative powerlessness, Blankenhorn remembered that

> we also spoke on that March day about foreign policy problems and the more and more acute situation between east and west, which we saw as especially dangerous, for the possibility of a military conflict of the western powers with Soviet Russia by all means existed. We had to infer from many statements of English and American leaders that an Allied withdrawal from the European continent, which the war-weary western countries felt only a marginal desire to defend, could not be ruled out. Our conversation revealed that our views were largely in agreement. I would like to say that it became the starting point for [our] later trustful cooperation.[115]

How much of an impression of Blankenhorn this particular encounter left in Adenauer's mind is difficult to assess. The future chancellor does not mention the meeting in his memoirs. It is most likely that Blankenhorn's potential usefulness became clear over the course of the next two years as the two men worked with each other in the council. Indeed, when Adenauer proposed Blankenhorn to a party colleague as a candidate for General Secretary of the CDU in the British Zone in January 1948, he emphasized not only his personal qualities but also his familiarity with important figures in the British zone and the larger political situation.[116]

Yet we have evidence that both men's views on foreign policy were not all that different in early 1946, by which time they both had come to see the partition of Germany and a western military occupation as the only feasible antidotes to a communist takeover of the whole country. As indicated above, Blankenhorn had a good grasp of geopolitics. He anticipated the defeat of Nazi Germany starting in the late 1930s. Such views were not uncommon among German diplomats critical of Nazi foreign policy. They saw a general European war as a grave threat to their country.[117] Blankenhorn, however, seems to have gone a step further by accepting a division of Germany after the war.

Marie Vassiltchikov's "diary entry" for January 28, 1944, states that Blankenhorn had "very definite ideas about Germany's post-defeat future—partition of

[115]Blankenhorn, *Verständnis*, 42–43, quote 43.

[116]Adenauer to Günther Gereke, January 26, 1948, in Konrad Adenauer, *Briefe 1945–1949*, ed. Hans-Peter Mensing, Rhöndorfer Ausgabe, ed. Rudolf Morsey and Hans-Peter Schwarz (Berlin: Siedler, 1984), 160–161.

[117]Peter Hoffmann, *The History of the German Resistance 1933–1945*, 3rd English ed., trans. Richard Barry (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 54.

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the country, the creation of individual autonomous *Länder*, etc.!"[118] This vision of a federal West Germany seems too prophetic to actually have been recorded in January 1944; however, a little over a year later, Blankenhorn confirmed that he indeed thought a division of Germany between east and west was a viable option. On May 14, 1945, shortly after his arrest and internment, OSS officials concluded a long interrogation by asking him how he visualized Germany's future. "As very bad," he said. "The Americans and the English will, one day, lose interest in Europe, and, then, we shall experience what we will call the 'End.'" After that, the remaining Nazis and a disillusioned German youth would combine and, as he put it, "go Communistic." After Germany became a "Russian Province," the rest of Europe would follow. "National Socialism and Communism are so related that people who have become breadless today will easily join Communism." When asked what could be done to prevent this, he said, "I belong to [the] middle-class (or bourgeois) world, and I am sure that it can only be defended by developing the middle-class (bourgeois) values." The bourgeoisie needed to be encouraged to lead the fight against communism. When his interrogator objected that "one cannot put weapons into the hands of the German middle-class," Blankenhorn replied,

> one could give them spiritual weapons. Suppose you occupy the Country as far as the Elbe. If you guarantee that you will actually occupy the Country, there will be a great chance that the middle-class will side with you—provided it has not gone "kaput" before. This is, of course, also an economical question. One should consider that these people have lost everything: their existence, their homes, their families; they are condemned by the whole World. Everything depends on what the Occupation will be.[119]

Here Blankenhorn expressed ideas not only strikingly similar to Adenauer's vision of a truncated German state associated with a western orientation but also to his fear of a withdrawal of the Americans and their allies from central Europe. While Adenauer developed his concept of Westbindung independently of Blankenhorn, the latter was not an opportunist in terms of his political views. Nor was he supportive of Westbindung only because of his Baden roots or his admiration for Stresemann. Instead, far earlier than most of his former colleagues and indeed than West German opinion as a whole, Blankenhorn had reached the conclusion that a unified Reich no longer served Germany's interests in the

[118]Vassiltchikov, *Berlin Diaries*, 141.
[119]X-2 Branch, OSS, "Interrogation," 6–8.

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foreseeable future.[120] In this respect, as Thomas and Gerstenmaier argued, he was more than a mere technical adviser for the future chancellor's foreign policy.

Conclusion

The evidence on Blankenhorn's career through 1946 indicates he developed a critical attitude toward National Socialism as well as contacts with resistance circles in the Auswärtiges Amt. Yet he was at best a peripheral figure in such circles and by no means a "driving force." Although he was not directly involved in any serious crimes, his biography also confirms that it was virtually impossible to keep a completely clean vest during the Third Reich if you chose to remain in government service. To varying degrees, his pattern of exaggeration and denial about his own curriculum vitae throughout the early 1950s was common for Blankenhorn's generation of German officials in the postwar years.[121]

His attempts to create a more benign impression of his career during the Third Reich after the war fit a pattern among elites in postwar Germany that Michael R. Hayse called "selective recollection."[122] Blankenhorn emphasized the harmful actions of the National Socialists he encountered on the job as well as his own ties to the German resistance, while at the same time relativizing or ignoring some of his own less-than-flattering activities. This self-image as victim and resister obviously was useful for career purposes but also could be extended quite easily to former colleagues with troublesome results. For instance, if Blankenhorn did blackball Fritz Kolbe, he may have acted in part because he saw Otto Köcher as a kindred soul who was trying to limit "Nazi" interference in the work of the Berne mission.

Yet his "selective recollection" was not uncritical and also afforded possibilities for a new start. His willingness to consider a truncated western German state in allegiance with the Western Allies in lieu of a unified German Reich as early as 1945 indicates this. In his OSS interrogation in May 1945, he even said that members of the German middle class "are guilty of having submitted to such a government" during the Nazi years, and added that he included himself in that statement.[123] Decades later he wrote,

> after extraordinary losses of people and territory—the results of a criminal war—we have become a country of intermediate size that can only preserve itself if it lives in an internal order of freedom, legality [*Rechtsstaatlichkeit*], and

[120]On the views of Blankenhorn's colleagues through 1950, see Maulucci, "The West German Foreign Office," 368–372.

[121]On the "rewriting of curriculum vitae" in postwar Germany, see Jarausch and Geyer, *Shattered Past*, 355–356.

[122]Hayse, *Recasting West German Elites*, 250.

[123]X-2 Branch, OSS, "Interrogation."

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> social justice and a stable external order of peace [*Friedensordnung*] based on balance [*Ausgleich*] and willingness to compromise.[124]

In this way Blankenhorn also learned from his experiences—and had certain longstanding political and moral convictions reinforced by these same—and could be depended on to help to do things differently after 1945.

As Konrad Jarausch and Michael Geyer emphasize, while there is no "*Stunde Null*" in twentieth-century German history, neither is there simple continuity due to its twists, turns, and disruptions.[125] Since the officials of Blankenhorn's generation helped to shape policy in West Germany after World War II, we need to understand their pre-1945 experiences, their subjective interpretations of this past, and the negative as well as positive implications of both.

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[124]Blankenhorn, *Verständnis*, 597.
[125]Jarausch and Geyer, *Shattered Past*, 354.

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