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# Germans in Brazil: A Comparative History of Cultural Conflict During World War I

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During World War I**

**Frederick C. Luebke**

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For Norma



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## **Germans in Brazil**



## Introduction

**T**HIS BOOK has been a long time in the making. More than a decade ago, as I completed *Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I*, I began to examine other countries for parallels to the American experience. I was particularly attracted by the possibilities offered by Brazil as another historical case study to illuminate social behaviors in periods of national crises, especially war, as they relate to immigrant peoples. Like the United States, Brazil had received a large European immigration in proportion to its total population, beginning about 1825 and building up somewhat inconsistently until World War I. As a Latin and Catholic country, Brazil was especially attractive to immigrants from Spain, Italy, and Portugal, but a large contingent of Germans, substantially Protestant in religion and north European in culture, settled in the southernmost states of Brazil—Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Paraná—and in major cities such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and São Salvador (Bahia). By 1914, when war in Europe began, nearly 400,000 persons of German origin resided in Brazil. Most lived in relatively exclusive ethnic enclaves located in both urban and rural districts. Although some German immigrants were well integrated into Brazilian society, the majority remained largely unassimilated in language, culture, and politics.

Studying Brazil was attractive to me for several reasons. Years ago I had offered Latin American history as a minor field in my doctoral program. Thus, Brazil was not entirely *terra incognita* for

me. Moreover, the German-Brazilian experience was unique in that Brazil was the only South American country that declared war on Germany in World War I. Its history seemed especially suited for comparisons with the United States with respect to its treatment of its German ethnic minority.

As I explored the relevant bibliography I soon discovered that American scholars had published very little on German immigration to Brazil and that they knew practically nothing about the German-Brazilian experience in World War I. I remembered a hastily produced book, *The Germans in South America*, by Clarence H. Haring, that included a long chapter on the Germans in Brazil during the war. Haring had written this book immediately following his return from a trip to Brazil, Argentina, and Chile in 1918 or 1919. Although his vision was clouded by the intense emotions generated by the Great War, his fragmentary study has remained until now the fullest account in the English language of the impact of the war on German-Brazilian society.

English-language materials treating the Germans in Brazil generally were almost as sparse—a paragraph here, an article there. By far the best work was a series of articles by the Brazilian-American anthropologist, Emílio Willems, an authority on the assimilation of German Brazilians. Virtually all other secondary sources are in either German or Portuguese, though one of the truly outstanding works on the subject is in French: *La colonisation allemande et le Rio Grande do Sul* (1959), by Jean Roche. A glance at Roche's eighty-page bibliography reveals the extent of books and articles, as well as primary sources, published on the German Brazilians in the German language. Since many of these titles are not available in the United States, it became clear that if I were to study Germans in Brazil, I needed to go to Germany, where much of this extensive material could be found.

Research in Germany was made possible by the award of a Fulbright senior research fellowship in 1974–75. I worked primarily at the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen in Stuttgart, which has an outstanding collection on Germans who emigrated to other lands, including Brazil.

While in Stuttgart I was able to examine a substantial body of material in the German language—newspapers, reminiscences,

letters, anniversary booklets, and publications such as yearbooks, annuals or calendars, reports, bulletins, and catalogs, produced by German-Brazilian individuals, churches, schools, societies, publishers, and commercial associations, in addition to an extensive collection of secondary works on German immigration. This research was later supplemented by work in Brazil, chiefly at the Instituto Hans Staden in São Paulo, made possible by grants from the American Philosophical Society and the University of Nebraska.

It had long since become obvious to me that the idea of a brief comparative study, such as I had originally planned, was not viable. In order to make meaningful comparisons between the experiences of Germans in the United States and in Brazil, I needed to discover and synthesize basic information about the latter country that was not otherwise available in the English language. Events that emerged from ethnocultural conflict cannot be understood without some command of the context—the social structure, the institutions, and the attitudes and beliefs of the immigrants, in addition to the responses of the most or receiving society to these strangers in their midst. Obviously, no attempt can be made here to provide a comprehensive profile of the German Brazilians in the manner of Jean Roche and the French *annalistes* or other advocates of systematic social history. Instead, my purpose is to provide enough information to render German-Brazilian behavior understandable. Thus my project was transformed from an article in comparative history to a book treating the German ethnic experience in Brazil in the era of World War I—a parallel volume to *Bonds of Loyalty*.

Comparisons between the Brazilian and the American experiences are by no means absent from this book, but they are less central, comprehensive, and systematic than I had originally intended. Before I could draw any meaningful contrasts, I found that I had to present basic historical information about German immigrants in Brazil and their place in Brazilian society. Comparisons are therefore included, not to provide the bases for generalizations about ethnic group conflict in time of national crises, but rather to examine this period of Brazilian history from another perspective.



The first three chapters establish the historical context for understanding what happened to the Germans in Brazil during the period of the war in Europe and its immediate aftermath, 1914 to 1920. The large pattern of German settlement in Brazil, offered in Chapter 1, is followed by a study of German ethnic institutions—churches, schools, societies—and the German-language press to reveal literacy levels, religious and linguistic characteristics, and the measure of assimilation (or lack thereof) into Brazilian society. Ethnic group relations, perceptions, and images, along with attendant concerns and fears, are analyzed next to show how and why the Brazilian majority (or, more properly, the governing elite) acquired a distorted image of the Germans.

The long period of Brazilian neutrality in the European war from 1914 to 1917 is treated in the next section, beginning with Chapter 4. It was a time of incubation of ethnic tensions as the Portuguese-language press became a vehicle for anti-German atrocity propaganda and as the German-language press countered with propagandistic efforts of its own. The German ethnic community was rejuvenated with a new sense of self-esteem as the verbal conflict caused German-Brazilian institutions to surge with vitality. The climax of this trend, treated in Chapter 5, came in April, 1917, as the Brazilian government broke off diplomatic relations with Germany in response to its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. German districts in several Brazilian cities were thereupon visited by riotous mobs. Homes were ransacked, commercial structures put to the torch, and German-language printing presses were destroyed. This wave of anti-Germanism, which came at a time when Brazil was technically still neutral, was much more destructive than anything experienced by Germans in the United States. The events of the summer of 1917 leading to the declaration of war are treated briefly in Chapter 6.

The war itself and its aftermath are treated in the final section, beginning with Chapter 7, which describes a second round of destructive anti-German riots and the efforts of the Brazilian government to cope with the problem of the German ethnic minority, many members of which were enemy aliens. This is followed by an analysis of the German Brazilians' response to the wartime repression that they were forced to endure, and the final chapter in-

cludes a series of comparisons with the experiences of Germans in the United States.

My usage of certain terms requires explanation. I think of this book as *cultural* history or, perhaps more precisely, as *sociocultural*, in the way that anthropologists might use the term. That means having some understanding of how a people think—or having some notion of their hierarchy of values, how they make sense of the world, and how their perception of reality is manifested in their behavior. The specific problem of the Germans in Brazil during World War I is first of all a matter of differing cultures in conflict. Having studied German immigrant culture in America for many years, I have felt reasonably confident in interpreting the behavior of the German Brazilians. It is another matter, however, to understand the history of a people—non-German Brazilians in this case—whose language and wellsprings of culture are much different from one's own. Consequently, some errors of fact or interpretation undoubtedly remain in my text.

Brazilian society, like the American, is an extraordinary amalgam of Indian, African, European, and Asian elements. Yet one must cut through this complex heterogeneity to identify in a rather simplistic way the characteristics of its core culture. The term *Luso-Brazilian* is often used for this purpose in much the same way that the foundation of American culture is frequently called *Anglo-Saxon Protestant*. Thus, *Luso-Brazilian* identifies the Portuguese origins of Brazilian culture, modified by five centuries of development in the New World. The Portuguese language and Latin Catholic culture remain at the heart of Brazilian diversity. This has been especially true of the educated, wealthy classes that have dominated the country throughout most of its history. Although *Luso-Brazilian* may refer to specifically Portuguese elements in the Brazilian population, I do not intend generally to suggest such an exclusive meaning in my usage of the term. As various Brazilian and American scholars have shown, members of non-Portuguese subgroups, including mulattoes and *caboclos*, could be fully accepted by Brazil's dominant classes, provided that standards of wealth and education were met. Thus, I use *Luso-Brazilian* to identify (rather than to define) the dominant culture of Brazil and its representatives, and to distinguish it from the *Teuto-Brazilian*,

which is the term the German Brazilians use to identify themselves and their culture. *Teuto-Brazilian* is itself a “shorthand” term, made in Brazil, that masks a rich diversity of provincial origin, dialect, religion, custom, and habit, as I hope to make clear in the chapters that follow.

## A Century of German Settlement in Brazil

### A Survey, 1818–1918

THE IMMIGRATION of Germans to Brazil began in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. The Peace of Vienna (1815) introduced an extended period of relative stability that was favorable for the relocation of persons who were looking for ways to improve their economic condition in other lands. Germans, especially in the southwestern states, were on the move. Russia was attractive to many at first, but others went to the United States and a few chose to settle in Brazil, where the ruling house of Portugal had found refuge in 1808 when one of Napoleon's armies entered Lisbon. Dom Pedro, crown prince of Portugal at the time and later the first emperor of Brazil, was married to Archduchess Leopoldina of Austria. Inevitably her retinue included German-speaking persons, many of whom remained permanently in Brazil. They were followed by several hundred immigrants from Switzerland and the Rhineland who in 1818 established the small colonies of Leopoldina and São Jorge dos Ilheus in the province of Bahia and, in 1820, Nova Friburgo near Rio de Janeiro.<sup>1</sup>

1. Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration, 1607–1860*, ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), 107–14; Carlos Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer und seine Nachkommen in Brasilien: 1808–1824–1974* (São Paulo, 1974), 23–24, 46–47, 57; Karl Heinrich Oberacker, Jr., *Der deutsche Beitrag zum Aufbau der brasilianischen Nation* (3rd ed., revised and expanded; São Leopoldo, 1978), 195–203; Karl Heinrich Oberacker, Jr., “Die Deutschen in Brasilien,” in Hartmut Fröschle (ed.), *Die Deutschen in Lateinamerika* (Tübingen, 1979), 184–87; Ferdinand Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg: Ursprung und Gestaltung deutschen evangelischen Kirchentums in Brasilien* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1936), 13–23; George P. Browne, “Government Immigration Policy in Imperial Brazil, 1822–1870” (Ph.D. dissertation,

This movement, though generally opposed by the Brazilian planter aristocracy, had been sponsored by the Portuguese king, João VI. At first, immigration was limited to persons who professed the Roman Catholic faith, but this restriction was later removed when the first Brazilian constitution was promulgated in 1824, two years after Dom Pedro declared Brazilian independence.<sup>2</sup>

## The Historical Pattern of German Immigration

The first truly German settlement in Brazil received its impetus from Dom Pedro I, who was eager to increase the population of Brazil's southern frontier, a region that bordered on the former Spanish colonies of La Plata. He hoped to establish a class of farmers who would engage in diversified agriculture to balance the huge cattle-raising operations in the area and the large-scale sugar and coffee plantations farther north. Dom Pedro initially feared that units of the Portuguese army stationed in Brazil would resist the independence movement. He therefore believed that he had to enlarge the number of Brazilian troops. To this end he dispatched Major Georg Schäffer, a German adventurer in his service, to Hamburg to recruit soldiers and settlers. Both groups were expected to become permanent residents of Brazil. Schäffer promised free passage and free land on the imperial domain on the banks of the Rio dos Sinos at São Leopoldo, which was located about twenty miles north of Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>3</sup> One hundred twenty-four persons—peasants, artisans, mer-

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Catholic University of America, 1972), 38–56. Although the settlers at Nova Friburgo were chiefly French Swiss of the Catholic faith, they were joined in 1823 by a contingent of German Protestant families. Ferdinand Schröder, *Die deutsche Einwanderung nach Südbrasilien bis zum Jahre 1859* (Berlin, 1931), 31. Michael M. Hall, "The Origins of Mass Immigration in Brazil, 1871–1914" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1969), treats Italian immigration primarily. For a general guide to the literature, see Manfred Illi, *Die deutsche Auswanderung nach Lateinamerika: Eine Literaturübersicht*, Lateinamerika-Studien, II (Munich, 1977), 44–87.

2. Schröder, *Die deutsche Einwanderung*, 33–34, 46; Fritz Sudhaus, *Deutschland und die Auswanderung nach Brasilien im 19. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg, 1940), 21; Wilhelm Mönckmeier, *Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung* (Jena, Germany: 1912), 209.

3. Carlos H. Oberacker, Jr., *Jorge Antonio von Schaeffer: Criador da primeira corrente emigratória alemã para o Brasil* (Porto Alegre, 1957); Browne, "Government Immigration Policy," 64–91; Dr. [Paul] Aldinger, *Deutsche Mitarbeit in Brasilien* (Curi-

chants, and their families, plus a Protestant minister—constituted the first contingent of settlers. Arriving late in 1824, they were greeted by the emperor and his wife as they stopped in Rio de Janeiro on their way south. In Porto Alegre they were received by José Pinheiro, president of the frontier province of Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>4</sup> Unlike several other colonies of immigrants founded in the 1820s, this one prospered, though not easily.

In the decades that followed, thousands of immigrants from the German states settled in southern Brazil. By the end of the century, according to Jean Roche, between 150,000 and 200,000 German immigrants and their descendants resided in Rio Grande do Sul alone.<sup>5</sup> It should be noted, however, that estimates of ethnic populations by less meticulous scholars than Roche are sometimes inflated by including the children of exogamous marriages and by failing to exclude the number of returnees.

The Brazilian government continued to foster immigration from Europe in a variety of ways throughout the nineteenth century. Among the earliest incentives it offered were free passage, plus seeds, animals, and implements. Non-Catholics were tolerated so long as their houses of worship did not bear the standard insignia of churches—crosses, spires, and the like. At times, immigrants were also lured by exemption from certain taxes or from military service for a period of years. Later the government provided transportation from the port of entry to an immigrant settlement; loans and grants went to colonization companies; salaries of clergymen

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tiba, 1923); Mack Walker, *Germany and the Emigration, 1816–1885* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), 38–41; Albert Schmid, *Deutsches Söldnerschicksal in Brasilien: Die Fremdenbataillone des Kaisers Dom Pedro I, ihre Revolte und ihre Auflösung* (Porto Alegre, 1951).

4. For detailed data on founders, locations, crops raised, and exports of São Leopoldo, see Ernesto Pellanda, *A colonização germanica no Rio Grande do Sul, 1824–1924* (*Repartição de estatística do estado do Rio Grande do Sul*) (Porto Alegre, 1925), 31–76.

5. Jean Roche, *La colonisation allemande et le Rio Grande do Sul* (Paris, 1959), 133–35; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 27–31; Oberacker, *Der deutsche Beitrag*, 289–92; Oskar Canstatt, *Die deutsche Auswanderung, Auswandererfürsorge und Auswandererziele* (Berlin-Schöneberg, 1904), 253; Joachim Fischer, “Geschichte der Evangelischen Kirche Lutherischen Bekenntnisses,” in Joachim Fischer and Christoph Jahn (eds.), *Es begann am Rio dos Sinos: Geschichte und Gegenwart der Ev. Kirche Lutherischen Bekenntnisses in Brasilien* (Erlangen, W. Germany, 1970), 90–92.

and teachers in certain colonies were paid; and various public buildings were erected at government expense.<sup>6</sup>

For several years after the establishment of the São Leopoldo colony (until Dom Pedro was forced to abdicate in 1831), European immigration to Brazil numbered about a thousand persons per year.<sup>7</sup> Then, during the turbulent first year of the regency, it ceased altogether. In the late 1830s and 1840s, immigration resumed as the government attracted several hundred persons each year, chiefly from Germany and Portugal. Following the European revolutions of 1848, however, the annual totals spiraled to ten or fifteen thousand persons, of whom one-fifth were German. By the 1870s, Brazilian immigration had expanded to include thousands of persons from Portugal, Italy, and Spain, as well as Austria, Russia, and Switzerland, many of whom were German-speaking. The high point was reached in 1891, when 216,000 persons were received from all sources. This substantial increase was related to the abolition of slavery. As the children of slave mothers were freed in 1871 and the slaves themselves were emancipated in 1888, immigration provided an adequate, inexpensive supply of laborers to perform the manual work on the sugar and coffee plantations. Moreover, there were some Brazilians with racist sentiments who welcomed the immigration as a means to augment the white proportion of the population and thereby counterbalance the huge, newly freed black population.<sup>8</sup>

6. For a summary of various Brazilian laws at the imperial as well as provincial level, see Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 27–45. For a full analysis, see Browne, "Government Immigration Policy." See also Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLB," 87–88; and Mönckmeier, *Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung*, 209.

7. See table summarizing Brazilian immigration from all countries, José Fernando Carneiro, *Imigração e colonização no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1950), facing p. 60; Schröder, *Die deutsche Einwanderung*, 155.

8. Imre Ferenczi (comp.) and Walter F. Willcox (ed.), *International Migrations*, Vol. I, *Statistics* (New York, 1929), 549–50; George P. Browne, "Política Imigratória no Brasil Regência," *Blumenau em Cadernos*, XVI (1975), 3–14; T. Lynn Smith, *Brazil: People and Institutions* (Rev. ed.; Baton Rouge, 1963), 118–33; Oberacker, *Der deutsche Beitrag*, 286–89; Thomas Holloway, "Immigration and Abolition: The Transition from Slave to Free Labor in the São Paulo Coffee Zone," in Dauril Alden and Warren Dean (eds.), *Essays Concerning the Socioeconomic History of Brazil and Portuguese India* (Gainesville, 1977), 150–77. Carneiro, *Imigração e colonização no Brasil*, also relates immigration to slavery and its abolition. F. de Leonardo Truda, *A colonização alemã no Rio Grande do Sul* (Porto Alegre, 1930), 111–28; Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (New York, 1974).

During these decades of the late nineteenth century, German immigration averaged only about two thousand per year, briefly rising to five thousand in 1890 and 1891. No doubt the numbers would have been higher had it not been for much bad publicity in the German press about Brazil as a place for emigrants to settle. The problem had come to a head in the 1850s and was directly related to the fact that more than half of the Germans in Brazil were Protestants, a tiny minority in an officially Catholic country. Throughout the latter half of the century, many emigration pamphlets, books, and periodicals published in Germany, such as *Der Deutsche Auswanderer*, described Brazil as undesirable or unattractive for Germans. Criticism was repeatedly leveled at abuses attributable to unscrupulous recruiting agents and the *parceria* system (a sharecropping arrangement that perpetuated land monopoly), but problems emerging from religious differences were perceived as being especially troublesome. Moreover, at that time a Protestant marriage had no legality in Brazil and was treated as concubinage. Prussia, the large and powerful state from which a substantial proportion of the German emigration originated, saw itself as the protector of Protestantism and hence instructed its minister to Brazil to negotiate for the introduction of civil marriage. Several such bills were introduced in the Brazilian legislature in the late 1850s, but none was passed, due to conservative opposition.<sup>9</sup>

The Prussian government responded in 1859 to this inaction with a directive sponsored by August von der Heydt, the minister of the interior, that officially discouraged emigration to Brazil. The Heydt'sche Reskript, as it was called in German, also curtailed the recruitment activities of agents and shipowners. Prussia encouraged other German states to join in a united effort to get Brazil (1) to recognize the legality of Protestant marriage, (2) to guarantee inheritance rights of immigrants and their children, (3) to grant Protestants equal rights with Catholics to erect their own churches and schools, and (4) to end the *parceria* system.

9. Carneiro, *Imigração e colonização no Brasil*, table facing p. 60; Walker, *Germany and the Emigration*, 127–29, 177–81; Sudhaus, *Deutschland und die Auswanderung*, 61–62; Hall, “The Origins of Mass Immigration,” 13–20; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 515–17; Fischer, “Geschichte der EKLb,” 89; George P. Browne, “Secularization and Modernization in Imperial Brazil: The Question of Non-Catholic Marriage,” *Revista de História de América*, LXXXIII (1977), 121–33.



In 1861, Brazil moderated its marriage law sufficiently to recognize the validity of Protestant marriages contracted before the immigrant partners arrived in Brazil. The new law, which went into effect in 1863, also permitted Protestant clergymen to perform civil marriage ceremonies, provided they were properly licensed by the government. Nothing else was done about the German complaints until 1890 after the emperor was exiled and the new republican constitution was promulgated, and with it the institution of civil marriage. Thus Prussia did not withdraw the Heydt'sche Reskript until 1895.<sup>10</sup>

Nothing in the Prussian regulation actually prevented a person from emigrating to Brazil if he wanted to do so. Hence there is no reliable way of estimating the effect of such policies. Surely most German emigrants of the late nineteenth century recognized that the United States, rather than Brazil, offered the more congenial cultural and economic environment. In the early 1880s, when German emigration to the United States attained unprecedented heights (250,000 in 1882), there was no comparable increase in the numbers of persons who chose to go to Brazil. Yet after 1896, when the German government no longer officially discouraged the movement, the number of emigrants to Brazil dropped to less than 1,000 per year. Not until just before World War I, from 1908 to 1914, did the volume increase to nearly 5,000 per year. The highest ever recorded was 8,004 in 1913.<sup>11</sup>

The census of 1920 provides a statistical summary of German-born persons in Brazil in the era of World War I. It shows that Germany ranked a distant fourth behind Italy, Portugal, and Spain as a source of immigrants. It demonstrates further that Germans were highly concentrated in the southern states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Paraná and in major cities, most notably Porto Alegre, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. Nearly 53,000 per-

10. Sudhaus, *Deutschland und die Auswanderung*, 99, 113, 119, 126, 177; Browne, "Secularization and Modernization," 131; Schröder, *Die deutsche Einwanderung*, 79; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 71; Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLB," 89; Canstatt, *Die deutsche Auswanderung*, 252. For a full discussion of the position of the German government regarding emigration to Brazil, see Gerhard Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien (1889–1914)* (Cologne and Vienna, 1971), 127–54.

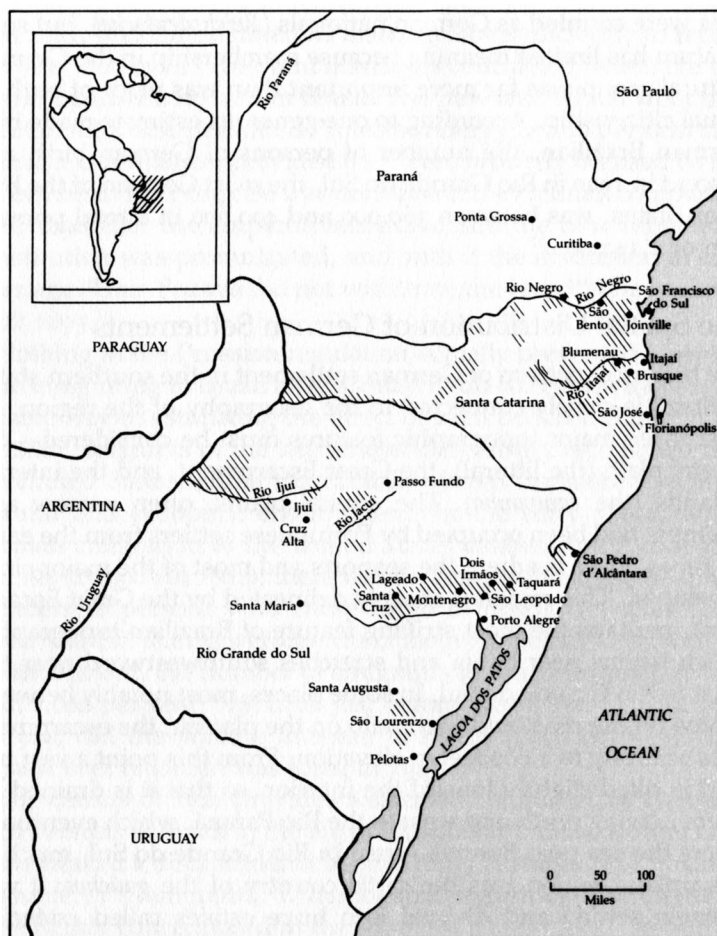
11. Ferenczi (comp.) and Willcox (ed.), *Statistics*, 550–51; Carneiro, *Imigração e colonização no Brasil*, table facing p. 60.

sons were counted as German nationals (*Reichsdeutsche*), but such a datum has limited meaning because membership in the German cultural group was far more important than was place of birth or actual citizenship. According to one generous estimate made by a German Brazilian, the number of persons of German birth and descent in 1920 in Rio Grande do Sul, the most German of the Brazilian states, was between 360,000 and 400,000 in a total population of 2,142,000.<sup>12</sup>

## The Spatial Distribution of German Settlements

The historical pattern of German settlement in the southern states of Brazil is closely connected to the geography of the region. At least three major topographic features must be considered—the coastal plain (the littoral), the Great Escarpment, and the interior uplands (the *campanha*). The coastal plains, often narrow and swampy, had been occupied by Portuguese settlers from the earliest times. Here is where the seaports and most of the major cities developed. This region is sharply delineated by the Great Escarpment, perhaps the most striking feature of Brazilian topography, which begins near Bahia and stretches southwestward near the coast to Rio Grande do Sul. In some places, most notably between Santos on the coast and São Paulo on the plateau, the escarpment rises abruptly to 2,600 feet in elevation. From this point a vast upland is tilted slightly toward the interior, so that it is drained by rivers flowing north and west to the Rio Paraná, which eventually enters the sea near Buenos Aires. In Rio Grande do Sul, much of this upland region was the cattle country of the *gaúchos*; it was sparsely settled and divided into huge estates called *estâncias*. South of the state of São Paulo, the escarpment tends to broaden into a hilly, heavily forested region called the *serra*. A series of

12. Karl Heinrich Oberacker, [Sr.], *Die volkspolitische Lage des Deutschtums in Rio Grande do Sul* (Jena, Germany, 1936), 92–95. Heinz Kloss has summarized these and other estimates in *Statistisches Handbuch der Volksdeutschen in Übersee* (Stuttgart, 1943), 61–67. The larger context of European immigration to Brazil has been studied carefully in recent years. For useful introductions, see Smith, *Brazil*, 118–43; and Thomas W. Merrick and Douglas H. Graham, *Population and Economic Development in Brazil: 1800 to the Present* (Baltimore, 1979), 80–117. See also Hall, “The Origins of Mass Immigration”; and Browne, “Government Immigration Policy.”



**Map 1.** Areas of nineteenth-century German settlement in southern Brazil. Shaded areas indicate heavy rural settlement. Names of cities and towns are restricted to those mentioned in the text.

smaller ridges, less clearly defined, are broken by valleys and rushing streams. North of Porto Alegre, the escarpment turns inland and crosses the state of Rio Grande do Sul from the coast nearly to the Argentine boundary at the Rio Uruguay.<sup>13</sup> This hilly region, located in the central part of the state, is drained by the

13. Preston James, *Latin America* (4th ed.; New York, 1969), 698–99, 800–804.

Rio Jacuí, which flows eastward into a huge coastal lagoon, Lagoa dos Patos, at Porto Alegre.

### RIO GRANDE DO SUL

The largest number of German immigrants settled in Brazil's southernmost state, Rio Grande do Sul, which is roughly the size of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey combined. The first of the many German settlements there was São Leopoldo, which is located on the Rio dos Sinos, the first of several tributaries that flow south out of the *serra* into the Rio Jacuí. The region north and west of São Leopoldo became the heartland of the German settlements, most of which were located along the terraces on the north side of the Jacuí Valley. An area of nearly four thousand square miles, the district stretches from Taquará at the eastern end to Santa Cruz in the west, a distance of more than one hundred miles. Its average width is twenty-five miles.<sup>14</sup>

The Germans were the first Europeans to settle this region. Since it was unsuited for grazing cattle and contained no lodes of precious minerals or gems, it had been ignored by the Portuguese, whose interest in the area had been limited to raising rice on the Jacuí plain. Similarly, early immigrants from the Azores were attracted to the prairie grasslands south of the Rio Jacuí. The Germans, in contrast, were strongly drawn to the forested lands. The landscape was somewhat reminiscent of Germany and they liked the abundance of wood, the reasonably fertile soil, the more than adequate rainfall, and the opportunity to live as they pleased in virtual isolation from other social and cultural groups. In the decades following the founding of São Leopoldo, the Germans spread out across the *serra* to Santa Maria and eventually to Cruz Alta on

14. Truda, *A colonização alemã*, 31–44; Browne, "Government Immigration Policy," 92–101. The most detailed study of the German settlements in Rio Grande do Sul is *La colonisation allemande* by Roche, a French historian of the *annaliste* school. Roche provides an integrated analysis of the topography, climate, plant life, and history of the region. His maps (pp. 91, 92, 107) are especially helpful. Aurélio Porto, *Die deutsche Arbeit in Rio Grande do Sul* (São Leopoldo, 1934), is a detailed account, especially for the early years. Many statistics are provided in Pellanda, *A colonização germanica no Rio Grande do Sul*. For a study that places the German ethnic group within the context of general European immigration to Rio Grande do Sul, see Dietrich von Delhaes-Guenther, "La influencia de la inmigración en el desarrollo y composición étnica de la población de Rio Grande do Sul," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, XIII (1976), 420–33.

the plateau. From there they descended into the valley of the Rio Ijuí on the western slope near the Argentine border, establishing colonies there and across the Rio Uruguay in the Misiones territory of Argentina. Some pushed on into Paraguay.<sup>15</sup>

The early years were especially difficult for the Germans in southern Brazil. Inevitably the immigrant group included a number of vagrants, impostors, and assorted scoundrels. The Teuto-Brazilians, as they came to be called, were frequently threatened by bands of thieves, hostile Indians, and inhospitable Luso-Brazilians. Often harassed and exploited by corrupt local officials, they had little legal protection and, except for paying taxes, they were usually excluded from participation in government.<sup>16</sup> Often they were caught up in frontier wars; at least four major conflicts involved Rio Grande do Sul during the imperial era. In one instance, the Paraguayan War of 1867, more than forty soldiers were recruited in the German settlement of Dois Irmãos, but only three survived.<sup>17</sup>

The majority of the Germans in Rio Grande do Sul were small farmers who cultivated the soil with primitive equipment and with the help of their typically large families. Living in isolated clearings in the subtropical forest or in small, almost exclusively German rural villages, they did not have to conform to established

15. Preston E. James, "The Expanding Settlements of Southern Brazil," *Geographical Review*, XXX (1940), 608–16; Porto, *Die deutsche Arbeit*, 64–91, 181–87. Schröder, *Die deutsche Einwanderung*, 81–92, offers brief descriptions of each colony and gives the names of settlers, their products, churches, origins in Germany, population data, etc. For an example of a study of a single colony, see Klaus Becker, "A fundação e os primeiros 30 anos de Teutônia," in *I. Colóquio de Estudos Teuto-Brasileiros* (Porto Alegre, 1963), 217–27; and João Guilherme Corrêa de Souza, "Uma comunidade Teuto-Brasileira: Aspectos de sua estrutura e organização sociais," in *I. Colóquio*, 181–201.

16. Karl von Koseritz, *Bilder aus Brasilien* (Leipzig, 1885), 138; Truda, *A colonização alemã*, 27; Joseph L. Love, *Rio Grande do Sul and Brazilian Regionalism, 1882–1930* (Stanford, Calif., 1971), 13. For examples of friction in São Leopoldo, see Porto, *Die deutsche Arbeit*, 158, 162, 240.

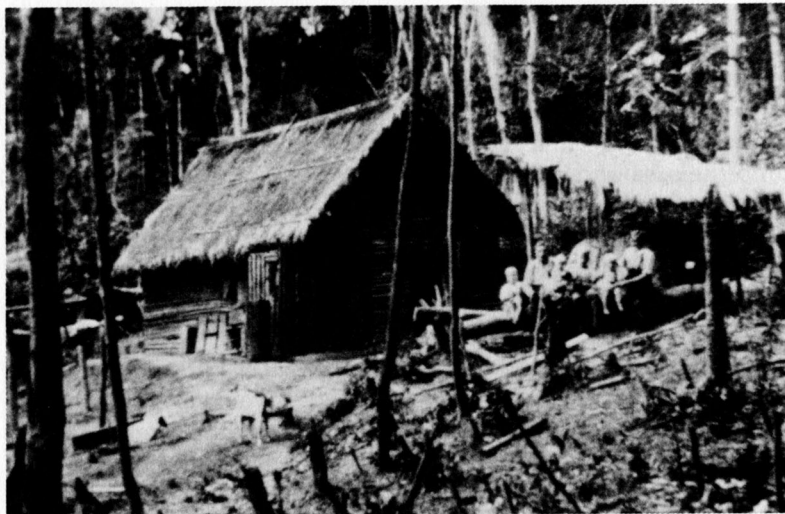
17. Porto, *Die deutsche Arbeit*, 104–12, 208–29; Heinz Dressel, *Der deutsch-brasilianische Kolonist im alten Siedlungsgebiet von São Leopoldo, Rio Grande do Sul: Eine soziologische Studie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Dois Irmãos* (Neuendettelsau, W. Germany, 1967), 18. A local uprising called the Muckerkrieg involved German religious radicals with government troops in 1874. See Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 511; and Canstatt, *Die deutsche Auswanderung*, 423–25.

or preexisting social and cultural standards, except in border areas. Linguistic acculturation was unnecessary. In general, their situation required only minimal adaptation to the larger social environment.<sup>18</sup>

The physical environment was another matter. If a settler came into the area and devoted all his energy to clearing the forest so that he could farm as he had in Europe, he was almost sure to fail. By the time he could accomplish the task of clearing the land of trees, crucial planting seasons would have passed. Instead, the German pioneers typically adapted the primitive slash-and-burn techniques that they had learned from the *caboclos*, who were poor, despised natives of mixed Indian and Portuguese blood. Lacking capital and credit, as well as effective means of transportation, the typical German *colono* also turned to indigenous crops such as manioc and maize, which he planted among the partially carbonized tree trunks. When the fertility of a given clearing was exhausted after several years, the pioneer would move to another spot and start the process over again. Such primitive, subsistence agriculture often became a more or less permanent part of the German-Brazilian way of life and was sometimes continued long after improvements in transportation and access to credit and world markets rendered such methods obsolete. Emílio Willems, an anthropologist who is the foremost student of German-Brazilian life, declares that the physical environment of the subtropical rain forest had forced a radical break with German peasant traditions. "Technology, food habits, dress, and housing patterns," he observes, "had changed almost beyond recognition; instead of a peasant village there were widely scattered farmsteads, transportation was by ox cart or mule train, and the settler's participation in the money economy was marginal at best."<sup>19</sup>

18. Liene Maria Martins Schütz, "Imigração alemã: Processo, costume e influências," in *Anais do 1º simpósio de história de imigração e colonização alemã no Rio Grande do Sul* (São Leopoldo, 1974), 275.

19. Love, *Rio Grande do Sul*, 18; James, "Expanding Settlements," 608; Emílio Willems, *A aculturação dos alemães no Brasil: Estudo antropológico dos imigrantes alemães e seus descendentes no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1946), 329ff. See also Emílio Willems, "Social Change on the Latin American Frontier," in David H. Miller and Jerome O. Steffen (eds.), *The Frontier: Comparative Studies* (Norman, 1977), 262–63 (quotation on p. 264). Cf. Terry Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil: Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth Century Texas* (Austin, 1966).



A German-Brazilian farmer with his family in temporary quarters in the forested *serra* of southern Brazil

Reprinted from Kahle, *Deutsche Heimat in Brasilien*

Nevertheless, the German cultural landscape remained distinctive.<sup>20</sup> In areas where Germans were more densely clustered and after decades of development, there were sharp contrasts between different ethnic group settlements. The landscape of the Jacuí floodplain, where Luso-Brazilians cultivated rice and customarily lived in temporary camplike structures, was noticeably different from that of the German settlements to the north. Architectural forms and styles; the care bestowed upon the land, buildings, and flower gardens; and the types of crops raised—all reflected the cultural values of the Teuto-Brazilian community in the

20. I have analyzed the relative importance of environmental forces, such as those emphasized by Emilio Willems, and the persistence of cultural forms in my essay, "Regionalism and the Great Plains: Problems of Concept and Method," *Western Historical Quarterly*, XV (1984), 19–38. See also my comments on conceptual schemas based on the environmentalism of Frederick Jackson Turner in "Ethnic Minority Groups in the American West," in Michael P. Malone (ed.), *Historians and the American West* (Lincoln, 1983), 387–413.



A German-Brazilian school building in Neu-Bremen, with the teacher's residence attached. Note the use of German *Fachwerk* (timbered framework with spaces filled with bricks).

Reprinted from Kahle, *Deutsche Heimat in Brasilien*

*serra*. Similarly, the German district varied in appearance from the zone of Italian colonies that formed on the crest of the transitional area. There, extensive vineyards were the dominant feature. The Italian homesteads were more substantial than the Luso-Brazilian, but generally less neat than the German.<sup>21</sup>

German cultural characteristics were most clearly evident in the *Schneiss* or *Pikade*, the names the Germans gave to the form of agricultural settlement common in the *serra*. The founders of a colony would make a long, straight cut through the forest (*Urwald*) that would subsequently become a road. Individual settlers would

21. Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, provides a full description of German-Brazilian housing forms. See also Alba Maria B. Gomes *et al.*, "A colonização alemã na área de Joaneta," in *I. Colóquio*, 166–76; and Oberacker, "Die Deutschen in Brasilien," 190–93. James, "Expanding Settlements," 616; Dressel, *Der deutsch-brasilianische Kolonist*, 30; Roy Nash, *The Conquest of Brazil* (New York, 1926), 182–83.





A view of Estrêla, Rio Grande do Sul, a strongly German community located in the *serra* approximately fifty miles west of Porto Alegre on the Rio Taquari

Reprinted from Kahle, *Deutsche Heimat in Brasilien*

then receive long, narrow plots of land of one or two hundred acres that stretched out at right angles from the road. Farmhouses were built at the side of the road, thereby creating a strung-out rural village. Several such *Pikaden* would constitute a colony. The center of the colony was the *Stadtplatz*, a cluster of buildings including the church, school, civil offices, stores, workshops, and the mill. This form of spatial organization was imported from central Germany, where the *Waldhufendorf* or *Strassendorf* was common. Occasionally German settlers in the United States attempted to establish colonies organized in this way, but they certainly were not typical, chiefly because the pattern of land sales as specified by American law, beginning with the Land Ordinance of 1785 through to the Homestead Act of 1862 and subsequent amendatory legislation, worked against their formation. The first structures erected by the German colonists in Brazil were primitive, and slash-and-burn techniques were used, but gradually over a period of many years the people built more substantial structures and adopted more conventional agricultural methods. Nevertheless, as Emílio Willems has emphasized, many of these commu-

nities remained in poverty and extreme cultural isolation for generations, well into the twentieth century.<sup>22</sup>

### SANTA CATARINA

Isolation was also typical of many German colonies that were founded in Santa Catarina, a state the size of Indiana that lies directly north of Rio Grande do Sul. Here the Great Escarpment was broken by the Rio Itajaí and, on its northern border, the Rio Negro. These rivers, plus several smaller streams, formed heavily forested valleys between the coast and the interior plateau. As in Rio Grande do Sul, wooded areas had been avoided by the Luso-Brazilians, who preferred the coastal lowlands or the cattle-grazing lands of the upland. Because the terrain did not encourage contiguous settlements like those on the terraces of Rio Grande do Sul, the German colonies tended to be separated by intervening ridges and valleys occupied by other ethnic groups, most frequently Italians. *Pikaden* were therefore less common in Santa Catarina and individual holdings tended to be smaller than those in Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>23</sup> Here also the Germans tended to concentrate in towns and hence to dominate the economic and social structures of their local communities.

The earliest German settlements in Santa Catarina, such as São

22. Alfred Hettner, "Das Deutschtum in Südbrasilien," *Geographische Zeitschrift*, VIII (1902), 612–14; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 175–82; Leo Waibel, "European Colonization in Southern Brazil," *Geographical Review*, XL (1950), 529–47; Oberacker, "Die Deutschen in Brasilien," 189–90; Hanns Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer in Rio Grande do Sul* (Ochsenfurt am Main, Germany, 1937), 41–43. For studies of specific communities, see Gomes *et al.*, "A colonização alemã," 151–62; Giralda Seyferth, *A colonização alemã no vale do Itajaí-Mirim: Um estudo do desenvolvimento economico* (Porto Alegre, 1974), 47–51; and Dressel, *Der deutsch-brasilianische Kolonist*. The latter is a detailed sociological study of the inhabitants of Dois Irmãos, a *Pikade* called Baumschneis by the Germans, located on the Rio dos Sinos upstream from São Leopoldo. For a brief description of the *Pikade* in English, see Terry G. Jordan, "Aspects of German Colonization in Southern Brazil," *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, XLII (1962), 346–53. Cf. Robert C. Eidt, *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina* (Madison, 1971), 163–65, 199–200 (Eidt's list of advantages of the *Waldhufendorf* settlement form).

23. James, "Expanding Settlements," 616–17; Jordan, "Aspects of Colonization," 351. Carneiro, *Imigração e colonização no Brasil*, 67–68, draws contrasts in patterns of colonization between Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina.

Pedro d'Alcântara and Rio Negro, were established in the late 1820s on strategically important routes that led southward from São Paulo to the southern border of Brazil. Virtually abandoned by the Brazilian government in the 1830s, these settlements barely survived until Santa Catarina captured the attention of a new generation of colonizers at mid-century.<sup>24</sup>

The most renowned of the later colonies to be established in Santa Catarina and perhaps the most successful in all Brazil was Blumenau, founded in 1850 on the banks of the Rio Itajaí by Dr. Hermann Blumenau, who served as director of the colony until he returned to Germany in 1880, by which time his colony had grown to fifteen thousand inhabitants. It was thoroughly, though not exclusively, German. The German language was spoken everywhere in Blumenau—in the homes, on the streets, and in stores, hotels, schools, and churches. As late as World War I, at least two-thirds of all the inhabitants of Blumenau spoke German as their mother tongue, even though by that time few were German-born. The proportion was even higher in the surrounding rural districts. The two local newspapers were published in German; imported German goods were everywhere in evidence. Even official government records were kept in German in the early days of the settlement. Like many of the Rio Grande do Sul colonies, Blumenau was isolated well into the twentieth century by lack of transportation connections. Although roads within the district were satisfactory for the times, connections with coastal communities were miserable. Water transportation on the Rio Itajaí was the standard mode, but the harbor facilities in the port city of Itajaí were inadequate. In short, the isolated district of Blumenau was well suited for the flowering of an immigrant German society on Brazilian soil.<sup>25</sup>

24. Percy E. Schramm, "Die deutsche Siedlungskolonie Dona Francisca (Brasilien: St. Catharina) im Rahmen gleichzeitiger Projekte und Verhandlungen," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, I (1964), 309; José Deeke, "Erste Anfänge der Kolonisation Santa Catharinas. Periode bis 1848," in Gottfried Entres (ed.), *Der Staat Santa Catharina in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart unter besonder Berücksichtigung des Deutschtums: Gedenkbuch zur 100-Feier deutscher einwanderung in Sta. Catharina* (Florianópolis, 1929), 28–35, hereinafter cited as *Gedenkbuch*; Browne, "Government Immigration Policy," 101–104.

25. R. A. Hehl, "Die deutsche Colonisation in Süd-Brasilien," *Petermann's Mitteilungen*, XXVIII (1882), 464; José Deeke, *Das Munizip Blumenau* (São Leopoldo, 1917); José Deeke, "Die intensiviere deutsche Kolonisation in Santa Catharina," in

Joinville, founded at the same time as Blumenau, was the second major German colony in Santa Catarina. Located on the coast in the northeastern corner of the province near São Francisco do Sul, this settlement occupied lands purchased by the Hamburg Colonization Company from the Prince of Joinville, son of the recently deposed King Louis Philippe of France. The prince had acquired the land as part of the dowry of his wife, Dona Francisca, the sister of the Brazilian emperor, Dom Pedro II. From the beginning this colony, known at first as Dona Francisca, attracted not farmers but urban dwellers—craftsmen whose skills provided a foundation for industrial development—in addition to a number of well-educated persons who left Germany for political reasons. Like Blumenau, Joinville developed many voluntary associations, a German-language newspaper, and numerous ethnic businesses. By 1880, its population reached eighteen thousand.<sup>26</sup>

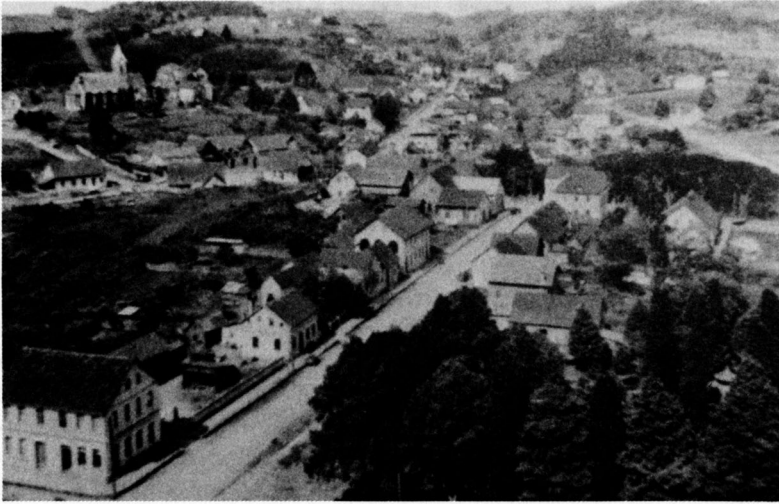
By no means were the German settlements in Santa Catarina limited to the Blumenau and Joinville districts. As in Rio Grande do Sul, German frontiersmen spread throughout the forested areas southward to Brusque and other communities, northward to São Bento, and westward past the cattle country to the valley of the Rio Uruguay, where in some districts they constituted as much as a quarter of the population. Between 1880 and 1915, a substantial immigration of German artisans contributed to the further industrialization of Joinville, Blumenau, and other strongly German cities of Santa Catarina.

Late in the nineteenth century the Germans were joined by large numbers of other immigrants—Russians, Poles, Ukrainians, as well as Italians—especially in the northern part of the province

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Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 40–52; José Ferreira da Silva, “História de Blumenau,” in *Centenário de Blumenau, 1850–2 de Setembro–1950* (N.p., [1950]); José Ferreira da Silva, *História de Blumenau* (Florianópolis, [ca. 1972]); Oberacker, “Die Deutschen in Brasilien,” 185; Clarence H. Haring, *The Germans in South America: A Contribution to the Economic History of the World War* (New York, 1920), 27–31; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 31–37; Seyferth, *A colonização alemã no vale do Itajaí-Mirim*, 87–98.

26. Hehl, “Die deutsche Colonisation in Süd-Brasilien,” 461–62; Ernesto Niemeyer, *Die Deutschen in Brasilien* (Curitiba, 1926), 33–37; Sudhaus, *Deutschland und die Auswanderung*, 69–75; Schramm, “Die deutsche Siedlungskolonie Dona Francisca,” 308–22.



A view of São Bento, Santa Catarina, located on the Rio Negro. Many German settlers moved north from São Bento into the state of Paraná.

Reprinted from Kahle, *Deutsche Heimat in Brasilien*

near the Rio Negro. By the time of World War I, there were approximately 100,000 persons of German heritage in Santa Catarina; most were of Brazilian birth and citizenship. The total population of the state was 669,000, according to the census of 1920.<sup>27</sup>

## PARANÁ

The third southern Brazilian state with many German inhabitants is Paraná, located north of Santa Catarina across the Rio Negro. Paraná, a state about the size of Nebraska, was still a frontier region as late as 1920, when its population had reached only 685,000.

27. Carneiro, *Imigração e colonização no Brasil*, 54–59; Gerd Kohlhepp, "Die deutschstämmigen Siedlungsgebiete im südbrasilianischen Staate Santa Catarina," in *Heidelberger Studien zur Kulturgeographie* (Wiesbaden, 1966), 219–44. See especially his maps (pp. 224, 230). For the economic development of the German district in Santa Catarina, see Gerd Kohlhepp, *Industriegeographie des nordöstlichen Santa Catarina (Südbrasilien): Ein Beitrag zur Geographie eines deutschbrasilianischen Siedlungsgebietes* (Heidelberg, 1968), 77–100.

Although a German colony had been founded on the Rio Negro as early as 1829, most settlements after 1870 consisted of extensions from São Bento and other German concentrations in Santa Catarina. Other clusters of German families developed in the big cities of the state, especially in Curitiba, the capital.

Outnumbered by Italian and Russian (*i.e.*, Polish, Ruthenian, and Ukrainian) immigrants, the German element in Paraná was enlarged by the arrival of *Wolgadeutsche* and *Schwartzmeerdeutsche* from Russia, beginning in 1877. Many of these Germans from Russia were Mennonite pacifists fleeing conscription into the Russian army. Accustomed to the rich soils and open spaces of the Russian steppes, many farmers among them settled on the *campos*, the grasslands of the plateau, where they tried, without much success, to raise wheat. As in the United States, the Germans from Russia sought to establish colonies that were exclusively Mennonite, Evangelical, Lutheran, or Catholic. Many of these early settlers experienced severe problems, causing a strong emigration across the western border into Argentina and Paraguay. In general, however, the Germans in Paraná were either concentrated in the areas of Curitiba and Ponta Grossa or were widely scattered across the state. More urban than rural and always a small minority in this state, the Germans tended to assimilate more rapidly here than they did in Santa Catarina or Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>28</sup>

#### OTHER GERMAN COLONIES IN BRAZIL

Compared with the huge settlements in the southern states, other German colonies in Brazil were numerically insignificant. There were clusters of German immigrants in the states of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, and even as far north as Bahia and Per-

28. Wilhelm Fugmann, *Die Deutschen in Paraná: Das deutsche Jahrhundertbuch* (Curitiba, 1929), 3–33; Werner Aulich, *Paraná und die Deutschen: Versuch einer charakterologischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Curitiba, 1953); Friedrich W. Brepohl and Wilhelm Fugmann, *Die Wolgadeutschen im brasilianischen Staate Paraná* (Stuttgart, 1927); Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 37–39; Altiva Pilatti Balhana and Cecilia Maria Westphalen, “O Censo dos Alemães do Paraná em 1917,” *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, XIII (1976), 404–19; Joseph W. Fretz, *Immigrant Group Settlements in Paraguay* (North Newton, Kan., 1962).

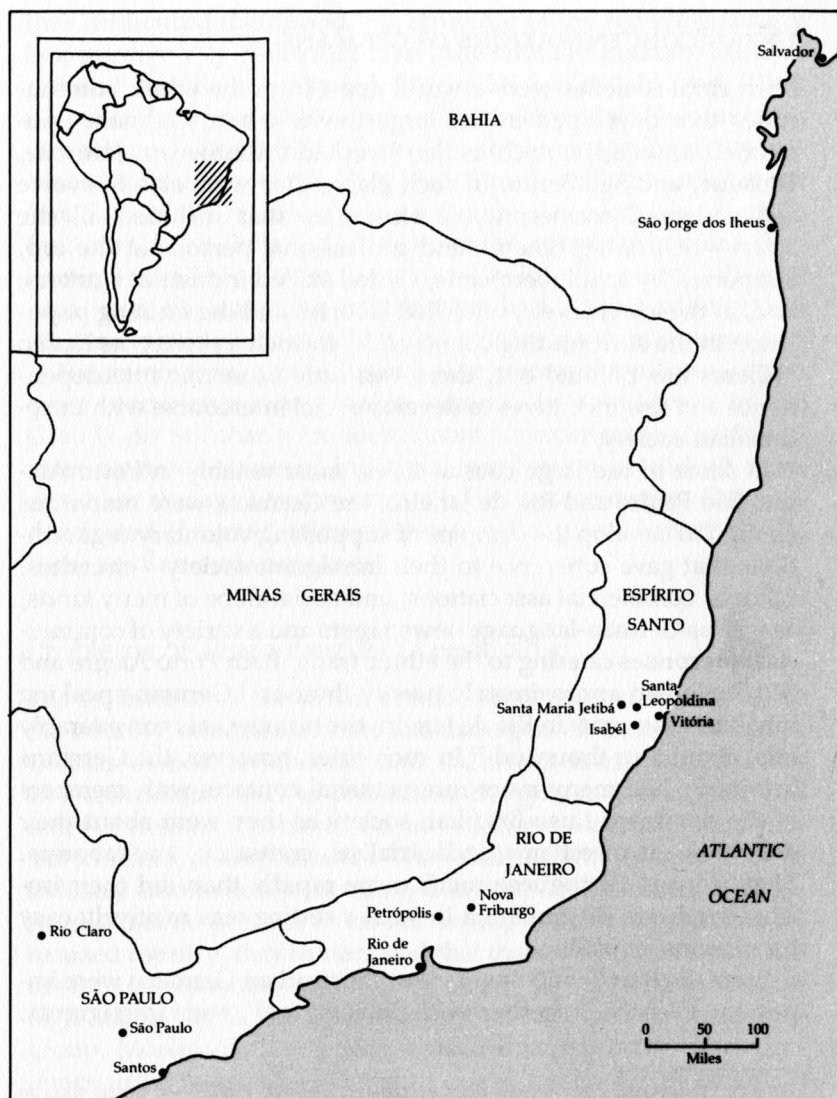
nambuco, but in most places their numbers were small, except in the city of São Paulo. They were usually so mixed with immigrants from other countries that they usually failed to achieve a strong identity in any given locality.

Espírito Santo, a small mountainous state located on the coast northeast of Rio de Janeiro, provides an important exception. Here the German-speaking people numbered seventeen or eighteen thousand in 1914, according to one estimate. Most were farmers living in isolated areas and practicing a primitive agriculture. Few were engaged in commerce or industry. Except for their churches, the Espírito Santo Germans and their descendants were unable to create the complex organizational structures typical of their compatriots in the southern states.<sup>29</sup>

Most German immigrants avoided the huge coffee plantations of São Paulo and the other states of the middle region. There were some, of course, who tried to operate under the prevailing *parceria* system, as, for example, at Rio Claro. A few were successful; after several years of sharecropping, they acquired the means to settle elsewhere. One of the largest coffee planters of São Paulo in the pre-World War I period was Francisco Schmidt, who immigrated from Germany as a youth, amassed one fortune as a coffee merchant, and made another as a planter. By 1914 his trees numbered in the millions and his agricultural employees in the thousands.<sup>30</sup>

29. Ernst Wagemann, "Das Deutschtum in Südamerika. II. Die deutschen Kolonisten in den tropischen Urwäldern Brasiliens," *Deutsche Rundschau*, CLXIII (1915), 162 and *passim*; see also Ernst Wagemann, *Die deutschen Kolonisten im brasilianischen Staate Espírito Santo*, Schriften des Vereins für Sozialpolitik, Vol. CXLVII, pt. 5 (Munich and Leipzig: 1915), 1–151. A translation into Portuguese, *A colonização alemã no Espírito Santo* (Rio de Janeiro, 1949), was also published serially in *Boletim Geográfico*, VI (1948–49). Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 50–53. For a folkloric study of the Espírito Santo Germans, see Renato José Costa Pacheco, "Assimilação de alemães no Espírito Santo," *Sociologia*, XVI (June, 1954), 183–201; Renato José Costa Pacheco, "Colonos alemães no Espírito Santo: Progresso ou estagnação?" in *I. Colóquio*, 239–45. This volume also contains two studies of German communities in Pernambuco.

30. Warren Dean, *Rio Claro: A Brazilian Plantation System, 1820–1920* (Stanford, Calif., 1976), 92–104; Joseph L. Love, *São Paulo in the Brazilian Federation, 1889–1937* (Stanford, Calif., 1980), 49, 79, 203; Gilberto Freyre, *New World in the Tropics: The Culture of Modern Brazil* (New York, 1966), 131; "Die grösste Kaffeeplantage der Welt," in *Uhle's Kalender für das Jahr 1918* (Rio de Janeiro and Curitiba, [1917]),



**Map 2.** Nineteenth-century German settlement in the coastal regions of Brazil from São Paulo to Salvador (Bahia). Names of cities and towns are restricted to those mentioned in the text.



### URBAN CONCENTRATIONS OF GERMANS

Such rural societies were a world apart from the ethnic communities that developed in the large towns where Germans constituted a majority, such as São Leopoldo, Blumenau, Joinville, Brusque, and São Bento. In such places they were able to evolve self-contained socioeconomic structures that included all the strata—rich entrepreneurs and professional persons at the top, supported by small merchants, clerks, skilled industrial workers, and, at the lower levels, unskilled laborers and the farming population in the surrounding countryside. In such a society, as Emílio Willems has pointed out, there was little economic interdependence and few incentives to develop social intercourse with Luso-Brazilian society.<sup>31</sup>

In some of the large coastal cities, most notably in Porto Alegre, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro, the Germans were numerous enough to develop the complex of supporting voluntary organizations that gave coherence to their immigrant society—churches, schools, commercial associations, and social clubs of many kinds, as well as German-language newspapers and a variety of commercial enterprises catering to the ethnic trade. Both Porto Alegre and São Paulo had approximately twenty thousand German-speaking inhabitants in 1920; in Rio de Janeiro the number was considerably less, about four thousand.<sup>32</sup> In such cities, however, the Germans inevitably had many more interpersonal contacts with members of the dominant Luso-Brazilian society as they went about their daily tasks as merchants, industrialists, craftsmen, and laborers. They learned Portuguese much more rapidly than did their isolated brethren. Assimilation in such a setting was relatively easy for persons so inclined.

From the Brazilian point of view, these urban Germans were important because, together with Italians and other immigrants,

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155–57; Oberacker, *Der deutsche Beitrag*, 420–21; Thomas Holloway, *Immigrants on the Land: Coffee and Society in São Paulo, 1886–1934* (Chapel Hill, 1980), 139.

31. Siegfried Endress, *Blumenau: Werden und Wesen einer deutschbrasilianischen Landschaft* (Tübingen, 1938); Emílio Willems, "Some Aspects of Cultural Conflict and Acculturation in Southern Rural Brazil," *Rural Sociology*, VII (1942), 379.

32. Kloss, *Statistisches Handbuch*, 66; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 49.

they influenced the developing structure of the receiving society in a positive way. Gilberto Freyre, the eminent Brazilian sociologist and historian, has noted that traditionalist "old stock" Brazilians of the upper classes preferred intellectual and bureaucratic pursuits and often felt that they were above competing in the materialistic business world. They were thus unwilling to assume the functions of the middle class in a dynamic, modernizing society. By contrast, the skills and attitudes of the upwardly mobile urban immigrants allowed them to move easily into the breach, thereby expanding the emerging middle class and adding validity and prestige to middle-class values through their accomplishments.<sup>33</sup>

The commercial and industrial elite among the urban German group experienced remarkable success. In 1915, firms in Rio Grande do Sul that were identifiably German accounted for almost as much value of industrial production as did all firms owned or managed by persons with Portuguese names. Germans dominated the production of shoes, nails, glass, leather goods, hats, candles, and chocolate.<sup>34</sup>

### Problems of Teuto-Brazilian Leadership

The leadership of the urban ethnic subsocieties naturally fell to the wealthy, educated owners and managers of Teuto-Brazilian or German-owned commercial and industrial firms; to engineers and technicians; and to prominent clergymen, journalists, and other professional persons. Business leaders especially were subject to strong cross pressures. Their daily activity in commerce or industry automatically encouraged rapid assimilation, and, as upwardly mobile persons in an increasingly industrialized and urbanized country, they understood that the achievement and maintenance of economic, social, and political power depended upon high status within the larger society, not within the ethnic subgroup. Moreover, they readily sensed that psychological dependence upon their fellow Germans could inhibit advancement. It

33. Freyre, *New World in the Tropics*, 89–90, 186; Gilberto Freyre, *Order and Progress: Brazil from Monarchy to Republic*, ed. and trans. Rod W. Horton (New York, 1970), 251.

34. Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 391–92.

could, in fact, become a source of social deprivation. At the same time, as Emílio Willems has observed, such persons were expected by their ethnic subsociety to defend the group interest against the dominant native society. Thus, if they exercised leadership among their fellow Germans, they could hinder their own upward movement within the larger social structure; if they failed to defend their ethnic group interest, they would naturally lose prestige and status within the subsociety.<sup>35</sup> The alternative chosen by persons who were thus trapped depended, of course, on unique circumstances and individual social and psychological needs.

For leaders such as clergymen, whose ties with the German subsociety were personally intimate, and for those whose interests were economically intertwined with the group, such as publishers of German-language newspapers, the dilemma scarcely existed. For them, the maintenance of the German language, cultural traditions, and various ethnic institutions and associations was essential. Inevitably they became the champions of immigrant ethnocentrism. Because they controlled the pulpits, the editorial columns, and the speakers' rostrums, their views were usually identified by the host society as those of the entire group.

### Reichsdeutsche

The attitudes of the clergy resembled those of many Reichsdeutsche—subjects of the German kaiser—who disdained Brazilian citizenship. Many in this group were educated, middle-class persons. Not a few were associated with German firms in Brazil and displayed the attitudes of sojourners in a strange land who looked forward to the day when they could return to their mother country. Some were excessively proud of their German culture, which, they were convinced, was certainly superior to Brazilian. Karl von Koseritz, a talented refugee of the revolutions of 1848 who became an outstanding leader of the Germans in the southern provinces, complained bitterly about the Rio de Janeiro

35. Emílio Willems, "Immigrants and Their Assimilation in Brazil," in T. Lynn Smith and Alexander Marchant (eds.), *Brazil: Portrait of Half a Continent* (1951; rpr. Westport, Conn., 1972), 214.



Karl von Koseritz, a refugee of the revolutions of 1848 in Germany. He became a leading figure among the German Brazilians of the nineteenth century.

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Germans, many of whom were Reichsdeutsche. They know nothing of the Germans in Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina, he said, and they cared even less; they involved themselves in Brazilian affairs only insofar as such matters impinged upon their immediate economic interests; they were concerned chiefly with circumstances in Germany and with international politics as it affected commerce. According to Koseritz, the Rio Germans had almost nothing in common with the Germans of the south, who, he asserted, were in Brazil to stay; they became naturalized and participated in the political life of the state, won economic influence, and earned the respect of Luso-Brazilians.<sup>36</sup>

Although Koseritz drew his lines rather too sharply, he was at least partly correct in his analysis of the urban Germans in comparison to the settlers of the *Urwald*. It is unlikely, however, that Koseritz understood the extent to which both groups were merely responding in their own way to radically different physical and social circumstances.

## Comparisons with the United States

The urban and rural environments of Brazil were different not only from each other but even more from what the immigrants would have encountered in the United States, had they chosen to go there.<sup>37</sup> Located in temperate latitudes, the United States offered a physical setting that was similar to what the immigrants had known in Germany. But most of Brazil is in the tropics; inevitably most Germans were attracted to the subtropical provinces of the south where the differences, sharp though they were, seemed less pronounced. In some respects, the German districts of Rio Grande do Sul resemble the hill country of central Texas, which also had many Germans among its earliest settlers.

36. Koseritz, *Bilder aus Brasilien*, 137–38; Carlos H. Oberacker, Jr., *Carlos von Koseritz* (São Paulo, 1961), 52; Porto, *Die deutsche Arbeit*, 198–201.

37. The best introduction to the history of Germans in the United States is the brilliant essay, "The Germans," by Kathleen N. Conzen, in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 405–25. But see also LaVern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (Boston, 1976); and Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I* (DeKalb, Ill., 1974), 27–81.

There were other differences as well. Americans were accustomed to German immigrants in ways Brazilians were not. Although both the American and the Brazilian Germans emigrated from the same parts of Germany and often for the same reasons, America had received a substantial contingent in the colonial period who were well assimilated into American society by the time the mass movement in the nineteenth century got under way.

Numerically the German-Brazilian immigration was only a small fraction—less than a twentieth—of the 5.5 million Germans who streamed to the United States between 1820 and 1920. But in Brazil the Germans clustered in isolated rural colonies that easily and naturally fostered the retention of immigrant language and culture. It is true that in the United States, Germans were also strongly attracted to farming; only Scandinavians exceeded them in this respect. But it is also true that they were more urban than was the American population generally in the nineteenth century and much more so than were the German Brazilians, who, despite their relatively small numbers, became a sharply defined society within society and retained an identity as a separate people that was much stronger than what was typical of Germans in the United States.

The exclusive, rural concentrations of German immigrants were at least partly the consequence of government policies. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the Brazilian government pursued policies aimed at attracting immigrants. Subsidies were granted; transportation costs were sometimes paid; settlements were founded and administered by the government; and the image of Brazil as a desirable place for immigrants was deliberately developed. The United States government, by contrast, did nothing directly to promote immigration. Throughout much of the century, it was an unrestricted activity, neither aided nor hindered. Moreover, while American land policy worked against the creation of exclusive settlements, Brazilian policy had the effect of encouraging it, especially in isolated areas.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the *Strassendorf* mode of settlement was common in Brazil, especially Rio Grande do Sul, but was rarely even attempted in the United States,

38. Browne, "Government Immigration Policy," 217–47.

so powerful were the effects of the American laws governing the alienation of public land.

Brazilian conditions generally combined to slow the process whereby German immigrants were absorbed into the receiving society. While they were forced to adapt to the subtropical environment, their isolation enhanced their capacity to withstand other forms of assimilation. Germans in the United States, however, seemed less subject to the physical environment, but more vulnerable to the assimilative power of the social environment. Thus, the cultural landscape of the German districts in southern Brazil was often distinctive, whereas in the United States physical marks of German culture were usually less evident, except perhaps to the practiced eye.<sup>39</sup>

Questions about the pattern of settlement—when and why immigrants chose to come to a new land, where they settled, and what the characteristics of their new physical and social environments were—are first steps toward understanding the behavior of an immigrant group. But there are other equally important questions to pursue if their history is to be understood. One must ask who the immigrants were in terms of wealth, education, occupation, and religion in comparison with members of the receiving society; what kinds of institutions they succeeded in creating and how well they sustained immigrant society and culture; what sort of assimilation patterns emerged; and what variations in behavior may be discerned among the internal elements of the group. In short, their social structure also must be analyzed.<sup>40</sup>

39. Cf. Charles van Ravenswaay, *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri* (Columbia, Mo., 1977); and Russel L. Gerlach, *Immigrants in the Ozarks: A Study in Ethnic Geography* (Columbia, Mo., 1976), 59–131.

40. Except for the work of Jean Roche and Emilio Willems, systematic research into such questions is virtually nonexistent.

## Teuto-Brazilian Social and Cultural Institutions

**G**ERMAN IMMIGRANTS built a new society in Brazil that was different not only from the life they had known in Germany but also from the established Luso-Brazilian society. Over a period of nearly a century they had developed a fairly distinctive ethnic community of nearly 400,000 persons, mostly Brazilian-born and German-speaking, infused with a strong sense of group identity and difference from other Brazilians, especially those of Portuguese antecedents. Under conditions of considerable adversity, they had adapted their agricultural practices; built churches, schools, and a complex of ethnic organizations; and had developed a substantial German-language press—all in a relatively high degree of isolation and with little help from others.

Most rural districts in which the Germans settled had the characteristics of a frontier area, even though nearby territories had been inhabited by Europeans many years earlier. Population density was relatively low in the German areas; most of the settlers were farmers and had spread out across the hilly, forested terrain. Despite this dispersion, they were able to found and maintain many of the auxiliary institutions that are customarily associated with effective cultural maintenance.

### The Role of the Churches

The institution most readily created in such a setting was the church. By all accounts, it played a central role in the history of the Germans in Brazil and in their assimilation. This is not to say



that every German immigrant was a practicing Christian or that the church was a pervasive influence in everyone's life—or even that everyone in a given colony was a member of one church or another. Yet the various churches, individually and collectively, performed social roles that were crucial to the life of the community. In many cases, especially in isolated areas, there were no other agencies, public or private, that could fulfill those roles effectively.<sup>1</sup>

The religious affiliation of the immigrants had always been a significant issue, in Brazil more so than in the United States. Catholicism had been the state religion, and at first Protestants were not welcome. As a central element in the development of Luso-Brazilian culture, the Catholic church played a role not unlike that of many Protestant denominations in the United States in early American history. Inevitably, the process of assimilation was more difficult for Protestants than it was for Catholic immigrants in Brazil. The government's opposition to Protestantism during the empire period, when most of the German colonies were established, unquestionably contributed to the self-imposed segregation of Protestant communities and fixed itself in their collective memories. Moreover, government schools were under the supervision of the Catholic church during this time. Emílio Willems has observed that religion drew a line of cultural demarcation between Catholics and Protestants among the Germans of Brazil. Differences in their philosophical conceptions and roles of behavior may be traced to the churches' differing hierarchies of values regarding law, government, and economic pursuits.<sup>2</sup>

Although the Protestants were a tiny minority in a great sea of Brazilian Catholics, they constituted a majority in most German-Brazilian communities. According to one estimate made in the early 1920s, 54 percent of the Germans in Rio Grande do Sul were Protestant, the remainder Catholic. Among individual governmental units (*municípios*, comparable to counties in the United States), there was a great range. For example, German Protestants

1. Karl Heinrich Oberacker, [Sr.], *Im Sonnenland Brasilien: Bilder und Gestalten. Erlebnisse aus Brasilien* (Karlsruhe, 1932), 270; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 509. For a brief survey, see Oberacker, "Die Deutschen in Brasilien," 238–44. Cf. Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 14.

2. Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 516; Willems, *A aculturação dos alemães no Brasil*, 463.

were estimated at 63 percent in Porto Alegre, 56 percent in São Leopoldo, 84 percent in Cruz Alta, and 90 percent in São Lourenço. Among the predominantly Catholic German communities were São Luíz at 88 percent, Montenegro and Passo Fundo at 68 percent, and Lageado at 62 percent. The scattered character of the population is indicated by the number of stations served in individual parishes. For example, in the *município* of Lageado, three Catholic parishes served 13,500 persons in twenty-six stations, and four Evangelical parishes served 6,534 persons in twenty-two stations. Within a given *município*, there could be much variation. The settlers of one valley might be almost entirely Protestant; just a few miles away a neighboring nucleus could be exclusively Catholic.<sup>3</sup>

The conditions surrounding Catholic and Protestant churches alike were primitive, especially in the early years. If the colonists wanted a church, they had to provide it for themselves. At first they worshiped in family groups in homes; later, small and often crude chapels were erected. Catholics were served occasionally by circuit-riding priests, but many of these clergymen were ignorant of the German language. It sometimes happened that a person would appear in a colony, claiming to be a clergyman, and then turn out to be a rogue who was exploiting the wretched circumstances of the people for his own personal advantage.<sup>4</sup> In most cases, small local groups were served effectively by dedicated laymen. Such informal arrangements were more easily made by Protestants than by Catholics, who permitted no one but a priest to celebrate the mass, to baptize, and to consecrate marriages.

If the colonists in the *Urwald* wanted their children to receive the rudiments of an education, they had to establish their own schools, because the state and federal governments were usually unable or unwilling to establish schools in the German districts. The immigrants did the only thing they could under the circumstances: they recreated to the best of their ability what they remembered of their village schools in Germany. Thus, after a local parish had been formed and the services of a bona fide clergyman

3. Souza, "Uma comunidade Teuto-Brasileira," 196–99; *Hundert Jahre Deutschland in Rio Grande do Sul, 1824–1924* (Porto Alegre, 1924), 448, 496. Cf. Silva, *História de Blumenau*, 268–94, and see table (p. 136).

4. Such impostors were known as *Pseudopfarren*. See Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 368–69.

obtained, they would start a school, usually with the pastor as the only teacher. The church school was in effect the public school; there was no alternative. In Dois Irmãos, for example, Evangelical clergymen served as the teachers of the school from 1868 to 1938—a seventy-year period in which the education of the young in the community was entirely in the hands of the church. Inevitably the language of instruction and of the textbooks and other teaching material in this school was German. Compared to modern schools or to schools in Germany at that time, these were miserable affairs, but they were better than nothing.<sup>5</sup>

### The Catholic Church

As a general rule, the Catholics among the German Brazilians were less exclusive or separatistic and less self-conscious than were the Protestants. The Catholics shared the faith of the vast majority of Brazilians; they were served by a church that, in fact as well as in name, was universal. Ancient as Christianity itself, the church embraced millions of adherents in many countries and ministered in many tongues. While it may be argued that Catholicism was an intimate part of the culture of countries with Latinate languages, such as Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal, it served Germans, Poles, Irish, and many others equally well. The Catholic church, in other words, was not a ready agency for the perpetuation of specific ethnocultural ideals. Consequently the barriers separating Catholic Germans from Luso-Brazilian society were not as formidable as were those surrounding the Protestants. The Catholics were considerably closer to the Brazilian core culture than were the Protestants.

The multinational character of the Catholic church was especially apparent in the clergy. During most of the early period the few Catholic priests who ventured into the *Urwald* were ordinarily not German. The Catholics of Dois Irmãos, for example, were served for two decades by circuit-riding priests from other areas; their first resident pastor, who came to the community in 1848, was a Pole. In those days, priests read the mass in Latin, but other ministrations, limited and inadequate though they may have been,

5. Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 133–46; Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 19; Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 179.

were frequently in Portuguese, and thus, in effect, clerics advanced the linguistic acculturation of the people. In the towns the Catholic parishes were often multi-ethnic, serving Luso-Brazilians, Italians, Spanish, Germans, and Poles; under such circumstances, Portuguese was used in church and school as the only language common to all. There were, of course, exclusively German parishes also, especially later in the century, served in most cases by German-born and German-trained clergy. Even in those churches, however, the priests would often preach first in Portuguese and then repeat their message in German.<sup>6</sup>

In general, the record of the German priests in Brazil was impressive. By the end of the century, German Catholic clergymen (and Italian as well) far outnumbered those of Portuguese origins in Rio Grande do Sul. A few years later, a priest named Johann Becker, who had come to Brazil from Germany as a child, was consecrated as archbishop of Porto Alegre. However, there was no distinctively German seminary for the training of priests in Brazil. A Jesuit seminary had been established in São Leopoldo, but Portuguese was the language of instruction there.<sup>7</sup>

It is clear that among most German Catholics of Brazil, the church came first and ethnicity second. Nevertheless, they founded distinctively ethnoreligious institutions in the early part of the twentieth-century, including an orphanage, a home for the aged, and, later, a school for the training of teachers of German Catholic schools, and they established a number of German-language publications.<sup>8</sup> Even though most German Catholics lived in close proximity to German Protestants, they tended to remain separate and often felt a closer bond with fellow Catholics of other ethnic groups than with their German Protestant neighbors.<sup>9</sup>

6. Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 19; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 520, 524; Oberacker, *Die volkspolitische Lage*, 58; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 38.

7. Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 195; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 521; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 48; Oberacker, *Die volkspolitische Lage*, 58.

8. Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 192–94; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 522; Oberacker, *Die volkspolitische Lage*, 59.

9. Souza, "Uma comunidade Teuto-Brasileira," 197. The division between Catholic and Protestant antedates their arrival in Brazil by three centuries. Yet their Brazilian experience had the effect of intensifying antipathies, as during the Farroupilha Revolt, or Farrapenkrieg, as the Germans called it. According to one sec-

## Protestant Denominations

For half a century, dozens of German Protestant congregations in southern Brazil sustained their independence and pursued their goals as best they could.<sup>10</sup> But the task was greater than their resources. In the 1880s, individual congregations began to develop closer ties with various Protestant missionary societies in Germany. The most important of these was the Gustav-Adolf Verein, which supported congregations of German Protestants anywhere outside Germany with contributions for the construction of church buildings and schools and for various social programs. Meanwhile, the Rheinische Missions Gesellschaft of Barmen sent pastors and teachers to serve in Brazilian parishes.<sup>11</sup>

Unlike their counterparts in the United States, Brazilian Protestants had been unable for decades to unite individual congregations into synods for the accomplishment of larger goals. No seminaries or colleges had been founded, nor was there any significant measure of doctrinal unity. Gradually a network developed among the widely dispersed Protestant clergymen, primarily because of efforts of Dr. Hermann Borchard, a pastor sent to Brazil by the Prussian state church in 1864. It was not until 1886, however, that the German Evangelical Synod of Rio Grande do Sul was founded under the leadership of Dr. Wilhelm Rotermund, pastor of the Evangelical congregation in São Leopoldo. Patterned on the North American synodical structure in which congregational autonomy was not surrendered to the central church body, the Riograndenser Synod, as it was usually called, quickly became the largest German Protestant organization in Brazil.<sup>12</sup> In Santa Catarina a

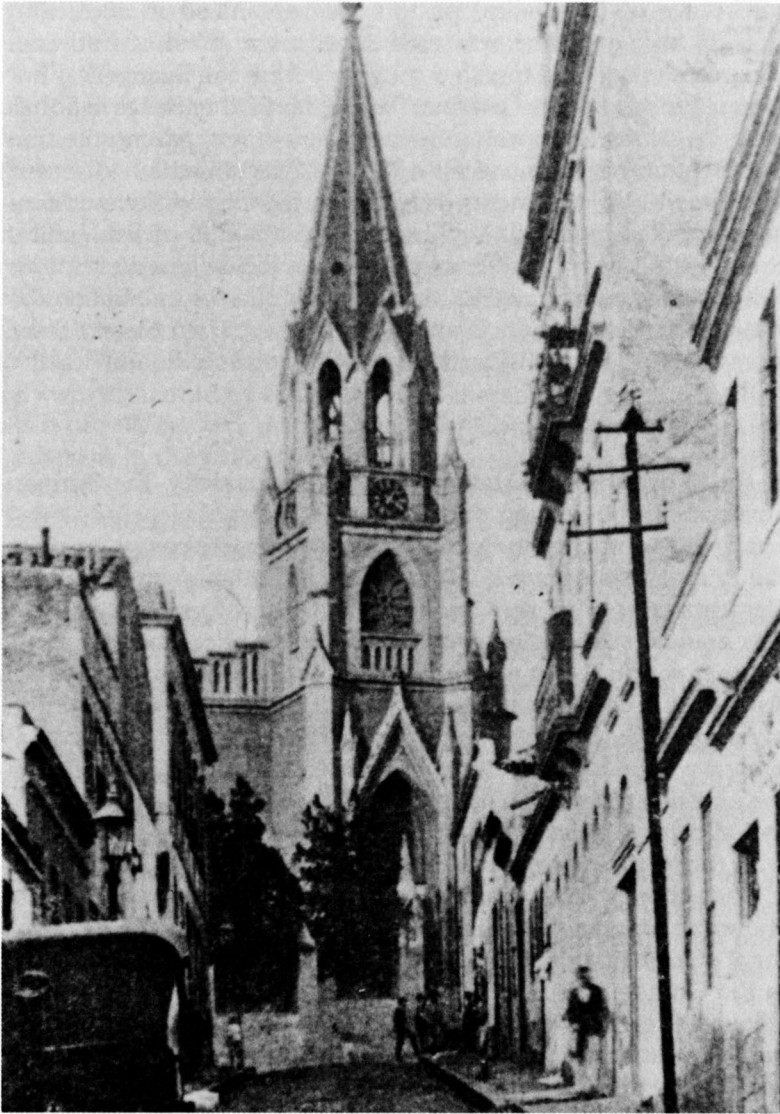
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ondary source, this conflict, which raged in Rio Grande do Sul from 1835 to 1845, engulfed German settlers and tended to range Protestants against Catholics. Gruesome tales of brutality and bitter obstinacy were then passed on to younger generations. Oskar Canstatt, *Brasilien: Land und Leute* (Berlin, 1877), 413.

10. Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 51–176; Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLb," 94–95, 102–103.

11. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLb," 97–101; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 190; Walter Mummelthey, "Santa Catarina," in Bruno Geissler (ed.), *Die Kulturbedeutung der deutschen evangelischen Kirche in Brasilien* (Leipzig, 1922), 12–23.

12. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLb," 109–15; Erich Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund: Ein Kampf um Recht und Richtung des Evangelischen Deutschtums in Südbrasilien* (São Leopoldo, 1936); Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 195–235.



The German Evangelical church in Porto Alegre. This imposing structure was not typical of Protestant church buildings, most of which were of more modest proportions. In terms of its architectural design, it might just as well have been built in Germany or the United States.

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conference of Evangelical pastors was organized in 1896, and later, in 1911, a synod was established. A number of Lutheran congregations joined together in 1905 to form the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Santa Catarina, Paraná, and Other States in South America. North American influence was again apparent; the first president of this body was Otto Kuhr, a German who had served as a circuit-riding Lutheran preacher in the United States before he was called to Brazil. Finally, in 1913, a synod of Evangelical congregations was organized in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, and Minas Gerais. In contrast to the theological differences between Lutherans and Evangelicals in the United States, there were relatively few between these two Protestant groups in Brazil.<sup>13</sup>

### Protestant Links with Germany

In the midst of this flurry of organizational activity, the German government took a step that eventually linked it closely to most Evangelical churches in Brazil. By means of a law passed in 1900, the Prussian state church (an amalgam of Lutheran and Calvinist elements created in 1819 and known as the Evangelical church) was granted supervision over German Evangelical congregations in other countries. In return for subsidies and other forms of assistance, the churches of the German diaspora were to accept the oversight of the Evangelischen Oberkirchenrat in Berlin. It was entirely a voluntary proposition, and the German Brazilians debated the question at length. The result was that many individual Evangelical congregations, though not the synods, accepted affiliation with the state church of Prussia.<sup>14</sup>

Undoubtedly this organizational bond with the Prussian state church and German bureaucracy helped to stimulate the development of auxiliary institutions in the Evangelical church, especially in Rio Grande do Sul. Before long, the Riograndenser Synod developed a teachers association that had its own professional journal and founded a teachers college with help from Germany. An association of local women's societies was established and periodicals were published for the laity. Because of the minority status

13. Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 344–52; Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLB," 116–20. Cf. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 37–39.

14. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLB," 140–43; "Stimmen aus Kirche und Schule," São Leopoldo *Sonntags-Beilage der Deutschen-Post*, September 28, 1924.

of Protestantism in Catholic Brazil, the Evangelical churches had always been closely identified with the pursuit of ethnocultural ideals. The new ties with Germany sealed this relationship, and the Riograndenser Synod became, in effect, the strongest agency for the promulgation of cultural chauvinism in Brazil. Almost all the pastors were now supplied, directly or indirectly, by the Prussian church; schools were subsidized by the German government; and pastors, teachers, and their families became in some measure representatives of Germany and German culture in Brazil.<sup>15</sup>

The tendency of the Evangelical church and its auxiliary agencies to serve as defenders of *Deutschtum* (a term they understood to mean their ethnocultural heritage of language, custom, and belief) was enhanced by the ecumenical character of the church. Instead of holding to a distinctive or particular theology, as many Lutherans in the United States did, the Evangelicals sought to include all German Protestants.<sup>16</sup> The desire to emphasize *Deutschtum* now became their common denominator.

The Reverend Martin Braunschweig, who was provost during the pre-World War I years, later wrote that the German Evangelical church was by far the strongest and most comprehensive agency for maintaining the German language and culture in Brazil and argued that the tie with German culture was vital for the church: "The German Evangelical church can live only so long as German *Volkstum* lives in Brazil." Max Dedekind, an Evangelical pastor in Brazil, wrote that the Germans in Brazil wanted to remain German and especially to retain the German language in their churches and schools. Even though the Brazilian government had given them no assistance, he continued, the Germans would nevertheless remain loyal and true citizens, but within the context of German cultural work. Another Evangelical pastor approached the outer limits of chauvinism in his defense of the cultural bond:

Our German Evangelical Church . . . regards its German cultural heritage as a God-given gift to be held in honor and nourished in church and school. Among the gifts the founders brought with them from

15. Emílio Willems, "Assimilation of German Immigrants in Brazil," *Sociology and Social Research*, XXV (1940), 128; Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer*, 93; Oberacker, *Die volkspolitische Lage*, 53.

16. Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 187-91; Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 39.



Germany are the deeply German conception of the Gospel, the German church services, the German language, and the rich treasures of art, science, and theology. Evangelical beliefs and German nationalism have been intimately bonded since Luther's times; they cannot be separated without injury. The German Evangelical Church in Brazil therefore wears its German dress consciously and proudly. . . . It can fill its responsibility only when it is consciously a German national church.

Most leaders of the Evangelical synods in Brazil seemed to agree that the relationship with the Prussian state church served to strengthen, as one of them expressed it, "the preservation of the German language, manners, and customs."<sup>17</sup>

### Lutheran Links with the United States

In their emphasis on the cultural bond with Germany, the Evangelical pastors were diametrically opposed to the position taken by German-speaking missionaries from the United States who were sent to serve German Brazilians by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, a conservative Lutheran body then known as the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. Even though the Brazilian branch of the "Missouri Synod" was small in comparison with the Riograndenser Synod, it was perceived as a major threat by the Evangelical leaders, and they denounced it vehemently because of its stance on language and culture.

In the United States the Missouri Synod had always promoted the maintenance of the German language and culture as a means to sustain its theological conservatism. Ever since its founding in 1845, it had stressed the importance of parish schools and synodical colleges and seminaries for the training of native pastors and teachers. But in Brazil this position underwent a remarkable transformation, beginning in 1899, when the first Missouri Synod missionary arrived in Rio Grande do Sul. Offering itself as an alternative to the Evangelical synods and their close nationalistic

17. Martin Braunschweig, "Die brasilianische Diaspora und die neue Zeit," in Geissler (ed.), *Die Kulturbedeutung*, 46; Max Dedekind, *Deutschtum und Evangelium in Brasilien* (Leipzig, 1929), 37, 45; Wilhelm Teschendorf, "Mittel-Brasilien," in Geissler (ed.), *Die Kulturbedeutung*, 11. For other expressions of *Deutschtumspolitik*, see Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 187–91; and Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 270 and *passim*.

ties with Germany, the Missouri Synod stressed the progressive abandonment of the German language and the gradual adoption of Portuguese, especially in the cities. Emphasizing its strong confessional orientation in contrast to the ecumenism of the Evangelicals, it grew rapidly, and by 1920, there were thirty-one Missouri Synod pastors serving sixteen thousand adherents. It quickly established a small seminary in Porto Alegre for the training of a native clergy; there, in a monthly periodical, Professor Johann Kunstmann articulated his church's position.<sup>18</sup> During the early decades of the century, however, most of the Missouri Synod pastors were American-born and trained. Despite the importance they placed on adopting Portuguese, few acquired a skillful command of the language in those early years, and they continued to minister to their people in the German language.

Few Protestant churches other than the Evangelical and Lutheran existed among the Germans of Brazil in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A number of German-Russian Mennonite congregations had been founded, particularly in Paraná. Small clusters of the German Baptists and Adventists could be found here and there—perhaps a dozen or more congregations, especially in Rio Grande do Sul—but they were relatively unimportant. Several North American denominations established missions in Brazil in the early years before World War I. Presbyterians were the most numerous, followed by the Baptists. Congregationalists, Methodists, and Episcopalians were also present, but among these denominations, only the Baptist group included a large number of Germans.<sup>19</sup>

18. Carlos H. Warth, "Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Brasiliens," in Fischer and Jahn (eds.), *Es begann am Rio dos Sinos*, 75–80; *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 440–42, 445, 492–93, 496; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 379–83; Dedekind, *Deutschtum und Evangelium*, 45; Oberacker, *Die volkspolitische Lage*, 59; Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer*, 94; Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 191–92; Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 141–42. For a detailed exposition of the Missouri Synod's position, see Johann Kunstmann, "Vom Deutschtum der Missourier," *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt für Süd-Amerika*, XIV (May 1, August 15, September 1, 1917), 114–16, 121–24, 130–34. The annual report of the synod's seminary in Porto Alegre shows that Portuguese was taught in every class. See *Kirchenblatt*, XIV (January 1, 1917).

19. Koseritz' *Deutscher Volkskalender für Brasilien auf das Jahr 1917* (Porto Alegre, [1916]); *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 448; Aulich, *Paraná und die Deutschen*; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 383.

## Unchurched Teuto-Brazilians

Although church historians might create the impression that all German Brazilians were members of one denomination or another, this certainly was not the case, especially in the cities, where diversity rather than homogeneity was the typical pattern. It is all but impossible to calculate the proportion of persons who ignored or opposed the churches and their domination of German immigrant society. No doubt some people who were counted as members in fact participated only rarely in the church's functions. Nonmembers were proportionately more numerous among those immigrants who were better educated and more highly skilled in the crafts and professions. Some, like Karl von Koseritz, were strong advocates of cultural maintenance and, at the same time, resolutely anticlerical.<sup>20</sup> Others, for individual psychological and social reasons, were simply eager to assimilate as rapidly as possible into Brazilian society. They learned Portuguese quickly, tended to marry outside the group, and divested themselves of the obvious marks of their German ethnicity. Because they wanted to disappear as Germans, they left few traces.<sup>21</sup>

Such rapid assimilators were rare enough in the solidly German districts, but in the marginal areas and in the large cities they were not uncommon. Mark Jefferson, an American geographer who traveled through southern Brazil in 1918, observed that in Santa Maria, located at the western end of the German district in Rio Grande do Sul, a high level of linguistic and marital assimilation had occurred; the architecture revealed no German influence and the German language was not heard on the streets and in public places.<sup>22</sup> In large cities such as Porto Alegre and São Paulo, where the Germans were a small minority, there were greater op-

20. The freethinking Koseritz was especially opposed to clerical influence. A former student at the University of Heidelberg, he fled to Brazil after the unsuccessful revolution of 1848, served in the Brazilian army against the Argentine dictator Manuel Rosas, and then settled in Rio Grande do Sul, first in Pelotas and later in Porto Alegre, where he was unusually influential as a journalist and political leader. In several respects his career bears a resemblance to that of Carl Schurz in the United States. See Oberacker, *Carlos von Koseritz*. Cf. Hans Trefousse, *Carl Schurz: A Biography* (Knoxville, 1982).

21. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 30, 45.

22. Mark Jefferson, "Pictures from Southern Brazil," *Geographical Review*, XVI (1926), 521-47.

portunities for submersion into the mainstream. It is unlikely, however, that rapid assimilation was as common in Brazil as it was in the United States, where the German settlements were much less exclusive and the cultural differences between the German immigrants and the host society were not as great.

In contrast to the rapid assimilators, the anticlerical element constituted a strong force in support of German cultural maintenance, especially in the cities and larger towns. Many people were influenced by well-educated, articulate political refugees such as Koseritz, who felt that Brazilian *Deutschtum* was being enervated by a pervasive materialism and indifference to the German cultural heritage. Their remedy for what was in fact an entirely normal social process was to stimulate the formation of non-church-related voluntary associations, such as singing societies, marksmen's or rifle clubs, gymnastic organizations (*Turnvereine*), and the like.<sup>23</sup>

## Clubs and Societies

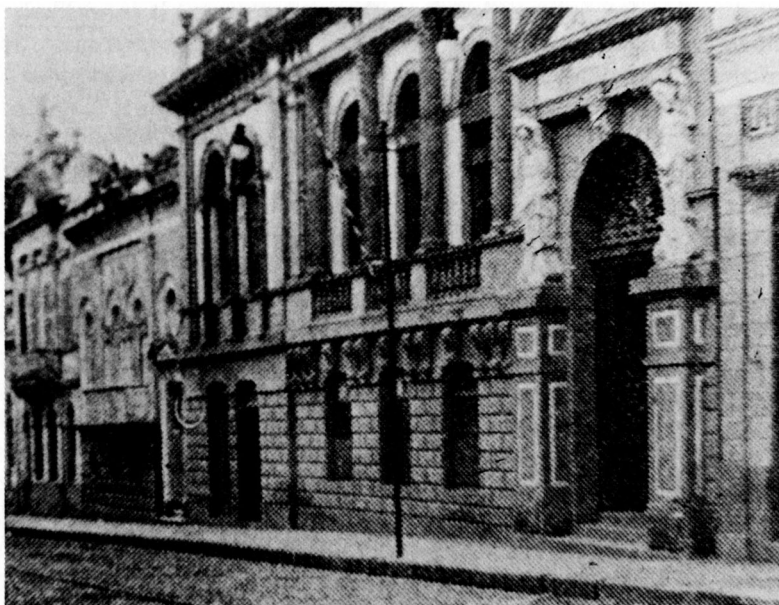
It must be said, however, that the various *Vereine* would have appeared even if there had been no Forty-eighters like Koseritz among the German immigrants. Societies were created wherever German Brazilians were numerous enough in one place to organize and maintain them. Thus they were most common in the cities and towns, such as Porto Alegre and Blumenau, but they could also be found in the *Pikaden* and *Strassendörfer* of Rio Grande do Sul. Dois Irmãos, for example, had a *Schützenverein* (rifle club) modeled directly on the German pattern, a *Hilfsverein* (charitable society), and a *Leseverein* (library association).<sup>24</sup>

Most of the German ethnic societies combined a variety of purposes. Some of the *Turnvereine*, for example, offered programs in singing, theater, and literature. Other organizations served purely social and recreational purposes—shooting, bowling, dancing, and card playing.<sup>25</sup> Still others, such as mutual benefit insurance

23. Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 124–30.

24. Souza, "Uma comunidade Teuto-Brasileira," 184; Seyferth, *A colonização alemã no vale do Itajaí-Mirim*, 89–94; Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 19–20. Cf. Silva, *História de Blumenau*, 242–55.

25. For a sociological study of bowling clubs in one community, see José Fraga Fachel, "Os grupos de bolão e os 'Kränzchen' em Santa Cruz do Sul," in *I. Colóquio*, 311–38.



The imposing clubhouse of the Germania Society in Porto Alegre as it appeared a year before its destruction in the anti-German riot of April 16, 1917

Reprinted from *Uhle's Kalender*: 1917

associations and commercial and professional organizations, added social activities to economic goals. One of the largest societies in Brazil was the Handwerker-Unterstützungs-Verein of Curitiba, Paraná, with nearly nineteen hundred members in 1913. Essentially a mutual benefit society for life and health insurance, it had a *Turnersektion* in addition to a variety of social and cultural functions. Like the smaller Deutscher Sängerbund of Curitiba, this *Verein* provided a clubhouse for its members. In Rio de Janeiro, the Germania Society, which had been founded in 1821, built a broad program around a nucleus of members in commerce. In Porto Alegre, a union of German *Vereine* maintained a hospital.<sup>26</sup>

26. Fugmann, *Die Deutschen in Paraná*, 100–105; Heinrich Hinden, *Deutsche und Deutscher Handel in Rio de Janeiro: Ein hundertjähriges Kulturbild zur Zentenar Feier der Gesellschaft "Germania," 1821–1921* (Rio de Janeiro, 1921); Fischer, "Geschichte der EKL B," 149.

Among the Germans both in Brazil and in the United States, anticlericalism was strongest in the *Turnvereine*, but other secular societies attracted substantial numbers of church members. The churches often tended to see the clubs as competitors and charitable purposes, but also for economic activities.<sup>27</sup> In general, however, the rivalry between the two types of organizations was not as keen in Brazil as it was in the United States.

In other instances, German associational activity transcended ethnicity. For example, the Beethoven Club of Rio de Janeiro, founded in 1881, was organized solely for the cultivation of German classical music; not all of its six hundred members were German. According to Koseritz, the club's annual concert was a great social event, held in the most luxurious hall in South America, and was attended by Emperor Pedro II and his family.<sup>28</sup>

## German Schools

In most respects, the associational activity (*Vereinsleben*) of the German Brazilians was similar to that of their ethnic cousins in the United States. A major difference, however, pertains to education. In Brazil, where for both cultural and economic reasons illiteracy was endemic, school societies (*Schulvereine*) were very common. In the United States, where literacy was standard among whites and a nearly universal public school system had evolved in the nineteenth century, such school societies were largely superfluous.

When the Germans first settled in southern Brazil, there were few tax-supported public schools, and none in the forested mountain area they chose as their new home. Few of the immigrants were well educated themselves, but they placed a high value on literacy. In the early years the fathers of families sometimes took turns teaching the children in the colony. Later, as the number of Evangelical pastors increased, the educational function was frequently shifted to the church, notably in Rio Grande do Sul. But in Santa Catarina, Paraná, and São Paulo, the schools were more often maintained by *Schulvereine*, especially among Protestants.<sup>29</sup>

27. Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer*, 102–103.

28. Koseritz, *Bilder aus Brasilien*, 294.

29. Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 19–20; Oberacker, "Die Deutschen in Brasilien," 233–35; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 174; Karl Fouquet, "Die

The parents would procure a building of some kind for use as a school and seek the services of a teacher, often a recent immigrant. His pay was paltry and his tenure short because he was likely to be looking for other, better-paying employment. Most of the schools consisted of only one classroom, and instruction was commonly limited to basic reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. Ordinarily, children would attend classes for no more than two or three years. Later in the nineteenth century, the curriculum in many schools was expanded to include the geography and history of Germany and Brazil. All instruction was in the German language, at least partly because few of the teachers, as recent immigrants, understood Portuguese.<sup>30</sup> Wretched though they were, these schools helped to raise the literacy rate in the German colonies high above the national average.

In Luso-Brazilian society, formal education was largely limited to the upper or wealthier classes. In districts where there were few German or Italian immigrants, as in the cattle-grazing *campanha*, illiteracy ran as high as 85 percent. As recently as 1920, only 24.5 percent of the Brazilian population was classified as literate. Rio Grande do Sul, with its numerous German and Italian immigrants, registered the highest rate of any state in the country with 38.8 percent, but in São Leopoldo *município*, the proportion soared to 62 percent, and among the Germans the figure was higher still. Gradually, the ruling classes in Brazil began to see public schools as potentially important agents for the assimilation of the *colonos* and that education was the responsibility of the state.<sup>31</sup>

But early efforts at public school education were not adequate.

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deutsch-brasilianische Schule, ein Werk der Selbsthilfe," in Gerhard Friesen and Walter Schatzberg (eds.), *The German Contribution to the Building of the Americas* (Hanover, N.H., 1977), 322; Mummelthey, "Santa Catarina," 16; Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer*, 86; Silva, *História de Blumenau*, 295–326. A particularly insightful study of the rural school is by Egon Schaden, "Aspectos históricos e sociológicos da escola rural Teuto-Brasileira," in *I. Colóquio*, 65–77.

30. Fouquet, "Die deutsch-brasilianische Schule," 321; Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLB," 135; Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 11.

31. Love, *Rio Grande do Sul*, 130; Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer*, 88; Artur H. Neiva and M. Diégues, Jr., "The Cultural Assimilation of Immigrants in Brazil," in W. D. Borrie (ed.), *The Cultural Integration of Immigrants* (Paris, 1959), 214.

A director of education in Rio Grande do Sul reported in 1879 that the German schools he had visited were excellently organized, well equipped, and well attended. The government schools, by contrast, were miserable affairs, entirely lacking in equipment and left in the hands of incompetent teachers. He recommended that in the German districts the government schools be closed. Some years later a German school society sought government assistance in adding to the faculty of its school a Brazilian teacher who was a specialist in teaching the Portuguese language and Brazilian history, geography, and literature. When the government failed to respond, the society successfully hired a teacher from Germany who had the desired competence. He served until the school was closed during World War I.<sup>32</sup>

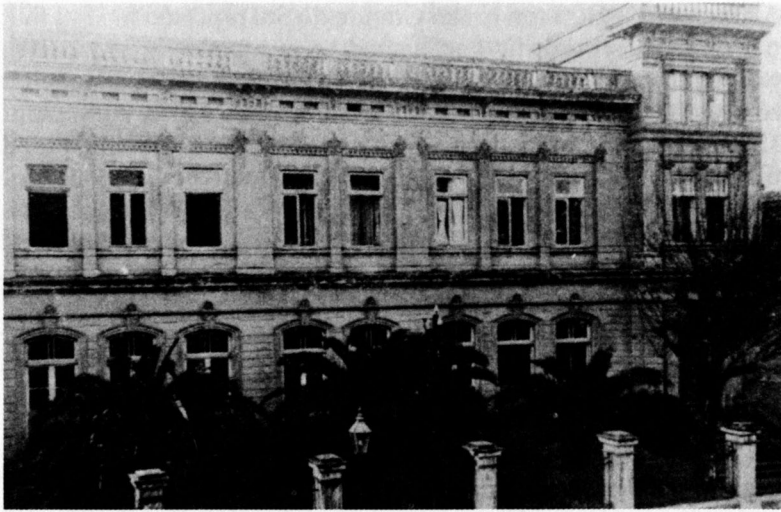
By the turn of the century, the Germans of southern Brazil had developed an extensive private school system. In Santa Catarina the governor's office reported in 1916 that 40 percent of the schools in the state were privately operated. The actual figure may have been significantly higher.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, in Blumenau *município*, there were 10 state and 113 private schools enrolling 520 and 5,011 children, respectively. In Joinville *município*, the proportion was much the same: 5 government schools with 303 students; 64 private, with 3,328 enrolled.<sup>34</sup> Not all the schools classified as private were German; some were Italian and a few were Polish. But the great majority—at least 80 percent—used the German language exclusively. Some were heavily subsidized by the Prussian state church, the Gustav-Adolf Verein, the Allgemeine Deutsche Schulverein, and other similar societies in Germany. Five years

32. Neiva and Diégues, "The Cultural Assimilation of Immigrants," 214; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 180.

33. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), September 19, 1917. The data are grouped in four categories: federal, state, municipal (county), and private schools. In the tabulation of students in each category, the enrollments in the municipal group were lumped with the private, suggesting that the municipal schools were *Vereinschulen* and the private were the parochial schools. Cf. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLB," 136.

34. Fouquet, "Die deutsch-brasilianische Schule," 322; Herbert Koch, "Die staatlichen Schulen in Santa Catharina," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Schulvereins für St. Catharina*, XII (August-September, 1917), 29–30. The same data are to be found in Herbert Koch, *Das Deutsche Schulwesen in Brasilien* (Langensalza, Germany, 1923), 18–19, and pp. 25–39.





The school maintained by the Deutsche Hilfsverein of Porto Alegre. Most German-Brazilian schools of the time were much less pretentious in appearance.

Reprinted from *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*

later, data from Rio Grande do Sul revealed a total of 698 private schools in the state, of which 60 percent were Protestant, the remainder Catholic.<sup>35</sup>

In some areas where the Teuto-Brazilian population was less highly concentrated, *Vereine* were organized to found "interconfessional" schools in which both Protestant and Catholic children were enrolled but instructed separately in religion.<sup>36</sup> Protestants were especially fearful that if they failed to maintain their own schools, their children would either lapse into illiteracy or be proselytized in Catholic schools. Thus the position of the Protestants resembled that of the Catholics in the United States who worked mightily during the same decades to build their huge system of parochial schools.

35. Neiva and Diégues, "The Cultural Assimilation of Immigrants," 214; *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 236; Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 180–82; Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 11.

36. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLK," 137; Mummelthey, "Santa Catarina," in Geissler (ed.), *Die Kulturbedeutung*, 16; Koch, *Das Deutsche Schulwesen*, 25.



The teachers college started by the Evangelical Synod of Rio Grande do Sul in Santa Cruz in 1913

Reprinted from *Uhle's Kalender: 1917*

A bureaucratic support system for the German schools began to emerge in the years before World War I. German Catholics, backed by the Jesuit order, founded a teachers association in 1898. Two years later they launched a professional journal for teachers. The Evangelicals quickly followed suit and, in 1904, went on to create an organization to coordinate the work of the many *Schulvereine* in Santa Catarina. In all instances and in the face of much poverty, these organizations strove to raise the level of instruction, to hire better-qualified teachers, to coordinate curricula, and to represent the interests of the German schools against increasing opposition from the government. In 1913, after several false starts, the Rio-grandenser Synod established a small teachers college (really a secondary school patterned on the German gymnasium) in Santa Cruz. This venture was strongly encouraged by Provost Martin Braunschweig, the representative of the Prussian state church,

and it received substantial monetary support from sources in Germany until war was declared in 1917. Later, in 1926, it was moved to São Leopoldo, where it continues to exist today.<sup>37</sup>

## The German-Language Press

Like the churches, schools, and voluntary associations, the German-language press was also an essential structural element in the immigrant house of culture. The first attempts to develop newspapers for the Germans in Brazil occurred in the 1850s, but these efforts required subsidies from external sources and hence failed to reflect the needs and interests of the immigrants. It was not until another decade had passed that the size of the German immigrant population had increased sufficiently to support a German-language press. The *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre and the *Kolonie-Zeitung* of Joinville were both founded in the early 1860s. At least fifty other newspapers were started in the following half-century. Most were short-lived, but others survived for many years. The majority appeared once or twice each week. By 1900, there were at least a dozen thriving papers, including dailies in Porto Alegre and São Paulo.<sup>38</sup>

The German-language press, like other immigrant institutions, tended to reflect the same divisions that were evident in religious life. Dr. Wilhelm Rotermund, the dynamic Evangelical pastor of São Leopoldo, founded the *Deutsche Post* in 1881; this paper consistently supported the close connection between Protestantism and the maintenance of German culture in Brazil. In Rotermund's view, the *Deutsches Volksblatt*, a rival Catholic paper founded in 1871 in São Leopoldo (but moved to Porto Alegre in 1891), was not a German paper at all, but rather a Jesuit sheet printed in German type. The Catholics returned the compliment by referring to Rotermund's *Post* as the *Deutsche Pest*.<sup>39</sup> Similarly repugnant to the

37. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLK," 136–40; Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 182–83; Hans Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse in Brasilien von 1852 bis zur Gegenwart* (Münster, 1931), 31; *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 325; Fouquet, "Die deutsch-brasilianische Schule," 325. The Catholics did not found an institution specifically to train teachers for its German-language schools until 1924, when one was started in Alt-Hamburg. Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer*, 87.

38. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 23–26, 127.

39. Hugo Metzler, *Aus 60 Jahren* (Porto Alegre, 1928), 38; interview with Egon Schaden, January 8, 1982, São Paulo.

Evangelicals and the Catholics alike was the anticlerical, free-thinking *Koseritz' Deutsche Zeitung*, founded in 1882 in Porto Alegre in direct opposition to the *Deutsche Zeitung*. Comparable divisions emerged in Curitiba, the capital of Paraná, where the anticlerical *Beobachter* (1890) was opposed by the *Kompass*, which was edited in a Franciscan cloister. In São Paulo, the *Germania* appealed to liberal, freethinking persons in the German community.<sup>40</sup>

In virtually all cases, the German-language newspapers reflected the personalities, values, and prejudices of their editors and publishers, who, with few exceptions, were born and educated in Germany. Most of these men actively promoted the maintenance of the German language and culture (because their economic well-being depended upon it), but they were nonetheless loyal to Brazil and performed an invaluable service in educating immigrants to Brazilian ways. Most of the immigrant journalists made a distinction between *Deutschtum* and *Deutschländertum*. The former term meant cherishing their German heritage and supporting immigrant institutions; the latter implied loyalty to Germany, its government, and its kaiser.<sup>41</sup>

Unlike most German-language newspapers in the United States, the German-Brazilian papers tended to avoid political involvement and only rarely supported one party or another. Some received subventions from the Brazilian government as part of its policy of supporting the recruitment of immigrants. Otherwise, according to one historian of the Germans in Brazil, the German-language press was free of government interference, except in time of war.<sup>42</sup>

The German Brazilians developed a variety of periodicals in addition to their newspapers. The most influential of these were religious; the Catholics, Evangelicals, and Lutherans each had their own magazines intended for lay readers.<sup>43</sup> Several periodicals for

40. *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 285; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 202–12; Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 65–66, 147–49; Erwin Buchmann, "Die deutschsprachige Presse in Brasilien," *Staden-Jahrbuch: Beiträge zur Brasilkunde*, IV (1956), 220.

41. Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 206.

42. Carl F. Wittke, *The German-language Press in America* (Lexington, Ky., 1957); Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 205. See also Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olson, *The German Language Press of the Americas, 1732–1968*, Vol. II, *History and Bibliography* (Pullach-München, 1973), 91–221.

43. Examples include *Der Christenbote* (1908), a monthly published in Blumenau for Evangelicals; *St. Paulusblatt* (1912), intended for Catholic readers in Rio Grande

farmers and one for persons in commerce and industry also appeared before World War I.<sup>44</sup> One of the most important products of the German-Brazilian press was the so-called *Kalender*, an annual, book-length publication that included a variety of articles concerning daily life, in addition to an almanac and compilations of standard information. Often a review of the events of the previous year was included. The calendars were widely read, even though they, like the periodicals, were usually prepared for specific religious constituencies.<sup>45</sup>

Because of its role in the development of ethnic identity, in the support of immigrant voluntary associations, and as a means of intragroup communication, the German-language press was a strong force for the perpetuation of the immigrant culture. Presumably it was also significant in the maintenance of the use of the German language. Yet it is not entirely clear how important the press really was for the remote rural German districts. For example, a German-language press never developed in Espírito Santo, where most of the immigrants were clustered in rural ghettos and isolated as well from their much more numerous fellows in the southern states. Despite this lack, the Portuguese language made few inroads in such districts; immigrant language and customs were retained for generations. Even former slaves and isolated Luso-Brazilians whom chance had placed among the Germans learned to speak the prevailing German dialect, sometimes even as their first language.<sup>46</sup>

The many dialects that the Germans ordinarily spoke in their daily activities and in their homes tended to become corrupted and mixed with one another. Only in districts where the dominant majority came from the same area in Germany could the dia-

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do Sul; and the *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt* (1906), published for Missouri Synod Lutherans. Rotermund's *Deutsche Post* of São Leopoldo published a Sunday supplement entitled *Sonntagsblatt für die evangelischen Gemeinden in Brasilien* (1887). Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 208–209; Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 27–31.

44. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 31–33.

45. An example is *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien für das Jahr 1914*, published by Rotermund in an edition of 12,750 copies. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 35–37; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 210–11.

46. Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 20; Jordan, "Aspects of German Colonization," 350.

lect be preserved. Dois Irmãos was such a place: The Hunsrück dialect (spoken west of the Rhine and south of the Mosel in Germany) prevailed into the 1960s. But even in homogeneous communities, Portuguese words found their way into everyday speech. Emílio Willems has estimated that approximately five hundred Portuguese terms were gradually absorbed into the language of the German Brazilians. Most of these words concerned political and economic activity for which there was no suitable German vocabulary. Borrowings were especially numerous in aspects of the horse culture that Germans adopted and adapted from the Luso-Brazilians.<sup>47</sup>

### Linguistic Acculturation

In Brazil as elsewhere, the linguistic acculturation of an immigrant population is closely associated with the number and quality of interpersonal contacts with members of the host or receiving society. Data from the 1940 census show that in Rio Grande do Sul, where the Germans had relatively few contacts with speakers of Portuguese, 97.6 percent of the German-Brazilian families habitually spoke German in their homes; in São Paulo, where the Germans were well dispersed within the huge city, the proportion dropped to 55.1 percent, even though the European-born compared with the Brazilian-born group was much larger there than in Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>48</sup> However, these data do not reveal the proportion of habitual German-speakers who could also speak Portuguese. Only in the most isolated rural districts did the children grow up ignorant of Portuguese. Yet generalizations about the failure of German Brazilians to acculturate linguistically are frequently based on impressions drawn from such atypical environments.

In contrast to the people in isolated rural areas, the craftsmen,

47. Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 34–40; Emílio Willems, "Linguistic Changes in German-Brazilian Communities," *Acta Americana*, I (October-December, 1943), 455; Willems, "Assimilation of German Immigrants," 127; Emílio Willems, "Acculturation and the Horse Complex among German-Brazilians," *American Anthropologist*, n.s., XLVI (April-June, 1944), 158–60. See also Carlos H. Oberacker, Jr., "Transformações da língua alemã no Brasil," in Egon Schaden (ed.), *Homem, cultura e sociedade no Brasil: Seleções da Revista de Antropologica* (2nd ed.; Petrópolis, 1977), 383–432.

48. Neiva and Diêgues, "The Cultural Assimilation of Immigrants," 221.

industrial workers, and professional persons in the cities and large towns learned Portuguese, not merely as an economic necessity, but also as a matter of social prestige. For educated urbanites, the inability to speak Portuguese became a source of social deprivation. Persons with social aspirations naturally perceived the language of the dominant Luso-Brazilian society as prestigious. Many eagerly shed the identifying marks of German ethnicity; given names, for example, were often modified or changed to Portuguese equivalents. By the time of World War I, there were undoubtedly thousands of descendants of German immigrants who were unable to speak German and who, despite their family names, were well integrated into Brazilian society. Unfortunately, there was no way to determine the size of the group.<sup>49</sup>

In general, it appears that rapid linguistic acculturation was associated with urban residence, employment in the industrial sector, high level of education, youth, and membership in the Catholic church.<sup>50</sup> There were, however, certain cross pressures, especially for the middle and upper classes. Such persons often felt disdain for Luso-Brazilian culture, believing that their German heritage was superior. At the same time, they had many contacts with Luso-Brazilian society because of their education and social status, and this produced a strong tendency toward assimilation.

### The Role of the Family

The basic unit in the social structure of the German-Brazilian population was, of course, the family. Isolation tended to enhance its importance in the rural areas, where the attainment of material success was largely dependent on the labor that children contributed to the agricultural enterprise. Thus large families were an economic asset, and comments about the fecundity of German-Brazilian families abound. Spectacular examples have been recorded: Hans Adam Schmidt, who immigrated at the age of sixteen to Santa Catarina in 1829, had 829 descendants a century later, of whom 748 were living; Jacob Goedert, who arrived in the

49. Willems, "Linguistic Changes," 448; Benjamin F. Schapelle, *The German Element in Brazil: Colonies and Dialect* (Philadelphia, 1917), 33.

50. Willems, "Linguistic Changes," 462.

same year at age ten, had 461. More meaningful, however, is the calculation that up to 1914 the average number of children in German immigrant families was 4.7. According to one estimate, the birth rate among members of the Evangelical church in Rio Grande do Sul immediately preceding World War I was 4.5 times the death rate.<sup>51</sup>

Large families were customary among both Catholics and Protestants. Impressionistic evidence suggests, however, that exogamy, or marriage outside the ethnic group, was more frequently a Catholic than a Protestant phenomenon. Following a trip to Brazil immediately after World War I, the American historian Clarence Haring reported that German Protestants were strongly race conscious, despised the "dark Brazilians," and rarely married outside their church. By contrast, according to Willems, German Catholics were more likely to marry non-German Catholics than German Protestants.<sup>52</sup> In the solidly German districts endogamy was standard, but in the marginal areas a different pattern emerged. A study of the records of the Catholic parish of Ijuí, located in an ethnically mixed area in the western part of Rio Grande do Sul, revealed that only 48 percent of the marriages involving German parishioners from 1899 to 1932 were between German men and German women. The remainder were to Italian (25 percent), Luso-Brazilian (15.6 percent), and Polish (11.4 percent) partners. Most frequent among the exogamous unions were those between German women and Italian men (17 percent). Even though Luso-Brazilians were apparently numerous in this parish, they were considered inferior partners because they did not share the German work ethic. At the same time, mixed marriages among Protestants in the Ijuí area were reportedly rare.<sup>53</sup>

Exogamy was also common among urban residents, especially

51. Reinhard Maack, "The Germans of South Brazil: A German View," *Quarterly Journal of Inter-American Relations*, I (July, 1939), 8–10. See also Artur Hehl Neiva, "Uma família teuto-brasileira," in *I. Colóquio*, 85–95. Fausel, *Dr. Rotermond*, 146.

52. Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 38; Willems, "Assimilation of German Immigrants," 129. See also Emilio Willems, "A miscigenação entre brasileiros de ascendência germânica," *Revista Sociologia*, XV (1953), 95–108. Willems' data are from a later period, chiefly the 1940s.

53. Porzelt, *Der deutsche Bauer*, 95; Maack, "The Germans of South Brazil," 11–12.





A typically large German family living in the Taquará *município* of Rio Grande do Sul  
Reprinted from *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien*: 1918

industrial workers. Conditions in the factory promoted social uniformity and equality in wages and living standards. Similarly, there was a greater inclination to marry outside the group among the well educated. Koseritz himself provides the most distinguished example of a German intellectual who married a Luso-Brazilian.<sup>54</sup>

## Conclusion

The social structure that evolved among the Teuto-Brazilians during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was thus the product of the adaptation of the German immigrant culture within the social environment of Brazil. Just as geographical conditions in that vast, tropical land imposed certain limits on German immigrant settlement and forced adaptation in economic behavior, so

54. Willems, "Assimilation of German Immigrants," 129; Willems, "A miscigenação entre brasileiros," 108; Maack, "The Germans of South Brazil," 12. Maack, a German geographer and an apologist for Nazism, considered Koseritz's marriage "tragic" because, as a consequence, his descendants were lost to the German-Brazilian population.

the social environment of Luso-Catholic Brazil acted on the immigrants in their new world. Immigrant churches quickly became the most important institutions among the German Brazilians. Differences in religious belief in relation to Brazilian culture in turn not only influenced the character of synodical organizations, schools, voluntary associations, and the immigrant press but also led to differences in linguistic acculturation and marital assimilation between Catholics and Protestants. Diversity within the Teuto-Brazilian subsociety is further revealed by differences in the assimilational experiences of urban immigrants and those who remained in isolated rural ghettos, where the quantity and quality of interpersonal contacts were different. Yet, despite these intra-group variations, the Germans were commonly and stereotypically perceived by persons outside the group as having uniform characteristics and behavior.

## The German Ethnic Group in Brazilian Society, 1890–1917

**B**Y THE LAST DECADE of the nineteenth century, the German ethnic group in Brazil had become a society within a society—a large, diverse, and structured community with institutions, language, values, and folkways that differed significantly from those of the host society. Because of the accidents of time and place, the Germans had been allowed to develop their own society without much interference, and in general they were well received and respected during the last years of the empire. European ideas were valued for the contributions they could make to Brazilian culture; German culture, science, and education were often considered among the best in the world.<sup>1</sup>

With the advent of the republic, however, attitudes toward the German Brazilians began to change. The difference was partly a matter of confidence: The republic had to demonstrate its authority and its ability to govern, a task made more difficult by the diffusion of political power among the states and the development of political parties on a state basis. The abolition of slavery in 1888 had created a labor shortage, chiefly in the central and southern states, that the government had sought to relieve by recruiting im-

1. Freyre, *Order and Progress*, 56–57, 123–24, 188–89. Freyre has noted that, of all the immigrant groups, the Italians were the most desired, the most imitated, and the most highly praised by Brazilian leaders who in those years hoped the influx of European immigrants would “whiten” the population. Since Italians were closer than Germans to Luso-Brazilians on a sociocultural distance scale, they were less separatistic and thus more capable of producing the desired genetic effect (see pp. 256–57). Cf. Skidmore, *Black into White*.

migrants from Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Germany. At the same time, the modernization of the economic structure of Brazil was under way, especially in the south. With the expansion of industry in relation to the production of agricultural commodities came economic and social dislocations that were new to Brazilians. As the world has witnessed so often in the twentieth century, modernization produced new social problems and tensions, especially in the cities. Some Brazilians, doubting the capacity of their society to absorb the flood of immigrants, demanded that the newcomers learn to conform to Brazilian ways. Others urged the revitalization of Latin Catholic culture, which in their view had been weakened by the infusion of foreign ideas and attitudes.<sup>2</sup>

## Nativism

Nativist sentiments fomented heated disputes, some within the German community itself, others among Germans, Italians, and Luso-Brazilians. It was a period of much strife, unrest, outrage, and even murder.<sup>3</sup> The unstable conditions of the early republican era as they affected ethnic groups are revealed in an incident that occurred in Porto Alegre in 1895. A radical, freethinking German lawyer, Germano Hasslocher, attacked individual Jesuit priests in the Portuguese-language press (*Gazeta da Tarde*) in a manner the Catholics deemed despicable. Hugo Metzler, the publisher of the Catholic paper *Deutsches Volksblatt*, thereupon reviled Hasslocher as a political apostate. Further insults were followed by threats of violence. Meanwhile Metzler, loyal Catholic that he was, had also criticized Italians on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Italian unification (which had been achieved at the expense of the papacy). Hasslocher's response was to use Metzler's editorial to incite a mob of celebrating Italians, and on September 29, 1895, they destroyed Metzler's printshop.<sup>4</sup>

Nativism was consonant with the doctrines of Comtean Positivism that infused the thought of many of the new republican lead-

2. Freyre, *Order and Progress*, 123, 197; E. Bradford Burns, *A History of Brazil* (New York, 1970), 250–54. For a general discussion, see Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 201–17.

3. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 148–55; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 40.

4. Metzler, *Aus 60 Jahren*, 38; Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 155.

ers. The commitment of the Brazilian Positivists was not merely to progress but also to order, which they understood to include a harmony among the classes, races, ethnic groups, and sexes. They could applaud the diverse origins of Brazilian society and culture and yet insist that a new unity—a distinctively Brazilian unity—had to be achieved, by force of dictatorship if necessary. Thus, the Constitution of 1891 generously granted citizenship to all immigrants who wanted it; at the same time, they felt strongly that the newcomers should make a conscious effort to assimilate. According to this view, Luso-Brazilian society needed to resist the tendency of such ethnic groups as the Germans to remain separate. To speak a different language, to attend different schools, to eat different foods, to wear different clothing, to worship different gods—all these actions were undesirable because they implied being not merely different but superior.<sup>5</sup>

Nativism also thrived on envy. While there is no record of persistent cultural conflict based on ethnic differences, one may assume that some Brazilians of the less privileged classes regarded the Germans with resentment and jealousy. Like any other large social grouping, the Germans encompassed a wide variation in education, skills, health, and working habits. In fact, large numbers experienced a deterioration in socioeconomic status as they struggled to survive in the Brazilian environment. But the strong image among some Brazilians was that the Germans were better housed and fed; that their system of private and parochial schools was often superior to what passed for public education in Brazil at that time; and that their homes and persons were cleaner and healthier. The Germans also seemed willing to work very hard, at least in contrast to the impoverished *caboclos*, among whom labor was intermittent and subject to long and frequent interruptions. Moreover, the Germans were savers. In order to counter the effects of inheritance laws that tended to break up farm properties into unprofitable units, the German *colonos* often saved diligently in order to provide their sons with agricultural land. Value conflicts were apparent in many other aspects of life as well. Willems

5. Freyre, *Order and Progress*, 14; João Cruz Costa, *A History of Ideas in Brazil*, trans. Suzette Macedo (Berkeley, 1964), 82–175; Fernando de Azevedo, *Brazilian Culture* (New York, 1950), 159–60, 414–18; Freyre, *New World in the Tropics*, 154; José Honório Rodrigues, *The Brazilians: Their Character and Aspirations* (Austin, 1967), 96.

has pointed out, for example, that whereas Luso-Brazilians were tolerant of prostitution but intolerant of sexual intercourse for unmarried women, Teuto-Brazilians were opposed to prostitution but permitted premarital intercourse under controlled conditions that normally led to marriage.<sup>6</sup>

Nativism displays itself most naturally in the field of politics. Even though the Teuto-Brazilians had experienced a great deal of success economically, their participation in the political process was quite another matter. Government at all levels remained firmly in the hands of the Luso-Brazilian landowners and in Rio Grande do Sul their power was virtually complete. They usually dominated the local leader of the established party. A rural political boss delivered the votes required of him, prevented the opposition from voting, controlled patronage, and dispensed favors. When enticement failed, he might resort to fraud and violence.<sup>7</sup> It was difficult for the Germans to find a place in such a system. Most of the time they were happy enough to be left alone without harassment.

Political apathy has, in fact, been frequently noted as a characteristic of German immigrants everywhere and should be understood sociologically as an aspect of marginality.<sup>8</sup> In southern Brazil, where the cultural isolation of Germans was especially strong, social pressure often worked against political participation. For

6. Although Emílio Willems is in no way responsible for my interpretation here, I have relied in part on his numerous works and have modified my views in consequence of private correspondence with him. See Willems, *A aculturação dos alemães no Brasil*. Among his English-language articles, see "Assimilation of German Immigrants," 125–32, and "Some Aspects of Cultural Conflict and Acculturation," 375–84.

7. Love, *Rio Grande do Sul*, 118–20; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 554–55; Max Dedekind, *Brasilien, das Ziel deutscher Auswanderer und die Deutsche Evangelische Kirche in Brasilien* (Elberfeld, Germany, 1924), 9. Cf. Victor Nunes Leal, *Coronelismo: The Municipality and Representative Government in Brazil*, trans. from the Portuguese edition (1949) by June Henfrey (Cambridge, 1977), 1–25.

8. Egon Schaden, "Der Deutschbrasilianer—Ein Problem," *Staden-Jahrbuch: Beitrage zur Brasilkunde*, II (1954), 193; Niemeyer, *Die Deutschen in Brasilien*, 89; Arpad Szilvassy, "Participação dos alemães e seus descendentes na vida política Brasileira," in *I. Colóquio*, 247–61; Schütz, "Imigração alemã," 307–308. Cf. Frederick C. Luebke, "Politics and Missouri Synod Lutherans: A Historiographical Review," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XLV (May, 1972), 141–58; and Norman A. Graebner, "Lutherans and Politics," in John E. Groh and Robert H. Smith (eds.), *The Lutheran Church in North American Life* (St. Louis, 1979), 12–30.

example, one German teacher in Rio Grande do Sul felt constrained to apologize for having become a Brazilian citizen. He explained that such a step was prerequisite to becoming an instructor in a government school, a position to which he aspired.<sup>9</sup> As the descendants of northern Europeans in a land marked strongly by southern European culture, the German Brazilians were an obviously different sort of people. In their separate and isolated world, participation in the political process was usually not considered very important. Mostly they were ignored by the ruling classes, and if they attempted to become involved in politics, they were easily dominated.

Throughout the empire period, the majority of German *colonos*—perhaps 75 percent—never bothered to acquire citizenship. For example, in 1852, there were only 165 voters of German stock in the entire São Leopoldo *município*. The majority were of peasant stock and few had traditions of political participation in Germany. Most were unaware of the rights that were at least technically theirs.<sup>10</sup>

It was the redoubtable Karl von Koseritz who led the fight for political rights and greater political participation among the Teuto-Brazilians. He was among the first of the Germans, and the first non-Catholic, to be elected to the provincial assembly of Rio Grande do Sul. In his speeches and publications, he repeatedly urged the Germans to become naturalized and to vote. Like many of his counterparts in the United States at that time, Koseritz also urged his fellow immigrants to organize themselves into a political bloc or, as circumstances might demand, a political party, arguing that this was the only way the Germans could enjoy the political power that was commensurate with their numbers. In 1883 he confidently but prematurely declared that the Germans had been drawn into public life; as he pointed out, they had been elected to the councils of several cities and held important positions in the national guard. By the end of the 1880s, four Germans had served in the provincial assembly of Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>11</sup>

9. "Anteil des Deutschtums an der Politik," in *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 179.

10. *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 179; Szilvassy, "Participação dos alemães," 249.

11. Koseritz, *Bilder aus Brasilien*, 140, 360; Oberacker, *Carlos von Koseritz*, 51–69; Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 147; *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 179; Roche, *La colonisa-*

## Neutralizing Teuto-Brazilian Power

Shortly after the establishment of the republic in 1889, all immigrants were granted the option of becoming citizens with the right to vote, provided that they could meet a literacy requirement. Promising though this enfranchisement was, it did not lead to political acculturation. Since the literacy rate of German Brazilians soared above that of the nation as a whole, they represented a potential threat to the political dominance of the *estancieiros*—the established landowner class—in districts where German settlements were concentrated. In Rio Grande do Sul, the regime of Julio do Castilhos and Antonio Borges de Medeiros (with its Positivist emphasis on order and commitment to social progress through republican dictatorship) solved the problem by negotiating a sort of gentleman's agreement: Teuto-Brazilians' electoral support for the ruling party was exchanged for cultural liberty, that is, freedom from any coercive program designed to integrate them into the political life of the local communities, the state, or the nation.<sup>12</sup>

Electoral docility on the part of the Germans was guaranteed in Rio Grande do Sul by a second step—the gerrymandering of electoral districts in 1897. Even though the Germans constituted 24.7 percent of the registered voters in the state, they were distributed among three districts so that the chance of their electing one of their number was seriously reduced. A subsequent reapportionment in 1914 preserved the minority status of Germans in all electoral districts. So effective was this arrangement that throughout the republican era from 1889 to World War I, rarely more than

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*tion allemande*, 534, 555; Szilvassy, "Participação dos alemães," 250. Actually, Koseritz might have been more successful if he had not been so impatient and intolerant of the church people, whom he inevitably alienated with his barrage of criticism aimed at Jesuits and the Protestant clergy.

12. Kohlhepp, "Die deutschstämmigen Siedlungsgebiete im südbrasilianischen Staate Santa Catarina," 220; Szilvassy, "Participação dos alemães," 250; Freyre, *Order and Progress*, 270. Freyre did not approve of the arrangement. He wrote that "descendants of Germans were allowed liberties or privileges entirely incompatible with Brazilian cultural basic unity (such as the right to have schools where Portuguese was not taught) by politicians who needed German votes in order to dominate or control their particular state" (Freyre, *New World in the Tropics*, 102).



three deputies in the state assembly bore German names—approximately a third of the seats their numbers warranted.<sup>13</sup>

Such steps to neutralize the political potential of the Teuto-Brazilians did not go far enough to satisfy the concerns of some Rio Grande do Sul politicians. They believed that measures had to be taken to break up the existing colonies and to guarantee that new settlements would consist of a mixture of ethnic groups. Some nativists wanted to accomplish these goals through a commission that was established in 1897 to investigate the validity of the land titles held by the immigrants—Italians as well as Germans. It was a fact that many immigrants had acquired their land from swindlers; they could base their landownership only on documents that had been falsified earlier by public officials. Naturally, such titles were thrown out, to the great consternation and bitterness of the immigrants, who perceived the work of the verification commission as a poorly disguised effort to force them off their land and break up their colonies.<sup>14</sup>

A decade later, another method was devised to restrict the growth of immigrant colonies, this time at the national level. In 1909, Congress passed a law specifying that at least 10 percent of the land in an area of small-farmer settlement had to be owned by native-born Brazilians. The effect of this legislation was minimal because by that time the great majority of the German *colonos* were Brazilian-born.<sup>15</sup>

In some respects, the Teuto-Brazilians fared better in Santa Catarina than they did in Rio Grande do Sul. The political power of the small landowners (as distinguished from the *estancieiros*) was greater in this smaller and poorer state, and the Germans benefited accordingly. Several German *colonos* attained a political prominence in Santa Catarina that was denied them in Rio Grande do Sul. The most distinguished was Lauro Müller. Born in Itajaí of immigrant parents, Müller received a military education and became a follower of a well-known Positivist, Benjamim Constant

13. Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 552–54, 568; Love, *Rio Grande do Sul*, 131–33.

14. Mönckmeier, *Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung*, 214; Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 160.

15. Karl Heinrich Oberacker, Jr., "Die sozialgeschichtliche Bedeutung der deutschen Einwanderung," *Staden-Jahrbuch: Beiträge zur Brasilkunde*, II (1954), 179.

Magalhães. He served as an aide to Marshal Deodoro da Fonseca, a founder of the republic, and after the coup of 1889, Deodoro appointed Müller, then twenty-six years of age, as governor of Santa Catarina. Müller was subsequently elected to the same office three times and also served the federal government as minister of commerce in the Rodrigues Alves administration and as foreign minister from 1912 to 1917 under presidents Hermes da Fonseca and Wenceslau Braz. Other second-generation Germans were active in Santa Catarina politics, including Müller's first cousin, General Felipe Schmidt, who served as governor from 1914 to 1918, and the four Konder brothers, who were active in state and federal politics in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>16</sup>

Along with these personal successes was a counterpoint of hostility. Positivism was less of a political force in Santa Catarina than it was in Rio Grande do Sul, and the immigrants were more highly concentrated in communities such as Blumenau, Joinville, and Brusque. Because the threat posed by the *colonos* to the ruling Luso-Brazilians had not been neutralized as in Rio Grande do Sul, tensions mounted in Santa Catarina and programs of assimilation were ardently espoused.

Several prominent Luso-Brazilian politicians in Santa Catarina spoke out against further growth of the German colonies. One of the governors in this period, Hercílio Luz, condemned the Germans severely for their separatism. He was especially troubled by the German Protestants because, in his view, they wanted only to remain German. Everything they did seemed to reflect their attachment to Germany; they wanted no other fatherland. Luz was particularly galled by the Evangelical clergy's opposition to marriages of Germans and Luso-Brazilians and by the refusal of Germans in general to adopt Brazilian customs.<sup>17</sup>

16. Marcus Konder, *Lauro Müller* (Itajaí, 1944); Rodrigo Octávio, "Lauro Mueller," *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*, CCLXV (1964), 172–88; Oberacker, *Der deutsche Beitrag*, 401–405; Martin Fischer, "O problema da conservação da cultura alemã," in *I. Colóquio*, 344; Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*; "A morte do Senador Felipe Schmidt," unidentified newspaper clipping, May 10, 1930, in Instituto Hans Staden, São Paulo.

17. Luz quoted in Martin Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung des deutschen Schulwesens in Südbasilien," in Geissler (ed.), *Die Kulturbedeutung*, 51. See also Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 217.

In Santa Catarina, as in the United States, the nativist attack on immigrant institutions focused on private schools. Whereas in the United States, Catholic parochial schools were targeted for control if not elimination, in Brazil it was the Protestant schools that were found objectionable. Another important difference is that in the United States the public schools were well developed and numerically preponderant, while in Santa Catarina they were an inadequate minority. Given this circumstance, any effort to expand and improve the public school system was perceived by Teuto-Brazilian leaders as an attack on the schools. At least two laws, passed in 1904 and 1907 by the Santa Catarina legislature, was intended to assist in the development of government schools and the regulation of private schools. But it was not until 1911 when Orestes Guimarães was appointed inspector of schools that effective control was initiated.<sup>18</sup>

Evidently, private school teachers and administrators were less than cooperative with state officials. In 1913, Santa Catarina enacted legislation requiring them to supply all information concerning curriculum and attendance statistics requested by state officials and to permit inspection of their schools. The law further specified that private schools were to observe national holidays and to comply with hygiene regulations. It expressly recognized the freedom of schools that received no government support to develop their own curricula, but any institution that accepted subventions from either the state or the *município* was required to use Portuguese as the language of instruction. Remarkably mild by present-day standards, this law was sharply condemned, especially by the Protestant clergy, who saw it as a sinister effort to strangle their schools.<sup>19</sup>

## The German Peril

Among Luso-Brazilian leaders of the educated and governing classes, there was a growing concern that the Germans in the

18. Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 51; Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 223; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 356; Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 184.

19. Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 51; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 356; Dedekind, *Brasilien*, 24. Many Brazilians admitted that if the Germans

southern states were becoming so numerous and so powerful that they could never be assimilated. Early in the twentieth century, their fears were heightened by much discussion of the "German peril"—a belief that Germany had set itself upon a course of world-wide imperialism, based in part on the presence of German immigrants in various underdeveloped countries, including Brazil. Before and after the turn of the century, German aggressiveness was observed in the South Pacific, China, the Philippines, and the Caribbean. When in 1904 the Germans threatened the integrity of Venezuela, Brazil's neighbor to the north, in a debt-collection controversy, alarmists in Europe, the United States, and certainly Brazil feared that Germany was taking the first steps in a plan designed to culminate in the creation of a German protectorate over southern Brazil and possibly an independent state that would be German in language and culture.<sup>20</sup>

The Brazilians' suspicion of German intentions was not unfounded. Already in the 1840s, there were propagandists in Germany who hoped to encourage German emigrants to go not to the United States but to southern Brazil and the La Plata district of Argentina and Uruguay. If sufficient numbers could be directed there, German language and culture would predominate and the people could establish a state that would become rivals of German industry rather than consumers of German goods, as they were likely to be in undeveloped Brazil. Still others maintained that the typical German emigrant lacked the ability to withstand the assimilative power of Anglo-American culture; he and his descendants would be completely un-Germanized within a few generations. Brazil, by contrast, offered a setting in which *Deutschtum* could be rooted permanently.<sup>21</sup>

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had failed to assimilate, it was not their fault, since the government had failed to provide Portuguese-language schools. For example, see Truda, *A colonização alemã*, 141–66.

20. For a general discussion of the "German peril," see Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 201–18.

21. F. Schmidt, *Grundzüge einer geregelten Auswanderung der Deutschen, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Südbrasilien* (Hamburg, 1842); F. Schmidt, *Die geregelte Auswanderung nach Brasilien und ihr erster glänzender Erfolg* (Rudolstadt, Germany, 1852); Wilhelm Georg Roscher, *Kolonien, Kolonialpolitik und Auswanderung* (Leipzig and Heidelberg, 1856), 358. Cf. Sudhaus, *Deutschland und die Auswanderung*, 48–50.

German cultural chauvinists continued to beat the same drum until, early in the twentieth century, resistance to acculturation became a common theme. Teuto-Brazilians could read, for example, about Hermann Leyfer, a German journalist who argued that cultural characteristics were inborn, inherited, and inalienable and that a person retained them to death, regardless of residence or other circumstance. "A German remains a German," he wrote. "To deny one's nationality is to deny one's self." Others carried the argument farther, asserting that maintaining the German language and culture was the duty of Teuto-Brazilians because they would thereby enhance and strengthen national culture, even as they contributed to Brazil's prosperity by their industry. Some writers recommended resistance to assimilation on the grounds that Brazilian culture was worthless. Brazil, wrote Walther Kundt, "is a country that has produced nothing memorable in any field, including economics and culture." Furthermore, he continued, Brazilians are unable "to establish a properly functioning means of transportation and communication, regulate their financial affairs, guarantee justice, build a fleet, or maintain an army other than one that is really nothing more than a privileged band of robbers."<sup>22</sup>

In São Leopoldo, Dr. Wilhelm Rotermund insisted on German racial superiority, arguing that Teuto-Brazilians must remain exclusive and racially pure because miscegenation could only introduce decadence. "We Germans are an elite," he wrote in his *Deutsche Post* in 1897, "and can fulfill our cultural mission only when we do not mix with Latinate people [*romanische Rassen*]."<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile in Germany the noisy, chauvinistic Pan-German League had, by 1900, united twenty thousand supernationalists from the urban middle classes and fueled new fears of German imperialism. In its widely distributed publications, this organization emphasized the cultural kinship of Germans all over the world and agitated vociferously for a colonial empire, for an enlarged navy, for war as an instrument of national policy, and for

22. Leyfer quoted in Joinville *Zeitung*, October 21, 1896; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), February 24, 1906; Walther Kundt, *Brasilien und seine Bedeutung für Deutschlands Handel und Industrie* (Berlin, 1903), 18. In 1905, *A Federação* of Porto Alegre published an article summarizing such Pan-Germanist comments. See Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 206.

23. Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 186.

the preservation of the German language and culture in German settlements overseas. A symptom rather than a cause of the rampant nationalism of the time, the Pan-German League was identified by English and French propagandists as the coordinating agency of German imperialism. Although the league's importance was grossly exaggerated, a flood of articles exposing the alleged Pan-Germanist conspiracy soon appeared in newspapers and periodicals in Europe, America, and elsewhere, climaxing with the publication in 1913 of *Pan-Germanism* by an American historian, Roland G. Usher. Typically filled with misinformation and overstatement, these materials repeatedly drew upon the same sources—either German chauvinists or French and English counterpropagandists—and as a result they succeeded in stirring up much anti-German sentiment.<sup>24</sup>

Literature of this kind also appeared in Brazil. By far the most significant example is a short book by a noted Brazilian literary critic, Sylvio Romero, which was published in 1906. In *O allemanismo no sul do Brasil*, Romero, who is distinguished for his recognition of the African contribution to Brazilian culture, warned his countrymen of the "German peril," outlined possible steps to combat the threat, and urged that measures be taken to assimilate the German *colonos* into Brazilian society. Undoubtedly Romero's book contributed to the efforts of the government during the pre-World War I decade to limit the potential political power of the Teuto-Brazilians, to break up the exclusive character of the German settlements, and to improve the quality of the public schools so that they could indeed function as agents of assimilation.<sup>25</sup>

24. Mildred S. Wertheimer, *The Pan-German League, 1890–1914*, Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, CXII (New York, 1924); Roland G. Usher, *Pan-Germanism* (Boston, 1913). For samples of such material, see Frederick W. Wile, "German Colonization in Brazil," *Fortnightly Review*, LXXIX (January, 1906), 129–38; and Alfred F. Sears, "German Influence in Latin America," *Popular Science Monthly*, LXXII (February, 1908), 140–52. More moderate or balanced are Stephen Bonsal, "Greater Germany in South America," *North American Review*, CLXXVI (January, 1903), 58–67; and George A. Chamberlain, "Germany in Southern Brazil," *Independent*, LVI (May 5, 1904), 1016–22. A later review of this material is provided by Loretta Baum, "German Political Designs with Reference to Brazil," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, II (November, 1919), 589–99.

25. Sylvio Romero, *O allemanismo no sul do Brasil: Seus perigos e os meios de os conjurar* (Rio de Janeiro, 1906). For a general treatment of the Brazilian literature attacking Pan-Germanism, see Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 207–16. Edgardo

The Portuguese-language press also warned against the "German peril." In August, 1904, for example, the *Correio do Povo* of Porto Alegre published extracts from several nationalistic newspapers in Germany to illustrate that Pan-Germanists considered the three southern states to be within Germany's sphere of influence.<sup>26</sup> Brazilians were especially offended by a remark of Gustav Schmoller, a German professor, regarding the options available to the three southernmost states: remaining a part of Brazil, becoming an independent country, or coming "into closer relation" with the German Empire.<sup>27</sup> Concern was frequently expressed about the opening of German consulates in southern cities and about the subsidies the Prussian state church (always described as the German government) was providing for German Evangelical schools in Brazil.

German-language newspapers in Brazil were by no means united in support of Pan-Germanism. The movement had its partisans, of course, but most Teuto-Brazilian journalists were more moderate. They believed that it was possible, even desirable, to maintain the German language and culture in Brazil, but within the framework of loyal Brazilian citizenship. So keen was the opposition to Pan-Germanism in Porto Alegre, for example, that one weekly newspaper, the *Rio Grandenser Vaterland*, was founded on the proposition that the Teuto-Brazilian fatherland was Rio Grande do Sul and Brazil, not Germany. This paper expressly declared its intention to do battle with Pan-Germanism and its advocates; having the support of prominent and powerful Riograndenser politicians, it thrived and continued to publish for many years.<sup>28</sup>

To the German imperial government, the Pan-Germanists were

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de Magalhães wrote a piece for English readers, but it merely repeated typical anti-German propaganda. See his "Germany and South America: A Brazilian View," *Nineteenth Century and After*, LXXXI (January, 1917), 67–80. See also Theodor Alemann, *Die Zukunft des Deutschtums in Amerika* (Buenos Aires and Stuttgart, 1923), 68–74.

26. Ernest Tonnelat, *L'expansion allemande hors d'Europe* (Paris, 1908), 144–45.

27. Chamberlain, "Germany in Southern Brazil," 1020; Fritz Bühler, *Dona Francisca: 70 Jahre deutscher Kulturarbeit in Brasilien im Staate Santa Catharina* (Berlin-Wilmersdorf, [1919]), 76–78. See also Gaston Gaillard, *Amérique latine et Europe occidentale: L'Amérique latine et la guerre* (Paris, 1918), 20–21.

28. Tonnelat, *L'expansion allemande*, 137; Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 24, 159; Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 196–97.

a nuisance. Count Bernhard von Bülow, the German chancellor, explicitly repudiated the league. In a speech before the German Reichstag on March 19, 1904, he denied unequivocally any intention to annex territory anywhere in South America. "In Brazil," commented von Bülow in an interview with a Brazilian journalist, "we wish to form no state within a state, and hope that the Germans there will become useful members of their country." The same message was brought to the Teuto-Brazilians by Prince Henry of Prussia, the brother of the kaiser, when he stopped in Brazil on a world tour a short time earlier.<sup>29</sup> Such spokesmen for the German government readily admitted that while their country had no political aspirations in the Western world, it had a strong economic interest and that Germany, like France and England, was eager to develop its trade relations with South American countries.

Had the German government wanted to assume a political role in Brazil, the opportunity came in connection with the visit of the German cruiser *Panther* to the port of Itajaí, Santa Catarina, in 1905. When a sailor failed to return to the ship at a designated time, the ship's commander, Count von Saurma-Jeltsch, ordered several officers and a dozen marines to go ashore and apprehend the deserter, which they did, but not without resistance. The action was a clear violation of Brazilian sovereignty, and Baron Rio Branco, the Brazilian foreigner minister, quickly demanded an apology. Meanwhile the Brazilian press became highly agitated over the affair. The German minister in Rio de Janeiro at first tried to defend Saurma's action, but Chancellor von Bülow successfully insisted, despite Kaiser Wilhelm's reluctance to discipline the commander, that the German government comply and that he be recalled.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, during the decade before the outbreak of World War I, Brazilians at all levels of society, from the ruling classes to the despised *caboclos*, had begun to perceive the Germans, both Teuto-Brazilians and Reichsdeutsche, as a problem—an element that threatened the equilibrium of Brazilian society.<sup>31</sup> The Germans

29. Chamberlain, "Germany in Southern Brazil," 1021–22.

30. Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 88–99; Alfred Vagts, *Deutschland und die Vereinigten Staaten in der Weltpolitik* (2 vols; New York, 1935), II, 1768–70; Tonnelat, *L'expansion allemande*, 145–56. Rio Branco's letter is quoted in Otto Prazeres, *O Brasil na guerra: (Algumas notas para a historia)* (Rio de Janeiro, 1918), 23–24.

31. Fischer, "O problema da conservação"; Schaden, "Der Deutschbrasilianer."



seemed rich and powerful, socially exclusive, and unwilling to be assimilated. To the more suspicious, they were eager accomplices in a Pan-Germanist plot to extend German power and the German language and culture to all parts of the world.

### Ethnic Images and Perceptions

The Brazilians' image of the Germans, like most stereotypes, rested on insufficient and distorted information, rhetorical exaggerations, and myths.<sup>32</sup> There was little comprehension of the diversity within the group, such as the differences that divided Catholics from Protestants or the disparate values and behaviors that separated farmers from urban workers and businessmen. Perceptions were drawn primarily from the behavior of a part of the ethnic elite—the articulate, educated clergy, journalists, and businessmen who perpetuated the immigrant culture because it served their economic interest and satisfied their psychological needs. Meanwhile the ordinary German-Brazilian people went about their daily business, gradually adapting to their surroundings and rarely giving the problem any thought. If their assimilation was unusually slow, it was because they had farther to go, culturally speaking, than did the Italians, for example, to whom they were frequently and negatively compared. Partly because of this cultural distance they tended to gather in separate communities, especially in the rural districts. Since the Germans were so numerous, it was relatively easy for them to create the institutions that maintained their distinctive cultural forms. Luso-Brazilians, no less than the Germans themselves, failed to understand how the physical environment in conjunction with the accidents of Brazilian history had promoted German isolationism. They had little appreciation for the diversity of German immigrant society and the sharp differences that often divided its members.

Luso-Brazilians were often mystified by the apparent separatism of the Germans. They could not understand why the Germans would even want to perpetuate their own language and culture indefinitely. In their view, Luso-Brazilian culture was especially attractive—it was open, tolerant, hospitable, adaptable, nonideo-

32. Schaden, "Der Deutschbrasilianer," 184.

logical, humane, and free of rigid social stratification. Brazilians were motivated by a spirit of conciliation that sought compromise and rejected extremist measures; above all, they considered themselves a nonviolent people.<sup>33</sup> José Honório Rodrigues, a modern authority on Brazilian national characteristics, observes:

The basic Luso-Brazilian personality has a horror of violence and always seeks a way of smoothing things over, a path of moderation that avoids definite breaks. Cleverness, prudence in shunning extremes, an ability to forget, a rich sense of humor, a cool head, and a warm heart get the Brazilians through difficult moments. . . . Conciliation rather than revolution has dominated Brazilian history. In part this is because the people, with their spirit of concord, prefer to gain less than to have recourse to violence, in part because the dominant oligarchic groups prefer yielding a little to risking much, and finally because the armed forces—democratic, liberal, and progressive in their tendencies—wield a balance of power that is exercised to moderate minorities rather than subjugate majorities.<sup>34</sup>

Rodrigues also supplies a lengthy list of negative characteristics, among them a tendency to procrastinate, belief in luck and gambling, psychosocial instability, and susceptibility to the temptations of nepotism and to the cult of personality.<sup>35</sup> The typical German *colono* would have agreed, but would have added a few other traits to the list.

The vaunted tradition of nonviolence did not conform to the German Brazilians' experience. They recalled that many of the original German settlers were soldiers recruited by the Brazilian government to fight its wars on the southern frontier. The *colonos* remembered bloody slaughter and destruction in the wars with Argentina and Paraguay; they experienced devastation in the civil conflicts in the nineteenth century; and from 1912 to 1915, state

33. Rodrigues, *The Brazilians*, 60–61; Neiva and Diégues, "The Cultural Assimilation of Immigrants," 185.

34. Rodrigues, *The Brazilians*, 59. Apparently Rodrigues wrote these words before the Brazilian army assumed control of the government in 1964. Non-Brazilian historians have disputed the claim of a nonviolent tradition. See Burns, *A History of Brazil*, 254; and Henry H. Keith, "The Non-Violent Tradition in Brazilian History: A Myth in Need of Explosion?" in Henry H. Keith and S. F. Edwards (eds.), *Conflict and Continuity in Brazilian Society* (Columbia, S.C., 1969), 231–40, and commentary by Joseph L. Love, *ibid.*, 241–47.

35. Rodrigues, *The Brazilians*, 62–65.

and federal forces numbering thousands of men were required to put down a revolt led by a religious mystic in the western territory contested by both Santa Catarina and Paraná. Beyond that, banditry seemed endemic in the interior.<sup>36</sup> Many Teuto-Brazilians were bitter about the government—national, state, and local—because it seemed oppressive, unfair, corrupt, and unwilling to respond to their needs. They felt excluded from the political process; they either had to fight for their rights or accept whatever was served up to them by the Luso-Brazilians.<sup>37</sup> They were criticized for not knowing Portuguese, yet the government gave them no schools—and they were criticized for that, too.

Why should the Germans want to assimilate into such a society? asked the most ethnocentric among them. It seemed obvious to them that Luso-Brazilian culture was inferior to their own; they found little that might be worthy of adoption or imitation. Unlike the Anglo-American Protestant culture in the United States, where German immigrants were virtually unable to withstand powerful assimilative forces, Brazilian culture was thought to be weak. The Luso-Brazilians themselves seemed to combine indolence and ignorance with ridiculous conceit. As for their Portuguese language, it was useful to know but unimportant in terms of world cultures. Compared with German, it offered few literary treasures. The distinguished Brazilian anthropologist Egon Schaden, reflecting upon his youth as a pupil in a German school in Santa Catarina before World War I, recalled that each child had a notebook with a firm admonition printed upon the cover: "Remember that you are a German!"<sup>38</sup>

It was precisely because Luso-Brazilian culture was so ineffectual, the German chauvinists argued, that Teuto-Brazilians should feel obligated to preserve their own culture. By infusing Brazilian society with their superior values and behaviors, they would per-

36. Tonnelat, *L'expansion allemande*, 97–98; Burns, *A History of Brazil*, 253; Fischer, "O problema da conservação," 343. For a detailed study of the Muckerkrieg, see Janaína Amado, *Conflito social no Brasil: A revolta dos "Mucker," Rio Grande do Sul, 1868–1898* (São Paulo, 1978).

37. Dedekind, *Brasilien*, 9.

38. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), October 20, 1917; Canstatt, *Brasilien*, 251, 416; Tonnelat, *L'expansion allemande*, 125, 141; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 43; interview with Egon Schaden, January 8, 1982, São Paulo.

form their best service as loyal Brazilian citizens. Some Germans held that each ethnic group should be allowed to develop its own potentialities, Teuto-Brazilian as well as Luso-Brazilian; each was to have the same right to survive. According to this doctrine, cultural pluralism would bring strength to the state; assimilation, by contrast, was threatening to the state because it meant the gradual disappearance of ethnic vitality.<sup>39</sup>

The preservation of the German language was equally essential, in the chauvinist view, because if it were to fade from use, so would valuable German customs, along with the German sense of duty and commitment to the work ethic. At the same time, they agreed that it was important for the Germans to master the Portuguese language. Only by speaking it fluently could the Germans ever hope to find the place they deserved in Brazilian society and to influence Brazilian culture properly.<sup>40</sup> Proponents of this brand of ethnocentrism never questioned the loyalty of the immigrants and their children to Brazil. Brazil was their home and they were totally committed to it. Most had been born there and had never lived anywhere else. Their bonds were with German culture, not with the German state or the kaiser and his ambitions.

Immigrant perceptions of the host society may be discerned in a variety of sources, including textbooks. For example, a geography published in 1916 specifically for German schools by Rotermond's Evangelical publishing house offers a generally positive portrait of the Luso-Brazilians but also reveals German attitudes:

The greater number of the inhabitants of our state [Rio Grande do Sul] are Luso-Brazilians, descended from immigrant Portuguese. . . . But these Portuguese did not keep their race pure. For the most part they mingled with Indians and negroes so that with time the mixed race of the Brazilians has arisen.

The Luso-Brazilian country dweller has many attractive qualities. He is generally modest and hospitable, much more polite and sociable than the German, and he is not so addicted to the abuse of alcohol. He has no class prejudice. Rich or poor, ignorant and cultured meet together in the pleasantest way. But these good qualities are not so well developed in the Luso-Brazilian dwellers in cities. Among them are

39. Schaden, "Der Deutschbrasilianer," 183–84; Willems, "Immigrants and Their Assimilation in Brazil," 209.

40. Oberacker, *Die volkspolitische Lage*, 76; Dedekind, *Brasilien*, 9, 45.

noticed rather some less agreeable Brazilian qualities, little sense of duty, unpunctuality, carelessness, and ingratitude.

The Brazilian is a zealous patriot and loves his country above everything.

The textbook writer then assesses his fellow Teuto-Brazilians. Protestant opposition to alcoholic drink is again apparent:

The German colonists are simple, industrious, worthy, and honorable men of good reliable character. All the more is it to be lamented that here and there one of them has hurt the name of the local Germans by quarrelsomeness or drunkenness. The significance of German things for Rio Grande is very great. A hundred years ago Rio Grande do Sul was a land on whose uplands the Luso-Brazilians grazed a few cattle and in whose primeval forest dwelt Indians and wild beasts. Then came the Germans and with them came agriculture, commerce, and industrial arts into the land. When we visit our thriving German colonies, when we see the German wholesale houses and factories in our cities, our hearts are proud of the things German industry and German capacity have accomplished.

What would Rio Grande do Sul be without the Germans? The future of the state depends on the further development of the German-Brazilian population.<sup>41</sup>

This passage exposes the conflict Germans felt as members of Brazilian society. Like any other ethnocultural group, the Germans felt the need to emphasize their desirable characteristics (and by implication the ways in which they thought themselves superior to the Luso-Brazilians). At the same time, however, they sought acceptance and recognition. They were eager to be considered an essential element in their country's history, and they wanted Brazilians to understand and appreciate how extensive their contributions had been to Brazil's development.

The literature of Teuto-Brazilian filiopietism therefore describes how individual Germans had participated in the exploration of the land, the independence movement, and the preservation of Brazilian territorial integrity through the wars with Argentina and Paraguay. It applauds Koseritz and Rotermond, different as they were from each other, for their liberalism. In the Teuto-Brazil-

41. Theodor Radletz, *Heimat and Naturkunde für Deutsche Schulen* (São Leopoldo, 1916), quoted in Jefferson, "Pictures from Southern Brazil," 546.

ian view, the liberty of conscience that these and other Germans defended helped to initiate the renewal of national intellectual life. Filiopietists also stressed the role of the Germans in giving work new value and dignity and in condemning slavery as morally and socially obnoxious. The Germans, they felt, had contributed significantly to the elevation of moral, cultural, and material standards in Brazil. Proud of the role the Germans had played in the history of Brazil, they were eager for Teuto-Brazilians to be recognized for their contributions.<sup>42</sup> The filiopietists were also convinced that the Germans should take credit, at least in part, for the emergence of the middle class in Brazil. Similarly, the fact that São Leopoldo, Joinville, Blumenau, and other strongly German cities were so well planned and administered could be attributed to the Germans' communal spirit and their sense of personal responsibility for the public welfare.<sup>43</sup>

For a substantial but not fully definable portion of the German subsociety in Brazil, this kind of ethnocentric talk was pointless. Like any other immigrant group, the Germans included persons who were favorably disposed toward the language and culture of the host society and who wanted to become a part of it as quickly and painlessly as possible.<sup>44</sup> Unlike the cultural idealists who claimed that it was their right (if not their responsibility) to maintain their immigrant speech and folkways and who denied the right of the government to demand that they learn the language of the country, the rapid assimilators were eager to abandon the marks of immigrant status that presumably had caused them social and economic deprivation.

Between these two extremes—the cultural chauvinists and the rapid assimilators—were the majority, who saw no particular problem at all. They went about their daily activities without thinking much about the status of immigrant culture in Brazil or the problems of assimilation. Through daily contacts at work, at

42. The classic example of Teuto-Brazilian filiopietistic literature is *Der deutsche Beitrag zum Aufbau der brasilianischen Nation*, by Karl H. Oberacker, Jr. Originally published in 1955, it was revised and expanded in 1978. A second, revised edition appeared in Portuguese: *A contribuição teuta a formação da nação Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, 1968).

43. Szilvassy, "Participação dos alemães," 248–53.

44. Fischer, "O problema da conservação," 344.

the store, at church, in school, or even at home, they learned Portuguese more or less automatically. Whether they learned quickly or slowly depended upon the individual circumstance and whether it provided good or poor opportunities for interaction with speakers of Portuguese. In any case, however, for them the ability to speak Portuguese became the symbol of higher social status; it was the avenue to social and economic progress, especially for the young.<sup>45</sup>

When governmental personnel began to identify as problems the exclusiveness of the rural German colonies and the slowness of the Germans to assimilate, as they did in the 1890s and later, they thought first of the extreme cases—the highly isolated districts where there were no Portuguese-language schools and where hundreds of second and third-generation children could be found whose knowledge of Portuguese was rudimentary at best. Similarly, when they tried to identify typical German attitudes, they naturally paid attention to the most conspicuous persons—the noisy idealists who made speeches and wrote editorials, essays, and letters demanding the right to maintain their cultural separatism.

Thus the Luso-Brazilian majority acquired a distorted image of the Teuto-Brazilians. Some elements of the composite picture were correct, others were out of proportion, and a few, one might suppose, were simply wrong. For decades in the nineteenth century, the Luso-Brazilian majority had ignored the question of German assimilation, probably because it had not seemed important enough to demand action. Then, when the Germans' failure to assimilate began to be perceived as a problem, some Brazilians tended to overreact and to press for extreme or far-reaching measures that would enforce greater conformity. Such was the situation when World War I began.

45. Schaden, "Der Deutschbrasilianer," 189–93.

## Brazil and the Distant War, 1914–1917

**W**ORLD WAR I, central though it is to modern world history, was not a major event in Brazilian development. Unlike the United States and most European countries, which can trace the origins of numerous contemporary conditions and problems to the Great War, Brazil was involved only peripherally. Ultimately, Brazil was the only South American nation to declare war. On August 4, 1914, when diplomacy failed and hostilities began, the Brazilian government quickly decreed its "complete neutrality." Nevertheless, the international conflict had an immediate and severe effect on the Brazilian economy, which was already in a nearly chaotic condition because of the extravagance and corruption of the Hermes da Fonseca regime (1910–1914).<sup>1</sup>

Brazil had been experiencing difficulties in its international trade relationships even before war was declared in Europe. There had been a substantial decline in Brazilian exports, which in turn meant a shortage of European capital for investment purposes. Prices dropped accordingly. The Brazilian treasury was directly affected by this turn of events because import taxes furnished the major source of income; state governments were similarly influ-

1. [Brazil, Ministerio das Relações Exteriores], *The Brazilian Green Book, Consisting of Diplomatic Documents Relating to Brazil's Attitude with Regard to the European War, 1914–1917* (London and New York, 1918), 11–13; Percy A. Martin, "Introduction by the Translator and Editor," *A History of Brazil*, by João Pandiá Calogeras (Chapel Hill, 1939), xiii; Percy Alvin Martin, "Brazil," in A. Curtis Wilgus (ed.), *Argentina, Brazil and Chile since Independence* (1935; rpr. New York, 1963), 166–68.



enced because they were financed chiefly by export taxes levied on coffee, rubber, sugar, and other agricultural commodities. As deficits grew in 1914 and 1915, the Brazilian government resorted to the inflationary expedient of issuing unsecured paper currency, so that by 1917 the quantity of fiat money in circulation had doubled. Overproduction was also a problem. In order to control devastating fluctuations in the price of coffee, Brazil had developed a program in which the government secured foreign loans to purchase coffee from the planters. Surpluses were then stockpiled in warehouses overseas and released to the international market in years of bad harvests.<sup>2</sup>

War upset these arrangements. For several decades Great Britain had been the largest investor in Brazilian development, but going to war meant the diversion of capital into arms and munitions. Purchases of Brazilian commodities, especially coffee, dropped sharply. War also meant the imposition of a British naval blockade on the Central Powers, and very quickly the German, Austrian, and Belgian markets for Brazilian coffee also vanished. In 1914 the value of Brazilian exports dropped 30 percent from what they had been the preceding year. The loss of German markets and investments inevitably increased Brazil's dependency upon the Allied Powers and upon the United States, which, like Brazil, retained its neutrality at that time. Later, Brazil's relations with the Central Powers deteriorated drastically when Germany seized huge quantities of Brazilian coffee warehoused in Hamburg and Antwerp. The net effect of these developments was that Brazil was forced to declare a moratorium on foreign debt payments until March, 1915.<sup>3</sup>

Except for the German and Italian *colonos*, most Brazilians tended to sympathize with the Allies, especially France. The cultural bond with France that had grown strong in Brazil during the empire period had continued into the twentieth century. Brazil's educational system in particular was founded on French models,

2. Herman G. James, *Brazil after a Century of Independence* (New York, 1925), 168–69; Love, *São Paulo in the Brazilian Federation*, 44–47. For a general treatment of the role of Germany in Brazil's foreign trade, see Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 232–73.

3. Percy Alvin Martin, *Latin America and the War* (Baltimore, 1925), 36–39, 51; Burns, *A History of Brazil*, 255.

and knowledge of the French language was common among the elite. Although admiration for French culture was an upper-class phenomenon, it had a significant effect on official policy. The Brazilian government, especially in its foreign policy, was strongly influenced by sentiments expressed in the leading newspapers and in the Congress; but in a country where the majority was illiterate, these were inevitably the opinions of the educated classes.<sup>4</sup>

For most ordinary people in Brazil, the war in Europe was a distant affair of no particular consequence. They understood little about it; it seemed to affect their daily lives in no direct or discernible fashion.<sup>5</sup> Still, the war tended to evoke sympathies for one side or the other, even though at first there was no expectation that Brazil should join in. Immigrants and their descendants, no matter how many generations removed, felt an emotional bond with their ancestral homeland and were convinced of the justice of its cause. This had the effect of ranging the few English, French, and Belgian immigrants with the majority of the Luso-Brazilians against the Germans and the Italians, since in 1914, Italy was still in alliance with Germany. Later, after Italy joined the Allies against Germany, the attitudes of the Italian Brazilians changed dramatically.

### The German-Language Press Interprets the War

When the news arrived in Brazil that a state of war existed between France and Germany, the *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre got out an extra edition, as it had the day before when Kaiser Wilhelm II ordered the mobilization of the army after Germany declared war on Russia. The paper revealed that all Reichsdeutsche subject to military service were ordered to report to the nearest consular office and prepare to return to Germany. Reservists in

4. Mario de Lima-Barbosa, *Les Français dans l'histoire du Brésil* (Rio de Janeiro and Paris, 1923); Freyre, *Order and Progress*; Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 5, 30, 32; Burns, *A History of Brazil*, 172, 201, 228.

5. "Attitude of Brazilians toward the War" and "Situation at São Paulo," anonymous reports sent to the Department of State by Capt. S. McCauley, Assistant Director of Naval Intelligence, April 25 and 26, 1918, in Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Entry 540, Box 1, Brazil folder, National Archives.

the Austrian army received a similar call to service. In the succeeding weeks a few reservists managed to return to Europe, but because of the British blockade most got no farther than the consulates, if they reported at all. No doubt there were some, as in the United States, who rushed to obtain citizenship in their adopted country in order to escape a pointless death on a European battlefield. On the other hand, a few Brazilians of German birth or descent actually volunteered and subsequently served in the German army; some of them were killed.<sup>6</sup>

Within a week after the news of the war reached Brazil, the Germans there had begun to organize committees for the support of the German Red Cross and for the sale of German war bonds. In Porto Alegre, the Verband deutscher Vereine (Union of German Societies) met with the German and Austrian consuls to discuss ways in which they could help families of reservists. Similar activities occurred in most of the German settlements, especially in the cities. Before many weeks had passed, numerous communities organized rallies and bazaars in support of the German war effort. Collections for war widows, orphans, and other needy persons continued throughout the fall of 1914. By the end of the year, Germans in Rio Grande do Sul had collected more than \$77,000 for the assistance of war widows, orphans, and other persons in need. Arno Philipp of the *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre) captured the spirit when he wrote that even though they could not sacrifice their blood for their old homeland, it was self-evident that they would at least give of their possessions.<sup>7</sup>

6. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), August 3, 4, 5, 1914, February 17, 1915; *Germania* (São Paulo), August 19, September 28, 1915; Georg Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens während des Weltkrieges und die Stellung des brasilianischen Deutschtums* (Hamburg, 1935), 18; Rudolf Becker, *Deutsche Siedler in Rio Grande do Sul: Eine Geschichte der deutschen Einwanderung* (1938), 76; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 475. For a classic account of a chauvinistic Teuto-Brazilian response to the news of the outbreak of World War I, see Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 258–68. Cf. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 86–89.

7. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), August 10, 21, 1914; Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 276; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 475; Becker, *Deutsche Siedler*, 77. Details of the collections in 1915 and 1916 are given in Uhle's *Kalender: 1917. Jahrbuch für das Deutschtum in Brasilien* (Curitiba, [1916]), 82. Philipp quoted in Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 163.



## Kaiserlich Deutsches Konsulat São Paulo

Seine Majestät der Kaiser haben im Namen des Reichs die Mobilmachung des Heeres und der Marine befohlen.

Sämtliche Unteroffiziere und Mannschaften des Beurlaubtenstandes sowie die Ersatzreservisten haben somit, wie einem jeden aus seinem Militärpaß bekannt, unverzüglich nach Deutschland zurückzukehren und sich bei demjenigen Bezirkskommando, das sie im Reichsgebiet zuerst erreichen, zu melden.

Nachweislich Mittellosen werden von diesem Konsulat Reiseunterstützungen gewährt.

Alle Militärpflichtigen, das sind diejenigen, die in diesem Jahr ihr zwanzigstes Lebensjahr vollendet haben oder noch vollenden, sowie die Zurückgestellten, über deren Militärverhältnis noch nicht endgültig entschieden ist, haben sich unverzüglich zur ärztlichen Untersuchung auf diesem Konsulat einzufinden.

Die sämtlichen Personal- und etwa schon vorhandene Militärpapiere, wie Lösungs- und Zurückstellungsscheine sind tunlichst vorher einzureichen.

Alle Zurückstellungen haben mit der Mobilmachung ihre Gültigkeit verloren.

Die höchste Pflicht, die Verteidigung des Vaterlandes, ruft. Kein wehrfähiger Deutscher wird sich ihr entziehen.

### Mit Gott für Kaiser und Reich!

São Paulo, den 2. August 1914.

Der Kaiserliche Konsul

(gez.) Dr. von der Heyde.

A notice placed in the *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), August 3, 1914, by the German consul in São Paulo. It announces the mobilization of reservists in the German army and navy and orders such persons in Brazil to return immediately to Germany and report to their district commanders.

Emotions ran high during the first weeks of the war. One German national who happened to be on a trip to South America in 1914 reported that in Porto Alegre, hatred of the Germans was so strong that the personal safety of some of the best-known leaders of the German community was endangered and that officers of German societies were regularly insulted on the streets. He also described how an excited mob consisting chiefly of young people tried to storm the German consulate in Porto Alegre but were restrained by the Brazilian Army. In his view, the trouble was attributable to the pro-Ally propaganda in the Brazilian press.<sup>8</sup>

It is true that most Portuguese-language newspapers favored the Allies, though some were more outspoken than others. The German explanation of events and their causes was largely ignored. In Bahia, for example, only the *Diário de Notícias* seemed willing to accord any space to the German point of view. By contrast, another Bahian paper called for the expulsion of all German citizens from Brazil.<sup>9</sup> The same pattern prevailed in all the major cities.

If the Portuguese-language newspapers displayed strong partisanship for France and England, the German press was no less the defender of the Central Powers. There were about two dozen German-language newspapers in Brazil in that time, and all of them, from the anticlerical, freethinking *Germania* of São Paulo to the Protestant church-oriented *Deutsche Post* of São Leopoldo, deemed it their duty to defend Germany. Even when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia at the end of July, 1914, the *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre ventured the opinion that Austria naturally would have the sympathy of Germans everywhere, not merely because of ethnic solidarity and shared culture, but because its cause rested on justice. As the Teuto-Brazilian journalists saw it, their biggest problem was to refute biased news coverage and vicious propaganda. The Portuguese-language press seemed filled with caricatures of Germany, its spirit and culture, and its purposes in the war. For the most part, educated Germans in Bra-

8. Paul von Kapff (ed.), *Erlebnisse Auslandsdeutsche im Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart, 1921), 14.

9. *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania und Deutschtum in Bahia* (Berlin, 1923), 136–37. Cf. Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 275.

zil refused to believe any news of the war that had been cleansed by British and French censors.<sup>10</sup>

Teuto-Brazilians were especially troubled by the atrocity propaganda that began to appear in the world press before the end of the first month of the war. Suddenly they were confronted with lurid tales of German brutality in Belgium and France—rape, pillage, massacres of defenseless civilians, and the destruction of cultural treasures. According to these mostly fictional accounts, fiends in German uniforms had amputated the breasts of Belgian women with the stroke of a sword, children had been bayoneted, and babies' hands had been chopped off. Unknown numbers of people in Brazil as elsewhere accepted these reports at face value, and inevitably their attitudes toward all things German were modified accordingly. Some of the stories were subsequently proven to be utterly false; others were distorted and embellished.<sup>11</sup>

Teuto-Brazilians naturally applauded any venture designed to counter British and French propaganda. For example, when the União Teuto-Brasileiro was founded in Rio de Janeiro, the distant *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre declared that it lay in the best interest, both material and spiritual, of Teuto-Brazilians to support all such efforts to develop a true understanding of what it meant to be German. The fact that Luso-Brazilians were prominent in the leadership and membership of the organization was especially gratifying. In Rio de Janeiro hundreds of Germans gathered to protest the pro-Ally propaganda and unanimously supported a defiant and defensive resolution that was later distributed widely in Brazil.<sup>12</sup>

The task of countering the propaganda of the Allies was difficult because there was no accessible German news service. The

10. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), July 31, August 12, 1914; Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 162ff.; Martin Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul: Ihr Werden und Wesen, eine Kulturgeschichte des riograndenser Deutschtums," n.d. [ca. 1929] (Typescript in Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart), 56; Buchmann, "Die deutschsprachige Presse in Brasilien," 220.

11. Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 271; James M. Read, *Atrocity Propaganda, 1914-1919* (New Haven, 1941), 29-34. I have treated this topic in greater detail in *Bonds of Loyalty*, 85-87.

12. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), September 5, 1914; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 476; Kapff (ed.), *Erlebnisse*, 14.

transatlantic cable from Emden in Germany to Pernambuco in Brazil had been cut during the first week of the war, and communication by ship was blocked by the British navy. News from non-Ally sources arrived piecemeal through neutral countries, but it was hardly adequate. Several German-language newspapers in Porto Alegre and São Paulo, in cooperation with certain German commercial houses, tried to set up a news service in Petrópolis, Pedro II's old summer capital in the mountains near Rio de Janeiro. Their idea was to make use of the official reports received by the German consul general, but the effort was futile because of the lack of means and experience. The *Deutsche Post* of São Leopoldo set up an elaborate telegram service through Uruguay to Buenos Aires in Argentina in order to tap Spanish sources of news. Two stations erected by the Germans in the United States at Sayville on Long Island and at Tuckerton, New Jersey, made sporadic connections with Brazil by shortwave radio, but this effort at long-distance communication lasted only through the month of August, 1914, when it was silenced by technical difficulties.<sup>13</sup>

Suspicious as they were of propaganda from French and British sources, the German Brazilians tended to believe the many rumors, distortions, and lies that were circulated among them through the efforts of German propagandists. So firm was their faith in the invincibility of German arms that when a German-language paper in Rio Grande do Sul published a false report that Paris had fallen, some *colonos* responded with a great celebration, complete with fireworks.<sup>14</sup>

In Brazil as in the United States, many of the editors and publishers of the German-language press were people born in Germany who were rather more eager than the rank-and-file members of the Teuto-Brazilian community to defend the fatherland. Extravagant partisanship was the result. Not content to address only readers of German, they began to include columns of copy in Portuguese—allegedly free of bias—in their papers. Readers were expected to give such material to Luso-Brazilian acquaintances so

13. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 114; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 56; Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 207; Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 19; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 469; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 136; Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 117.

14. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 114.

that they too could have the benefit of German truth. German-language papers also reprinted articles in Portuguese from the Brazilian press that allegedly distorted war news, disparaged Germany in some way, or slandered Teuto-Brazilians. The *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre, for example, provided its readers with a reprint in which it was charged that a German rally at Taquará had been opened with the singing of the German national anthem, rather than the Brazilian. This accusation was then rejected as a malicious fabrication.<sup>15</sup>

The next German countermeasure in the propaganda war was to try to acquire control of Portuguese-language newspapers. A comparable effort in the United States was futile, but in Brazil this tactic seems to have been more fruitful. The *Tribuna* of Rio de Janeiro, for example, was an established paper with a circulation of more than ten thousand copies. Then, in 1915, it was purchased by German interests and subsidized by the German embassy through collections from local German bankers and businessmen. In Porto Alegre, the *Diário*, which had followed a strongly anti-German line throughout the first year of the war, was bought out in September, 1915, by a corporation owned by German Brazilians, and an editor named Willy Lüderitz was put in charge.<sup>16</sup>

In Santa Catarina, *O Dia* of Florianópolis and the *Novedades* of Itajaí also followed the pro-German line. In both instances ownership rested with politicians, such as Felipe Schmidt, who naturally cultivated the votes of Teuto-Brazilians. In other cases Portuguese-language newspapers were started by Germans after the war began. *O Diário* of Rio de Janeiro was such a creation. Founded by the publisher of the *Deutsche Zeitung* of São Paulo, this paper was externally Portuguese but the inside pages were in German and were entitled *Deutsche Tageblatt*. Neither this effort nor several others like it were successful. Offensive to the Luso-Brazilian population, they were equally unable to attract subscribers among the Germans.<sup>17</sup>

15. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), September 30, 1914.

16. *Ibid.*, September 15, 1914. See also *Germania* (São Paulo), July 31, August 5, 1915.

17. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 56, 164; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 54–55; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 479; *Monatsblätter des Germanischen Bundes für Süd-Amerika*, I (March, 1916), 2.



What the German-language press chose to report reveals a great deal about the psychology of this beleaguered minority. Reliable news of the war itself was in short supply, but there were numerous attacks on the bias of the Portuguese-language press. Columns were filled with accounts of the fund-raising activities of Teuto-Brazilian organizations on behalf of the German Red Cross and with chauvinistic speeches made at pro-German rallies, bazaars, and festivals. More significantly, the German papers were intensely interested in what Luso-Brazilian leaders had to say, pro or con, about Germany, German culture, or Teuto-Brazilian society. Anything an important politician said or did that could be construed as favorable to the Germans was reported as a justification of their behavior or point of view.<sup>18</sup> Dunshee de Abranches, president of the Chamber of Deputies in the Brazilian Congress, was identified as a special hero. It was his willingness "to break lances for German honor," according to one German source, that led to his forced resignation.<sup>19</sup>

The German-language press was most sensitive about what it called *Deutschenhetze*—German baiting or anti-German agitation. Dozens of articles on this subject appeared during the first weeks and months of the war. Indicative of a siege mentality, they revealed a deep concern for what the writers perceived as the debasement of German culture. It was their culture, not Germany itself or the course of the war in Europe, that was the central concern of the German Brazilians. What the kaiser said or did, what battles his armies won or lost, or what policies his government formulated and pursued were important to them because these things impinged upon their self-image and their self-esteem. For German soldiers to be called barbarians, Huns, or butchers of women and children was as unfair as it was untrue; by implication such charges could be applied to the German Brazilians as well. They perceived themselves as industrious, moral, honest, educated, loyal citizens of Brazil, but during those early weeks and months of the war the Portuguese-language papers carried chill-

18. For example, see *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), August 31, 1914, report in Portuguese on the defense of the Germans made by Joaquín Luíz Osório, a deputy in the Brazilian Congress from Rio Grande do Sul.

19. Kapff (ed.), *Erlebnisse*, 14; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 153; Brunn, *Deutschland und Brasilien*, 274.

ing stories of German brutality, arrogance, and inhumanity. In contrast, the Allies, they were told, were fighting to preserve civilization, freedom, and justice. It is not surprising that the German-language press responded vigorously and sometimes unwisely.<sup>20</sup>

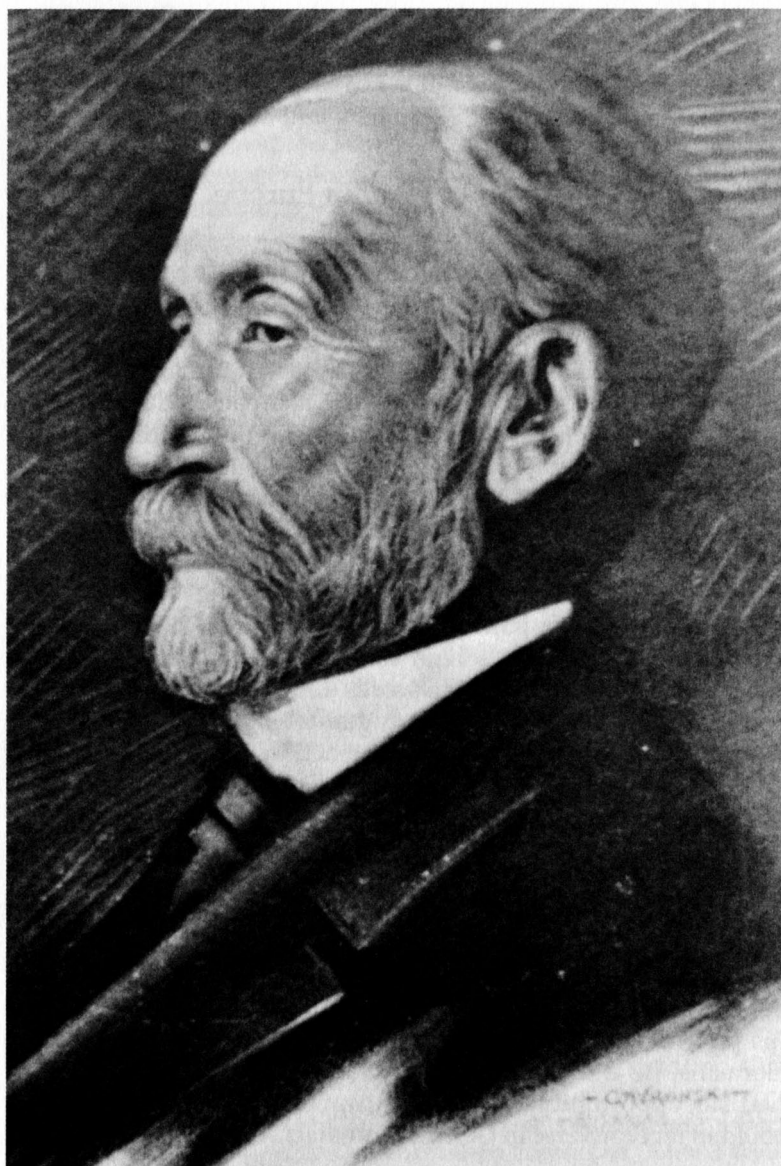
### The Churches Respond to War in Europe

In São Leopoldo old Dr. Rotermund lost his patience. Writing in his *Deutsche Post*, he asserted that the Luso-Brazilians should know that the Germans objected to the prejudice and ignorance that pervaded the Portuguese-language press in its obvious partisanship for France. The irate clergyman went on to encourage a boycott of all businesses whose owners sympathized with the Allies. One had already begun in Porto Alegre, he reported. Moreover, he advised, papers filled with lies about Germany should be sent back to the publishers; all economic relations should be broken off with such people—*Deutschenfresser*, he called them (literally, one who devours Germans). In the past, Germans had learned Portuguese in order to trade with them. “We have gone much too far in our politeness,” he grumbled. “Why don’t the Lusos learn German? It’s high time that we Germans begin to speak German—with German words and German action.”<sup>21</sup>

Widely reprinted in the Portuguese-language press, Rotermund’s outburst produced a stormy reaction. A huge anti-German demonstration was staged outside the *Post*’s building in São Leopoldo. It is possible that the place would have been destroyed, had it not been for the intervention of Dr. Antonio Borges de Medeiros, president of the state of Rio Grande do Sul. Borges subsequently requested an interview with the editor of the *Post*, who readily agreed that it was unreasonable to expect Luso-Brazilians to learn the German language but insisted that Germans should be allowed to use German in their own social relationships. For his part, Borges was remarkably restrained. Hoping to calm the Germans, he expressed his wish that in regions where Germans had no opportunity to learn Portuguese, government officials could in fact converse in German and that German could be taught

20. For example, see *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), February 12, 13, 1915.

21. *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo), September 2, 1914, transcribed in Fischer, “Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul,” 236.



Dr. Wilhelm Rotermund, patriarch of the German Evangelical Synod of Rio Grande do Sul and publisher of the *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo)

Reprinted from *Uhle's Kalender für das Jahr 1918*

in the higher schools along with English and French. Moreover, Borges claimed to understand that the concern for the Teuto-Brazilians was primarily for the welfare of their relatives and friends in Germany. Whatever else Borges might have told the editor of the *Post* was not reported.<sup>22</sup>

There was no agreement among the German editors on how aggressive they should be in the defense of their ethnic interests. Some charged that in this case the *Post* had endangered good relations between Luso- and Teuto-Brazilians; others felt that in the end the *Post* had backed off and was too willing to accommodate itself to Brazilian views. Feelings engendered by the war were so intense that new German-language publications were brought out to promulgate one position or the other. In Montenegro, Rio Grande do Sul, a paper was founded in 1914 to foster the integration of the Germans into Brazilian life; inevitably, Teuto-Brazilian chauvinists denounced it as a fraud and a deception. Some months earlier in Pelotas, located at the southern end of Rio Grande do Sul, several Evangelical clergymen combined to found the *Deutsche Wacht* for German-speakers there, whether they were Teuto-Brazilians, Reichsdeutsche, Austrians, or Swiss. Its announced purpose was to watch over German interests and to bridge the political and religious divisions within the group. By scorning political involvement, the founders made the cultivation of ethnicity the paper's *raison d'être*. The earthshaking events in Europe, the paper observed at the outset of the war, had stimulated consciousness—a development that “fills each good German with pride and joy.”<sup>23</sup>

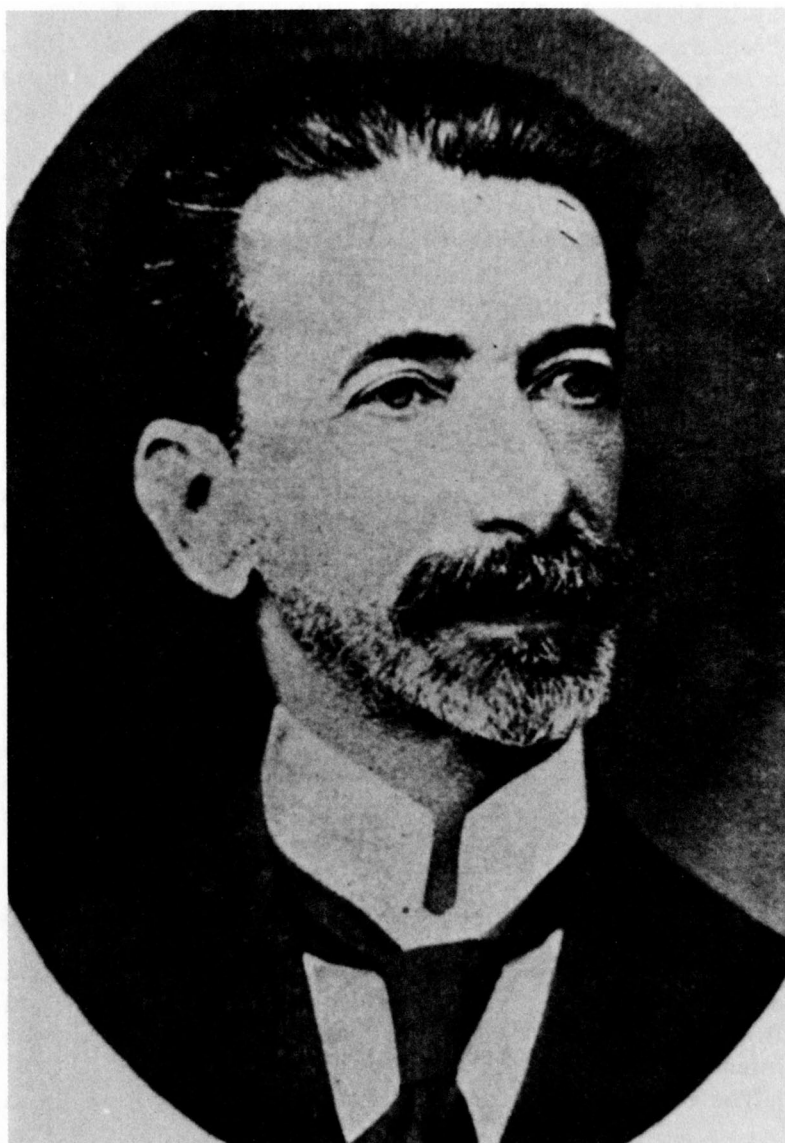
Other papers observed the same effect. The *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre was pleased to note that the war was invigorating German ethnicity all over the world; the press, churches, schools, societies of all kinds—all had increased in number, strength, and scope of activities. Even persons who formerly had felt alienated from the ethnic group, the *Zeitung* noted, were captured by the intense new spirit of unity and togetherness.<sup>24</sup>

The German gymnastic societies (*Turnvereine*) also thrived in

22. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 165; *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo), September 8, 1914, transcribed in Fischer, “Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul,” 237.

23. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), September 12, 1914; *Deutsche Wacht* (Pelotas), n.d., transcribed in Fischer, “Die deutscher Presse in Rio Grande do Sul,” 322.

24. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), August 13, 1914, March 16, 1915.



Dr. Antonio Borges de Medeiros, the distinguished, long-term president of the state of Rio Grande do Sul

Reprinted from *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*

this heady enthusiasm for *Deutschtum*. In May, 1915, the union of turners in Porto Alegre started a new monthly publication, *Deutsche Turnblätter*, declaring in the inaugural issue that its purpose was to strengthen the power of German culture "by nourishing German customs, German gymnastics, and German songs." Subsequent issues continued this emphasis, but unlike the newspapers, it was silent on the subject of anti-Germanism in Brazil.<sup>25</sup>

Among the churches, the German Evangelical synods experienced a surge of excitement because of the war in Europe. Its leaders had declared repeatedly that its bonds with the German language and culture were insoluble. In a publication intended for the officials of the Riograndenser Synod, Wilhelm Rotermund prophesied that Germany's destiny would determine the status of "her children" overseas. He made the link between cultural maintenance and religious commitment explicit: "We Germans must not educate our children in Luso-Brazilian institutions," he wrote. "Offerings of life blood will not be required of us, as of our ethnic brethren over there, but it is our duty to hold fast to our ethnic customs and to our Evangelical faith, even as we must participate eagerly in the work of the church and contribute our money to Evangelical churches and schools." Above all, Rotermund hoped that the war would generate enthusiasm for the German language and Brazilian customs, thereby strengthening his church.<sup>26</sup>

Local congregations participated actively in the campaign to raise funds for the German Red Cross, buy German war bonds, and sponsor bazaars and rallies to aid German victims of war. Special prayer services were held for the success of German arms. At Taquará, located north of Porto Alegre, the German and Austrian consuls, dressed in full uniform, joined an overflow crowd in a service at an Evangelical church. Even though the great majority of the people in attendance were Brazilian citizens, the preacher used "we" and "us" in references to Germany and spoke of the German army as "our" army. He admonished the congregation that it was their "holy duty to defend their ethnic culture, which was threatened with annihilation."<sup>27</sup>

25. *Deutsche Turnblätter*, I (May, 1915).

26. Rundschreiben No. 414 des Vorstandes des Riograndenser Synode, quoted in Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 21; Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 146–47.

27. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), August 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 1914.

The professional journal published for the teachers of Evangelical schools in Rio Grande do Sul was similarly indiscreet. The editor, who also served as the director of the tiny Evangelical teachers college of Santa Cruz, spoke of Germany as "we" and of its army as "our magnificent soldiers." Virtually every issue of this monthly during 1914 and 1915 reveals the Evangelical church's exceptional commitment to German ethnocultural values and to its psychological investment in the outcome of the war. The idea that the Evangelical schools had the responsibility of instructing young Teuto-Brazilians in the Portuguese language is entirely absent.<sup>28</sup>

The dedication of the Evangelical church to German culture is further manifested in the curriculum of the college. In 1916 all course work in this three-year institution was offered in the German language, except for the history of Brazil. Although the college offered instruction in Portuguese, its annual report repeatedly identifies German-language classes as the most important part of the curriculum. Religion was also regularly taught. The course of study for the third year included German history since 1888; the description of this course emphasizes Kaiser Wilhelm II and the war. The annual report indicates that in 1916, twelve major events in the war, mostly German victories, were singled out for special attention and some were celebrated with a free day.<sup>29</sup> Here, indeed, was a "nursery of Kaiserism."

In the United States such an epithet was usually reserved for the schools of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. In Brazil, however, the Missouri Synod was seen in a very different light. This church never offered a word of defense for Germany or for the preservation of *Deutschtum* in its official Brazilian publication; rather, the war was considered the "worst of evils." Missouri Synod leaders saw the European conflict as a judgment of God upon a sinful people—punishment for wickedness, unbelief, failure to pray, contempt for God's Word, atheism, and the idolatry of human wisdom as revealed especially in modern science and theological liberalism.<sup>30</sup> The contrast between this position and the

28. *Allgemeine Lehrer-Zeitung für Rio Grande do Sul*, 1914–1915.

29. 7. *Jahresbericht des Deutschen Ev. Lehrerseminar für Rio Grande do Sul zu Santa Cruz*, 1916.

30. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 253–54; "Was will uns der Liebe Gott sagen durch die gegenwärtige schwere Kriegsnot?" *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt für Süd-*

Evangelical view was stark and, to the Evangelicals, unforgivable.

For a variety of reasons the German Catholics in Brazil were much less chauvinistic than were the Evangelicals. They did not perceive themselves as being threatened in the same way; because of its universal, multi-ethnic character, the Catholic church tended to unite its German adherents with Luso-Brazilians rather than to separate or isolate them from the rest of society. This tendency is reflected in the annual German Catholic *Kalender*. Compared to those put out by Protestant or secular publishers, the Catholic publications projected at most a muted pro-Germanism.<sup>31</sup> The Catholic church was not a ready agency for the organization of bazaars, rallies, or other activities to raise either money or enthusiasm for Germany's cause in the war. Moreover, the numerous Catholic clergymen of German antecedents generally kept silent on the subject, especially in Rio Grande do Sul, where João Becker was the archbishop of Porto Alegre. Born in Germany and raised in Brazil, Becker often displayed the characteristics of second-generation immigrants who for psychological or situational reasons reject their ethnic heritage. He was exceedingly sensitive to criticism that he was a German partisan and he was determined to align his administration with the dominant attitudes and behaviors of Luso-Brazilian society.

The inclusive or universal character of the Catholic church was hardly enough, however, to raise it above suspicion. Even though the church as a whole did not allow itself to become embroiled in the propaganda war, there were individual German Catholics, acting independently or on behalf of independent Catholic institutions, who supported the Central Powers as vigorously as did any Evangelical or freethinker. This was especially true within the Franciscan order, whose members and leaders were mostly German. Father Petrus Sinzig of Petrópolis is a notable example of an active pro-German among the Franciscans. A man of many talents, Sinzig defended the German point of view in his *Vozes de Petrópolis*, a Portuguese-language paper published under Franciscan auspices. It was Sinzig who tried to organize a substitute

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*Amerika*, XIV (August 15, 1914); "Was sagt die Bibel vom Weltkrieg?" *ibid.* (November 15, 1915).

31. For example, see *Der Familienfreund: Katholischer Hauskalender und Wegweiser für das Jahr 1917* (Porto Alegre, [1916]).





Dom João Becker, the German-born archbishop of Porto Alegre  
Reprinted from *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*

press service at the beginning of the war; he was the author of such patriotic hymns as "Siegeslied" and "Heil, Wilhelm, Heil!" According to the editor of *Deutsche Zeitung* of São Paulo, Sinzig was the guiding light in the fight against English and French propaganda.<sup>32</sup> The Franciscan influence was apparent in the Curitiba *Kompass*, widely recognized as a voice of German Catholicism, which was published by lay persons under Franciscan sponsorship. It, too, was a vigorous defender of Germany's interests in the war.<sup>33</sup>

Like the Evangelicals, many German Catholic institutions and parishes became the objects of Luso-Brazilian fears and were subjected to threats and intimidation of various kinds. Early in 1915, for example, there was a widespread rumor that the Franciscan cloister in Blumenau, Santa Catarina, was a secret arsenal of arms, including small cannons, still packed in crates. These weapons were allegedly intended for distribution among the Blumenau Germans if the monastery were attacked. Officials of the order denounced the allegations as malicious slander, but such rumors were not easily dispelled. Indeed, they cropped up again in April, 1917, following the break in diplomatic relations between Brazil and Germany.<sup>34</sup>

## Tension Increases

Throughout 1914 and 1915 the German-language press continued to report how organizations in this or that community had raised

32. Petrus Sinzig, *Nach dreisszig Jahren: Vierte Chronik (1915–1921) der Süd-brasilianischen Franziskanerprovinz von der Unbefleckten Empfängnis* (Curitiba and Freiburg, [1922], 140; see also Venantius Willeke, "Deutsche Kulturpioniere in Brasilien," *Staden-Jahrbuch: Beiträge zur Brasilkunde*, XIX (1971), 91–103. Sinzig also tried to influence non-German-Brazilian opinion by publishing a two-volume collection of essays written by German scholars and translated into Portuguese. These writings were in response to a French book (1916) that charged that Germany was theoretically and practically inimical to Catholicism. See Jorge Pfeilschifter (ed.), *Cultura alemã catholicismo e a guerra mundial: Réplica de defeza contra o livro "La guerra allemande et le Catholicisme"* (2 vols.; Petrópolis, 1916, 1917).

33. For an example of its gushy, intense chauvinism, see the article by Otto von Süd [pseud.] in Curitiba *Kompass*, April 20, 1916, reprinted in Sinzig, *Nach dreisszig Jahren*, 138–40.

34. Sinzig, *Nach dreisszig Jahren*, 62; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 23, 1917.

# Einladung zur Zeichnung auf die 3. steuerfreie 5 1/2-prozentige österreichischeKriegsanleihe

Die k. k. österreichische Regierung hat zur Deckung der Kriegsanlagen eine dritte Kriegsanleihe zur öffentlichen Zeichnung aufgelegt.

Die Anleihe wird in Schuldverschreibungen des österreichischen Staates zu 100, 200, 1000, 2000 und 10.000 Kronen ausgegeben; dieselben sind vom 1. Oktober 1915 datiert und in deutscher Sprache ausgestellt; der wesentliche Inhalt des Textes ist in den österreichischen Landessprachen beigelegt.

Diese Kriegsanleihe wird zu 5 1/2 Prozent fürs Jahr im Nachhinein verzinst; die Verzinsung erfolgt in 1/2-jährlichen Faten durch Zinsenkupons am 1. Jänner und am 1. Juli eines jeden Jahres; am 1. Jänner 1916 wird die erste 1/2-jährliche Zinsrate ausgezahlt.

Die Anleihe wird von der k. k. Staatsregierung am 1. Oktober 1930 zurückgezahlt, doch behält sich diese das Recht vor, die Rückzahlung ganz oder teilweise schon früher vorzunehmen, was mindestens drei Monate vor dem früheren Rückzahlungstermin verlautbart werden wird.

**Der Zeichnungspreis beträgt 93.6 Prozent**, zuzüglich der 5 1/2 Prozent Stückzinsen vom 1. Oktober bis zum Tage der Einzahlung.

Seitens der österreichischen Banken hat die K. K. Priv. **Oesterreichische Länderbank** in Wien die Firma **Willner, Arens & Comp.** in São Paulo damit betraut, Zeichnungen für diese Kriegsanleihe entgegenzunehmen.

Die k. k. priv. österr. Länderbank wird die zugeteilten Stücke durch diese Firma den Zeichnern übersenden oder auf deren Wunsch in Wien aufbewahren und verwalten.

Die Firma **Willner, Arens & Comp.** in São Paulo, Rua Libero Badaró Nr. 106, verabfolgt Zeichnungsformulare und sendet solche auch per Post zu.

Dieselbe ist bereit, die Zinsenkupons hier in São Paulo zu den jeweiligen Einlösungsterminen zum Inkasso zu überreichen und zum jeweiligen Tageskurse auszubezahlen.

Dieselbe ist weiters bereit, diese Kriegsanleihe bis zu **75 Prozent** des übernommenen Betrages zu beleihen und dafür bis zu 1/2 Prozent über dem österreichischen Bankzinsfuß zu berechnen.

Beträge von K 600.— an können auch in 4 Teilen, zu 25 Prozent jeden Monat, bezahlt werden.

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Anderer Eingang

Sonntag, den 21. November 1915

**VOLKSFEST**

Advertisements for German and Austrian war bonds frequently appeared in the German-language press. This example is from the *Germania* (São Paulo), November 20, 1915.

money for war-relief purposes, purchased German war bonds, or conducted a rally or bazaar of some kind—all intended to help the German war effort. It was unquestionably their right as citizens of a neutral country to engage in such activities, just as supporters of the Allies could and did do similar things for England and France. The behavior of many Teuto-Brazilians was nevertheless indiscreet and led to a further deterioration in their relations with the rest of society.

Sometimes the behavior on both sides was simply petty or petulant. In Pelotas, for example, a Portuguese-language newspaper (*Diário Popular*) delighted in attacking *Deutschtum*. Germans were incensed to read that Beethoven was not a German after all, but a Belgian; and that the invention of printing with movable type should be attributed not to Gutenberg, but to some obscure French shoemaker. One German response was a spiteful play on words, suggesting that the proper German translation of *Liga pelos Aliados* (League for the Allies) was *Lüge der Allügierten* (lies of pathological liars), a coined term that sounds much like the correct German translation, *Liga der Alliierten*.<sup>35</sup>

In other instances, the behavior of the Teuto-Brazilians was insensitive or simply stupid. Some celebrated German victories ostentatiously; opened or closed meetings with the singing of “Deutschland über Alles,” the German national anthem; and displayed German and Austrian flags everywhere. The last was especially offensive to Luso-Brazilians and sometimes led to trouble. One Sunday afternoon in August, 1915, a couple of Teuto-Brazilian merchants in Montenegro (near Porto Alegre) raised the German flag at a private gathering in a courtyard behind their place of business. A mob of non-Germans (“yellows and blacks,” according to the German-language newspaper) collected outside in protest. Fortunately, police arrived in time to neutralize the crowd. Four days later, Brazil received the news that Warsaw had fallen to the German army. This time the merchants in Montenegro and their friends celebrated with fireworks. Again a mob of forty or fifty men appeared, armed with clubs and led by a well-known Luso-Brazilian of the community, and once more violence was narrowly averted by the police. Several days

35. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), April 22, 1915.



A postcard advertising a special collection for German war victims that was to be held on January 27, 1917. The message reads: "Let no one say, 'I have already given'; our troops also do not say, 'We have already fought!'"

Author's private collection

later a pro-German rally was held at the clubhouse of a local *Verein* in Montenegro. A Luso-Brazilian, Dr. Abreu de Souza, belabored the Allies as he praised the local Germans for the way in which their work, sweat, and blood had helped to build Brazil into a great nation. Still another anti-German mob tried to disrupt the meeting, and this time a detachment of military police was required to maintain order.<sup>36</sup>

The aggressiveness of the German-Brazilian cultural chauvinists in their defense of Imperial Germany inevitably provoked a response in kind. Some of the most distinguished of Brazilian political culture leaders, led by the brilliant orator and statesman Ruy Barbosa of Bahia and including the novelists José Graça Aranha and José Veríssimo, decided that the time had come for coun-

36. *Ibid.*, August 11, 16, 1915; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 45.

termesures. In March, 1915, they founded the Liga pelos Aliados (League for the Allies) with Barbosa as president. Its declared purpose was to defend the Allies, protest alleged German atrocities and violations of international law, and raise money for the French and British Red Cross. Its strongly pro-French orientation made it especially attractive to the Positivists. The league also sought to hasten the assimilation of immigrants in the Portuguese language, and the promotion of Brazilian patriotism. An elitist, nativist organization, it soon became involved in domestic politics. For example, in response to Pan-Germanist propaganda, Ruy Barbosa proclaimed the dangers of German imperialism in the boundary controversy between the states of Paraná and Santa Catarina. The disputed area, a lightly settled region in the west near the Argentine border, included a substantial concession that had been granted to a German company, which in turn reportedly sold its land to German settlers only.<sup>37</sup>

Both the Liga pelos Aliados and, later, the Liga de Resistencia Nacional bore a striking resemblance to the National Security League and the American Defense Society in the United States, organizations that saw themselves during the neutrality period chiefly as propagandizers for preparedness. In both countries these wartime patriotic societies led the campaign against the

37. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 33–35; Martin, "Brazil," 250; Gaillard, *Amérique latine et Europe occidentale*, 42; Rodrigues, *The Brazilians*, 96; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 148.

Graça Aranha is often cited as a Brazilian intellectual whose much-praised novel *Canaan* (1902), set in a German district of Espírito Santo (where he had served briefly as a judge), reveals sympathetic understanding of Teuto-Brazilians. This is to overstate the case. At best, his understanding of the German settlers is superficial; he reveals no real comprehension of their behaviors, motives, and attitudes, much less of their diversity. Although Graça Aranha respects their willingness to work hard and their resultant economic power, he is also suspicious of their motives and critical of their reluctance to assimilate quickly. He portrays them as hard, mean-spirited, and unsympathetic, perhaps even cruel, to their own kind, just as he devastatingly describes minor Brazilian authorities as greedy, lazy, vindictive, and dishonest. There is no contradiction between Graça Aranha as the author of *Canaan* and as a militant anti-German in the era of World War I. The seeds of the latter are clearly in the novel, which also reveals fear of German imperialism, envy of German economic success, and disapproval of Teuto-Brazilian slowness in learning Portuguese. José Graça Aranha, *Canaan*, trans. Mariano Joaquín Lorente (Boston, 1920). Cf. Skidmore, *Black into White*, 109–12.



German language and culture; they repeatedly cited "the German menace" as their chief international concern; and they all produced profound and enduring resentments among the German ethnic subsocieties.<sup>38</sup>

### Germanische Bund für Süd-Amerika

Unlike the Luso-Brazilians, the Germans in Brazil were unable to establish a national organization comparable either to the Liga pelos Aliados or to the National German-American Alliance, which had been founded in the United States in 1901. The closest Brazilian equivalent to that aggressive, well-funded organization was the Germanische Bund für Süd-Amerika (German Federation of South America), established early in 1916 through the efforts of G. W. Zimmerli, a Swiss by birth who appeared briefly in Brazil as a representative of the German Red Cross.<sup>39</sup>

Intended as a mighty union of all Germanic peoples in South America—Germans, Austrians, Swiss, Dutch, and even Scandinavians—the Germanische Bund, according to its constitution, was to promote broadly Teutonic culture (*germanische Volkstum*) within the framework of Brazilian law and in harmony with the responsibilities of Brazilian citizenship. Although it believed that envy was the real cause of anti-German agitation, the Bund allegedly wanted to develop friendly relationships between Luso-Brazilians and Germanic elements in the population, as well as between the Brazilian government and the several Germanic states of central Europe. It supported German-language schools in Brazil, but it also claimed to favor the increased use of the Portuguese language among Germans. It hoped to spread German literature through a monthly publication and to bring the glories of German literature to Brazilian readers through Portuguese translations. Finally, the Bund intended to guarantee the protection of law to its members, especially if they suffered discrimination because of their membership in an ethnic minority group. Unlike the National German-American Alliance, on which it was patterned to

38. Cf. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 159, 215, 251. Gaillard, *Amérique latine et Europa occidentale*, 49; Szilvassy, "Participação dos alemães," 251; Love, *São Paulo in the Brazilian Federation*, 237.

39. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), February 19, 1916.

some extent, the Bund was not open to organizations but restricted its membership to individual persons. By November, 1916, it claimed to have attracted six thousand members.<sup>40</sup>

Such idealistic goals were attractive to many Teuto-Brazilians, and Zimmerli won much support as he scurried about in southern Brazil and Argentina. Although he concentrated his efforts on the educated, wealthy Reichsdeutsche in the cities, he did not ignore the isolated German communities in the *serra*, where his gospel was at first gladly received, especially in Evangelical districts. Local chapters of the Bund were organized in many communities during January and February, 1916, and their officers often included pastors and teachers of local Evangelical churches and schools. Temporary officers of the national organization were chosen in February; A. Krall, an agent of the Hamburg-Amerika shipping firm in Porto Alegre, became the first president. In Santa Catarina the prime mover of the organization was Arthur Koehler, the publisher of the Blumenau *Urwaldsbote*. Otto Rohkohl, described as the German consul, served as the local chairman; to everyone's surprise, the Bund attracted the support of both the local Evangelical pastor, Walter Mummelthey, and the head of the Franciscan order, Father Marcellus. A new era of harmony and cooperation had arrived, it appeared, as the first issue of the *Monatsblätter des Germanischen Bundes für Süd-Amerika* was published early in March.<sup>41</sup>

Zimmerli, an unusually energetic and aggressive person, moved so rapidly and successfully that one suspects that his employment as a Red Cross representative was merely a cover for his real job. Further research might well reveal that he, like Albert Dernburg and several other persons ostensibly working for the Red Cross in the United States, was an agent of the German government assigned to propaganda activity.<sup>42</sup> It is obvious that the German-

40. *Ibid.*, March 7, 1916; *Monatsblätter des Germanischen Bundes für Süd-Amerika*, I (March, 1916), 2, (November, 1916), 286; Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 269; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 46.

41. *Monatsblätter des Germanischen Bundes für Süd-Amerika*, I (November, 1916), 312-13; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), January 21, February 16, 1916; Fugmann, *Die Deutschen in Paraná*, 130.

42. Cf. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 127. In a communication dated June 13, 1916, Count Johann von Bernstorff, the German ambassador to the United States, referred to Zimmerli as a "Red Cross delegate" who had arrived in the United States



ische Bund was expected to counter the success of the Liga pelos Aliados; the inaugural issue of the *Monatsblätter* explicitly cited the league as an enemy of Germany and declared its intention to combat the league's propaganda. Zimmerli enjoyed the immediate and full support of the German consular corps; the Reichs-deutsche also responded eagerly. It is clear that Zimmerli's primary purpose was to mobilize German-Brazilian opinion, wealth, and influence under the kaiser's banner.<sup>43</sup> All the fine talk about Germanic culture and the improvement of relations with Luso-Brazilian society was a clumsy effort to screen the real purpose of the organization. Even more heavy-handed was Zimmerli's harsh condemnation of Teuto-Brazilian leaders who opposed his work.

As a stranger to Brazil, Zimmerli was unfamiliar with the leadership structure of the existing German-Brazilian subculture and he carelessly offended many influential persons.<sup>44</sup> Like his counterparts in the United States, he had no real understanding of the degree of assimilation that had actually taken place among Teuto-Brazilians, despite their continued maintenance of the German language and customs. Nor did he comprehend the ways in which his organization—an ephemeral expediency serving the immediate interests of Germany—might undermine the established leadership structure of the ethnic subsociety or how his success threatened to cause a further deterioration of its relationships with Luso-Brazilian society.

Opposition to Zimmerli and his Bund developed most quickly among the Evangelical clergy of Rio Grande do Sul and spread to the influential Verband deutscher Vereine in Porto Alegre. The Reverend Kolfhaus of São Leopoldo and Dr. Martin Braunschweig, the resident provost of the Prussian state church, led the attack through the pages of the *Deutsche Post*, a São Leopoldo newspaper that catered to Protestant readers. Widely reprinted in other

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from Brazil "without means" and "compromised financially." Bernstorff reported that he had obtained from private sources the means to finance a two-month lecture tour for Zimmerli in the United States. He assumed that he would subsequently receive reimbursement from Berlin. RG 59, Entry 540, Box 1, Brazil folder.

43. *Monatsblätter des Germanischen Bundes für Süd-Amerika*, I (March, 1916), 2, (April, 1916), 55; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul, 20–21; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), March 7, 1916.

44. Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 21.

German-language publications, including many that flatly rejected its arguments, the *Post's* articles crystallized opposition to the Bund by mid-March, 1916. By then the debate had degenerated into a mud-slinging contest, thereby dissolving any real possibility that the Bund might achieve its clandestine goals.<sup>45</sup>

By the end of February the German-language newspapers were filled with charges, explanations, and countercharges about the Germanische Bund. The first criticisms were mild enough: If the real purpose of the Bund was to fight pro-Ally propaganda, why exclude non-Germans (Turks, Bulgarians, Hungarians, and non-German Austrians, as well as friendly Luso-Brazilians) from the organization? The argument of the Porto Alegre Verband deutscher Vereine was more to the point. Sensitive to the Bund's challenge to its status within the German ethnic community, the Verband observed that since the goals of the Bund were so similar to its own, it made little sense to fracture the force of Teuto-Brazilian opinion by establishing a rival to its leadership.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile, the São Leopoldo *Post* charged that Zimmerli was exploiting German patriotism for his own personal benefit and predicted that money collected by the Bund would never go to the German Red Cross. Such attacks on Zimmerli's integrity continued for a month. Highly sensitive to these personal charges, Zimmerli, a former Protestant pastor, blamed them on the Evangelical clergy, especially Provost Braunschweig. He was especially puzzled by Braunschweig's opposition because the latter was, after all, an official representative of the German government.<sup>47</sup> Finally, when Zimmerli was denounced as a danger to the Brazilian state by the president of the Verband deutscher Vereine, Aloys Friedrich, the Bund retorted that such a charge was like "throwing a firebrand into the lordly house of our *Deutschtum*."<sup>48</sup>

By the end of March, news of the imbroglio had become standard fare even in the Portuguese-language press. Pro-Ally news-

45. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), March 18, 1916; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 21–22; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), February 26, 1916.

46. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), February 19, 21, March 2, 8, 31, 1916; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 21.

47. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), February 26, March 15, 16, April 3, 1916; *Monatsblätter des Germanischen Bundes für Süd-Amerika*, II (March, 1917), 100, 120–23.

48. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), March 31, 1916.

papers such as the *Jornal do Commercio* and *A Noite* charged that Zimmerli was at the center of a plot to destroy public order in Rio Grande do Sul. The Porto Alegre *Diário* (controlled by Teuto-Brazilians) echoed the *Deutsche Post* of São Leopoldo in denouncing Zimmerli as a thief and a swindler. The pro-German *Diário* of Rio de Janeiro reported the circulation of rumors that connected Zimmerli with an intended mobilization of the Germans in the southern states and that in Santa Catarina alone, Germans had a military force of eighty thousand armed men, including cavalry.<sup>49</sup>

It was obvious that Zimmerli's usefulness to the German cause had vanished. Early in April, 1916, he left for Rio de Janeiro to receive the commendations of the German ambassador before returning to Europe via the United States. Little more was heard of him, but his organization and its periodical survived until October, 1917, when Brazil entered the war and put an end to such activity. During its year and a half of publication, the *Monatsblätter* turned out page after page of the crassest sort of ethnocentrism and column after column of polemics aimed either at the Allied powers or at Teuto-Brazilians who disagreed with its purposes and methods. Unable to unite the Germans, it succeeded only in dividing them more deeply. Some local chapters of the Bund remained active well into 1917, but others were neutralized by Evangelical pastors who used their prestige to take over the leadership and then, having gained office, allowed the organization to wither. Bitterness, dissension, and anxiety remained as the heritage of Zimmerli's brief sojourn in Brazil. In effect he managed to intensify the Teuto-Brazilian sense of alienation and insecurity on one hand and of bellicose superiority on the other. At the same time, Zimmerli's organization offended the Luso-Brazilians and stimulated their determination to put an end to such divisive behavior as soon as possible.<sup>50</sup>

Luso-Brazilians, especially those who strongly favored the cause of the Allies, tended to see the Germans as a united group, despite the disagreements and divisions that were so apparent to

49. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, March 26, 1916; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), March 29, 31, 1916.

50. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), March 31, April 3, September 22, 1916; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 25.

persons within the ethnic community itself. This tendency was enhanced by the Portuguese-language press, which reported as newsworthy the most extravagant opinions of German Brazilians, their most outrageous behavior, and the most exceptional events related to the problem. Rapid assimilators and others within the German community who disagreed with the chauvinists and were embarrassed by their behavior usually remained silent. Because they said or did nothing to attract the attention of the press, they were unable to modify the prevailing image of the Teuto-Brazilian subsociety. Thus Luso-Brazilians assumed that the Germans spoke with one voice and that officers of ethnic voluntary associations, particularly those of unions such as the *Verband deutscher Vereine*, were representative of the entire German-Brazilian population. Such an illusion of unity was precisely what these officials hoped for, because they believed that it would invest their defense of *Deutschtum* with greater authority and strength. Indeed, the Porto Alegre Verband deliberately cultivated this misapprehension when it characterized itself as an umbrella organization that spoke for all Germans in the city—Catholics, Evangelicals, Lutherans, merchants, professional people, craftsmen, factory workers, and unskilled laborers.<sup>51</sup>

### A Teuto-Brazilian Foreign Minister

Pro-Ally Brazilians were also concerned about the few persons of German origin who held high political office in the national or state governments. They assumed that such persons would automatically pursue policies that would favor Germany. It is a curious irony that the one Teuto-Brazilian who had attained genuine eminence in the Brazilian government, Lauro Müller, held the office of foreign minister at that time. A politician of major importance, he was, according to Ruy Barbosa, one of a small group of five or six leaders who virtually selected Hermes da Fonseca over Barbosa as the president of Brazil in 1909. Müller had been appointed to his office by Hermes in 1912 as the successor to the celebrated Baron Rio Branco. In general, he conducted the affairs of the For-

51. Cf. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), March 13, 1915.



Lauro Müller, foreign minister of Brazil from 1912 to 1917, born in Santa Catarina of German immigrant parents

Reprinted from Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*

eign Ministry with distinction, especially in strengthening relations with Argentina and Chile.<sup>52</sup>

With the advent of war in 1914, Müller sought to keep Brazil on a course of strict neutrality, believing that such a policy would be advantageous for Brazil. His position was analogous to that of his American counterpart, William Jennings Bryan, whose strong neutralism eventually led him to deep disagreements with President Woodrow Wilson and ultimately to his resignation as secretary of state in the wake of the *Lusitania* crisis in 1915.<sup>53</sup> The Luso-Brazilian elite, who clearly favored the Allies for economic as well as cultural reasons, interpreted Müller's policies as pro-German. From their point of view, the best interests of the country called for an outspoken pro-Ally policy. Because Müller's brand of neu-

52. José Maria Bello, *A History of Modern Brazil, 1889–1964* (4th ed., trans. James L. Taylor with a concluding chapter by Rollie E. Poppino; Stanford, Calif., 1966), 206. Rodrigo Octávio offers a brief, scholarly summary of Müller's life but ignores his role as foreign minister. See his "Lauro Mueller," 172–88.

53. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 129, 136. Cf. Paolo Coletta, "A Question of Alternatives: Wilson, Bryan, Lansing, and America's Intervention in World War I," *Nebraska History*, LXIII (Spring, 1982), 33–57.

tralism also worked to the advantage of Germany, it seemed to give ample evidence of his deepest sympathies.

Müller's detractors could not forget his German ancestry, despite his record of patriotic service, nor would they let others forget it. For his part, Müller made no effort to hide or deny his antecedents, even though he was keenly aware of the liability his ethnicity imposed upon his conduct of the nation's foreign affairs. A small incident suggests how deeply the problem affected him psychologically. Upon his return from a trip to the United States, Müller was the guest of honor at a reception held by a Brazilian politician. The host's son innocently asked Müller what he was, expecting an answer such as lawyer, engineer, teacher, or businessman. Caught off guard, Müller just as innocently replied, "I am a German." Needless to say, his enemies seized upon this slip and used it to discredit his alleged neutralism. It would be a mistake, however, to class Müller with the pro-German cultural chauvinists. He was thoroughly assimilated, and except for his final two or three years as foreign minister, the fact that he was the son of German-born parents was inconsequential. Another story that circulated about him was that on one occasion he slyly observed, "The only time I feel like a German is when I see a bottle of beer."<sup>54</sup>

## The British Black List

For a time it appeared to many Brazilians that Müller's policies were right after all and that the country's destiny was not in fact tied to the Allies. Early in 1916 the British Parliament approved the Trading-with-the-Enemy Act, a central element in its economic warfare with Germany. This law called for the development and regular revision of a register of persons and firms with whom British persons and firms were forbidden to trade. This Black List was intended to include any company anywhere that traded with the Central Powers. In fact, however, many companies were listed only because they were personally or corporately owned, con-

54. *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 143; Oberacker, *Der deutsche Beitrag*, 330–33; Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 38; interview with Egon Schaden, January 8, 1982, São Paulo.

trolled, or managed by Germans or persons with German names.<sup>55</sup>

British consuls in Brazilian cities were especially influential in gathering information for the Black List. In São Paulo, for example, George Falconer Atlee was unusually aggressive, doing everything he could to coordinate a Black List committee in the city and to drive German merchants and bankers out of business.<sup>56</sup> In São Paulo as elsewhere in Brazil, the immediacy of war precluded the possibility of basing the Black List on substantial evidence or proof rather than on allegation or suspicion; hence injustices were as frequent as the many ingenious efforts to disguise trade with Germany through the use of intermediaries, false names of consignees, and the like.

Before the war, Germany had ranked third behind the United States and Britain in the value of Brazil's foreign commerce. After direct trade with Germany had been eliminated by the British naval blockade, commerce increased markedly with the still-neutral United States and the neutral countries of Europe, such as the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark. But since British trade continued undiminished, it remained a powerful weapon to club neutral nations into line. The many bitter complaints that were registered about the injustices of the Black List were regarded by the British merely as unsolicited testimony to its efficacy.<sup>57</sup>

The Black List was widely perceived in Brazil and elsewhere as an unwarranted violation of neutral rights, and many Brazilians were appalled by the zeal with which British consular agents in Brazil tried to enforce it. Some Brazilian companies were devastated by the shock waves that raced through the economy. In the three southern states, for example, coal was withheld from river steamers operated by firms with German connections, with the result that vital water transportation there was seriously disrupted. A substantial portion of Brazil's foreign trade was in the hands of firms with German names; the Black List included them as well as some corporations whose apparent German connections were

55. The Brazilian firms on the Black List by city are given in Uhle's *Kalender*: 1917, p. 78.

56. "Situation at São Paulo," 11.

57. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 41-42; Frederick A. Kirkpatrick, *South America and the War* (Cambridge, 1918), 37; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 169.

limited to the names of certain stockholders. Although Teuto-Brazilian firms in Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere were dismayed by the Black List and the raw economic power it represented, they were not alone; many Luso-Brazilian businessmen swelled the chorus of opposition. Brazil formally protested in a diplomatic note to the British government that the nationality of a firm is determined by its place of registration, not the citizenship of its stockholders, and that therefore such enforcement of the list infringed upon Brazilian sovereignty. Like its counterpart in the United States, the normally pro-Ally Brazilian press sharply criticized the Black List and its administration.<sup>58</sup>

The Brazilian economy was similarly damaged in 1917 when Britain prohibited the importation of coffee, Brazil's chief export. Britain itself had an ample warehouse supply. By restricting coffee imports, it freed much-needed vessels for the shipment of more vital commodities. At the same time, the British navy tightly controlled the quantity of coffee going to the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries, thereby preventing the resale of surpluses to Germany. Brazil was left holding the coffee bag as its exports of this commodity dropped in 1917 to 70 percent of what they had been in 1915. Again the Brazilian press condemned Britain for its restrictive policies, which continued even after Brazil broke off diplomatic relations with Germany in April, 1917.<sup>59</sup>

As the war in Europe dragged on through the summer and fall of 1916 the German-language newspapers gradually seemed to weary of the subject. The evils of the Black List commanded the most attention in their columns, and defensive responses to slander, real or imagined, against German culture continued as before. The papers printed many reports about the Germanische Bund and its activities, as German Brazilians continued to quibble over the usage of the terms *germanisch* as opposed to *deutsch*. But

58. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 42; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 169; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 486–90; Uhle's *Kalender*: 1917, pp. 76, 78; "Situation at São Paulo," 12. For the impact of the Black List on the huge German coffee-importing firm of Theodor Wille, see Siegfried Zimmermann, *Theodor Wille, 1844–1969* (Hamburg, 1969), 134–35.

59. U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1917*, Supplement 1, *The World War* (1931), 294, 397, hereinafter cited as *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*; Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 38; James, *Brazil after a Century of Independence*, 413–20.



the heady excitement and enthusiasm of the first year of the war had abated.

At least one Teuto-Brazilian, a resident of Lajes in the interior of Santa Catarina, was determined to have a little fun at British expense. Describing himself as a fanatical *Deutschenfresser* in a letter to the British consul in Porto Alegre, he reported that the "wicked German Franciscans" in Lajes had constructed what appeared to be a wireless radio station in order to receive communications from Germany. Nearly two months later, in October, 1916, an Englishman attached to the British embassy arrived in Lajes to investigate. Ineptly disguised as a cattleman, he was accompanied by a black servant and a local boy as translator. At this point, everyone decided to join in the gag. A couple of wires were hastily strung from the top of a dilapidated windmill to an old printshop on the grounds of the Franciscan cloister. When the Englishman arrived, he was treated with all gravity. Unaware that he was playing the fool, he examined this evidence and then hurried back to Porto Alegre to file his report on the evil Franciscans' subversive activities. Meanwhile, the Germans hugely enjoyed their practical joke, which was subsequently reported in the German-language press. They could hardly believe that anyone could have taken the original letter seriously, much less dispatch an embassy official hundreds of miles into primitive country to investigate such a silly rumor.<sup>60</sup>

### Some Comparisons

The experiences of the Teuto-Brazilians during the neutrality period were remarkably like those of German Americans. In both countries the leadership classes tended to be sympathetic to the Allied powers and in both most common people tended to regard war in Europe as a distant affair of no immediate concern to them. Still, German immigrants and their descendants naturally tended to be partisans of the Central Powers.

The German-language press in both Brazil and the United States defended the kaiser and his troops against atrocity charges leveled by British and French propagandists. Countless *Vereine* ac-

60. Sinzig, *Nach dreissig Jahren*, 80–81.

tively supported the Central Powers through demonstrations, rallies, and bazaars organized to raise contributions for the German Red Cross and to sell German war bonds. Germany sought to gain editorial control of newspapers in both countries and, under the protective cover of the German Red Cross, dispatch agents to organize German immigrant groups in support of the fatherland. In both countries the effect of the war in Europe was to energize German immigrant identity with Germany.

The responses of the churches were more varied. In Brazil, the Evangelical synods, numerically dominant and proportionately much more important there than in the United States, relied on Germany for financial support and for a steady supply of pastors. Evangelical leaders in Catholic Brazil frequently articulated a relationship between German culture and Protestant theology that had no equivalent in the United States. Hence, partisanship for Germany tend to be comparatively strong among Teuto-Brazilian Protestants. At the same time, however, some Brazilian Lutherans had organizational bonds with American churches and refused to give any official support to the kaiser's cause.

The hierarchy of the Catholic church in Brazil, which was largely drawn from Luso-Brazilian sources, naturally tended to support the pro-Ally stance of the Brazilian elite. Hence, such a German-born prelate as Archbishop João Becker felt strong pressure to conform and to oppose those Teuto-Brazilian priests and laypersons who were vocally pro-German. A contrasting relationship prevailed in the United States, where the Catholics were a minority and the hierarchy was dominated by Irish bishops, most of whom had scant sympathy for Britain. While few were indiscreet enough to oppose the Allies openly, there is little evidence of differences in the United States comparable to those that divided the Brazilian church in this respect.

In both countries the Germans were perceived by the host society as a unified group without significant internal differences and conflicts. Hence, their threat to dominant pro-Ally attitudes was perceived as being greater than it really was. In Brazil as in the United States, prominent German ethnic leaders fostered this misperception because it seemed to grant greater authority to their defense of German goals and policies.

The economics of both countries were deeply affected as world

war disrupted patterns of international trade. British efforts to enforce the Black List led to rankling injustices everywhere and moderated pro-Ally sentiment among business leaders, just as pro-German spokesmen were stimulated thereby to press their partisanship with new vigor. Such developments left the German ethnic groups in both the United States and Brazil ill-prepared for the dramatic events that transpired in the spring months of 1917.

## April Riots

**B**Y THE END OF 1916 the news from the battlefields of Europe had dissipated any illusions about the nature of modern warfare. The slaughter in the trenches was horrible beyond imagination; the countless wounded were threatened by disease; the smell of death penetrated hundreds of villages in all fighting areas; and many thousands—even millions—of persons living in otherwise rich and bountiful lands faced starvation. For the multitudes of war-weary on both sides, victory seemed an almost senseless goal; the attainment of some sort of peace was a more rational object, a more earnest hope.

The United States, like Brazil, remained officially neutral, even though national sentiment tended to favor Britain, France, and their allies over Germany and Austria. Both countries were affected economically in intricate and diverse ways; because of extensive trade relations, both were vitally concerned about submarine warfare and its effect on neutral shipping. Following the destruction of the American vessel *Sussex* in March, 1916, the American government had successfully pressured the Germans to abandon unrestricted submarine warfare and to return to established rules of visit and search before sinking merchant vessels. Germany adhered to this "Sussex Pledge" throughout the remainder of 1916 and in December, having attained some military successes on its eastern front, undertook a peace offensive, suggesting that talks begin without reference to terms. American President Woodrow Wilson, who clearly perceived that failure to

attain a negotiated peace at that time would mean a return to unrestricted submarine warfare and then American involvement in the war, publicly supported a settlement without indemnities and annexations in which both sides could negotiate as equals. Thus, as 1917 began, it appeared to many observers that peace was possible.

Then came a dramatic and ominous change. Within the war councils of the German government, advocates of military solutions won out over those who favored the diplomatic approach. Wilson's "Peace without Victory" initiative was answered with an announcement from the German government that starting on February 1, 1917, its submarines would sink without warning the ships of all nations destined for Allied ports. Three days later the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany, an action fully expected by the German warlords, who believed that disrupting the flow of supplies to the Allies was worth the risk of American involvement. They confidently expected to deliver a military knockout before the unprepared United States could field an effective army on European soil.

Before the month had passed, President Wilson asked Congress for authority to arm American merchantmen and, in effect, to initiate an undeclared naval war against German submarines. Congress debated the issue at length but without resolution until the session came to an end. Wilson, who had begun his second term as president, thereupon used his executive authority to order the arming of the vessels. In mid-March, four American ships were torpedoed in rapid succession. Finding no honorable alternative to full-fledged belligerency, Wilson then called Congress into special session for the purpose of declaring war on Germany. After a few days of debate, the war resolution was adopted and signed by the president on April 6, 1917.

### Brazilian Response to German Submarine Warfare

Although Brazil's Foreign Ministry remained in close contact with the American Department of State during those weeks, its response to the Germans' resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare was less aggressive. Given the illiteracy rate among Brazil-

ians generally and their physical distance from the theaters of war, there could be no genuine popular sentiment in favor of Brazilian involvement. Nevertheless, many influential persons in Brazil were remarkably belligerent. Several leading Rio de Janeiro newspapers were vociferous in their condemnation of Germany. The *Jornal do Commercio*, for example, denounced Germany's policy as "ruthless piracy," and the *Correio de Manhã* declared that Brazil's place was "at the side of the United States." The Liga pelos Aliados adopted a resolution urging the president of Brazil to put an end to its "criminal neutrality, which shames us before the world and injures us economically and financially, while causing us to be suspected by the Allies as passive accomplices of the German government."<sup>1</sup> Many of these same voices were raised in favor of preparedness; they argued that circumstances demanded that Brazil expand its armed forces immediately.

No one person was more emphatic or more effective in promoting support for the Allies than was the brilliant rhetorician Ruy Barbosa. A politician of unusual charisma, Barbosa was famous for his eloquent criticism of the government, the ruling class or clique, especially the military, and their policies. As a senator from Bahia, he had through the years built up a large personal following—perhaps the largest of any individual politician in Brazil—and was a frequent but never successful candidate for the presidency. In 1916 he held the relatively unimportant post of ambassador to Argentina, but he used it to popularize his views, particularly in a widely publicized speech delivered at the law school in Buenos Aires in which he condemned neutrality in the Great War as immoral and cowardly.<sup>2</sup> Like the former American president Theodore Roosevelt, whom he resembled in some ways, Barbosa perceived the world conflict as a titanic struggle between the forces of good and evil—democrats versus autocrats, the defenders of liberty versus vicious perpetrators of international

1. FRUS, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 251, 255–56; *The Brazilian Green Book*, 14–17; *New York Times*, February 5, 6, 7, 1917.

2. Bello, *A History of Modern Brazil*, 233. See Magalhães, "Germany and South America," 67–80. In his *Rui, o homem e o mito* (3rd ed.; Rio de Janeiro, 1979), Raymundo Magalhães Júnior ignores Barbosa's role as a partisan of the Allies before and during World War I.

crime. He spoke at numerous patriotic rallies and demonstrations in 1916 and 1917; his speeches were widely reprinted and translated. One entitled "A grande conflagração" was published in an Italian-language edition of thirty thousand copies.<sup>3</sup>

The partisans of the Allies focused their attention on the foreign minister, Lauro Müller, whose ethnic antecedents they could not forget. Barbosa in particular seems to have been resentful of Müller and dismayed that the Foreign Ministry was in the hands of a man whose parents had been born in Germany. According to *O Paíz*, one of the most outspoken of Rio newspapers to advocate a pro-Ally policy, the moment had come for Müller to demonstrate that his German origins would not "prevent him from acting in a positive manner," by which was meant pursuing a policy matching that of the United States. Müller was also attacked in the Brazilian Congress, where Medeiros de Albuquerque, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, asserted that Brazil should have aligned itself long before with the Allies. He also implied that Müller, whom he described as a cowardly tool of Germanism, was humiliating Brazil by his policies and frustrating the "noble aspirations of the Brazilian people."<sup>4</sup>

In fact, however, Müller pursued a moderate and prudent course. Neither he nor President Wenceslau Braz believed that intervention would be in Brazil's best interest. Sensitive to the limitations placed on his political actions by the accident of his parentage, Müller prepared a dispatch to the German government regarding Germany's declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare. Ostensibly written by President Braz, the note protested the German policy as a violation of international law and announced that his government would hold Germany responsible for any hostile acts against Brazilian merchant vessels.<sup>5</sup>

Müller's note was dismissed by his pro-Ally enemies as weak and indecisive. Medeiros de Albuquerque attacked it as a "terrible deception" that did nothing to dissipate the suspicion surrounding the foreign minister. If Müller could back his empty words with decisive acts, Medeiros suggested, his aspirations to the presidency could be taken seriously, for in that event he would

3. *Germania* (São Paulo), April 10, 1917.

4. *New York Times*, February 5, 1917.

5. *Ibid.*, February 8, 11, 1917; see also *The Brazilian Green Book*, 18–19.

“win so great a victory over himself” that no one could dispute his right to the republic’s highest office.<sup>6</sup>

Germany refused to attach much importance to the Brazilian protest. To abandon its submarine blockade, the Germans replied in a note delivered late in February, would risk national annihilation; although it was indeed likely that Brazil would suffer losses, any claims could easily be negotiated through diplomatic discourse.<sup>7</sup> The German response seemed to validate the fears of Müller’s enemies, and his position became increasingly untenable during the weeks and months that followed.

## Anti-German Propaganda

Meanwhile, anti-German propaganda intensified. It was repeatedly charged that Germany had been plotting for years to use the German settlements in southern Brazil as the base for its imperialist designs. Most of these allegations appear to have been drawn from several widely distributed tracts written by a French journalist and propagandist, André Chéradame, whose *Pangerman Plot Unmasked* (1917) claimed that Germany had coveted southern Brazil for years. Brazilians of German origin were “almost absolute masters” in Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina, according to Chéradame, and by virtue of a German law of 1913 that permitted dual citizenship, they were “liegemen of William II.” Chéradame claimed that the “German Peril” was all the more real because the numerous *Schützenvereine* (rifle clubs) were in fact military societies capable of assisting in the establishment of a huge protectorate that the Germans planned to extend over Paraguay, Uruguay, and parts of Argentina and Brazil.<sup>8</sup>

Sympathizers of the Allies were only too eager to accept such propaganda as truth. A *Noite* of Rio de Janeiro was especially ac-

6. *New York Times*, February 14, 1917.

7. *Ibid.*, February 26, 1917.

8. André Chéradame, *The Pangerman Plot Unmasked* (New York, 1917), 193–98, and esp. the map (p. 194). The United States Department of State had heard rumors of “80,000 shooting club members” as early as June, 1916, and had asked the American chargé d’affaires in Rio de Janeiro to check them out. The State Department regarded the rumors as propagandistic exaggeration and believed that the German Brazilians in fact represented no threat. See Leland Harrison to Alexander Benson, June 8, 1917, in RG 59, Entry 540, Letters Received by Leland



tive in promoting this brand of propaganda. In February, 1917, for example, it reported that the agent of German imperialism in the southern states was the Hamburg Colonization Company, an organization with which Lauro Müller had connections. The company had in fact been settling German immigrants in Brazil since 1900. According to *A Noite*, only colonists of German nationality were admitted to settlement on company lands, which were located near the border between Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina. It was also alleged that the colonists would soon demand the incorporation of southern Brazil with Germany under the name "Antarctic Germany." Several weeks later, *A Noite* assigned a reporter to study the "German Danger." According to his findings, Blumenau was a purely German city with forty *Schützenvereine* whose members were prepared to spring into action at a moment's notice.<sup>9</sup>

Another *Noite* article charged that a German pastor in Santa Cruz in Rio Grande do Sul, speaking from the chancel of his church, had advised the children of his parish to refrain from talking Portuguese because it was an inferior language that they learned on the streets from Negro youngsters. Although it is true that some Germans were capable of such cultural chauvinism, in this case the facts were twisted. It was the publisher of the Porto Alegre *Volksblatt* (not a clergyman) who had addressed the young people in a general meeting of German Catholics (not a worship service). He urged them to learn both the Portuguese and German languages well and to use each as circumstances demanded, in preference to their German dialects and the dreadful Portuguese laden with vulgar expressions that "Negroes and other fourth-class persons use." The comment was certainly infused with a sense of ethnic superiority, but not at the expense of Luso-Brazilian culture.<sup>10</sup>

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Harrison, 1916–1918, Box 1; Alexander Benson to Secretary of State, March 20, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 9. For studies of Allied propaganda in the United States and elsewhere, see Read, *Atrocity Propaganda*; and Horace Peterson, *Propaganda for War: The Campaign against American Neutrality* (Norman, 1939).

9. *New York Times*, February 24, 1917; *A Raza* (Rio de Janeiro), February 7, 1917; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), May 29, 1917.

10. *Uhle's Kalender: 1917*, p. 76.

The German-language newspapers frequently protested against pro-Ally propaganda and accused French and English agents of originating the rumors, but their comments rarely found their way into the Portuguese-language press and thus had little effect. The Curitiba *Kompass*, for example, insisted that there was no basis whatever for the so-called *deutsche Gefahr*, either in Germany or among Teuto-Brazilians, the great majority of whom were citizens who readily identified Brazil as their fatherland. Even Clarence Haring, who wrote in the immediate postwar period, correctly asserted that there was no evidence that the German government ever intended to annex any part of Brazil and that any danger of a military sort from Teuto-Brazilians was remote. The typical German farmer wanted most of all to be left alone. He had come to Brazil as an impoverished immigrant, had prospered there, and hence felt no particular loyalty to Germany. There may have been a few secret agents of the German embassy in the Teuto-Brazilian districts, but they posed no threat to Brazil, lacking both effective cohesion and leadership. If any peril to Brazil existed, wrote Haring, it was to be found among some of the German capitalists of the coastal cities—Reichsdeutsche, supported by German banks—who believed that a German victory would enhance their business prospects.<sup>11</sup>

Some of these German businessmen were able to exercise considerable influence on the German-language press. Thus it was that throughout the early months of 1917, some newspapers such as the *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre and the *Germania* of São Paulo continued to follow a steadily pro-German line despite the ominous signs that Luso-Brazilian tolerance for such behavior was weakening. Even after the United States had declared war on Germany, the *Germania* criticized German Americans for proclaiming that money collected for the German Red Cross would now go to the American Red Cross instead. Their desire as American citizens to support the United States over was understandable, observed the *Germania*, but it was hardly necessary for them to behave like loud-mouthed Yankees, declaring that their patriotism

11. Curitiba *Kompass*, April 17, 1917; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 66. See also "Situation at São Paulo," anonymous report transmitted to the Department of State by Capt. S. McCauley, Assistant Director of Naval Intelligence, April 26, 1918, in RG 59, Entry 540, Box 1, Brazil folder.

was of the highest possible order. Still, the *Germania* recognized that the Teuto-Brazilian situation had become extremely sensitive and stressed the necessity of remaining calm. All eyes were on the southern states to observe the conduct of Germans, this newspaper warned; unrest there could do extraordinary damage to the small colonies of Germans in such places as Pernambuco, Bahia, Rio, and São Paulo without helping the German cause a bit.<sup>12</sup>

### Germans Sink the *Paraná*

Trouble was not long in coming. Although the northern cities did not escape the violence, the greatest damage was suffered in Porto Alegre and other centers of Teuto-Brazilian population and economic power in Rio Grande do Sul. The tinderbox was set aflame by news that on April 5, 1917, a German submarine off the coast of northern France had sunk the *Paraná*, a small Brazilian freighter of 4,461 tons laden with 93,000 sacks of coffee. Official confirmation of the sinking came on the same day that the United States declared war on Germany. Following his rescue by a French warship, the captain of the *Paraná* cabled the ship's owner, the Commerce and Navigation Company of Rio, that the vessel had been torpedoed without warning, that it had been shelled five times, and that three crewmen had been killed.<sup>13</sup>

There was little doubt that Brazil would respond with anything less than a formal break in diplomatic relations. The Liga pelos Aliados naturally demanded an immediate declaration of war. *A Noite* agreed, insisting that a mere break was insufficient. In addition, it demanded reprisals and a declaration of "sympathetic neutrality," but preferred that Brazil should join the Allies in war. Other papers took a similar position, but according to the *New York Times*, the U.S. Department of State estimated that the German influence in Brazil was "still too strong" for a declaration of war. This was an oblique reference to Foreign Minister Müller, who somewhat quixotically fought a delaying action, urging that Brazil demand satisfaction from Germany in the form of punish-

12. *Germania* (São Paulo), April 2, 10, 1917.

13. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 6, 1917; *New York Times*, April 7, 8, 9, 1917.

ment for the submarine commander and indemnification for the families of the victims; if Germany then failed to comply, he said, Brazil should cut off diplomatic relations. While Müller was strong enough to prevent an immediate declaration of war, he could not delay a severance of relations. Prompt action was demanded because at that moment nearly fifty German merchant vessels berthed in Brazilian ports were subject to seizure if a diplomatic rupture were declared. In order to head off their escape, the other cabinet ministers prevailed over Müller, and on April 11 the break was officially announced.<sup>14</sup>

The next day, April 12, the Brazilian Ministry of Marine impounded the German ships in an action tactfully described as a measure taken to prevent German crews from inflicting damage on the ships. According to one newspaper account, customs guards in Santos caught disembarking German seamen carrying important and virtually irreplaceable parts of their vessel's engines.<sup>15</sup> The Brazilian government fully appreciated the potential value of forty or fifty German ships. They could go a long way toward indemnifying Brazil for the loss of some of its own vessels to German torpedoes; more important, they could greatly enlarge the size of Brazil's merchant marine and expand its capacity to market coffee, the keystone of the nation's buffeted economy.

While government leaders debated the appropriate course for Brazil to follow, the superpatriotic press kept stoking the fires of anti-Germanism. *A Noite* in particular printed rumors about German spies sending mysterious light signals and radio messages. In an article on the German rifle clubs (*Schützenvereine*) in southern Brazil, the paper charged that they were military organizations. The *Jornal do Commercio* suggested that they be mobilized into the Brazilian army, where they could be properly controlled. The Liga pela Aliados sent a series of demands to President Braz that received extensive coverage. Included were the disarming of the rifle clubs, a rigorous surveillance of all Reichsdeutsche and a prohibition of correspondence among them, the dismissal of

14. New York Times, April 8, 13, 1917. The Times reprinted numerous news items in translation from Brazilian newspapers.

15. FRUS, 1917, Supp. 1, The World War, 252; New York Times, April 13, 14, 16, 1917.

Lauro Müller as foreign minister, and the appointment of Ruy Barbosa as his successor. Meanwhile, the *Correio de Manhã* called for a full mobilization of military resources; *O Paiz* insisted on a declaration of war. In contrast to such jingoism, the governors of the southern states, Borges de Medeiros of Rio Grande do Sul and Felipe Schmidt of Santa Catarina (Müller's cousin), declared that absolute calm reigned in the German districts of their states and that the Teuto-Brazilians were incapable of hostile attitudes toward their country.<sup>16</sup>

Such words of moderation were lost amid the widespread demonstrations and patriotic rallies stimulated by the sinking of the *Paraná* and the attendant publicity. Obviously orchestrated affairs, the rallies attracted huge crowds in Rio, São Paulo, Porto Alegre, and elsewhere. Orators delivered fervent patriotic speeches elaborating upon the barbarism of the Germans; national hymns and anthems were sung; Brazilian flags were displayed everywhere along with the national banners of the Allies and their newest recruit, the United States; and great crowds paraded through the major cities. Such processions typically moved from major government buildings to the offices of superpatriotic newspapers and to the consulates of the Allies. More speeches would be heard as the crowd shouted "Viva Brazil! Death to Germany!" and streamed forward to the German and Austrian legations, where police guards were often stationed to maintain order. In many cases the rallies were transformed into demonstrations against the Teuto-Brazilians as the crowds surged to prominent German business establishments, clubhouses of German societies, and German-language newspapers. Detachments of cavalry frequently accompanied the processions in order to restrain incendiary enthusiasms. Despite the laudable efforts of local governments to maintain order, epithets hurled at these symbols of German power in Brazil were often followed by rocks and stones. Such disturbances were most serious in Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo, where the offices of the *Deutsche Zeitung* suffered extensive vandalism. In São Paulo, the American consul estimated the crowd at fifteen thousand persons. The police were determined to main-

16. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 12, 1917; New York *Times*, April 10, 13, 14, 1917; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), April 16, 1917.

tain order and in their effort to control the mob, one person was killed and many more were injured.<sup>17</sup>

## Riots in Porto Alegre

On Friday and Saturday, April 13 and 14, Porto Alegre experienced patriotic demonstrations not unlike those that had occurred in other cities. On Saturday night, however, the spirit of the mob took over when a huge crowd gathered before the offices of the *Diário Allemão*. Dr. Vieira Pires, head of the state police, tried to calm the multitude but withdrew after he was injured by a stone. The police were unable to prevent the mob from entering the premises, and pitching books, paper, and furniture into a huge bonfire in the street.<sup>18</sup>

Sunday was even more portentous. A relatively small group of superpatriots, perhaps a hundred, went by streetcar to São João, a suburb where many Germans lived, apparently in response to a deliberately planted rumor that some Germans were planning to burn a Brazilian flag on the playing field of the *Turnerbund* (gymnastic society) located there. Finding nothing, they returned to the city in a particularly agitated and belligerent mood. Their route took them past the Hotel Schmidt, a German inn of some renown, whose owner, fearful of the rabble and determined to protect his property, had erected a barricade in front of his establishment. When the frustrated assemblage of superpatriots passed by the hotel aboard streetcars, Friedrich Schmidt, supported by his son, an employee, and a neighbor, fired pistols into the crowd and lightly wounded two passengers. The hotelkeeper and his small band were quickly overcome, disarmed, and placed under arrest.<sup>19</sup>

17. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 12, 1917; *New York Times*, April 14, 15, 1917; *Germania* (São Paulo), April 11, 12, 25, 1917; *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo), April 26, 1917; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), April 13, 1917; Charles Hoover to Alexander Benson (chargé d'affaires in Rio), April 11, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 8.

18. *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), April 16, 1917; *Porto Alegre Correio do Povo*, April 17, 1917.

19. The account offered in this and the following paragraphs is based on the *Deutsche Post* of São Leopoldo, April 24, 1917. It is supplemented and verified by other reports in *A Federação* of Porto Alegre, April 16, 17, 18, 1917; *Correio do Povo*

Then it was discovered that Schmidt had hidden additional weapons and ammunition within his hotel. The few police present were unable to restrain the crowd and a fearful stoning of the hotel ensued. After smashing every window in the building, the mob pressed on to other Teuto-Brazilian structures in the neighborhood, gathering recruits as they moved from street to street. German-language newspapers, bookstores, pharmacies, restaurants, and beer halls, as well as some larger commercial houses, were vandalized. Destruction continued through the evening. Not until well after midnight did the rioters disperse and peace return. But the calm was only temporary.

On Monday morning, April 16, it appeared at first that the intense emotions of the previous day had subsided. But the Porto Alegre newspapers published reports of the Schmidt incident and its aftermath, and even though mob violence was uniformly condemned, people were agitated. Those of a superpatriotic bent of mind were determined to find opportunities to strike back at the Germans in retaliation for Schmidt's absurd attack. The Teuto-Brazilians were fearful. The officers of the Germania Society, for example, dispatched a letter to the governor in which they sharply denounced Schmidt and his accomplices.

But it was too late for such well-meant gestures. A group of students had previously planned a demonstration for Monday afternoon. This gathering went out of control almost immediately. Swollen by new arrivals, it was transformed into another ugly mob that streamed into the German district and resumed the systematic bombardment. All buildings in the area that were known to be occupied by either Teuto-Brazilians or *Reichsdeutsche* were subjected to an awesome volley of rocks and stones. While looting occurred, press accounts make little of it, thereby indirectly stressing the ethnic animosity that seems to have stimulated the riot.<sup>20</sup> As it had the night before, the riot centered on structures located on Caminho Novo, Rua dos Andrades, Rua 7 de Setembro, Rua Dr. Flores, Rua General Camara, and Rua 24 de Maio.

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of Porto Alegre, April 17, 1917; *Jornal do Commercio* of Rio de Janeiro, April 17, 18, 1917; *Germania* of São Paulo, April 25, 1917; and *Der Familienfreund: Katholischer Hauskalender für das Jahr 1918* (Porto Alegre, [1917]), 129. Cf. Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 49–50.

20. Königk emphasizes that looting was extensive. See *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 49.



The ruins of the Hotel Schmidt in Porto Alegre, following its destruction by arsonists on April 16, 1917

Reprinted from *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien: 1918*

By four o'clock the Hotel Schmidt was in flames. Even though a police guard had been posted, a mob estimated at a thousand persons had broken into the building and demolished everything in sight. Then someone poured kerosene all around, ignited it, and transformed the hotel into a raging inferno.

The arsonists moved on to the home of one Dr. Viktor Fischel, where a series of events unfolded that illuminate in a limited way the problems faced by the police. The rioters first bombarded the Fischel house with stones, then stormed the doorway, gained entrance, smashed its furnishings, and threw the remains into the street. The vastly outnumbered and ill-equipped police were powerless to halt the havoc. When the rioters took steps to set Fischel's place ablaze, an officer named Hercílio Limeiro bravely faced up to the lawless mob and managed to dissuade them. Their attention was diverted temporarily by the discovery of what appeared to be an operation for the manufacture of counterfeit coins. The rioters demanded that the police arrest Fischel, who had not escaped. After this they went on to commit other criminal acts of



their own. Despite the commendable behavior of individual officers such as Limeiro, it is apparent that authorities were unable to dispatch reinforcements to the scene in sufficient numbers to maintain order.

From Fischel's residence the rioters returned to the inner city, where on Rua São Rafael they came to the clubhouse of the Porto Alegre Turnerbund. Everything in it was destroyed—furniture, pictures, cabinets, gymnastic equipment. Plans to burn the building were frustrated by a Major Rath, an instructor in the police department whose living quarters were next door. With the help of just a few officers, Rath was able to force the mob out of the building, but not before much destruction had been wrought.

The most dramatic events of those terrifying days occurred that evening (Monday, April 16, 1917). Reinforced by additions of rabble (so labeled by *A Federação*, the voice of the Rio Grande do Sul state government), the mob gathered at 7:00 P.M. in Rua 7 de Setembro before the headquarters of the Bromberg Company, perhaps the largest, richest, and most powerful German-owned firm in Brazil. Again the police were powerless before the crowd. Equipped with axes and crowbars, the rioters broke down the doors and rushed into the building. Arsonists began their work immediately; soon the night sky was illuminated for miles around as flames shot upward from exploding drums of petroleum. By 10:30 P.M., the fire had spread to neighboring businesses and warehouses.

The elegant clubhouse of the Germania Society on Rua Dr. Flores was the next victim. Kerosene was spread all around to guarantee the rapid spread of fire. Within a few moments it was adding to the nighttime illumination of Porto Alegre.<sup>21</sup> Since all buildings here were located immediately adjacent to one another, it seemed for a time as though the entire city would go up in flames. It was quite beyond the capacity of the municipal firefighters to extinguish the gigantic conflagration, but through heroic efforts they were able to prevent it from spreading. This achievement came at the expense of one fireman's life and injury to several more.

21. [Sociedade Independência], *Betrachtungen zu Ihrer Geschichte aus Anlass der Jahrhundert-Feier, 1855–1955* (Porto Alegre, 1955), 31. See also *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 300.

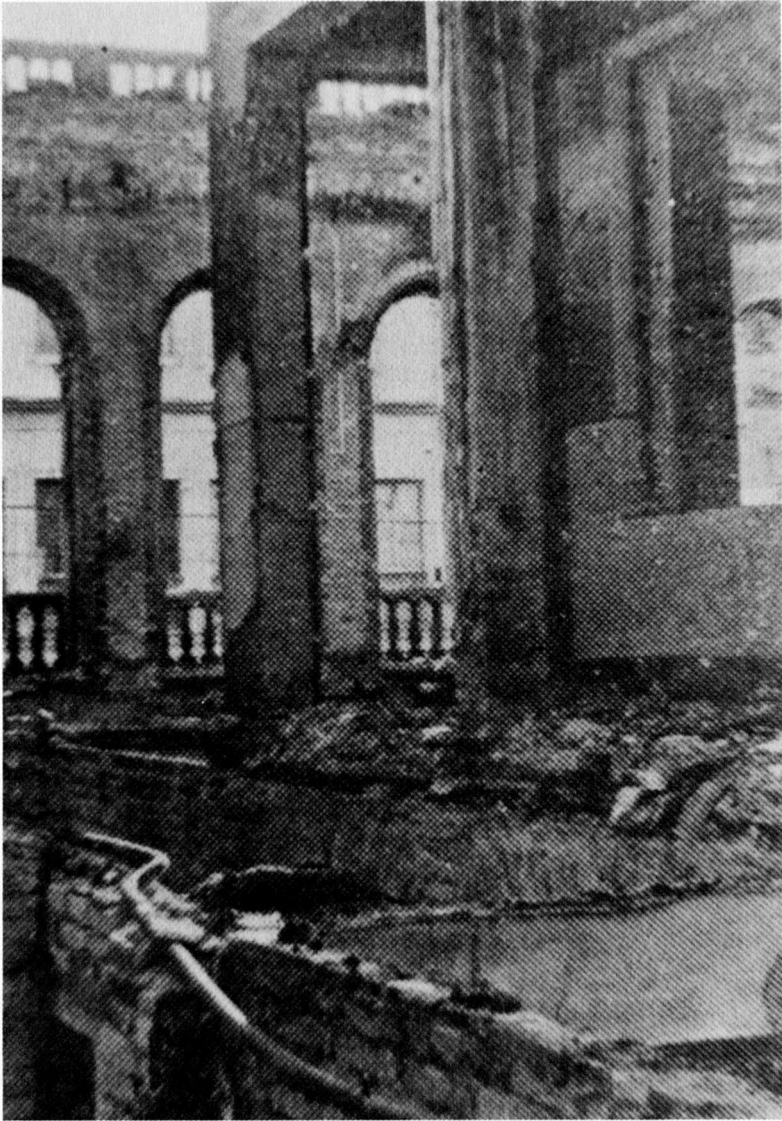


The entrance of the elegant clubhouse of the Germania Society of Porto Alegre following its destruction on April 16, 1917

Reprinted from *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien*: 1918

Meanwhile, arsonists put the torch to scores of other German or Teuto-Brazilian residences and businesses. In addition to those owned by the Bromberg Company, several other large commercial and industrial buildings were destroyed that night. The list reads like a directory of major German companies. The printing plant of the *Deutsche Zeitung* suffered a surprise attack and much equipment was damaged before it was saved from arsonists by the timely arrival of the military.<sup>22</sup> Curiously, the *Deutsches Volksblatt*, which catered to Catholic readers, was spared. Whether the rioters were capable of discriminating under prevailing conditions between the accommodationist *Volksblatt* and the more haughty, chauvinistic *Zeitung* cannot be determined. Later references to the riots suggest that they were carefully planned and directed, usually by non-Luso-Brazilian persons. One such account, written by

22. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), April 16, 1917. Despite the date given for this issue, it was actually published near the end of the month.



An interior view of the destroyed Germania clubhouse, Porto Alegre  
Reprinted from *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien: 1918*

an Evangelical clergyman who retired to Germany after the war, flatly attributed the Porto Alegre riot to the English consul stationed there. He charged that the mob, after having been enlivened with alcoholic drink, destroyed specific structures at the consul's direction. Although the newspapers make no reference to such activity by officials of the Allied powers, circumstantial evidence tends to corroborate the charge. Much of the destruction seems to have been systematic, not random. A report received by United States naval intelligence from São Paulo suggests that Italian Brazilians, jealous of the influence German businessmen seemed to have with Brazilian politicians, had stirred up the disturbances to get the Germans out and thereby enhance their own influence.<sup>23</sup>

The three days of riots left nearly three hundred buildings in various stages of ruin. As a protective measure some inhabitants of the German district displayed Brazilian flags; others prepared large signs with the inscription, "This house is Brazilian!" By Monday evening, cavalry formed cordons on streets adjacent to the conflagration in order to protect German homes that still remained intact. Nonetheless, rioters continued to feed the flames with combustible materials when they could, and extraordinary movement continued in the streets all through the night.

The next morning the city of Porto Alegre surveyed the destruction it had inflicted upon itself. The Germans naturally feared a resumption of the terror and many fled for refuge to relatives and friends in the *serra*. The state government of Borges de Medeiros, known for its firm commitment to "Order and Progress," immediately imposed military law. Vieira Pires, the head of the state police, issued a proclamation censuring "the crimes and acts of hatred and contempt that the mob committed against foreigners as well as natives." All public meetings or gathering in public places were forbidden and army units patrolled the streets. With one accord all the major newspapers, but especially the official *Federação*, denounced the depredations and counseled calm. In Rio de Janeiro, President Braz took decisive action. He also condemned

23. Cf. Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 154; Dedekind, *Brasilien*, 12. "Situation at São Paulo," 4-5.



A row of burned-out buildings in the German district (Rua 7 de Setembro) of Porto Alegre following the riot of April 16, 1917

Reprinted from *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien*: 1918

the crimes, but more significantly he placed 7,400 federal troops at Borges de Medeiros' disposal to assist in the maintenance of order.<sup>24</sup>

Of course, the German-language press did not publish for the next several days. Some could not because of damages sustained; others voluntarily agreed to suspend publication until peace was assured. When the rural German districts failed to receive their usual newspapers, a sense of panic spread among many of the people in those areas. One response of the *colonos* was to halt the shipment of the agricultural products upon which Porto Alegre depended until their confidence in the ability of the government to maintain order was restored. By April 25, most German-language newspapers were publishing again.<sup>25</sup>

24. *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo), April 24, 1917; *New York Times*, April 20, 1917.

25. *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien*: 1918 (São Leopoldo, [1917], 192.

## The Unrest Spreads

Although the rural districts in Rio Grande do Sul experienced nothing compared to the Porto Alegre terror, anti-German demonstrations or riots occurred in Santa Maria, Montenegro, and several other provincial cities. In São Leopoldo, for example, a mob threatened to destroy the *Deutsche Post* but was deterred at the last moment by an effective speech by a local government official, Dr. Gabriel Azambuja de Fortuna. The *Post*, like the Porto Alegre papers, suspended publication for a week.<sup>26</sup>

The numerous Germans in Pelotas were not so lucky. A port city located at the southernmost tip of Brazil near the entrance to the huge coastal sound, Lagoa dos Patos, Pelotas was the home of the *Deutsche Wacht*, an aggressive, chauvinistic journal started in 1914. The editor at the time of the riots in 1917 was Rudi Schäfer, who later recorded his experiences in those troubled days. On Monday, April 16, the Portuguese-language newspapers of Pelotas received telegrams throughout the day reporting the tumultuous events in Porto Alegre almost as quickly as they happened. Thus stimulated, certain partisans of the Allies, unrestrained by considerations of law or common sense, resolved to try to duplicate the riots in the state capital. According to Schäfer, who is not an unbiased source, careful plans were laid by an English national (an electrical engineer), several Italians, and a "renegade" Alsatian. Through the generous dispensation of alcoholic beverages, these conspirators recruited supporters among illiterate black laborers found in waterfront saloons. Their enthusiasm for lawlessness was heightened by the excited rhetoric of student patriots and, perhaps more efficaciously, by the promise of opportunities for plunder. Rumors of an impending riot traveled briskly through the city. By late afternoon, Schäfer received offers of sanctuary in the homes of discerning, respectable Luso-Brazilians, but he resolved to stay in his printshop and protect it with barricades.

By nightfall a thousand or more persons had gathered in the central plaza. Growing from moment to moment, the mob swarmed into the German district and began its work of destruction. The

26. Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 238.



scenes that followed were almost a replication of events in Porto Alegre. Screaming "Viva Brazil! Death to Germany!" the multitude swept from one building to another—first the clubhouse of the Concordia-Verein and the German school, and then a well-known German bar and a German watchmaker's shop, establishments capable of satisfying newly whetted appetites for liquor and loot. The mob went on to attack the Pelotas branch of the Bromberg Company, other large commercial establishments, and the *Deutsche Wacht*, where the besieged Schäfer repeatedly but ineffectually pleaded by phone with the police for help.

After pelting the building with stones and firing revolvers for nearly half an hour, the mob battered through Schäfer's barricade and poured into the *Wacht's* editorial offices and printshop. Many items were stolen, especially books, paper, and smaller pieces of furniture (some of which later reappeared in second hand stores); everything else, including boxes of type, was dragged out into the street, piled in a great heap, doused with kerosene, and burned like a huge funeral pyre. The vastly outnumbered police were incapable of coping with the rioters. Denounced as collaborators of the Germans, the police stood up to the mob and somehow managed to prevent a conflagration like the one that was devastating Porto Alegre at that very hour. According to the *Deutsche Post*, the conspirators had planned further depredations for the next day, but a military detachment of one hundred men arrived the next afternoon and prevented any additional outrages. Meanwhile, many German families, including Schäfer's, fled to a rural German district twenty-five miles away.<sup>27</sup>

Anti-German demonstrations in other states were less common and generally less severe. Almost none occurred in Santa Catarina, possibly because Teuto-Brazilians occupied the governor's chair and many local positions of authority. In Paraná, an attack on the Curitiba *Kompass* was prevented by the decisive action of the chief of the state police. In São Paulo state, Rio Claro was the scene of an outbreak on Sunday evening, April 15, when a mob attacked a German Protestant church and a boarding school associated with it. After the vandals had done their work, the pastor

27. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 18, 1917; *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo), April 25, 1917; *Germania* (São Paulo), April 27, 30, 1917; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 322, 326.

was forced to kiss the Brazilian flag. Here as in Porto Alegre and Pelotas, the disturbances exceeded the ability of local authorities to maintain order and troops were sent in.<sup>28</sup> Two weeks later, the indiscretion of a German Protestant pastor provoked another anti-German incident in Campinho de Santa Isabel, a small community in Espírito Santo. When his parish school was closed by the state director of education until Portuguese was introduced as the language of instruction, the pastor led a group of his parishioners down the village street shouting "Viva Germany! Death to Brazil!" Appalled by such insolence, a gang of Luso-Brazilians attacked the Germans until police intervened and forced the latter to "respect the proper sentiments of the Brazilian people." Farther north, in Pernambuco, a mob burned a small private school to the ground.<sup>29</sup>

Taken as a whole, the violence visited upon Brazil in April, 1917, was surprisingly widespread and severe. It came as a shock to many people, Luso- and Teuto-Brazilian alike. While few observers would ever have suggested that there were no ethnic differences or frictions, most accepted the stereotype of Brazilian society as pluralist, tolerant, and nonviolent; they saw individual Brazilians as amiable and easygoing, ready to accept ethnocultural diversity and eager to reconcile differences. While the behavior of the superpatriots, typified by the Liga pelos Aliados and Ruy Barbosa, was often harsh and inflammatory, the government on all levels—national, state, and local—apparently coped with problems of civil disorder as efficiently as possible, though there is some evidence that the protection of the law was withheld partially or temporarily.<sup>30</sup>

## Governmental Responses

In the days and weeks following the April riots, the several governments resisted the temptation to succumb to superpatriotic

28. *Germania* (São Paulo), April 25, 1917; Sinzig, *Nach dreisszig Jahren*, 100; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 18, 1917; Uhle's *Kalender für das Jahr 1918*, p. 140.

29. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 29, 1917; Porto Alegre *Correio do Povo*, April 17, 1917; Alfredo Carlos Schmalz, "400 anos de presença germanica em Pernambuco," in *I. Colóquio*, 304.

30. Warren Dean, *The Industrialization of São Paulo, 1880–1945* (Austin, 1969), 166.



political pressure. Even though Borges de Medeiros' sympathies lay with the Allies, he did everything he could to maintain order and internal peace in Rio Grande do Sul. Shortly after the Porto Alegre disturbances, he met with the editors of the city's German-language newspapers. He assured them of his determination to keep the peace and urged them to resume publication and to use their influence to calm the Teuto-Brazilians by restoring their confidence in the government. Borges hoped especially to stop the movement of fearful Teuto-Brazilians out of the cities and, as some rumors had it, out of the state.<sup>31</sup>

It is obvious that Borges understood the Teuto-Brazilian citizens of his state. On the basis of their past behavior, he knew that with few exceptions they were entirely loyal to Brazil, despite their cultural ties to Germany. On a practical level, Borges wanted to counter the panic that had spread from the cities to the rural Germans and to restore the flow of agricultural products to Porto Alegre.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout this period, a number of journalists, both Luso- and Teuto-Brazilian, played a key role in the effort to return to normal. The official newspaper of the Republican party in Rio Grande do Sul, *A Federação*, condemned superpatriotic journals such as *O Paíz* of Rio, charging that their extreme partisanship had unintentionally promoted violence in Porto Alegre. It also sought to improve the public image of the Teuto-Brazilians by reprinting a long, laudatory article that recounted the great contributions of Germans to Brazilian history and culture. Another Portuguese-language newspaper, *A Republica*, was alert to charges that Luso-Brazilians had acted brutally and senselessly in the Porto Alegre riots. Asserting that Brazilian culture dictates that intelligence and respect should govern the determination of action, this paper argued that attacks on Teuto-Brazilian citizens were simply unjustified, even if war was declared.<sup>33</sup>

31. *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo), April 24, 1917; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 23, 1917; Porto Alegre *Correio do Povo*, April 21, 1917; *Germania* (São Paulo), April 23, 1917; Curitiba *Kompass*, April 24, 1917.

32. For a more critical evaluation of Borges' role, see Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 49–50.

33. *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), April 20, 25, 1917; *A Republica* quoted in Curitiba *Kompass*, April 19, 1917.

In Santa Catarina, Governor Felipe Schmidt followed a course similar to Borges'. Schmidt convened a meeting of Teuto-Brazilian leaders to discuss the problem and to plan a course of action. The Germans responded unanimously by swearing their loyalty to Brazil; Schmidt so assured President Braz in Rio de Janeiro. As in Rio Grande do Sul, the German-language newspapers were requested to continue publishing and to use their influence to encourage calm and to build confidence in the government. In Paraná, the chief of the state police, Dr. Lindolfo Pessôa, said many of the same things and publicly credited the Germans for much of the economic progress made by the state.<sup>34</sup>

The superpatriotic press, however, continued as it had before the riots. The wildest rumors could find a place in the pro-Ally newspapers and some had the characteristics of deliberately planted lies; others, oddly enough, seem to have originated in Montevideo.<sup>35</sup> The *Correio do Povo* of Porto Alegre, for example, published a dispatch from the Uruguayan capital about events in its own city. When the warehouses of the Bromberg Company were burned on April 16, the Montevideo dispatch alleged that they had contained enormous quantities of arms, ammunition, machine guns, and even artillery. The *Jornal do Commercio* picked up the item from the *Correio do Povo* and added an earlier rumor about a huge cache of weapons in Santa Catarina, where large numbers of mutinous Germans were allegedly congregating. The *New York Times* soon expanded on all this with a story entitled "Germans in Brazil Reported in Revolt." According to this and a subsequent account, heavily armed Germans had already tried to blow up bridges and an insurrection was imminent. The same ar-

34. Curitiba *Kompass*, April 17, 21, 28, 1917; *Germania* (São Paulo), April 28, 1917.

35. The Uruguayan rumors apparently were rooted in the historic fear that Uruguayans had of invasion from Brazil. Early in 1917, Manuel Otero, the Uruguayan foreign minister, spoke of an impending revolution in southern Brazil due to alleged German activity there. He feared that Germans in Brazil would acquire a cache of arms and ammunition, legally the property of Paraguay, that was known in diplomatic circles to be hidden since 1911 in Argentine territory between Paraguay and Brazil. See Secretary of State [Lansing] to American Embassy in Buenos Aires, April 10, 1917, and [Frederic J.] Stimson to Secretary of State, April 11, 1917, both in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910-1929 (M336, roll 67).

ticle reported that José Nabuco de Gourea, a member of Congress from Rio Grande do Sul, confirmed reports that the recent riots in Porto Alegre and elsewhere had been caused by the Germans and that "the native [*sic*] population was incensed and determined to crush the Germans if they did not desist from troublemaking." Meanwhile, the American consul in Rio Grande do Sul was less gullible. He reported to his superior in Rio de Janeiro that there was no probability whatsoever of the Teuto-Brazilians doing anything significant to help Germany.<sup>36</sup>

Other rumors claimed that airplanes, presumably German, were flying in darkest night in the vicinity of Curitiba, where the office of the *Kompass* was alleged to house a secret radio station.<sup>37</sup> *A Noite* reported that German importers in Santa Catarina, working in conjunction with German submarines, had plans to engage in piracy along the Brazilian coast in the event that war was declared. When several foreigners purchased a plot of land on the Brazilian coast near Guaratiba, it was reported that Germans were plotting to construct a naval base there. When a Rio construction firm with a German name (Riedlinger) began to build a hotel on Flamengo Beach, the rumor was spread that Germans were constructing a fortress within the nation's capital.<sup>38</sup>

## Teuto-Brazilian Reaction

The range of reaction among the Teuto-Brazilians in the wake of the April riots was as wide as among the Luso-Brazilians. Most were fully prepared to accommodate their behavior to the norms narrowed by the international crises. Some decided that the best course would be to make overt gestures of assimilation. This could be done most obviously in the matter of names. Although the transformation of family names seems to have been less common in Brazil than in the United States, many persons altered their first

36. Porto Alegre *Correio do Povo*, April 20, 1917; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 23, 1917; New York *Times*, April 20, 25, 1917; Samuel T. Lee to Edwin V. Morgan, April 28, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 9.

37. *Germania* (São Paulo), April 28, 1917; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 20, 1917.

38. *Noite* quoted in *Germania* (São Paulo), May 1, 1917; *Uhle's Kalender: 1917*, p. 78.

names from the German to Portuguese equivalents. Thus Heinrich became Enrique, Karl became Carlos, and so on. Name changes in commercial firms, already started by the imposition of the Black List in 1916, were accelerated. For example, Schnakenberg, Buttermilch, and Company reorganized in 1917 as Bernardino and Zacharias—Schnakenberg's name was dropped, Bernhard Buttermilch's name reappeared as Bernardino, and the given name of a new Luso-Brazilian partner, Zacharias Junqueira, was added. Many voluntary organizations adopted the same cosmetic tactic. Thus the Deutsch-Brasilianische Männergesang Vereine Frohsinn von Rio Branco reorganized simply as Club Rio Branco. It also altered its constitution to admit Brazilian-born people to membership. In other examples of accommodationist behavior, Teuto-Brazilian organizations and persons with obviously German names wrote public letters to President Wenceslau Braz and Foreign Minister Müller, expressing their support for the break in diplomatic relations with Germany.<sup>39</sup>

Despite such efforts to improve the public image of at least some individual Teuto-Brazilian organizations, the societies as a group entered a difficult period after the riots. Many persons, especially German-speaking Swiss and well-assimilated Brazilian-born Germans, dropped their memberships in the *Vereine* as participation in such organizations became a source of social embarrassment or economic loss. Treasury receipts were correspondingly reduced and some activities had to be curtailed.<sup>40</sup> The *Turnvereine* also seemed apprehensive. Whereas in 1916 the pages of their Porto Alegre publication, *Deutsche Turnblätter*, had been glutted with pro-German chauvinism, the issues following the riots were greatly toned down and offered neither propaganda nor comments on the current wave of anti-Germanism. The *Monatsblätter des Germanischen Bundes* chose the most prudent course of all—it simply ceased publication entirely, except for a final issue that appeared in October, 1917.

39. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, May 3, April 30, 1917; Porto Alegre *Correio do Povo*, April 25, 1917. See also *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), April 18, 1917; Edwin Morgan to Secretary of State [Lansing], July 10, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 9; and Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 19, 26, 1917.

40. *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 153.

The Teuto-Brazilian churches had mixed experiences and responses to the riots. German Catholic parishes had generally been ignored by the demonstrators. Archbishop Becker in Porto Alegre dispatched two letters to the priests and parishioners of his diocese, warning them of the dangers of war and reminding them of their responsibilities to Brazil, their fatherland.<sup>41</sup> There were individual priests whose pro-German sentiments remained unmodified, but as an organization the Catholic church strongly encouraged the accommodation of its German members to newly developed norms of patriotic behavior. Such German Catholic publications as the *Marienkalender* said little of the war and nothing of the riots.

The Lutherans of the Missouri Synod tended to see the riots as a vindication of their own assimilationist stance. Their synodical publication happily pointed out that not a single window had been broken in any of their churches and that their tiny theological seminary in Porto Alegre had also been spared by the mob. The editor, Johann Kunstmann, subsequently published a long series of essays in which he explained how his church's distinction between church and state led to an understanding of *Deutschtum* as a commitment to the German language and culture, but never as loyalty to the German government. In his view, the German language and culture were valuable as means to keep members within the church and to retain purity of doctrine; but they should never be understood as ends in themselves.<sup>42</sup>

The several Evangelical bodies were much larger and therefore more diverse in their experiences. Perhaps their most eloquent representative was Dr. Wilhelm Rotermund's *Deutsche Post* of São Leopoldo, which took a firm but moderate stance that was entirely congruent with the position taken by state president Borges de Medeiros. In its first issue published after the riots, the *Post* commented that "we are citizens of this country and as such we have the primary duty to obey willingly the laws of the national, state, and local governments. We citizens of German descent are

41. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, May 2, 1917; Hugo Metzler, *Die St. Josefskirche der deutschen Katholiken zu Porto Alegre während des Weltkrieges* (Porto Alegre, 1918), 7.

42. *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt für Süd-Amerika*, XIV (May 1, 1917), 69. See August and September issues for Kunstmann, "Vom Deutschtum der Missourier."

just as good Brazilians as anyone else, no matter what their origin may be, but we must demonstrate that fact in deeds as well as words." In return for such unconditional loyalty, the Teuto-Brazilians could expect the government to guarantee public order in general and the lives and property of Teuto-Brazilians in particular. Other Evangelical spokesmen also tried to bring their denomination closer to an accommodationist position. Clemens Brandenburger, for example, strongly endorsed the teaching of Portuguese to children in German schools as early as possible. In short, these and other exponents of accommodation emphasized that it was possible to identify completely with Brazil as "our Fatherland" and, at the same time, retain German culture.<sup>43</sup> They also liked to point out that the riots were rarely incited by genuine Brazilians, but rather that they could be traced to instigation by English, French, or Italian provocateurs.<sup>44</sup>

The moderation of the *Deutsche Post* contrasted significantly with the more chauvinistic and secular *Germania* of São Paulo. Both counseled calm and the avoidance of provocation, but the latter remained more partisan than the *Post* was. The editor of the *Germania* could not resist sardonic slurs against other ethnic groups. When, on April 12, he warned of further outbreaks of vandalism, he remarked that in the next few days the Germans could expect "further manifestations of their [the Brazilians'] high civilization." When the *Germania* reported the brutal slaying of a Luso-Brazilian by an Italian several weeks later, he sarcastically observed that "this murder again places in proper light the exceptionally high culture of a race that calls us barbarians." At the same time he stopped printing part of the *Germania* in Portuguese and dropped its Portuguese subtitle, *Diário Teuto-Brasileiro*, commenting that "our genuine Brazilian friends read German and the others don't believe what we say in the Portuguese part."<sup>45</sup>

A sharp division emerged among German Brazilians during those anxious days as to the proper course to follow after the Porto Alegre riots. While no one espoused a pro-Ally tack, the

43. *Deutsche Post* (São Leopoldo), April 24, 1917; Clemens Brandenburger, "Der Schreib-Unterricht im ersten Schuljahre der zweisprachigen Schule Brasiliens," in *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien: 1918*, pp. 177-79. Cf. Koseritz' *Deutscher Volkskalender für Brasilien auf das Jahr 1918* (Porto Alegre, [1917]), 87.

44. *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 150.

45. *Germania* (São Paulo), April 20, 30, 1917.

moderates were clearly at odds with the die-hard chauvinists, who were more determined than ever to maintain their ethnicity and to assert the justice of the German cause as they saw it.<sup>46</sup> The latter were capable of remarkable self-deception or duplicity. Regarding the sinking of the *Paraná*, they could say that a final investigation might well demonstrate that the vessel was not torpedoed by a German submarine but that the Allies had done the deed in order to provoke Brazil into entering the war. Newspaper articles in German on the Porto Alegre riots could omit entirely the role of Friedrich Schmidt and his firing into the crowd of superpatriots. The pro-German chauvinists also tended to criticize the government for its failure to prevent the destruction suffered by the Germans in the riots, hinting darkly that the police and fire departments were held back from their responsibilities, thereby deliberately causing the destruction of the German district.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the pro-German tendencies of the Teuto-Brazilian leaders and the widespread anxiety caused by the riots, the fact remained that the majority of the German-speaking people in Brazil had been indifferent to the war. Europe was a distant place, Germany an abstraction with no immediate significance for their daily lives. But in April, 1917, repercussions of war half a world away reached the German colonies of Brazil and touched them in frightfully direct and devastating ways. Given the unrestrained character of the riots and the ethnic hatred they seemed to reflect, many Teuto-Brazilians wondered what would happen to them if Brazil actually declared war.

46. Koseritz' *Volkskalender*, 1918, p. 284.

47. An example of such biased journalism appears, surprisingly enough, in the moderate *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien*: 1918, pp. 190–93. Cf. Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 50.

## The Drift Toward War

IT WAS CLEAR that Lauro Müller's days as the Brazilian foreign minister were numbered. All through the month of April his enemies continued their attacks on him and his policy of neutrality. They did everything they could to paint him with a pro-German brush. On April 16, at the same time that rioters were devastating Porto Alegre, Ruy Barbosa addressed a crowd of fifty thousand demonstrators at a rally sponsored by the Liga pelos Aliados in Rio De Janeiro. In his most florid and stirring style, Barbosa denounced Müller's unwillingness to go further than a break in diplomatic relations. Asserting that there was an "absolute identity of interests between Brazil and the United States," Barbosa demanded an end to neutrality and a Brazilian declaration of war.<sup>1</sup>

Müller remained the chief stumbling block. So long as he directed the Foreign Ministry, it was unlikely that Brazil would drift any closer to belligerency. The Liga pelos Aliados thereupon stepped up its campaign to smear Müller. Its purpose was to influence Brazilian public opinion to the extent necessary to transform Müller into a political liability so that President Braz would be forced to ease him from office.

Müller's detractors rendered him vulnerable by pointing out his allegedly German economic, social, and personal connections. Claiming that he had a large personal interest in a variety of Ger-

1. *Washington Post*, April 17, 1917; *New York Times*, April 17, 1917; Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 56.



man enterprises, they said he was the motive force in the Hamburg Colonization Company and associated him with various German-owned banks and importing firms, especially the Bromberg Company. They never distinguished between Teuto-Brazilian enterprises and those owned by investors who lived in Germany. Müller's critics also insisted that he was active in German social circles in Rio de Janeiro and that he was a prominent member of the Germania Society there. They characterized his home in Rio as a palace; they pointed out that he also kept a beautiful home in the summer capital, Petrópolis, which since the days of the empire had always had a sizable German population. It was virtually a German resort, they charged, where beer gardens and various amusements created a foreign ambience in which German music and German conversation were standard. The implications were obvious: One could not possibly have such pervasively German connections and still direct Brazilian foreign policy.<sup>2</sup>

The attack was carried to an intensely personal level. Clearly influenced by the anti-Müller campaign, the American chargé d'affaires in Rio de Janeiro reported to the secretary of state in Washington that Müller was "selfish, shift, and utterly unscrupulous," that he had amassed a large fortune while in public office, and that he had staffed the Brazilian Foreign Office with incompetents. The popular press reported that Müller regarded Brazilians with contempt and avoided social contacts with them whenever possible. It was alleged that he frequently made derogatory remarks to his German friends about Luso-Brazilians, saying, for example, that they could think of nothing but eating and making love.<sup>3</sup>

There was little doubt, however, about Müller's actions as foreign minister. To the partisans of the Allies it appeared that everything he did was intended to work for the benefit of Germany. He resisted the pressure to ask Congress for a declaration of war; he insisted on issuing an official statement declaring Brazil's neutrality in the war between the United States and Germany; and he seemed slow in getting Dr. Adolf von Pauli, the German minister

2. *New York Times*, May 4, 1917.

3. Alexander Benson to Secretary of State, May 10, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 8; *New York Times*, May 4, 1917. See Octávio, "Lauro Mueller," 172-88.

to Brazil, out of the country after the break in diplomatic relations on April 11.

Nearly two weeks had passed between the time that Von Pauli received his passport and his departure from Rio de Janeiro on April 27. Müller claimed the delay actually arose out of the refusal of British and French authorities to guarantee safe passage to Von Pauli unless he returned to Germany aboard a ship that was headed for a Scandinavian port and that would put into an Allied harbor for examination. For its part, the German government claimed that it could not possibly warn all of its naval units in time to assure safe conduct. The decision was finally made that Von Pauli (and all German consuls in Brazil as well) would travel by train to Uruguay, a slow mode of transportation on a route that passed through São Paulo and the Teuto-Brazilian districts in the southern states.<sup>4</sup>

Müller's last effort to halt the drift toward war was to issue a decree on April 25 in which Brazil announced its neutrality in the conflict between the United States and Germany. To the super-patriots, this was a retrograde step rendered unnecessary by Brazil's severance of diplomatic ties with Germany; they saw it as one more example of Müller's pro-Germanism. But Braz seems to have agreed with Müller that Brazilian law made the step necessary. They insisted that they were obliged to enjoin all government authorities to observe neutrality "so long as they are not given orders to the contrary." The executive branch could do no more than this, Braz announced, until the Congress, to which the constitution assigned the initiative in such matters, assembled and took such action as it deemed appropriate. Moreover, they argued, the declaration of neutrality was a formality required by established diplomatic practice.<sup>5</sup> It was also a clever move on Müller's part—his last before he was forced out of office—and it had the effect of delaying action for a month. It meant that if the partisans of the Allies were to have their way, they would have to get Congress to revoke the neutrality decree, and in order to accomplish that, a bill would have to be introduced and steered through the usual

4. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, April 30, 1917; *New York Times*, April 29, 1917.

5. *The Brazilian Green Book*, 39; *New York Times*, May 2, 1917; Martin, "Brazil," 252.

time-consuming parliamentary procedures. Even more significant, it meant that the coveted German ships sequestered in Brazilian ports could not be seized and put to work for the benefit of the Allies until the decree was revoked or war declared.

Meanwhile, the Liga pelos Aliados intensified its pressure on the Braz administration for Müller's resignation. It was joined by all the major newspapers—the *Jornal do Commercio*, *O Paiz*, *Correio da Manhã*, *Epoca*, and others, including journals in the Italian, French, and English languages. All endorsed the league's demands that the arms of the *Schützenvereine* be confiscated, that the publication of German-language newspapers be halted, and that some sort of supervision be established over the *Reichsdeutsche* in Brazil.<sup>6</sup>

### The Resignation of Lauro Müller

Müller continued to defend himself to the end. He insisted that Brazil's situation in relation to the United States was fundamentally different from that of Cuba and Panama, two Latin American countries (both informal protectorates of the United States) that responded quickly to President Wilson's hope that other neutral countries would follow America's lead in declaring war against Germany. Müller dismissed as mere intrigue charges that he was friendly to Germany. "I am a Brazilian and only a Brazilian!" he cried. At the same time he condemned Ruy Barbosa as an irresponsible demagogue who, like Demosthenes, swayed public opinion by eloquence rather than by logic or measured judgment. Müller's frequent assertions of loyalty to Brazil made no difference, even though as early as 1916 he had publicly denounced Teuto-Brazilians who claimed a dual nationality.<sup>7</sup>

Müller understood, of course, that he had indeed become a political liability to the Braz regime and that he had to resign, but he held off until Congress convened on May 3, 1917. In his letter of resignation, Müller explained that he had not wanted to abandon the president at a time when Congress was not in session; it is more likely that he had no intention of giving his successor, sure to be a sympathizer of the Allies, an opportunity to direct policy

6. *New York Times*, May 4, 1917.

7. *Germania* (São Paulo), May 1, 1917; Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 46.

without the moderating influence of congressional politics. President Braz, who apparently retained a high regard for Müller's ability and a genuine admiration for his past accomplishments, offered Müller a different cabinet post. This may have been a courtesy only, and Müller wisely declined the honor, declaring that he preferred to return to private life or resume his army career. According to the *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre, the Santa Catarina delegation in Congress sought out Müller at his home to ask him to resume a seat in the Senate. One incumbent, a Luso-Brazilian, offered to resign in order to make room for him. Again, he refused.<sup>8</sup>

Once out of office, Müller received many plaudits for his long years of excellent service as foreign minister. The *Jornal do Commercio*, which had earlier joined in the anti-Müller chorus, now claimed that he had been unjustly attacked and that suspicions regarding his loyalty had never been substantiated. The *Jornal* praised him lavishly for his earlier success in drawing the Latin American republics together. "Even in the most delicate of circumstances," this paper now declared, "he gave proof of his devotion and patriotism."<sup>9</sup>

The chances of Ruy Barbosa being named as Müller's successor in the Foreign Ministry were slight—he was much too controversial a politician for that. Instead, President Braz found a substitute in Dr. Nilo Peçanha, who was satisfactory to Barbosa himself and to other prowar enthusiasts. Known for his pro-Ally sympathies, Peçanha was a prominent politician who had served briefly as acting president in 1909 and 1910. His appointment was well received; it indicated that in the future the Braz administration would pursue a clearly anti-German line. Indeed, many newspapers predicted that a declaration of war would soon follow. It was even suggested in the press that Peçanha had accepted appointment only on the condition that Braz would support Brazilian intervention.<sup>10</sup>

8. *New York Times*, May 5, 1917; *Germania* (São Paulo), May 4, 1917; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, May 3, 1917; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), May 7, 1917.

9. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, May 3, 1917; *New York Times*, May 5, 1917.

10. According to the *New York Times*, May 6, 7, 1917, Peçanha consulted with both Barbosa and Rodrigues Alves, the latter a former president and leading candidate to succeed Braz, before announcing his acceptance. The *Jornal do Commercio*

## The Revocation of Neutrality

Shortly after taking office, Peçanha revealed his belief that should Brazil take an active part in the war, the nation would not send troops, but would help by lending its moral support and by supplying economic aid in the form of its agricultural products. Peçanha also expressed the opinion that the first step toward involvement in the war would have to be the revocation of the neutrality decree of April 28. He obviously was inviting Congress to take the initiative, which in Braz's view belonged to the legislative branch. For whatever reason, Congress did nothing, and it remained for the executive to take action. The opportunity for this came on May 23, when the news arrived that the Germans had sunk another Brazilian vessel. The victim this time was the *Tijuca*, an old steamer of 2,304 tons built in England in 1883. En route from Pernambuco to Le Havre, the ship had been off the Brittany coast when the torpedoes struck.<sup>11</sup> By coincidence, the Brazilian government learned at the same time that a German prize court in Hamburg had denied a series of pleas to release the Brazilian steamship *Rio Pardo*, a vessel that had been confiscated by the German navy for transporting contraband within the war zone.<sup>12</sup>

Braz immediately sent a message to Congress recommending the revocation of neutrality in the war between Germany and the United States. Claiming that such annulment would be in harmony with the sympathies of the great majority of the Brazilian people, the president emphasized that the neutrality decree had been intended as a temporary measure and that the time had come for its withdrawal. He also reminded Congress that revocation was directly related to another matter that was paramount in many minds—the urgent need to utilize those German vessels that were being held in Brazilian ports. Once again the pro-Ally press crowed its approval and predicted that a declaration of war was in the offing. The *Jornal do Commercio* somewhat prematurely

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reported that Barbosa advised Peçanha to make the reorganization of the entire cabinet the condition of his acceptance.

11. *New York Times*, May 7, 1917; *The Brazilian Green Book*, 41.

12. *New York Times*, May 22, 1917.

announced, "Our neutrality is ended—we are aligned with and for America."<sup>13</sup>

The committee on foreign relations immediately drafted an appropriate bill. A day later the Chamber of Deputies added an amendment specifically authorizing the government to put the German ships to work, passed the bill overwhelmingly, and sent it on to the Senate, all to the tumultuous approval of a gallery packed with prowar enthusiasts. On June 1, the Senate passed the bill; the president signed it the same day and undertook its enforcement immediately, directing that the ships be prepared for sea as soon as possible.<sup>14</sup>

Thus began a new chapter in the saga of the German ships. Forty-six in number and sequestered in ports all along the Brazilian coast, but chiefly in Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, the vessels had an aggregate displacement of 240,779 tons. The *Blücher* was the largest at 12,350 tons; thirteen displaced less than 4,000 tons each. The serious shortage of shipping that had developed worldwide in 1916 was made much worse by Germany's policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, which had begun on January 31, 1917. Brazil was one of the few Latin American countries possessing a merchant marine of significant tonnage; seizure of the impounded German ships would enable it to greatly expand its ability to capitalize on the ship famine. The pro-Ally press, notably the *Jornal do Commercio*, had persistently urged this course of action and had linked it to the confiscation by Germany of Brazilian coffee stored in warehouses in Hamburg and Antwerp.<sup>15</sup> So long as Lauro Müller was foreign minister, the Braz administration had been unwilling to run the risk; it meant giving Germany a cause for declaring war on Brazil. But now that Müller was gone and Congress had authorized the confiscation of the German ships, the partisans of the Allies would have been pleased if it had indeed provoked a German declaration of war; the blame would then go to the other side. Germany, of course, didn't bother.

13. *The Brazilian Green Book*, 39–42; *New York Times*, April 23, 24, 25, 1917.

14. *New York Times*, April 28, 29, 30, 1917; *The Brazilian Green Book*, 43–44; *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 293–94.

15. *New York Times*, June 3, 1917; Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 51; Martin, "Brazil," 251.

## A Midyear Interlude

During the next five months, from the beginning of June to the end of October, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry was preoccupied with the problem of the German ships and their utilization. Almost all agitation calling for Brazil to enter the war ceased, pending the resolution of this issue. Persons who had been urging Brazil to rally under the Allied banner of justice and righteousness against Germany now found themselves bargaining with the Allies for arrangements they believed to be just and right for Brazil. They discovered that their Allied friends could drive hard bargains with great skill; they also found that their enthusiasm for the Allied cause was modified by their desire to win advantages for Brazil in international trade and shipping. Brilliant speeches demanding an end to immoral neutrality were no longer necessary; they could in fact inhibit the ability of the diplomats to extract favorable concessions from the Allies.

Attacks on the Teuto-Brazilian population, their institutions—*Schützenvereine*, private schools, the press—and the continued use of a foreign tongue also declined in number and intensity. Occasional references to the “German danger” continued to appear, but they added nothing to the old propaganda that had been spread by the pro-Ally press for many months. The chauvinistic *Correio da Manhã* of Porto Alegre repeated and embellished the rumors that had circulated in the aftermath of the diplomatic break in April that a Teuto-Brazilian military revolt was developing in Santa Catarina, centering in Joinville and Blumenau. An investigation followed, personally conducted by General Barbedo of the Sixth Military District. His report dismissed as fairy tales the rumors of armed hordes of Germans preparing to attack the Brazilian army and stated that there was no evidence either of radio stations or of the importation of weapons.<sup>16</sup> There was no hysteria

16. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), July 12, 19, 1917. The American ambassador to Brazil, Edwin Vernon Morgan, concurred with Barbedo's assessment. In a letter to Secretary of State Robert Lansing, Morgan wrote: “That the colonists have perfected a military organization and that they have imported ammunition and arms in quantity is more than doubtful. That they have in concealment a large number of rapid fire guns or that 20 or 30,000 perfectly equipped men can be

during this period—no riots, not even peaceful anti-German demonstrations.

As the next step in the pursuit of its new policy of nonbelligerency, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry tried to link the abandonment of neutrality with the disposal of its huge coffee surpluses. The revocation act of June 1 applied to the United States only; Brazil's several declarations of neutrality in the conflict between the other Allied powers and Germany, which had been announced in 1914 and 1915, remained in force. Brazil therefore let it be known that it would revoke its neutrality with respect to Britain if the latter would remove its prohibition of imports of Brazilian coffee. Britain replied that it had enough coffee in warehouses to last five years and that it needed to reserve all available shipping space for essential food supplies. Brazil then requested the United States to intervene on its behalf. The result was that Britain expressed its willingness to buy a quantity of Brazilian coffee equal to 25 percent of the coffee it had imported in 1916 from all sources. Brazil accepted this promise in good faith and, on June 29, 1917, withdrew its neutrality decrees as they related to Britain, France, Russia, Portugal, Italy, and Japan, only to discover that the British now insisted that the coffee be transported in the recently seized German ships. Brazil thereupon declared, somewhat petulantly, that there were no former German ships—they were now all incorporated into Brazil's government-owned merchant fleet.<sup>17</sup> Inevitably the deal collapsed. Brazil had been outmaneuvered; it had revoked its neutrality decrees without gaining anything in return.

Although Brazil needed the ships, it soon discovered that France, Britain, and the United States wanted them even more desperately. Each government made proposals, none of which satisfied all parties. Brazil's hand was weakened by the common knowledge that the nation had the resources to put only thirteen of the forty-six vessels into service. Some had been either damaged or otherwise rendered inoperable by the German crews; the

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placed in the field . . . is probably untrue" (Morgan to Lansing, July 10, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 9).

17. *The Brazilian Green Book*, 74; *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 294, 296, 304–305, 310.



remainder had deteriorated to such an extent that only a country with extensive shipbuilding and repair facilities, such as the United States, could return them to active service. Unsuccessful negotiations for sales, charters, dummy companies, repair arrangements, operating arrangements, and cargo restrictions, as well as additional coffee purchases, continued through August, September, and October.

Unlike the Allies, Brazil was in no great hurry; in the middle of September, President Braz, who played an active role in the bargaining, decided to take a month-long vacation. Upon his return, Braz insisted that the Brazilian government would neither alienate nor charter the ships but would organize them in transatlantic lines under the Brazilian flag and with Brazilian crews. The American ambassador to Brazil, Edwin Morgan, pointed out that since Brazil could not in fact supply the latter, the operation of the vessels would inevitably fall to Americans. Thus Braz's insistence on the maintenance of the Brazilian flag, Morgan observed, would soon have the effect of bringing Brazil actively into the conflict.<sup>18</sup> Ultimately, however, other events intruded to lead Brazil to a declaration of war.

The first of these events related to the persistent but frequently repudiated rumors that Germans were gathering in southern Brazil to stage an armed rebellion. Early in September such a rumor surfaced again, this time embroidered with the allegation that the governor of Santa Catarina, General Felipe Schmidt, stood at the head of this mythical army, ready to lead it against Brazilian forces. Shamelessly calculated to contribute to Schmidt's defeat at the polls, this fabrication was exposed in loud and angry speeches delivered in the Santa Catarina state legislature.<sup>19</sup> A month later the rumor appeared again, but this time its source seemed more reliable and its form and content more ominous.

### The Luxburg Dispatches

At the center of the new imbroglio was Count Karl von Luxburg, the German minister to Argentina. For some months (at least

18. *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 315, 318–21, 325, 331–32, 335, 345–46.

19. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), September 3, 1917.

since July 3, 1917), Luxburg had been communicating with the German Foreign Office in Berlin through the Swedish legation in Buenos Aires. In an egregious violation of its neutrality, the Swedish government had permitted Luxburg to disguise his cables in its code as though they were official Swedish dispatches. Virtually all communications of the German Foreign Office with its agents in Latin American countries were funneled through Buenos Aires in this way. Ironically, the Swedish line of communication passed through England on its way to Stockholm, which was in regular and direct communication with Berlin.

Late in July an informer connected with the Central and South American Telephone Company provided the American ambassador in Buenos Aires, Frederic J. Stimson, with copies of nineteen of Luxburg's telegrams, all in the numerical code used by the Swedes. Some weeks later he received a second and larger group. All were quickly sent to Washington to be deciphered. Unable to decode them, the State Department cabled them to London, where British intelligence had cracked the Swedish code and had been quietly monitoring Luxburg's messages, the great majority of which were routine and without much significance.<sup>20</sup> The American embassy in London then selected certain messages and returned them to Washington.<sup>21</sup>

On September 8, 1917, Secretary of State Robert Lansing, after consulting with President Wilson in the matter, released three of Luxburg's telegrams to the Washington press. He chose messages that were especially indiscreet. In one, Luxburg referred to the Argentine foreign minister as "a notorious ass and anglophile." In another he urged that two Argentine vessels in the war zone either "be spared if possible, or else sunk without a trace [*spurlos*

20. The Luxburg dispatches were subsequently published in the Committee on Public Information's *Official Bulletin*, December 21, 1917. The original typed transcriptions are in RG 59, Entry 543, Box 5, File 120.

21. Frederic Jesup Stimson, *My United States* (New York, 1931), 399, 406–407, 412; Stimson to Secretary of State, July 23, September 15, 1917, both in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910–1929 (M336, roll 67); Lansing to American Embassy in London, September 6, 1917, in RG 59, Entry 543, Box 5, File 120; see also Ambassador Page to Secretary of State, September 6, 1917, in the same file. For extensive correspondence regarding the Luxburg telegrams, see RG 59, Entry 543, Classified Case Files of Edward Bell, 1917–19.

*versenkt*].”<sup>22</sup> Lansing’s revelations immediately caused a huge uproar in the world press, and for several weeks countless stories appeared in all the major newspapers as journalists were titillated by Luxburg’s vocabulary and appalled by Sweden’s unneutral conduct.<sup>23</sup> Press accounts everywhere credited the American intelligence service with having decoded the telegrams.

Rumors soon began to circulate that the Luxburg dispatches also contained references to German intrigue in Brazil. On September 10 and 11, the American ambassador in London, Walter Hines Page, sent three more decoded messages to Washington with the recommendation that they also be published “for the sake of the probable effect in the Argentine Republic and Brazil.” Telegram number 63, dated July 7, 1917, read in part: “Our [Germany’s] attitude towards Brazil has created the impression here [Buenos Aires] that our easy-going good nature can be counted on. This is dangerous in South America, where the people under thin veneer are Indians. A submarine squadron with full powers to me might possibly still save the situation.” Telegrams numbered 88 and 89 were both dated August 4, 1917. In the latter, Luxburg wrote: “I am convinced that we should be able to carry through our principal political aims in South America: the maintenance of the open market in Argentina and the re-organization of Brazil.”<sup>24</sup> This dispatch seemed to confirm what the propagandists had been claiming for years—that Germany had political aims in Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina and that by implication Teuto-Brazilian citizens represented some sort of internal threat to the country.

Instead of releasing these dispatches to the press immediately, as Page recommended, Lansing gave them on September 19 to the Argentine and Brazilian ambassadors, who immediately con-

22. Lansing to American Embassy in Buenos Aires, September 7, 1917, in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910–1929 (M336, roll 67); *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 322–23.

23. For example, see Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, September 10–25, 1917; see New York *Times* and Washington *Post* for the same period. The General Records of the Department of State, NA, contain many clippings from newspapers in England and other countries about the dispatches.

24. Page to Secretary of State, September 10, 11, 1917, both in RG 59, Entry 543, Box 5, File 120.

veyed them to their superiors in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. Of course Lansing hoped that at least the Brazilians would be sufficiently outraged to declare war, but President Braz and Foreign Minister Peçanha decided to use the dispatches carefully. After all, the telegrams were vague and their meaning subject to debate. It was by no means certain that their release to the press would trigger a popular clamor for war. They could be used more effectively to convince members of Congress that the German threat was real. Thus, rumors about a German plot continued to circulate for the next month as the Brazilian government waited for the right occasion to exploit the Luxburg dispatches.<sup>25</sup>

It came near the end of October. The news arrived on the twenty-third that a German submarine had torpedoed a fourth Brazilian vessel, the *Macao*, two hundred miles off the coast of Spain.<sup>26</sup> Formerly the German ship *Palatia* and now part of the government-owned Lloyd Brasileiro Line, the vessel was laden with a cargo of black beans and coffee intended for France. The Germans added insult to injury by taking the captain of the *Macao* captive.<sup>27</sup>

After conferring with government leaders, President Braz decided that the time had come, as he put it in his message to Congress on October 25, 1917, "to make legal our defensive attitude . . . and to develop the organization of national resistance." By torpedoing the *Macao* and seizing its commander, Germany had imposed a state of war upon Brazil, he declared; for that reason he felt at liberty "to recommend belligerent retaliation . . . in order to maintain the dignity of the nation." Braz further announced that if Congress would declare war, he would immediately seize the

25. Lansing to the American Ambassador in Rio de Janeiro, September 19, 1917, in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910-1929 (M336, roll 67); Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 246n.124; *New York Times*, October 11, 1917.

26. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, October 26, 1917. One contemporary Teuto-Brazilian writer has made the astonishing and unsupported assertion that present-day Brazilian historians believe that the *Macao* could have been sunk by the Americans in order to bring Brazil into the war. See Klaus Geissler, "Deutsche in Amazonasgebiet," *Staden-Jahrbuch: Beiträge zur Brasilkunde*, XXIX (1981), 53.

27. *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), October 26, 1917; *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), October 26, 1917; *New York Times*, October 26, 1917; Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 51; Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 67.

German gunboat *Eber*, then in the port of Bahia, and imprison its crew.<sup>28</sup>

## The Declaration of War

The next day, October 26, 1917, the Chamber of Deputies by a vote of 149 to 1 and the Senate unanimously approved a resolution proclaiming a state of war between Brazil and the German Empire. It also empowered the president "to take such steps for the national defense and public safety as he shall consider adequate." Only then did Peçanha take advantage of the Luxburg dispatches. As though to justify Brazil's entry into the war, he announced grandiloquently that Germany had been caught in a plot to invade Brazil. It appears that in order to galvanize public opinion in support of the war resolution, Peçanha grossly exaggerated the content and significance of Luxburg's messages. The press, especially in Argentina, then demanded that the Argentine government release the actual text of the incriminating telegrams or else authorize their publication by a foreign government, *i.e.*, the United States.<sup>29</sup> In response to this pressure, the American secretary of state released the texts of telegrams numbered 63 and 89. They were published in Rio de Janeiro papers on October 30, 1917. The *New York Times*, which welcomed Brazil's entry into the war, reported that the Luxburg dispatches confirmed long-held suspicions of a German plot, but as for Peçanha's hyperbole, the newspaper merely noted that the texts did "not fully sustain the statements made by the Brazilian Minister."<sup>30</sup>

On October 31, President Braz addressed a widely publicized manifesto to the presidents and governors of the states: "It is nec-

28. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, October 26, 27, 1917; *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), October 26, 27, 1917; *The Brazilian Green Book*, 87–88; *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 351; *New York Times*, October 26, 27, 1917.

29. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, October 27, 1917; *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), October 27, 1917; *The Brazilian Green Book*, 88; *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 352; *New York Times*, October 27, 29, 31, 1917.

30. Morgan to Secretary of State, October 30, 1917, in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910–1929 (M336, roll 67); Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 1, 1917; *New York Times*, October 31, 1917.

essary that all internal differences disappear and that the nation stand forth one and indivisible before the aggressor." He added that Brazil's "liberal traditions have always taught respect for the persons and property of the enemy, as far as is compatible with public safety."<sup>31</sup> Superpatriots heeded the former more than the latter. As in April, enthusiastic public demonstrations were accompanied by attacks on German and Teuto-Brazilian property.

31. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 1, 1917. The translation is from Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 69.

## A Second Round of Riots

WAR WITH GERMANY did not come as a surprise to the Teuto-Brazilians, though some tried to ignore its portents throughout September and October, 1917. There were plenty of signs of changes in attitude. In addition to the publicity attending the Luxburg dispatches and the revival of rumors about an impending German revolt in southern Brazil, the state legislature of Santa Catarina enacted a law on October 5, 1917, that established compulsory school attendance for all children from six to eleven years of age. It required all foreign-language schools to include Portuguese-language instruction in their curricula, in addition to Brazilian history and geography.<sup>1</sup> A few days later, there were reports in the press about the disposition of the court case filed against Friedrich Schmidt in Porto Alegre for his having fired upon patriotic demonstrators in April. Thus, just a few days before the sinking of the *Macao*, the prosecutor had the occasion to characterize anew the torpedoing of the *Paraná* as a barbaric attack by the Germans on the dignity of the Brazilian people. Memories of the Porto Alegre riots were revived as newspapers reported the prosecutor's review of those unhappy events.<sup>2</sup>

Some German-language newspapers made a halfhearted effort to prepare readers for the possibility of war. Less than a week before the declaration of hostilities, the *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Ale-

1. Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 51; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 356; Koch, *Das Deutsche Schulwesen*, 21.

2. *Germania* (São Paulo), October 17, 1917.

gre defended the Teuto-Brazilian record of citizenship and explicitly stated that all able-bodied Teuto-Brazilians would willingly bear arms against Germany, if citizenship required it of them. Still, the *Deutsche Zeitung* could not resist suggesting the improbability of war because the Brazilian Constitution permits a defensive war only, and Germany would never wage a war of conquest against Brazil. Thus, ethnic chauvinism remained naïve until the end.<sup>3</sup>

When war was finally declared on October 26, the editor of the *Deutsche Zeitung* anticipated trouble; an intolerance of all things German, he wrote, could be expected as a matter of course. He suggested that scheduled ethnic festivals be canceled in order to avoid causing offense. He pointed out that the president's message recommending war had immediately caused great excitement and enthousiasm among the local youths who congregated in the streets and coffeehouses.<sup>4</sup> His advice was far too mild. Given their experiences in April following the break in diplomatic relations, the Germans of Porto Alegre, São Paulo, and other cities as well should have been prepared for another round of violence, perhaps worse than the first.

Unlike many of the Teuto-Brazilian leaders, some local governments did anticipate the possibility of new riots. This was especially true of Porto Alegre, where the police forbade all public demonstrations. A few other cities, including Rio de Janeiro, tried to ban public meetings of any kind, thereby hoping to nip in the bud any planning sessions for future anti-German depredations. At the same time, the Ministry of Justice in Rio issued a directive to all state presidents and governors that prohibited the publication of alarming rumors or routine information about the departures of vessels, the movements of troops, and other events of a military character.<sup>5</sup>

Most major cities, however, permitted (or could not prevent) patriotic demonstrations in those heady days following the decla-

3. *Deutsche Zeitung* (Porto Alegre), October 20, 1917.

4. *Ibid.*, October 26, 1917.

5. Porto Alegre *Correio da Manhã*, October 27, 28, 1917; *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), November 5, 1917; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, October 31, November 1, 4, 1917.



ration of war. A few degenerated into scenes of anti-German agitation. No doubt some were the result of several directives issued by the national government relating to the Germans. The most important was an order issued by the minister of the interior to the state presidents and governors to end the publication of all German-language newspapers, periodicals, and books. A second decree ordered the closing of all schools in which Portuguese was not taught. Similarly, the director of the Brazilian postal service announced that his agency would no longer handle materials published in the German language. Subsequently, censorship was instituted, German sailors were interned, alleged "spies" were arrested, identification cards were required of all *Reichsdeutsche*, and interstate travel by aliens without special permits was forbidden.<sup>6</sup>

### New Violence in the Cities

Newspapers and schools then became prime targets in a new round of violence that occurred in Curitiba, Pelotas, Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro, and other cities. In general, these disturbances appeared to have been more random in character, perhaps less well organized, and less severe than were the April riots. There is some evidence, however, that like the earlier disorders, these were at least partly attributable to Italian immigrants whose anti-German sentiments were intense. In American intelligence reports, the riots were simply referred to as "the Italian demonstrations." Especially in São Paulo, where Italians constituted half the population, they organized a vigilance committee, "a secret service force," for the purpose of German surveillance and fomenting anti-German activity.<sup>7</sup>

The first riot struck Curitiba, the capital of Paraná, on Sunday evening, October 28, and continued into the early hours of the next day. Its origins are unclear. Catholic sources assert that anti-

6. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, October 30, November 1, 4, 1917; *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), October 30, 1917; Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 52; "Attitude of Brazilians toward the War," anonymous report transmitted to the Department of State by Capt. S. McCauley, Assistant Director of Naval Intelligence, April 25, 1918, p. 11, in RG 59, Entry 540, Box 1, Brazil folder.

7. "Attitude of Brazilians," 11; in the same file, see the "Situation at São Paulo," transmitted by McCauley, April 26, 1918, pp. 5, 9, 10, 11.

clericalism was at the root of the problem. In any case, a demonstration grew more or less spontaneously from a dispute among people of strong anti-German sentiments, and a large crowd gathered. The assemblage then moved to the residence of the state president, where there was much patriotic display. A parade then formed that quickly degenerated into a mob seeking indiscriminate revenge on the Germans for the sinking of the *Macao*.

At first the mob merely sought symbols of German power that they could destroy, such as flags, banners, and pictures of the kaiser and other German leaders. Such objects were taken from a German theater and the clubhouses of several *Vereine* and burned in the streets. As midnight approached, the mob moved on to the offices of the *Beobachter*, the anticlerical newspaper, and to the *Kompass*, the chauvinistic Catholic publication. The offices and the printshop of the latter were located within a complex of buildings maintained by the Franciscan order that included a school, apartments for the teachers and editors, as well as the cloister itself. All were vandalized. Books, school equipment, clothes, and furniture were piled high in the street and burned. Other items were stolen. Printing equipment was wrecked, some of it beyond repair; doors and windows were smashed. Telephone calls were repeatedly made to the police. Someone had misdirected them to the brewery, possibly intentionally. Finally they arrived, drove the mob away, and with the help of cloister residents extinguished the fire.<sup>8</sup>

Failure to comply completely and immediately with the injunction against publishing in the German language stimulated another major disturbance in Pelotas, where the strongly pro-German *Deutsche Wacht*, severely damaged in April, was now put to rest permanently. Its end came on October 30, 1917, the same day that the editor, Rudi Schäfer, had been informed officially that he could no longer publish. Schäfer received the news after an issue had been printed but before it was distributed. He naïvely announced to the police that that day's product would be his last, implying thereby that the issue would be distributed. This information was quickly spread through the city, and that night a mob

8. O Paíz (Rio de Janeiro), November 4, 1917; Sinzig, *Nach dreissig Jahren*, 100–103; Fugmann, *Die Deutschen in Paraná*, 87, 121, 127, 192; Paul Rohrbach, *Bei den Deutschen in Latein-Amerika* (Berlin, 1922), 31; Arndt and Olson, *History and Bibliography*, 122.

destroyed the *Wacht's* building and its contents. Next, the rabble severely vandalized a German-language school and the clubhouse of the Concordia-Verein. Many other buildings were threatened with destruction, but the police were able to protect them. For several nights following, police closely guarded numerous German businesses in order to prevent further depredations.<sup>9</sup>

Petrópolis, the old summer capital of Brazil, was next. The disturbance there began in the evening of Wednesday, November 1, 1917, on the heels of news about the Curitiba riot. Apparently another spontaneous affair, the Petrópolis riot developed from a noisy argument, possibly prearranged, between two Italians, one of whom defended the Germans. Attracted by the commotion, a crowd gathered. Patriotic sympathies were heated by the exchanges, and soon cries of "Viva Brazil! Death to Germany!" kindled enthusiasm for the liquor supplies in a nearby *Gasthaus*. After smashing its doors, windows, and furniture and depleting its liquid stores, the mob stormed a German bakery and a bowling club. Then, at midnight, they wrecked Father Sinzig's publishing house, where *Vozes de Petrópolis* and various German-language publications were produced. The riot continued until 3:00 A.M.; many German businesses and houses were damaged. In his account of the affair, Father Sinzig emphasized that the riot had been the work of a few agitators and that the respectable Luso-Brazilians of the city were warmly generous in assisting their devastated German neighbors.<sup>10</sup>

Rio de Janeiro experienced a major anti-German riot on November 3, 1917. According to the *Jornal do Commercio*, the disturbances were directly attributable to popular indignation over the torpedoing of two former German ships, the *Acary* and the *Guahyba*. Superpatriotic students led the demonstrations at first but soon the crowd mushroomed into an ugly mob, one so large and unruly that the police were unable to control it. The disturbances began in front of the presidential palace but quickly moved to the

9. *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), October 31, November 1, 9, 1917; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 326. On October 31, 1917, Borges de Medeiros dispatched a long report on the riot to the minister of the interior in Rio de Janeiro. It is reprinted in Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 2, 1917.

10. *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), November 3, 1917; Sinzig, *Nach dreiszig Jahren*, 143–44. *Jornal do Commercio* ignored the Petrópolis disturbances entirely, despite the proximity of this city to Rio de Janeiro.

nearby German district, where a well-known German restaurant was completely wrecked. Next, the clubhouse of the Germania Society and a nearby German school were severely damaged, as the mob moved on to a special target, the buildings of Arp and Company, which had regularly displayed pro-German materials in its windows since the beginning of the war in 1914. Next, the offices and the equipment of the pro-German, Portuguese-language newspaper *Diário Allemão* were destroyed. Several other well-known German commercial houses were vandalized, though the branch office of the Bayer Company was spared because the caretaker had the presence of mind to place a large "For Rent" sign over the main entrance.<sup>11</sup>

According to one historian of the Rio de Janeiro Germans, the outrages committed by the rabble that night were done at the direction of paid agitators. The American historian Clarence Haring reported that "the police conveniently arrived after the damage was done." Still, the chief of police took immediate measures to strengthen security forces to prevent further outbreaks of popular indignation. Soldiers patrolled the streets in sensitive districts and guarded German-owned commercial houses and banks from further depredations as order was quickly restored in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>12</sup>

The great seaport of Santos, located near São Paulo, also endured a severe riot in the evening of Saturday, November 3, 1917, at the same time the Rio disturbance occurred. In this instance, the American consul, Carl F. Deichman, was in the midst of the action and he submitted a report to his superior, Ambassador Edwin Morgan, at his earliest opportunity. In Deichman's view, the trouble was directly attributable to popular indignation over the sinking of the two Brazilian vessels, but he added that the crowds, which had gathered more or less spontaneously, were subsequently exploited by agitators who deliberately incited the crowd to acts of vandalism. Signboards in the German language were removed and destroyed, the German clubhouse was set on fire, and a variety of German-owned business houses were exten-

11. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 4, 5, 1917; *O Paiz* (Rio de Janeiro), November 4, 1917.

12. Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 494-95; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 65; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 5, 1917.

sively damaged. The police managed to save a German bank and a department store only by using their carbines and bayonets. Deichman himself narrowly escaped injury by gunfire in the melee. In the effort to save the offices of *A Notícia*, which was known as a pro-German newspaper, one man was killed and others were injured, some seriously. Calm was finally restored when marines on Brazilian warships anchored in the Santos harbor were ordered to patrol the streets of the city.<sup>13</sup>

Many other Brazilian cities experienced similar disturbances during the first week of the war. Most were on or near the coast, such as São Paulo and Pernambuco, but some were remote, interior towns such as Cuiabá, the capital of Mato Grosso. This time the state of Santa Catarina was especially vulnerable to the contagion, and serious disorders broke out in Itajaí, São José, and the capital city of Florianópolis. Problems in the solidly German communities, including Blumenau and Joinville, were real enough though less severe. Most of the rural towns in the *serra* had no trouble, but a few were afflicted with endemic anti-Germanism for months afterward.<sup>14</sup>

## Causes of the Disturbances

In his report to the U.S. Department of State, Ambassador Morgan observed that the rioters usually had been "students, boys, and uneducated people." Had the police intervened, Morgan reported, the mobs probably could have been disbanded. In Rio

13. Carl F. Deichman to Edwin V. Morgan, November 5, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 8. See also Edwin V. Morgan to Secretary of State, November 8, 1917, in the same source.

14. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 5, 1917; *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), November 3, 1917; Pfarrer Radlach, "Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges auf die deutsch-evangelischen Gemeinden in Santa Catharina," in Geissler (ed.), *Die Kulturbedeutung*, 24; Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 190; *Der Familienfreund: Katholischer Hauskalender und Wegweiser für das Jahr 1920* (Porto Alegre, [1919]), 124; Ambassador Edwin V. Morgan to Secretary of State, November 8, 1917, in RG 59, American Embassy Correspondence, Rio de Janeiro, 1917, part 8. The American consul in Pernambuco reported that a riot occurred there on November 7. Several German-owned buildings were destroyed, one policeman killed, and twenty-two persons injured. A. T. Haerberle to Secretary of State, November 8, 1917, in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910–1929 (microfilm roll 66).

Grande, Pelotas, and Florianópolis, order was reestablished, not by the appointed authorities, but by private citizens acting independently. In Morgan's view, "the less guilty suffered the most" while the German-owned banks, which he regarded as agents of German propaganda and espionage, suffered insignificant injury. Morgan emphasized that Teuto-Brazilians generally were law-abiding and loyal, and that the hatred directed against them was due, not to their own conduct, but to the acts of the German government. He predicted that leniency in the treatment of Teuto-Brazilians was likely to develop, rather than the reverse.<sup>15</sup>

In most communities, ethnic strife was in fact short-lived.<sup>16</sup> Brazilian behavior often resembled the huge bonfires set by the rioters. Fed with kerosene, paper, and smashed furniture, the flames flared up instantly, generated terrific heat, and then quickly burned out. Similarly, Brazilian intolerance of ethnic differences or of perceived pro-German behavior flashed into violence, but then it subsided quickly, as more typical manifestations of the Brazilian personality returned, such as easy acceptance and good humor.

Although the riots were clearly an urban phenomenon, they seem not to have been closely related to other social or demographic variables, such as density of German population, or even to indiscreet pro-German behavior in the period before the declaration of war. Instead, the attitudes of local officials, or outstanding personalities, seem to have been most significant. For example, if the editor of a local newspaper had been especially intemperate in his denunciation of Germany and the pro-German behavior of Teuto-Brazilians, or if there were in a given community persons who, for whatever political, economic, social, or cultural reasons, took it upon themselves to plan, organize, and lead a demonstration and transform it into something more destructive, then anti-German riots were more likely to occur. Although newspaper accounts usually emphasized attacks on the German-language press and commercial houses, both Catholic and Protestant churches and schools were by no means immune to attack, as

15. Edwin V. Morgan to Secretary of State, November 5, 1917, in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910-1929 (microfilm roll 66).

16. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 5, 6, 1917; "Attitude of Brazilians toward the War," 12-13.

numerous histories of local parishes testify.<sup>17</sup> As in the April riots, property damage was extensive, but physical injury to persons was relatively rare.<sup>18</sup> Many accounts emphasize that the majority of Luso-Brazilians, especially government officials and respected leaders of society, did not condone the violence. While it does not follow that they approved of pro-German behavior, they were often helpful to individual Teuto-Brazilians whose lives or property were threatened, and they were instrumental in restoring peace. At the same time, there is evidence, admittedly inconclusive in character, to suggest that the police were sometimes deliberately slow in responding to calls for help and that they arrived to quell the disturbances only after rioters had a chance to work their destruction unhindered.

It is impossible to determine the role of the Portuguese-language press in stimulating this new wave of violence. Such quasi-official newspapers as the Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio* and *A Federação* (Porto Alegre) were not sensationalist sheets that catered to popular tastes. More conscious of their role as journals of official record and of elite opinion, they were often inadequate as purveyors of news. They reported what the government wanted reported. In his widely publicized message to the state presidents and governors on the declaration of war, President Braz revealed his government's expectation that "the press, which has never failed in its patriotism in the hour of danger, will avoid inopportune discussions."<sup>19</sup> It is not surprising therefore that the anti-German riots in Curitiba, Pelotas, and Petrópolis (October 28 to November 1) were not even mentioned in the *Jornal do Commercio*; it was only when Rio de Janeiro itself was afflicted on November 3 that this newspaper provided coverage of the violence.

Still, there is no question that because of its strongly pro-Ally bias, the Brazilian press contributed to an intense anti-German feeling that ultimately manifested itself in riots. Both before and after the declaration of war, the Brazilian public was fed a steady diet of stories about the internal German menace. Rumors about the gathering of armed Germans in southern Brazil were fre-

17. For examples, see accounts in *Lutherische Kirche in Brasilien: Festschrift zum 50-jährigen Bestehen der lutherischen Synode am 9. Oktober 1955* [1955], *passim*.

18. For an example of personal injury to an Evangelical pastor, see Radlach, "Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges," 24.

19. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 69.

quently repeated, despite their utter lack of foundation in fact.<sup>20</sup> Other reports claimed that virtually the entire Brazilian army was being sent to the south to suppress the impending German revolt. Meanwhile, nervous Brazilian navy men observed what appeared to be strange nighttime signals along the coast, presumably signifying some sort of enemy communication. Investigation proved them to be innocent enough, but in his war message to Congress, President Braz had warned the people to be on guard against enemy spies. It is hardly surprising that excitable persons were soon discovering them everywhere. There were rumors that Draconian measures would soon be taken against German (or Teuto-Brazilian) products, but it was also reported that such steps would not be in harmony with Brazilian interests or with the country's liberal traditions. Some enthusiasts for the Allied cause were appropriately horrified by the news that Rio de Janeiro police discovered seventeen cases of ammunition in the warehouse of Bellingrodt and Meyer, a German importing firm that for years had been marketing such merchandise in Brazil.<sup>21</sup>

Patriotic organizations experienced a new surge of activity in the weeks following the declaration of war. This was especially true of the League of National Defense (*Liga da Defesa Nacional*), a preparedness association founded in 1916 that had urged the organization of paramilitary units (*tiro da guerra*) in which able-bodied male citizens would be trained in the use of rifles. In general, the League of National Defense was similar in purpose and organization to the American Defense Society in the United States. In Porto Alegre, several hundred Brazilians formed the League of National Resistance (*Liga da Resistencia Nacional*), an organization especially devoted to eradicating German influence in Brazilian life. It favored nothing less than a war on German culture in all its manifestations, not the least of which were German names of streets and towns.<sup>22</sup>

Many persons who joined in this anti-German agitation failed

20. *New York Times*, November 1, 11, 1917.

21. Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 43; *O Paiz* (Rio de Janeiro), November 4, 6, 7, 1917; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 497; *Hundert Jahre Deutscher Hilfsverein, São Paulo* (N.p., 1963), 45; *New York Times*, November 11, 1917.

22. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 71–72. See also *Rio de Janeiro Jornal do Commercio*, November 1–15, 1917. *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), January 4, October 14, 1918.



to distinguish between German aliens resident in Brazil (Reichs-deutsche) and Brazilian citizens of German birth or descent (Teuto-Brazilians). Much confusion resulted and not a few miscarriages of justice. But other persons understood the difference very well. Claiming in a speech before Congress to have studied the German language in order to equip himself better to understand the German problem, one politician named Barbosa Lima excoriated Teuto-Brazilians who retained a "double identity" and presumably a double loyalty. In his view, a Brazilian could not speak German habitually in public or at home or, for that matter, celebrate the defeat of the French at Sedan in 1870 or revere the memory of Bismarck as a great man. Other legislators of similar attitudes introduced resolutions in Congress that would have confiscated all the property of Reichsdeutsche, as well as the remaining vessels in the sequestered fleet of German merchant ships.<sup>23</sup>

Beyond all such superpatriotic behavior, however, it was necessary for the government to impose certain basic precautionary restrictions on German aliens in Brazil. The most obvious was obligatory registration with the police. Photographing and fingerprinting became standard procedure in many areas. In Paraná, alien registration even became the basis for a census of Germans in the state. Censorship of mail was also introduced. In some cities the newspapers printed lists of German aliens who had registered. This led *O Paíz* to observe that since the names of certain prostitutes of German nationality appeared on such lists, the loyalty of any Brazilian citizen who patronized them should be questioned. Meanwhile, the army suspended furloughs, recalled officers to their garrisons, and doubled guard detachments on railroads.<sup>24</sup>

Anti-German sentiment was greatly intensified on November 3, when the news of the sinking of two more Brazilian vessels (the *Acary* and the *Guahyba*) was released.<sup>25</sup> President Braz decided to

23. *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), November 5, 6, 1917; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 5, 1917.

24. *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), November 4, 8, 1917; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 157; Balhana and Westphalen, "O Censo dos Alemães do Paraná," 404-19; New York *Times*, November 4, 1917; Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 277-79.

25. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 4, 1917; New York *Times*, November 4, 1917; Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 52. The *Acary* was formerly the German ship *Ehrenburg*.

cite these losses as evidence to support his request of Congress for new repressive legislation against German aliens (and their property and business) in Brazil. The huge anti-German riots in Rio de Janeiro were touched off by the same news. In his message to Congress, Braz asked for authority (1) to annul contracts for public works that had been negotiated with German firms, (2) to prohibit any further concessions of new land to German subjects for settlement by German subjects, (3) to control German-owned banks in Brazil and eventually to annul their licenses and to extend similar measures to German-owned commercial firms, (4) to prohibit the sale of German-owned properties, and (5) to intern German subjects.<sup>26</sup>

Congress responded immediately. Afrânio de Mello Franco, a prominent member of the Chamber of Deputies, introduced a bill that corresponded to Braz's request. It was vigorously debated, amended in the Senate, and finally sent to the president, who signed it into law on November 16. Known as the *Lei da guerra* (war law), this legislation granted the executive all the extraordinary powers he had asked for. The most significant powers involved economic questions. The president was empowered to seize the property of enemy aliens and to sell all goods consigned to them. The money acquired thereby was to be deposited in the national treasury as security against future losses caused by Germany. Really intended to apply to German-owned businesses rather than to persons, the law defined a firm as German when half or more of its ownership was held by subjects of the kaiser. The location of a company headquarters in Brazil or Germany was considered to be irrelevant.<sup>27</sup>

This legislation affected most directly the great German-owned banks in Brazil and their numerous branches, as well as the Theodor Wille and Company, one of Brazil's largest coffee-exporting firms. Most of the provisions were standard or normal procedure at the onset of war. According to American historian Percy A. Martin, these parts of the *Lei da guerra* were moderate. Moreover, the subsequent administration of the law was generally sensible

26. *The Brazilian Green Book*, 97; Prazeres, *O Brasil na guerra*, 81–83; New York Times, November 4, 1917; *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), November 5, 1917.

27. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 6–16, 1917; Prazeres, *O Brasil na guerra*, 83–85. The full text of the *Lei da guerra* is given in English translation in *The Brazilian Green Book*, 99–102.

and marked less by a spirit of revenge than by a concern for the revival of trade in the postwar period.<sup>28</sup>

For the most anxious superpatriots, however, Braz's program did not go far enough. Stimulated by the many rumors of a potential German uprising in the southern states, they demanded and received a provision that granted the president the power to declare any part of the country to be under a state of siege. The purpose of this section (which was well within Brazilian tradition) was to enable the executive to suppress any further disorders—either anti-German riots or any possible German revolt.<sup>29</sup> Drafted in haste at a time when passions were not always held in restraint, this section of the law (Article I) was ill-defined and soon led to wide inconsistencies in administration.

In accord with his newly granted authority, President Braz declared a state of siege the next day (November 17, 1917). It applied to the Federal District (the capital city of Rio de Janeiro) and to the states of Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul. Martial law was imposed in these areas, and though it was neither possible nor desirable to intern all enemy aliens resident in Brazil, approximately seven hundred were arrested, most of them officers in the German naval or military reserves. The army command at Porto Alegre ordered that all *Schützenvereine* be disbanded and their guns and ammunition confiscated. Detachments of the army were billeted in the rural German colonies. In general, the *Lei da guerra* and the executive orders that preceded it were the basis for the repression and persecution experienced by the Teuto-Brazilians during World War I.<sup>30</sup>

28. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 81; Martin, "Brazil," 256.

29. Prazeres, *O Brasil na guerra*, 15–21, 100–198, provides extensive transcriptions of the congressional debates in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate over the question of the state of siege. Other documents are also included.

30. *Ibid.*, 199; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 16, 17, 1917; Martin, "Brazil," 255; *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), November 17, 1917; Nuno Pinheiro [de Andrade], *Problemas da guerra e da paz: (Legislação de guerra do Brasil)* (Rio de Janeiro, 1919), 28; *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 334; Bühler, *Dona Francisca*, 76, 79.

## Impact of War on German Ethnic Society and Institutions

**T**HE ORDER suspending all publications in the German language was the measure that affected the Teuto-Brazilians most immediately and most directly. The ethnic press was their basic means of intragroup communication. It also was their chief contact with the world of Luso-Brazilian society, and their way of finding out what the government required or expected of them. Yet the prohibition was total. It applied not only to newspapers but to all periodicals, farm journals, church magazines, almanacs, devotional literature, even German translations of classic Portuguese and Brazilian literature, and school books of every kind, including texts for teaching Portuguese to German-speaking children.

To the Brazilian mind, the Germans had had ample opportunity to learn the Portuguese language; if they had not done so, the ban on German would now force them to it. If they had no means by which to learn Portuguese, that was unfortunate, but it could not be helped, given the present emergency and the threat of German insurgency in the southern states. Moreover, the government lacked the means to monitor or translate all publications in the German language. It seemed better to prohibit them all.

Such heavy-handed injunctions reveal the ignorance or lack of understanding the ruling classes of Brazil had of the Teuto-Brazilian social and cultural circumstance. They seemed unable to read the evidence, pervasive though it was, that the great majority of the Germans in Brazil—farmers, laborers, small-business men, and craftsmen—felt no special loyalty to the German kaiser and

his empire; that they represented no potential threat, military or otherwise, to the established regime; and that as native Brazilians, they were naturally loyal to their government. Luso-Brazilians failed to recognize that the evidence they perceived as pro-German was mostly cultural in character, not political, and that it was usually based on the behavior of a nonrepresentative, elite segment of the German-Brazilian population resident in the large cities—the European-born journalists, clergymen, technicians, and entrepreneurs with strong economic or psychological bonds with Germany.

### The German-Language Press

The total prohibition against any publication in the German language was far more severe than any wartime restriction the United States government imposed upon its German-speaking minority during World War I. German-American newspapers were permitted to publish throughout the war, though under inept surveillance and under limiting circumstances that brought financial disaster to many.<sup>1</sup> But in Brazil, economic survival was possible only if the German-language publishers switched entirely to Portuguese.

A surprisingly large number of German-language publishers elected to try the Portuguese option. Thus, in Porto Alegre the *Deutsches Volksblatt* became the *Gazeta Popular*; the *Neue Deutsche Zeitung* became the *Gazeta Colonial*; in the backcountry of Rio Grande do Sul, the *Serra-Post* of Ijuí appeared as the *Correio Serrano*; in Santa Catarina, the *Urwaldsbote* of Blumenau was transformed into the *Commercio do Blumenau* and the *Blumenauer Zeitung* became the *Gazeta Blumenauense*. The publishers of these and other similar Portuguese-language substitutes considered them to be temporary expedients to carry subscribers through the war to a time when they could resume publishing in German. Not all papers survived, but many did, even though they were closely censored. For example, the circulation of the *Gazeta Popular* dropped to 2,500, roughly one-third the subscribers it attracted after the war when it returned to the German language in 1920. It actually did quite well compared to some others, probably because it was

1. Cf. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 241–43.

widely known as the Catholic paper. With the church as its silent partner, it was reasonably safe. More important, however, was the fact that as a Catholic paper it would not persist in ethnic chauvinism, unlike the *Jornal da Tarde* (the transmuted *Vaterland* of Porto Alegre), which later in the war period was temporarily silenced by another mob.<sup>2</sup>

## The German Schools

The decrees of October 29 also ordered that hundreds of German schools throughout Brazil (267 in Santa Catarina alone) were to be closed immediately. Nevertheless, many remained open until they received official notification early in November. The directive was straightforward enough: Only schools in which Portuguese was used as the language of instruction could stay open; all others were to remain closed until they could demonstrate to local school authorities that they were staffed with teachers competent in Portuguese and that instructional materials in Portuguese were to be used. In the United States, where school legislation was at that time exclusively the province of state and local governments, there was nothing comparable to Brazil's nationwide closure of private and parochial German-language schools, though many states curtailed or abolished instruction in the German language as a part of the curriculum in the public schools. Only in Louisiana, where there were almost no German-language schools, was the prohibition against the use of the "enemy language" total.<sup>3</sup>

In most German districts the news was received with surprising equanimity, probably because the long summer vacation (which coincided with the Christmas holiday) was near. But when the local churches or school societies tried to reopen their schools,

2. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 49; Arndt and Olson, *History and Bibliography*, 112, 116, 153; Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 57, 133–34, 156, 181; *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 288.

3. Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 50; Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 9, 1917; *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), November 9, 1917; *O Paiz* (Rio de Janeiro), November 9, 1917; Frederick C. Luebke, "Legal Restrictions on Foreign Languages in the Great Plains States, 1917–1923," in Paul Schach (ed.), *Language in Conflict: Linguistic Acculturation on the Great Plains* (Lincoln, 1980), 1–19; U.S. Army, Office of the Judge Advocate General, *Compilations of War Laws of the Various State and Insular Possessions* (1919), 47; Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 252–55.

they found that they faced formidable problems. Finding teachers sufficiently competent in Portuguese to meet the new standards was often impossible; acquiring suitable Portuguese-language instructional materials was very difficult. Even though the enforcement of the decree was lax in some places, many schools remained closed permanently. Because public institutions had never been established in many areas of German settlement, the regulation meant that thousands of Teuto-Brazilian children had no alternative schools to attend; they were simply deprived of education. This was usually not the case in the cities, but even there some parents felt so strongly about the matter that they insisted on the right to educate their children at home. In some cases, arrangements were made for a German teacher to go from house to house to instruct three or four children at a time. Resentment was increased by the knowledge that even though the decrees technically applied to all non-Portuguese-language schools, Italian institutions were ordinarily not forced to comply with the new language restrictions.<sup>4</sup>

Enforcement varied considerably from state to state. In Paraná, a state law placed all private schools under government supervision and required that Portuguese be introduced as the language of instruction in all private schools by April, 1918. In Rio Grande do Sul, where Comtean Positivism continued to infuse much governmental thought and action, enforcement was often moderated by the application of common sense to specific circumstances. Reluctant to impose unreasonable restrictions on individual freedoms, local officials in Rio Grande do Sul were allowed to stretch definitions of what constituted competence in Portuguese. In some remote districts the decree could even be ignored entirely. This did not go unnoticed in Rio de Janeiro, where President Braz publicly criticized Borges de Medeiros as the only state president or governor who failed to require that all classes be conducted in Portuguese. More important, the Rio Grande do Sul government recognized that it had a responsibility to provide sub-

4. *Das Brasildeutschtum lusobrasilisch gesehen*, translated by Irene Schultz from *O Observador e Financeiro*, no. 33, Rio de Janeiro, 1938 (Stuttgart, 1944), 107–39; Braunschweig, “Die rechtliche Stellung,” 50; *Hundert Jahre Deutschum*, 326; Brepohl and Fugmann, *Die Wolgadeutschen*, 71; Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 91; Sinzig, *Nach dreissig Jahren*, 106; Dedekind, *Deutschum und Evangelium*, 47.

stitutes for the closed German-language schools. By taking advantage of a federal decree of May 4, 1918, that provided subsidies for schools established by state governments in areas inhabited by "European settlers," the Rio Grande do Sul government opened 167 new public schools at one stroke. Nevertheless, most Teuto-Brazilians refused to enroll their children in these substitute institutions. Ironically, it was the German districts that had been relatively well supplied with schools, albeit private ones, while other areas with much higher rates of illiteracy continued to go without them.<sup>5</sup>

In Santa Catarina, enforcement was more stringent. Here Positivism was weaker, nativism stronger, and the Catholic church more influential. The anti-German propaganda of 1917 had frequently identified Santa Catarina as the center of the alleged German insurgency, thereby intensifying the determination of officials to purify the state's reputation. Moreover, Santa Catarina had a unique history of government concern for and control of education that had climaxed in the enactment on October 5 of the legislation establishing compulsory education and requiring instruction in Portuguese. It was impossible for the schools, public and private, to accomplish both at once, yet strict enforcement was expected by state authorities. It was difficult to gain permission to reopen. Schools had to convince local authorities that projected daily schedules allowed ample time for instruction in Portuguese and in Brazilian history and geography; too much time assigned to religious instruction could jeopardize permission to reopen. Few German schools could meet the requirements, and the never numerous government schools could not possibly absorb all the German-speaking youngsters. The result was that as many as six thousand children in Santa Catarina were out of school during most of the war. In Joinville, for example, only one small private school and the Catholic parochial school were able to remain open. In its effort to cope, the Santa Catarina government introduced crash courses in Blumenau for German-speaking teachers to learn Portuguese, and procedures were established to test the ability of

5. Fischer and Jahn (eds.), *Es begann am Rio dos Sinos*, 150; Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 49–50; Love, *Rio Grande do Sul*, 179; Schaden, "Aspectos históricos e sociológicos da escola rural teuto-brasileira," 65–78; Oberacker, *Die volkspolitische Lage*, 67.



teachers to instruct in that language. Later, by the middle of 1918, authorities began to relax standards and to allow more private schools to resume instruction. But there were many others, especially in the more mountainous areas of the state, that were casualties of the war and never reopened.<sup>6</sup>

The problem of the German schools was compounded by the fact that many of the teachers, unlike the children, were German-born immigrants who had never bothered to acquire Brazilian citizenship. Inevitably, examiners were reluctant or unwilling to allow enemy aliens the right to teach. The indiscriminate closing of German-language schools created special hardships for the teachers, whose income was normally derived from small monthly fees collected from the parents of the schoolchildren. After their schools were closed, many Brazilian-born teachers sought employment in the new government schools and, if hired, never returned to their old responsibilities. In other cases, the German schools—usually tiny, one-room operations—had as teachers the pastors of the sponsoring churches. One effect of the war-born regulations in this regard was to separate the teaching function from the pastorate and to allow the *Gemeindeschulen* to become state-supported public schools with no religious or German-language instruction.<sup>7</sup>

## The German Churches

Like the schools, the German-Brazilian churches were also obvious targets for superpatriots, and there were many minor anti-German incidents, especially during the first several months following the declaration of war. Church services in some communities were interrupted, pastors threatened with physical harm, German-language signboards vandalized, and altar cloths bearing

6. Koch, *Das Deutsche Schulwesen*, 17–24; Braunschweig, “Die rechtliche Stellung,” 51–53; Fischer and Jahn (ed.), *Es begann am Rio dos Sinos*, 150; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 356–57; Rohrbach, *Bei den Deutschen*, 31; Bühler, *Dona Francisca*, 83; Radlach, “Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges,” 25; Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 91, 222; Edwin V. Morgan to Secretary of State, December 13, 1917, in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Brazil, 1910–1929 (microfilm reel 21; 832.49/9).

7. Radlach, “Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges,” 25; *Lutherische Kirche in Brasilien*, 60.

German (or even Latin) inscriptions destroyed. Inevitably the Protestants suffered more than did the Catholics because of their intimate bonds with the German language, culture, and institutions. But some German Catholics were persecuted, too, especially the clergy. Sometimes German Catholics were mistreated by Luso-Brazilian superpatriots who ignorantly assumed that all Germans in Brazil were Protestants.<sup>8</sup>

Shortly after war had been declared, Cardinal Joaquim Arcoverde, the archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, together with several other bishops, issued a pastoral letter in which he announced that all further preaching in the German language in Catholic parishes was to be prohibited, and that the German language could no longer be used as the language of instruction in any Catholic schools at any level. Conversely, all Catholic schools were to stress patriotism, the history and geography of Brazil, and the Portuguese language. Moreover, this prelate announced his intention to remove German clergy from all positions of a public character. Other bishops issued similar orders, though one simply limited himself to a request for a substantial increase in prayers. The result of these several directives was that many German-born priests were removed and reassigned to other duties and that some abbots of Franciscan and Benedictine monasteries were replaced.<sup>9</sup>

Oppressive though these measures may have seemed at the time to Teuto-Brazilian Catholics, they were modified by another pastoral letter issued in November, 1917. In this instance the cardinal and his colleagues defended the "many Catholics and not a few Protestants of German origin" who were being unjustly attacked and "surrounded by an atmosphere of hate." The letter described the German Brazilians as "true and disciplined members of the church" who until very recently had been praised for their contributions to Brazilian progress. Declaring them worthy of "Christian love and protection," the cardinal courageously denounced the attacks that had been made against them in the press

8. *Der Familienfreund*: 1920, p. 124; Joseph Grones to Mathias Grones, October 12, 1920, in Joseph Scheben Papers, Institut für geschichtliche Landeskunde der Rheinlande, Bonn. I am indebted to Walter Kamphoefner for bringing this letter to my attention.

9. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 3, 11, 1917; *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), November 9, 1917; *Entres* (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 237; Sinzig, *Nach dreissig Jahren*, 144, 145, 149.

and from public rostrums. These hateful accusations, the cardinal warned, were clothed in the mantle of patriotism in order to disguise anticlerical impulses. If these malicious slanders were not answered, he predicted, soon all representatives of the faith would be attacked or impugned.<sup>10</sup> Inevitably the cardinal's stern words stimulated a wave of anticlerical sentiment among the superpatriots.

In Porto Alegre, Archbishop Becker was not so brave. Anxious to dispel a prewar reputation of being partial to the Germans in his archdiocese, Becker, like the other bishops, issued his own ban, directing that the German language could no longer be used in the celebration of the mass, in marriages, burials, or any other official functions in any of the churches or chapels under his jurisdiction. He also requested that the clergy seek to work out agreements with local officials and immediately report to the chancery any difficulties that they might experience in the exercise of their office. Archbishop Becker would then seek to resolve the problem with state authorities.<sup>11</sup>

The government restriction, thus reinforced by an insecure prelate, intensified the anxiety of the members of St. Joseph's congregation of Porto Alegre, the only Catholic parish in the city that was exclusively German. The subsequent experiences of this congregation illustrate the tensions and confusion experienced by many German Catholics in Brazil during the war. By 1917, St. Joseph's had grown to a large congregation of more than four hundred families. Its membership included many recent arrivals—Reichsdeutsche—whose ability to speak Portuguese was limited or nonexistent. The parish maintained two schools, one for each sex, and together they enrolled about five hundred children. It was a vigorous, healthy congregation that counted among its members some of the wealthiest and most influential members of the Teuto-Brazilian community in Rio Grande do Sul.

Shortly after Archbishop Becker issued his ban, the *Correio do Povo* of Porto Alegre published a remarkably unrestrained and hateful attack on St. Joseph's, which denounced the congregation

10. Sinzig, *Nach dreiszig Jahren*, 101–102. Sinzig quotes the entire letter in German translation.

11. Metzler, *Die St. Josefsgemeinde*, 7. Metzler's book consists almost entirely of documents.

as unnecessary, illegal, and disastrous for the unity of the Brazilian nation.<sup>12</sup> In accordance with the archbishop's directive, the parish pastor, Father Aloys Kades, immediately sought episcopal guidance, even though he and the lay leaders of the congregation feared that Becker would dissolve the congregation in order to avoid trouble. Thus began a series of exchanges that, at least in the estimation of German Catholics of Porto Alegre, revealed Becker as fearfully indecisive, devious, and vindictive.<sup>13</sup>

The controversy between the archbishop and St. Joseph's continued for months. It attained a new level of acrimony in April, 1918, when the government of Rio Grande do Sul announced that Protestant churches would be allowed, starting immediately, to use the German language in all parts of their public worship—liturgy, hymns, prayers, blessings—except the sermon and other pastoral addresses. Catholic Germans then went to state president Borges de Medeiros, requesting that the language ban be lifted for them as well. Borges assumed that the request had the support of the archbishop and on June 22, 1918, announced that Catholics were also now included. St. Joseph's congregation then petitioned their archbishop for permission to resume the use of the German language. Becker refused to grant formal permission; however, through a subordinate he informed the congregation that what the government would allow, he would allow, but that he would accept no responsibility for the consequences. St. Joseph's thereupon conducted German-language services on the following two Sundays without incident. At the end of July, however, the pastor of St. Joseph's received a notice from the chancery dated July 5 forbidding the use of German because it would encourage criticism of the church. Complaints and appeals, charges and countercharges continued until September 16, when Becker finally announced that the diocesan curia had decided to let St. Joseph's have its way, even though several German parishes in the rural colonies had been closed by police after the pastors had been arrested for preaching in German.<sup>14</sup> By then the German Catholics

12. Porto Alegre *Correio do Povo*, November 27, 1917. A full translation in German is provided in Metzler, *Die St. Josefsgemeinde*, 8–10.

13. Metzler, *Die St. Josefsgemeinde*, 12–67.

14. *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), June 22, 1918; Metzler, *Die St. Josefsgemeinde*, 45–46, 58–59.

of Porto Alegre wished that they, like their cousins in Rio de Janeiro, had an archbishop who was Luso-Brazilian.

The situation was radically different and generally more difficult for the Protestants, especially the Evangelicals. For decades their leaders had stressed the intimate bond between their faith and the German language. Moreover, they had become dependent on direct support from Germany in the form of financial subsidies and the supply of trained clergymen, most of whom were now enemy aliens. Inevitably the Evangelicals were perceived in some superpatriotic circles as minions of the German kaiser who threatened the country's peace and stability. In some cases their situation was made worse by their own manners—some behaved like spit-and-polish junior officers in the Prussian army. In other instances trouble resulted from simple thoughtlessness or insensitivity. For example, one pastor neglected to cancel or reschedule various church activities that fell on November 15, 1917, which was the most important national holiday in Brazil. Not surprisingly, some local superpatriots interpreted this as evidence of German disdain or disrespect for Brazil. That evening they led a noisy procession of agitated citizens to the church and brought an abrupt end to the choir practice and confirmation instruction that were under way.<sup>15</sup>

Similar disturbances occurred in many Teuto-Brazilian communities during the first months of the war. Some congregations were virtually frozen with fear as they posted night watches and guards to protect property and lives. A few pastors suffered physical abuse. Wild rumors raced through some congregations as reports of violence, some of them true, were heard. Agitation was most common in communities with newspapers that published vehement, passionate anti-German diatribes. Some Evangelical pastors were personally attacked in print. Several years later, one cleric reflected that it is amazing that the persecution was not worse, given the overheated rhetoric that damned all Germans as brutal, barbaric, and utterly devoid of culture and civilization.<sup>16</sup>

15. Joseph Grones to Mathias Grones, October 12, 1920, in Scheben Papers; Radlach, "Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges," 24.

16. Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 150; Wolfgang Ammon, *Chronik von São Bento in Santa Catharina, 1873–1923* (Joinville, 1923), 233; *Lutherische Kirche in Brasilien, passim*; Radlach, "Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges," 24.

Still, the violence visited upon the Germans was fitful or sporadic; there was no systematic persecution by the Brazilian government. Instead, violence emerged from the inability or unwillingness of local authorities to control certain individuals who were determined, for whatever reasons of their own, to attack the Germans in their midst. Hence, the histories of some local Protestant parishes describe the war period as a fearful time, but others report no problems at all—for them, life went on as always.<sup>17</sup>

The first week of the war presented a dilemma for many Protestant congregations because October 31, 1917, was the four-hundredth anniversary of the beginning of Martin Luther's Reformation. Many congregations had been planning festivities for months. Some anxiously canceled everything, fearing that their celebrations could easily be mistaken for pro-German demonstrations, but others were determined to follow through, which they did without incident.<sup>18</sup>

The prohibition against using the German language in public services was not uniformly observed across the land. Apparently some remote parishes ignored it totally; others discovered clever ways of obeying the letter of the law while violating its spirit. At the opposite extreme were congregations that anxiously dropped all services for the duration of the war. In one Lutheran parish in Joinville, the pastor conducted public worship in German until Christmas Eve, 1917, when a mob forcibly brought an end to it. Thereafter the pastor, who escaped his enemies unscathed, deemed it prudent to observe the ban and no services were conducted in his church for nearly three months.<sup>19</sup> In other communities, pastors made serious efforts to comply with the language restrictions. A Lutheran clergyman in Ponta Grossa, for example, tried to introduce a new Portuguese liturgy of his own creation

17. Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 274–75, 281–86; 75 Jahre Deutschtum: Santo Angelo-Agudo (1857–1932) (São Leopoldo, 1932), 120; *Lutherische Kirche in Brasilien*, *passim*; Radlach, "Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges," 26.

18. *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt für Süd-Amerika*, XIV (October 15, 1917); Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 150; *Lutherische Kirche in Brasilien*, 49.

19. Radlach, "Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges," 25; Fischer and Jahn (eds.), *Es begann am Rio dos Sinos*, 150; Fritz Wüstner, *Kirchengemeinde Joinville: Evangelische Bekenntnisse in Schwachheit und Kraft, 1851–1951* (Joinville, [1951]), 51. For another incident involving the celebration of Christmas, see Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 273.

but it proved to be decidedly unpopular with his congregants. But in so remote an area as Santa Maria Jetibá, located in the mountains of Espírito Santo, the Lutherans built a new impressive church, which was dedicated, presumably in the German language, in July, 1918. The historian of this parish laconically reported that even though there were several anti-German mob scenes early in the war, the activities of the congregation were never seriously hindered.<sup>20</sup> Still, remote location or isolation was not the only explanation. In Porto Alegre, the ladies' aid society of one Evangelical congregation noted that its work had not been disturbed in any way during the war period. Paradoxically, St. Joseph's Catholic parish in the same city claimed that every organizational activity had been hampered and that there was nothing that could have been done about it except to wait for the storm to pass.<sup>21</sup>

The problems of the Protestant Germans were intensified greatly by the fact that almost all of their clergy were Reichsdeutsche. Even though many were long-term residents of Brazil, few had taken out citizenship papers because, upon their retirement from the ministry, they intended to return to the land of their birth. As enemy aliens, they were limited in their ability to negotiate with government officials. An exception to this tendency was the crusty, old Dr. Wilhelm Rotermund, venerated within church circles and highly respected beyond. A citizen since 1887, Rotermund was still serving the Riograndenser Synod as its president despite his advanced age of seventy-five years.<sup>22</sup> Like most Evangelical pastors, he passionately believed that the survival of his church depended upon the retention of the German language and culture. But he also believed that Teuto-Brazilians had to learn Portuguese and, as citizens, participate intelligently in Brazilian life. Thus, Rotermund's personal record and position as the head of an organization with 100,000 members gave him an authority

20. *Lutherische Kirche in Brasilien*, 140, 176, and see p. 151.

21. *Jahresberichte der Deutsche Evangelische Gemeinde zu Porto Alegre über das Jahr 1920 und des Vereines Frauenhilfe . . . über die Jahre 1917 bis 1920*, p. 29; Metzler, *Die St. Josefskirche*.

22. Radlach, "Die Einwirkungen des Weltkrieges," 26; Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 203.

denied most Protestant pastors. He did not hesitate to use it. He stood up fearlessly and repeatedly for what he believed to be the constitutional rights of his people.

Immediately following official notification of the ban on the German language, Rotermund vigorously protested the restriction as a violation of the freedom of religion. In a sharply worded statement presented to the government, Rotermund pointed out that Article 72 of the Constitution granted the right of free practice to all religions. He argued that since the use of the German language was essential to the life of the Evangelical church, any restriction of this right was tantamount to an infringement of religious freedom and therefore unconstitutional. German, he insisted, had the same relationship to Evangelical worship that Latin had to the Catholic ritual. Presumably as a result of Rotermund's plea, the Rio Grande do Sul chief of police subsequently announced that in Protestant churches of that state the liturgy (but not other parts of the service such as hymns and prayers) could be conducted in German.<sup>23</sup> This interpretation did not, of course, apply to states other than Rio Grande do Sul.

Several weeks later, when the administration of the state of siege had been vested in a military commission, Rotermund again protested the language restrictions. Writing to the commanding general, Rotermund repeated his earlier arguments. The military authority expressed his sympathy for the plight of the German Protestants and personally deplored the restrictions. Nevertheless, though he understood that the Germans were no threat to Brazilian security, he required that they continue to refrain from using German in all public functions in order to avoid provoking the "lower classes." What language pastors used in private ministrations was of no concern to him. Of course, this response failed to satisfy Rotermund, especially because the general's clarification was never publicized among lower officials in government, with the result that enforcement was left largely to the discretion of local functionaries. Inevitably it was inconsistent and tension remained high, especially in the large cities.<sup>24</sup>

23. Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 152. Rotermund announced this ruling in his *Rundschreiben* No. 948 of November 21, 1917.

24. Fausel, *Dr. Rotermund*, 153.



After several months the national government in Rio de Janeiro dispatched a high-ranking army officer to the southern states in order to sample public opinion in these matters. Rotermund once again used the opportunity to present the government with a detailed description of the tribulations of the Rio Grande do Sul Evangelicals. "I cannot believe," he wrote, "that high government officials sanction the arbitrary character of events that have occurred; I am astonished that clear directives have not been issued to end abuses. Agitators have moved against our churches and have perpetrated the grossest excesses on the basis of orders never published and decrees that no one has seen." Rotermund was especially outraged by a ruling that forbade the use of German-language textbooks for instruction in Portuguese. "I cannot comprehend," he continued, "how a government that makes such a great effort to encourage the use of the Portuguese language can forbid the distribution and sale of materials for this purpose." He bitterly accused the government of stripping his people of their "holiest rights" and of denigrating, by its incomprehensible policies, the qualities of firmness and integrity they displayed in their struggle for justice. If the Teuto-Brazilians did not fight to preserve their inherited religion and language, Rotermund declared, they would quickly degenerate to the level of Helots.<sup>25</sup>

There is no firm evidence that Rotermund's frequent protests actually caused a change in government policy. Yet the national government did in fact relax its regulations early in 1918. When the original decree establishing the state of siege expired at the end of 1917, the government extended it only to February 26, 1918, when it was allowed to lapse until March 6. The suspension was deliberate. It was allowed for political reasons: The days in question immediately preceded the national election. Various newspapers in the areas affected by the state of siege had protested the decree as an unnecessary curtailment of personal liberty and of the freedom of the press. After the election, the state of siege was directly resumed and extended to December 31, 1918. Still, it was only six weeks later, on April 11, 1918, that the chief of police of the state of Rio Grande do Sul declared that Protestant churches would be allowed to use the German language in all parts of their public worship except the sermons and public an-

25. *Ibid.*, 154-55.

nouncements. A similar relaxation was announced at the same time in Santa Catarina.<sup>26</sup>

For the German Protestant churches with connections in the United States, of which the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was the most important, the war period was less stressful than it was for the several synods with strong ties to Germany. Most of the Missouri Lutheran pastors were American citizens, not German, and thus were not subject to the restrictions imposed upon enemy aliens. Given their commitment to bilingualism and the gradual abandonment of the German language, this synod's clergy and congregations generally complied with the government's language restrictions. There were instances, especially during the prewar period, in which some Missouri Lutheran pastors were noisily pro-German, but once war had been declared, discretion conquered sentiment. War also exacerbated old denominational rivalries, as, for example, when an Evangelical leader accused the Missouri Lutherans of gleefully pointing out in their church paper to officials that the provost of the Prussian state church resident in Brazil was, in fact, a German bureaucrat.<sup>27</sup>

The burdens imposed by war transcended parochial tensions or local incidents in which German pastors or their congregants suffered some measure of harassment or persecution. The fact was that normal channels of communication were disrupted. Synodical conventions were canceled because, as public meetings, they would have had to be conducted in Portuguese, and given the linguistic inadequacies of many pastors, that was impossible. The language ban also extended to the printed word and hence all church periodicals and annuals were suspended. In one case, four thousand undistributed copies of *Der Familienfreund*, a German Catholic annual, were confiscated as dangerous to the state. The finances of the Evangelical synods were also in deep trouble. Subsidies from Germany were cut off at a time when organiza-

26. Edwin V. Morgan to Secretary of State, January 2, 1918, and Morgan to Secretary of State, March 6, 1918, both in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Brazil, 1910–1929 (microfilm reel 21; 832.00/45); *A Federação* (Porto Alegre), April 17, 1918; Bühler, *Dona Francisca*, 87.

27. Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 515; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 48; Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 43. Provost Braunschweig was not interned. He remained in Brazil throughout the war and shortly thereafter retired to Germany.

tional needs were increasing. Moreover, there was no longer a supply of German-trained pastors to fill parish vacancies. The care of retired clergymen also became a special problem, since such persons usually depended upon support from Germany. Translocal problems of this kind had to be solved without recourse to normal modes of communication in church periodicals. Circumstances thus forced the German Protestants to become self-reliant in unprecedented ways. They learned to contribute money as never before; they took the first steps toward establishing their own theological seminaries for the training of Brazilian-born clergy.<sup>28</sup>

Generally speaking, the German ethnic churches of Brazil had to endure a repression that was different in some important respects from what it was in the United States, where there was no blanket proscription by the federal government against the use of the "enemy language" in either the churches or the schools. Several states, however, did enact restrictive measures. But most American state legislatures, which usually convened biennially in those years, were not in session during the greater part of the war period. Had this not been the case, it is likely that many anti-German-language laws would have been enacted. Instead, efforts at language regulation in the United States commonly emanated from state and county councils of defense, which were special agencies created to coordinate the domestic war effort at the local level. Their directives and orders, oppressive though many of them were, lacked the force of law. As a result, most wartime restrictions on the German language in the United States tended to be highly local in character and resulted in such ugly phenomena as public ceremonies in which German-language books were burned to the accompaniment of patriotic speeches and anthems. In other instances, clergymen were tarred and feathered and their church buildings splashed with yellow paint. The American oppression thus tended to be extralegal or informal, even though, in terms of human interrelationships, it was often intense and personal.<sup>29</sup> In Brazil, the legal measures created problems of a differ-

28. *Der Familienfreund*: 1920, p. 124; Fischer and Jahn (eds.), *Es begann am Rio dos Sinos*, 150–52; Fausel, *Dr. Rotermond*, 149–50; *Lutherische Kirche in Brasilien*, 2, 60; Becker, *Deutsche Siedler*, 79.

29. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 14–19, 225–67; Carl F. Wittke, *German-Americans and the World War* (Columbus, Ohio, 1936), *passim*; Donald R. Hickey, "The Prager

ent character and magnitude, even though there seem to have been proportionately fewer instances of personal violence and abuse after the wave of riots that occurred in the first ten days after the declaration of war.

## German Clubs and Societies

In spite of the many difficulties they experienced, most German-Brazilian churches and their affiliated organizations tried to function as best they could during the year of war. As they saw it, they were in the business of saving souls from eternal perdition; given such a transcendent purpose, they were determined to survive. The numerous German ethnic societies, however, served no such noble end. Their goals centered on this life, not the next. Their existence was more temporary, more secular, more vulnerable. Inevitably, they were prime targets of superpatriotic intolerance. Some *Vereine* suffered mob violence. Their halls were vandalized, their banners dragged through the streets and burned, their members subjected to various indignities, such as being forced to kiss the Brazilian flag amid patriotic ceremonies.<sup>30</sup>

Some of the *Vereine* quickly decided that expediency called for them simply to disband. Many others suspended all activities for the duration of the war and did not emerge from their hibernation until after the Armistice.<sup>31</sup> Most of the remainder changed their

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Affair: A Study in Wartime Hysteria," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, LXII (Summer, 1969), 117-34; Luebke, "Legal Restrictions," 1-19; Frederick C. Luebke, "Superpatriotism in World War I: The Experience of a Lutheran Pastor," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XLI (February, 1968), 3-11; Lyle W. Dorsett, "The Ordeal of Colorado's Germans during World War I," *Colorado Magazine*, LI (Fall, 1974), 277-93; Darrell R. Sawyer, "Anti-German Sentiment in South Dakota During World War I," *South Dakota Historical Collections*, XXXVIII (1976), 439-514; Clifford H. Scott, "Assimilation in a German-American Community: The Impact of World War I," *Northwest Ohio Quarterly*, LII (Winter, 1980), 153-67; Anna Zellick, "Patriots on the Rampage: Mob Action in Lewiston, 1917-1918," *Montana*, XXXI (January, 1981), 30-43; Sister John Christine Wolkerstorfer, "Persecution in St. Paul—The Germans in World War I," *Ramsay County History*, XIII (Fall-Winter, 1976), 3-13.

30. Joseph Grones to Mathias Grones, October 12, 1920, in Scheben Papers.

31. *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 321-32; Fugmann, *Die Deutschen in Paraná*, 114; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 510; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 150.

names to something appropriate in Portuguese, revised their governance documents to modify ethnic exclusiveness, and tried to carry on as best they could. Since government regulations regarding public meetings usually meant police surveillance, large formal gatherings were normally avoided. Most *Vereine* experienced sharp losses in membership; for one's name to appear on the rolls was a potential source of trouble.<sup>32</sup>

Of course, the measure of accommodation necessary to satisfy superpatriotic demands varied greatly with the character of the organization. For example, one could hardly expect the singing societies suddenly to take up Brazilian folk songs with much zeal. The highly suspect *Schützenvereine* naturally tend to fade almost entirely from the scene as military authorities ordered their dissolution and confiscated their guns and ammunition. Apparently, some were converted into *tiro da guerra*, the paramilitary training units established by the government. In one community at least, Teuto-Brazilian young men participated with enthusiasm; energetic recruitment efforts were followed by the construction of barracks, which after the war were converted into a hospital.<sup>33</sup>

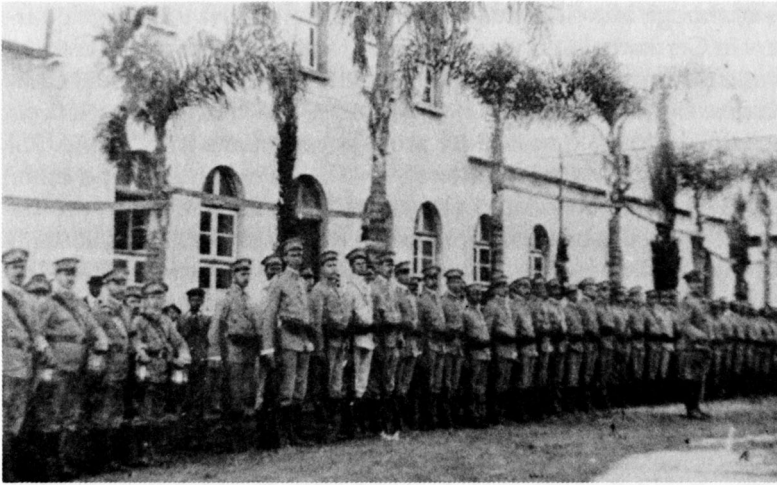
The large social organizations found in the major cities usually survived under protective coloration of some kind.<sup>34</sup> Compared to their equivalents in rural districts, they found it rather more difficult to persist. They were ready objects of superpatriotic envy and ire because their memberships usually included high proportions of prominent businessmen and professional persons, many of whom were *Reichsdeutsche*.<sup>35</sup> The latter often felt no loyalty for Brazil; subjects of the German kaiser, they were living in an enemy

32. Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Commercio*, November 6, 1917; *Hundert Jahre Deutschland*, 35, 333; Becker, *Deutsche Siedler*, 78; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 539; *Hundert Jahre Deutscher Hilfsverein*, 45; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 157.

33. Ernst Niemeyer, *50 Jahre Verein deutscher Sängerbund Curitiba, 1884–1934* (Curitiba, [1934]), 40; *Hundert Jahre Deutschland*, 321–22, 334; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 539; Ammon, *Chronik von São Bento*, 230, 233.

34. *Hundert Jahre Deutscher Hilfsverein*, 45.

35. For example, see the flyer distributed in Joinville, Santa Catarina, in June, 1918, against the Deutsche Verband of that city. It lists the members of the organization by name, occupation, and country of birth (flyer in Instituto Hans Staden, São Paulo). See also Bühler, *Dona Francisca*; Samuel T. Lee to Secretary of State, August 15, 1918, in RG 59, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Germany, 1910–1929 (microfilm reel 66).



Tiro Brasileiro, No. 227, of Estrêla, Rio Grande do Sul. The unit enrolled approximately 140 men, of whom 80 percent were German Brazilian. The structure in the background is the Catholic rectory of Estrêla.

Reprinted from *Uhle's Kalender für das Jahr 1918*

country; and some did what they could to help the German cause, short of criminal action. For example, members of the German Society in Bahia continued to collect funds through much of the war period for the German Red Cross. These they dispatched to Argentina, expecting that their contributions could be forwarded to Germany from that neutral country. Loyal Teuto-Brazilians often found such activity offensive and many withdrew from organizations that were dominated by socially prominent and economically powerful Reichsdeutsche.<sup>36</sup>

### German-Owned Businesses

Virtually all commercial and industrial firms owned by either Germans or Teuto-Brazilians experienced some difficulties during the war. Superpatriots often failed to distinguish between the

36. *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 158; Bühler, *Dona Francisca*, 79.

two, though it is clear that branches of companies with headquarters in Germany fared worse. The national government, of course, was concerned chiefly about the activities of German-owned companies. By means of the *Lei da guerra*, it had decreed restrictions not unlike those imposed by most governments in wartime. All alien property, including money, credits, merchandise, and other goods, had to be declared and all such items were subject to sequestration. Business relations with enemy subjects living abroad, through banks or other commercial houses, were prohibited. Exporting any goods or merchandise of enemy ownership was forbidden. Moreover, any enemy alien "who proved to be troublesome or suspect to the Brazilian cause" was subject to internment in a concentration camp.<sup>37</sup> Few Reichsdeutsche were willing to tempt fate by testing such a loosely worded law, especially during the first few months following the declaration of war.

The Brazilian government quickly discovered, however, that strict enforcement of the economic provisions of the *Lei da guerra* worked to the detriment of Brazilian interests. If the letter of the law was to be observed, various German-owned banks, insurance companies, and other businesses would be unable to meet their obligations either to Brazilian-owned firms or to their many Brazilian employees. Consequently the government granted the German companies a series of concessions that allowed them to operate freely, short of enterprise that could possibly aid the enemy. Thus, despite the official limitations, most German-owned companies continued through much of the war in good economic health.<sup>38</sup>

There were a few exceptions. In January, for example, the federal government canceled a contract for the delivery of war matériel that earlier had been negotiated with the Brazilian representative (Haupt and Company) of the famous Krupp Company of Essen, Germany. In March it rescinded a contract with a German company for developing a railroad in Santa Catarina. But it was not until September, 1918, that it terminated the service of a

37. Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 495; *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 157; *The Brazilian Green Book*, 99–100.

38. Pinheiro, *Problemas da guerra*, 37. Cf. Dean, *The Industrialization of São Paulo*, 100–101.

German-owned transatlantic cable between Pernambuco and Tenerife in the Canary Islands.<sup>39</sup>

The most obvious beneficiaries of the government's liberal policy were the large German-owned banks, the Brasilianische Bank für Deutschland, the Banco Allemão Transatlântico, and the Banco Germânico da América do Sul, each of which was deeply involved in financing the production and trade of coffee. Meanwhile, the great coffee-exporting firm of Theodor Wille and Company (headquartered in Hamburg) lost its leading position to British- and American-owned rivals, but it survived in Brazil by turning from coffee to manufacturing. Similarly, other German-owned companies that depended on internal trade weathered the storm easily. In Rio de Janeiro, for example, there were no bankruptcies among German-owned firms. Indeed, it was a period of prosperity for some, such as Lambert Riedlinger's construction firm, which specialized in reinforced concrete buildings. Luso-Brazilian merchants continued to patronize German wholesale houses because it was in their private interest to do so. Haring observed that prominent Brazilians who preferred not to be seen trading in German shops merely placed their orders by telephone or sent their servants to purchase the desired merchandise.<sup>40</sup>

No doubt there were some small-business men of German descent who were ruined by the war, among them many storekeepers and restaurateurs whose places of business were destroyed in the riots of 1917. Others found their volume of business reduced by informal, local boycotts, but most had to endure nothing worse than superpatriotic suspicion, innuendo, or an occasional harsh word or insult. Nonetheless, it was in their interest to keep a low profile. Some businessmen avoided the inconvenience

39. Pinheiro, *Problemas da guerra*, 243; [Brazil, Ministério das Relações Exteriores], *Guerra da Europa: Documentos Diplomáticos. Attitude do Brasil. 1918* (Rio de Janeiro, 1918), 100–101, hereinafter cited as *Documentos Diplomáticos, 1918*.

40. Pinheiro, *Problemas da guerra*, 32–41; Prazeres, *O Brasil na guerra*, 204–205; Love, *São Paulo in the Brazilian Federation*, 47, 56, 205; Zimmerman, *Theodor Wille*, 136; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 497, 506; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 62–64; "Attitude of Brazilians toward the War," typed manuscript dated March 20, 1918, p. 14, anonymous report sent to the Department of State by Capt. S. McCauley, Assistant Director of Naval Intelligence, April 25, 1918, in RG 59, Entry 540, Box 1, Brazil folder. Cf. Dean, *The Industrialization of São Paulo*, 100–101.



of being German by claiming to be Dutch, Danish, or Norwegian. Most German-owned firms, both large and small, severely restricted their advertisements in the newspapers. Few displayed the audacity of the Hasenclever Company, which had the courage in December, 1917, to sue the Brazilian government for the damages it had suffered during the Rio de Janeiro riots a month earlier. Although a judge threw out the Hasenclever complaint, there is no evidence that the company experienced a consequent adversity. Gradually, as the war year ran its course, German businessmen began to operate with new boldness, recognizing that the government was eager to establish and enlarge trade patterns and to take early advantage of the opportunities that would emerge in the postwar period.<sup>41</sup>

## War and the Common People

Common people of German citizenship, unlike the wealthy business and professional elite, sometimes experienced serious difficulties. Some were fired from their jobs by superpatriotic employers. Others were stranded in Brazil by the declaration of war. A few were hired by German companies, but others were simply without prospects. In Porto Alegre the Verband deutscher Vereine tried to relieve the distress by inaugurating its own "public works" program. It put unemployed enemy aliens to work as temporary groundskeepers for the German hospital and the *Turnerbund's* playing field.<sup>42</sup>

For most ordinary Teuto-Brazilians, World War I was period of only mild discomfort, but it depended on where one lived and how seriously local officials took the war-born restrictions. In some of the remote, solidly German rural districts, life went on undisturbed. In small cities like Joinville and Blumenau, where persons of German origin dominated the community, compliance with the regulations was often indifferent and enforcement haphazard. The American traveler Mark Jefferson reported that in Joinville's post office, there was a notice forbidding anyone to

41. Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 497; Roche, *La colonisation allemande*, 539.

42. *Hundert Jahre Deutschum*, 293.

speak German. Since many of the older residents could speak nothing but German, the injunction was ignored with typical Brazilian insouciance. Sometimes such signs were simply mutilated with impunity. But it should be remembered that Joinville was also a place where almost all German schools were closed, where German street names were changed to something suitably Portuguese or patriotic, and where a superpatriotic mob interrupted a German Lutheran service on Christmas Eve in order to stop the use of the "enemy language." There were other communities in which trouble was endemic. In Montenegro, for example, proper patriots staged anti-German demonstrations with some regularity—every two or three months, by one account—to obliterate German-language signs and to deface German houses with patriotic graffiti.<sup>43</sup>

In the large cities where the Germans were a small though highly visible minority, ethnic relations were often more tense. It behooved the ordinary Teuto-Brazilian in such places to be circumspect in his behavior. If there was trouble of some kind, they could expect to be blamed for it. It was widely rumored, for example, that Germans were the cause of much labor unrest that swept Brazilian industrial centers at that time, but recent research has shown that they played no role in the movement.<sup>44</sup> Not surprisingly, large numbers of Teuto-Brazilians in the cities began to use Portuguese equivalents of their given names in order to minimize suspicion.

Relatively few Teuto-Brazilian young men were affected by military conscription, but those who were drafted received an unprecedented exposure to Brazilian society and culture. Although universal military training had been enacted a decade earlier, it had not been enforced. At the beginning of the war, the Brazilian army numbered no more than thirty thousand men, including officers. A law of December 27, 1917, established draft boards to

43. Jefferson, "Pictures from Southern Brazil," 521–47; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 46; Rohrbach, *Bei den Deutschen*, 20; Wüstner, *Kirchengemeinde Joinville*, 51; *Der Familienfreund*: 1920, p. 124.

44. Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 56; Sheldon L. Maram, "The Immigrant and the Brazilian Labor Movement, 1890–1920," in Alden and Dean (eds.), *Essays Concerning the Socioeconomic History of Brazil and Portuguese India*, 184–85; Dean, *The Industrialization of São Paulo*, 166.

register all young men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty, but few were actually conscripted because the government lacked the means to feed and clothe the draftees, much less equip and instruct them in the arts of war.<sup>45</sup>

There were other young Teuto-Brazilians, mostly from Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina, who voluntarily enlisted for service in the army, a fact trumpeted by ethnic leaders who wished to establish the legitimacy of their claims for patriotism. Government authorities, distressed that many of these young men could not speak Portuguese, nevertheless recognized that their literacy rates were much higher than those of other recruits, many of whom came from the lowest classes of Brazilian society.<sup>46</sup>

But whether they were draftees or volunteers, these young men were not the leaders of the ethnic group, unlike the clergy, teachers, journalists, and businessmen whose stores, factories, or warehouses had been damaged or destroyed by riots. The war and its attendant restrictions affected the latter in direct and sometimes drastic ways. To these formulators of ethnic group opinion (persons of high status and power within the subsociety), the war laws seemed unnecessary and harsh. They saw themselves not as threats to national security but as loyal, industrious, and valuable citizens or residents of Brazil. They considered themselves to be innocent victims of an irrational and undeserved anti-German hysteria instigated by a small but influential group of Francophile enthusiasts envious of German accomplishments. In their opinion, the government had succumbed to political influence and powerful rhetoric and therefore it had decreed the many legal restrictions. But many persons in government, they believed, did not really share the superpatriotic view.

There is much evidence to support at least parts of this interpretation. The president and Congress clearly were sensitive to the pressure applied by the Liga pelos Aliados and other superpatriotic organizations and leaders. The declaration of war itself and the enactment of the *Lei da guerra* were not responses by a

45. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 86.

46. Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 59–60; Uhle's *Kalender für das Jahr 1918*, p. 354. Cf. *O Paíz* (Rio de Janeiro), March 6, 1917, as cited in Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 76.

democratic government to a deeply felt popular sentiment. They were rather political reactions to the ability of certain ruling-class persons to manipulate public opinion and to influence decision making at the highest level. But the popular enthusiasm shown at the outset of the war could not be sustained indefinitely. While some persons in the government and the military services undoubtedly believed that the Germans of Brazil were a subversive and traitorous element, most others did not and enforced the restrictions to no greater extent than local circumstances demanded.

### The Role of Brazil in World War I

During the first months of the war the government generally tried to enforce the war law and to participate in the Allied war effort to crush Germany. But it really lacked the means, if not the will. The market for Brazilian coffee was greatly reduced; the disruption of international trade diminished the revenue normally produced by tariffs on imports. Still, the war stimulated much business activity within the country, as it dramatically increased the production of foodstuff, especially sugar, beef, and beans, for the Allies. A few aviators and a military mission were sent to Europe and a small number of Brazilian soldiers actually fought in France. But the army as a whole remained tiny and never grew to more than sixty thousand men. The navy was engaged in patrol duty in the South Atlantic and only at the very end of the war was a squadron assigned to the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>47</sup>

On the domestic front, the Brazilian government participated in a minor way in the propaganda war. In 1918, it published a series of books documenting through personal accounts and photographs the war crimes of the Germans. *Os Horrores de Wittenberg*, for example, described brutal treatment Allied prisoners of war received in a camp in Germany. American propaganda was also imported. One of the pamphlets written by Earl Sperry and published by the U.S. Committee on Public Information was translated in 1918 and distributed in Brazil as *Intrigas e Conspirações*:

47. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 92–94, 87–90; Martin, "Brazil," 254–56; *Documentos Diplomaticos*, 1918, pp. 74–77, 92–97, 152–56; James, *Brazil after a Century of Independence*, 169–71; *FRUS*, 1917, Supp. 1, *The World War*, 379–80.

*Dos Allemaes nos Estados Unidos durante o Periodo da Nossa Neutralidade.* But gradually, as the first months of Brazilian participation passed and it became clear that no significant number of Brazilian soldiers would be sent to the trenches in France, the restrictions of the war law and others were relaxed.

In the opinion of one American resident of Brazil, popular attitudes by March, 1918, had degenerated to what he called "almost complete apathy." In his view, Brazilian "passions have not been inflamed" and "even mercenary motives fail to rouse the people." In São Paulo, he reported, the German Brazilians "look with derision upon the 'play-war' which this country is indulging in." The Brazilian war effort was a bad joke and the enforcement of the anti-German measures he described as a "hollow pretense."<sup>48</sup>

By mid-1918, Brazilian superpatriots, also alarmed by instances of government laxity, registered loud complaints. In May, newspapers had reported that the national government itself had no scruples about patronizing German-owned businesses: It had engaged such a firm to decorate the Guanabara Palace in Rio in preparation for a reception to welcome a British mission to Brazil. It was also pointed out that though the *Lei da guerra* specified that German-owned banks were to be placed under direct government supervision, they had been allowed to operate more or less normally. This had worked to the advantage of both the government and many merchants and consumers. Finally, the government responded to the agitation of the Liga pelos Aliados, and on July 28, 1918, the German-owned banks were ordered to cease operations. But even then, pending transactions were allowed to be concluded. The government did not formally cancel the right of the German banks to conduct business in Brazil until October 16, 1918, less than a month before the Armistice.<sup>49</sup>

In general, the Brazilian response to the problems posed by its large German ethnic minority was violent and repressive. The anti-German riots of 1917 were unprecedented in Teuto-Brazilian experience; the imposition of martial law was of doubtful necessity; the governmental regulation of German-language usage and

48. "Attitude of Brazilians toward the War," 1, 5, 10, 14.

49. *Ibid.*, 12-14; Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 62-66; Pinheiro, *Problemas da guerra*, 37-38. The decree of October 16, 1918, is reprinted in Pinheiro (p. 240). See also *Documentos Diplomaticos*, 1918, pp. 97-101.

the attendant infringements of the freedoms of press, assembly, and religious practice were of questionable constitutionality. Even though these restrictions were inconsistently enforced, they left strong impressions in many Teuto-Brazilian memories. German ethnic newspapers switched to Portuguese; others simply ceased publication. Scores of German schools were closed, many permanently. On the whole, German Catholics suffered less than did the Protestants, whose institutional ties with Germany were close and clear. Many clubs and societies disappeared permanently while others suspended operations for the duration of the war, but most survived through the adoption of accommodationist strategies. The discomfort experienced by common people of German descent varied greatly from place to place, but urban dwellers were more exposed to superpatriotic excesses than were the inhabitants of rural German enclaves. Although Brazil's repression of the German ethnic minority is understandable within the context of its history, it was remarkably harsh in relation to the negligible threat that the Teuto-Brazilians actually posed to national security.

## Aftermath and Retrospect

WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED in Rio de Janeiro that an armistice had been signed at Compiègne on November 11, 1918, the Brazilian Senate turned to its most distinguished member, Ruy Barbosa, for an oration suitable for the occasion. Although ill and preoccupied with problems of Brazil's international relations, this champion of weak nations, righteousness, and the Allies extemporaneously addressed his colleagues in the florid manner they expected of him. Describing the war as a dramatic struggle in which "cruelty that exceeded the very limits of the satanic fought ferociously against divine loftiness of sacrifice and measureless abnegation," Barbosa grandly welcomed Brazil into the house of victory alongside Britain, France, and the United States. His speech, we are told, made a profound impression.<sup>1</sup>

Far to the south in Santa Augusta in Rio Grande do Sul, certain Teuto-Brazilians received the news of Germany's defeat with disbelief, and they dismissed it as a shameless lie. That the kaiser had abdicated, that Germany was experiencing revolutionary turmoil, or that a republic had been created was simply not possible in the Germany they remembered. Their Evangelical pastor described those days as the blackest of his life, and one ninety-two-year-old who had avidly followed the news of the war was heartbroken. He died soon thereafter in inconsolable grief for his old fatherland.<sup>2</sup>

Neither Ruy Barbosa nor the die-hard chauvinists of Santa Au-

1. Ruy Barbosa, "Brazil in the House of Victory," *Inter-America*, II (1919), 139–44.

2. Oberacker, *Im Sonnenland Brasilien*, 288–90.

gusta were typical of the elite or the masses of Brazilian society. Of course, government officials were pleased that the war was over; it meant that they could turn to pressing problems of international trade and a growing national debt. At the same time, few Brazilians, including those of German birth or descent, were moved deeply by Germany's defeat. Most people naturally pursued their private affairs in ways untouched by national politics or international conflict. For most Germans in Brazil, the Armistice made no immediate or significant difference in their personal lives, since most of the wartime restrictions (regardless of enforcement, or lack of it, in their own communities) remained on the books during the next several months, a time when much public attention shifted to the peace conference at Versailles.

Brazil was a minor participant in these negotiations. Its delegation was headed by Dr. Epitácio Pessoa, a minor political figure who was elected president of Brazil during the course of the negotiations. The Brazilians concentrated on two issues, the Brazilian coffee seized by Germany and the German ships seized by Brazil. The first was settled easily; Germany was in no position to contest the issue. But the second ran afoul of the French, who insisted that all former German ships sequestered or confiscated during the war be distributed among the Allies in proportion to their own maritime losses in the war. The Brazilian government, which had leased to France thirty of the forty-three German vessels it had requisitioned, argued that the issue was already settled because French acceptance of the leases was tantamount to recognizing Brazil's right of ownership. Intransigent in its opposition to the French plan, Brazil resisted until May, 1920, when France finally conceded.<sup>3</sup> Thus the thorny question of the German ships, which had so preoccupied Brazil's leadership during much of the war, was finally resolved.

### The Return to Normalcy

On January 12, 1920, President Epitácio Pessoa declared the Treaty of Versailles to be in force. The technical state of war following the

3. Martin, *Latin America and the War*, 99–106; James, *Brazil after a Century of Independence*, 174; Bernard M. Baruch, *The Making of the Reparation and Economic Sections of the Treaty* (New York, 1920), 37–39, 187.



Armistice, which had continued for a period slightly longer than the war itself, was officially at an end. All federal decrees and orders limiting the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and movement were repealed as the national emergency was terminated. It remained for the state governments to remove such war-time measures as they had individually enacted. Six weeks later, for example, the government of Rio Grande do Sul permitted schools to resume instruction in any foreign language, including German. At least one Teuto-Brazilian source attributed this generous action to the Positivist principles of its strong chief executive, Borges de Medeiros.<sup>4</sup>

Santa Catarina was much slower to remove its restrictions. In that state the numerous *Vereine* continued to be persecuted. Indeed, like many state governments in the United States, Santa Catarina had enacted additional restrictive legislation after the Armistice. In September, 1919, a law was passed that defined "foreign-language schools" as those in which instruction in one or more subjects was conducted in a language other than Portuguese, irrespective of the citizenship or birthplace of the teacher. A month later, Santa Catarina once again closed many German schools because they allegedly had violated the requirement that teachers provide evidence of competency in the Portuguese language. In January, 1920, a further directive specified that the schools in the German colonies were to schedule at least twenty-four half-hour periods per week for instruction in Portuguese in reading, writing, history, geography, music, and civics. Moreover, all school documents such as lesson plans, curricular statements, and attendance reports were to be prepared in the Portuguese language. Not until September, 1921, did the Santa Catarina government repeal the regulations it had enacted during the war.<sup>5</sup> Obviously, in this nationalistic state the campaign to speed up the assimilation of Teuto-Brazilians by regulating their schools, which had been under way several years before the war, continued naturally afterwards.

4. Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 50; 11. *Jahresbericht des Deutschen Ev. Lehrerseminar für Rio Grande do Sul zu Santa Cruz, 1920; Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien, 1921* (São Leopoldo, n.d.), 37.

5. *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien: 1921*, p. 37; *Germania* (São Paulo), August 22, 1919; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 357; Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 223.

Of course, such legal measures reflected upper-class concerns about the slowness of the Germans to be assimilated into Brazilian life. Most ordinary folk were unconcerned whether the Germans were absorbed rapidly, slowly, or not at all. Similarly, the responses of the German ethnic group to the war and its aftermath are based on "elitist" evidence culled from editorials, reports, reminiscences, and commemorative materials. Ordinary Teuto-Brazilians, especially those marginally literate persons who had experienced downward mobility in the rural enclaves, left no record. But even among those in the ethnic leadership group who had perceived the war as a dangerous period in which their persons, property, and way of life had been threatened, there were many who decided that the less said about the war and its concomitants the better off they would be. Thus many postwar reports, calendars, and anniversary booklets published by ethnic institutions avoided mentioning the matter. In effect, they blanked out of the record those months or years in which the use of the German language was illegal. For example, the 1919 annual report of the tiny German Evangelical teachers college in Santa Cruz says nothing of the war's impact, including the fact that reports for 1917 and 1918 had never been published because of the language proscription. The 1920 report merely prints a translation of a letter received from the Ministry of the Interior officially lifting the ban on German.<sup>6</sup> The *Deutsche Turnblätter* of Porto Alegre was explicit about this strategy of silence. In its first issue following the war, it declared its intentions to refrain from comment and to gather strength, presumably for future contests in which the integrity of the Teuto-Brazilian community would be challenged.<sup>7</sup>

### German-Language Publications

The Teuto-Brazilian newspapers were generally hesitant about resuming publication in German; governmental directives were unclear and evidently varied from state to state. In Paraná the Curitiba *Kompass* reappeared in German on July 29, 1919; in São Paulo, the

6. 10. *Jahresbericht des Deutschen Ev. Lehrerseminar für Rio Grande do Sul zu Santa Cruz*, 1919; see also the eleventh report (for 1920). Cf. Luebke, "Legal Restrictions," 1-19.

7. *Deutsche Turnblätter* (July, 1920).

*Germania* resumed on August 19, 1919; and in Rio Grande do Sul, where restrictions were lifted on September 12, 1919, both the *Deutsches Volksblatt* and the *Neue Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre returned to German on September 16. Four days later, however, the Porto Alegre police shut down the *Volksblatt* in the belief that the Ministry of the Interior intended to withhold permission until after the peace treaty had been signed. A letter of protest was immediately sent to President Pessôa, who responded with a telegram clarifying the issue and permitting the *Volksblatt* to resume publication in German.<sup>8</sup>

The German-language newspapers responded variously to their restored freedom to publish. The *Kompass* was mild: In a new epoch of social tensions, it reasserted its devotion to Christian culture and to the interests of the German ethnic community and of the Brazilian nation. The *Neue Deutsche Zeitung* described the war years as a troubled dream but declared that the distress had created a new sense of unity among the Teuto-Brazilians. It remained for the more chauvinistic *Germania* to follow a harder, more defensive line. This paper bewailed the fate of Germany, which it characterized as the victim of an Allied plan of eradication. It described its own recent experience as having been gagged and bound hand and foot, like everything else that was German. But now that those horrible times have passed, the *Germania* asserted, it must return to its duty to raise the consciousness of German identity to new levels and to defend Germany in an unswerving and nonpartisan way. Its new slogan was to be "End hatred and agitation!" even as it would fearlessly defend *Deutschtum* and oppose unjust attacks on Teuto-Brazilians. Still, the *Germania* declared, it recognized the strong bond between the success of Brazil and the German colony and therefore it intended to foster good relations with the government and to defend it also from unfair criticism without reference to partisan interests.<sup>9</sup>

Another year passed before the many German-language calendars reappeared, no doubt because, as book-length publications,

8. Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 154–55.

9. Curitiba *Kompass*, July 29, 1919; Porto Alegre *Neue Deutsche Zeitung*, September 16, 1919, as quoted in Fischer, "Die deutsche Presse in Rio Grande do Sul," 134; *Germania* (São Paulo), August 19, 1919.

they required months rather than days to be compiled and manufactured. The first postwar calendars were published in 1920 for use in 1921, and, like many other German-language publications, most preferred to tread lightly on the sensitive issues of the war and the distress it had caused. This was not true, however, of the calendar published by Rotermund, the grand old man of the Evangelical church in Rio Grande do Sul. It contains a long article entitled "Das brasilianische Deutschtum nach dem Kriege," which conveyed remarkable bitterness. Its author, identified only as "Dr. B.," declared that because of the calculated hatred of the French and British for everything German everywhere in the world, Teuto-Brazilians had not been safe in their own homeland. The pitifully weak president Wenceslau Braz had been unable to prevent the dark machinations of a clique of money-hungry politicians and businessmen to drag Brazil into the war. Teuto-Brazilians, he said, were treated as pariahs in their own country, their schools closed, newspapers forbidden to publish, and printshops destroyed. German businesses and clubhouses went up in flames because officials ignored their constitutional duty to protect lives and property. Even freedom of conscience was violated, he declared, as Teuto-Brazilians were forbidden to worship their God in their own language. While the Germans might have taken up arms against such a weak government, it would have been out of character for Germans to challenge the authority of the state. The author carried on in this fashion for several pages, at one point blaming Jews in the service of both the Allies and the Bolsheviks for the sorry state of affairs.<sup>10</sup>

Such venomous resentment was uncommon, at least in print. A more moderate response is provided by Koseritz' *Deutscher Volkskalender*, a secular rather than a church-related publication: "Even during the war the Germans of our state [Rio Grande do Sul] had to suffer relatively little, except for individual outrages perpetrated by mobs and for certain minor limitations on freedom of movement in churches, the press, schools, and associational life. Now that peace has been restored, commerce has returned. German instruction, German sermons, and German newspapers are again unrestricted. German songs resound in our singing so-

10. *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien*: 1921, pp. 35–40.

cieties and the gun clubs have gotten their rifles back. Nevertheless, there still remains a residue of the desire to nationalize (read de-Germanize) everything." Despite this relatively placid view of recent Teuto-Brazilian experience, this publication, like many others, remained thoroughly committed to the maintenance of the German language and culture. It offered specific suggestions about what German Brazilians should do for the revival of *Deutschtum* in Brazil: (1) Help the suffering people in postwar Germany; (2) restore Brazilian trade with Germany; (3) above all, revitalize the spiritual bonds with Germany—German books, newspapers, music, and art must be distributed more widely than ever before among Teuto-Brazilians; and (4) help newly arrived immigrants from Germany to make a new start in Brazil. A final exhortation cautioned against allowing differences of opinion regarding Germany's internal political affairs to divide them, because as Brazilians they are properly without influence in such matters.<sup>11</sup> Thus, *Koseritz' Deutscher Volkskalender* articulated a cultural pluralist position that was unchanged by the war: unswerving political loyalty to the new fatherland combined with steadfast devotion to the cultural forms of the old.

No matter how differently or how generously the publishers of German-language newspapers and periodicals might have perceived their wartime experiences, the fact remained that a huge proportion of these publishing ventures failed to survive the war. The ban on German had been devastating; the substitution of Portuguese was a mere expediency that was both difficult and unsatisfactory. According to data accumulated by a leading student of German-language publishing in Brazil, there were twenty-one newspapers in 1917. A few were dailies; others appeared weekly; most were published two or three times per week. Of these, nine (43 percent) were casualties of war. Among them was the *Deutsche Zeitung* of Porto Alegre, the oldest continuously published German-language newspaper in Brazil (since 1861), whose well-known and influential editor, Arno Philipp, also had been a deputy in the Rio Grande do Sul legislature. In Paraná, the anticlerical and liberal *Beobachter*, founded in 1890, failed to reappear in 1919. But most of the other casualties, such as the notorious *Deutsche*

11. *Koseritz' Volkskalender*, 1921, pp. 33–34, 102.

*Wacht* of Pelotas, were recent in origin and not well established. Meanwhile, the revived *Germania* of São Paulo, a venerable advocate of social democracy, lasted only until 1921.<sup>12</sup>

It appears that publications lacking ties with the churches were the most vulnerable. Papers that catered to Catholic readers, such as the *Kompass* of Curitiba or the *Deutsches Volksblatt* of Porto Alegre, or Evangelical readers, such as the *Deutsche Post* of São Leopoldo, drew strength from the informal support of organized institutions; anticlerical, liberal, freethinking, or socialist newspapers, however, had no comparable associational backing. Moreover, the churches had led the resistance to wartime oppression. Evangelical pastors in particular had stressed the intimate connection between religious belief and German culture.

Heavy though the losses were among the German-language newspapers, they were not indicators of the power of assimilation, as they were in the United States. In Brazil, the nine casualties were more than matched by the number of new ventures in German-language journalism that were attempted in the postwar period. A total of eleven newspapers were founded from 1919 to 1923, though only two survived the decade. But a variety of periodicals serving special constituencies, such as the members of teachers or farmers organizations, were also founded in the years immediately following the war. In the United States, where the assimilation of the German ethnic group was more advanced, the war caused a permanent reduction in the number of German-language newspapers and periodicals that was proportionately much greater than in Brazil.<sup>13</sup>

## The Effects of the War on the Churches and Schools

Similarly, in the United States the war had hastened the linguistic acculturation of the German churches—dramatically in some cases. In Brazil this effect was much less apparent. Among the German Catholics, the tendency to use Portuguese had always been strong. Missouri Synod Lutherans, for reasons of their own,

12. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 24–26; Arndt and Olson, *History and Bibliography*, 91–221.

13. Gehse, *Die deutsche Presse*, 23–37; Wittke, *The German-language Press in America*, 274–76.

had repeatedly emphasized the need to switch to the language of the majority. But Evangelical synods continued to resist linguistic acculturation, as they had before the war. Such conservative leaders as Provost Martin Braunschweig agreed unhesitatingly that a substantial measure of acculturation was necessary and desirable; they understood that prominent persons in the Brazilian government, as well as Luso-Brazilians generally, continued in the post-war period to expect Teuto-Brazilians to become totally integrated into the life of the country. But they still insisted that it was possible and preferable to retain German distinctiveness in language, culture, and customs, even though economic and political integration could be achieved and the Portuguese language mastered. Braunschweig and others continued to believe that if the German language were abandoned in worship, private devotional life, and in schools, Evangelical Protestantism as they knew it would eventually disappear. Even though they welcomed the development of new ties with North American Evangelicals, they refused to learn from the North American experience that linguistic acculturation of the church in Brazil was both possible and desirable.<sup>14</sup>

Still, the churches had been changed by the war. They had been forced by circumstances to depend on themselves rather than on donations of money and men from Germany. The development of financial self-sufficiency was essential, and they accomplished it under trying circumstances. This was especially true of synodical activities, as distinguished from the parish or congregational level. Thus, the Brazilian synods had to assume the costs of administration, maintenance of synodical institutions, subsidies for pastors and teachers assigned to congregations that were not yet self-supporting, assistance for retired pastors who remained in Brazil rather than returning to Germany—all of which had formerly been supported by German mission societies or the Prussian state church.<sup>15</sup>

The fact that well-trained pastors and preachers were no longer available had both immediate and long-range consequences. As a first step, the churches began to employ laymen as deacons, teach-

14. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 314–18; Braunschweig, "Die brasilianische Diaspora," 41, 46–48; Koseritz' *Volkskalender*, 1921, p. 102.

15. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLb," 151.

ers, and substitute pastors after they had been given brief training and examination. But more important, they agreed that it was essential for them to establish their own Brazilian institutions for the preparation of parish pastors. The Evangelical Synod of Rio Grande do Sul therefore founded in 1925 a pretheological school patterned on the German model in Cachoeira, which several years later was moved to São Leopoldo. In this way the Evangelicals, like the Lutherans, would encourage the development of a native-born clergy, even though the students would still be expected to go to Germany for formal theological training. In the decades following, this institution developed into a full-fledged theological seminary that educated nearly all of the pastors of what is today called the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confessions in Brazil. German Catholics in Rio Grande do Sul recognized a similar need and in 1924 founded a small institution to prepare teachers for their schools.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, the several church organizations resumed their regular schedule of conferences and conventions, and conducted their business almost exclusively in the German language. The Riograndenser Synod convened at Linha Brochier as early as May, 1919, but most church-related organizations did not return to accustomed patterns of meeting until 1920. Church leaders continued to debate the need for and consequences of programs for nurturing the German language and culture. Some argued that the cultural chauvinism of the past had naturally or understandably provoked Luso-Brazilians to repress the Germans; others continued to believe that the church would disappear if linguistic and cultural assimilation occurred.<sup>17</sup>

Much more than the churches, the German schools continued to be prime targets of nativists determined to force the assimilation of immigrants. A mild nationalism continued throughout the 1920s, leading to more regulatory legislation and the further establishment of "federal schools" by the government to render pri-

16. *Ibid.*; Braunschweig, "Die brasilianische Diaspora," 47; Becker, *Deutsche Siedler*, 82.

17. Koseritz' *Volkskalender*, 1921, p. 102; Entres (ed.), *Gedenkbuch*, 224; Braunschweig, "Die brasilianische Diaspora," 48; Bühler, *Dona Francisca*, 81–83; Dedekind, *Brasilien*, 57.



vate schools superfluous. The study of Portuguese became a regular part of the curriculum, and Brazilian history and geography were commonly introduced. By far the largest number of German schools continued to be in Rio Grande do Sul, a fact one Evangelical leader attributed to the Positivism that had become characteristic of that state's government.<sup>18</sup>

Efforts were made in the postwar period to rebuild the system of German schools, but with limited success. Many that had been closed during the war never reopened; most of the others continued to be staffed by one teacher each. Although comparable schools in the United States rapidly shifted to instruction in English and placed renewed emphasis on religious education, the Brazilian schools seemed dedicated to cultural and linguistic maintenance. Schools run by churches were increasingly nonconfessional, as formal religious instruction tended to disappear or be available only as Bible history. In some cases, parents who wanted more rigorous religious instruction for their children could pay extra fees and the school would make special arrangements.<sup>19</sup>

Opposition to the German schools increased strongly in the 1930s. Various state governments enacted new limitations. For example, in 1935, São Paulo designated Portuguese as the only permissible language of instruction in grades one to four; in the higher grades, only one hour of instruction in a foreign language was allowed per day. By 1938, the national government eliminated German entirely as a medium of instruction. In some districts the result of such legislation, as Martin Braunschweig had predicted in 1922, was illiteracy in two languages instead of only one. Decades later a pastor of a rural Evangelical congregation in Dois Irmãos (near São Leopoldo) elaborated on these effects. He described how his parishioners, living in rural isolation, normally spoke the Hunsrück dialect mixed with fragments of Portuguese. When their youngsters went to school, they heard what was for them an unintelligible foreign language. Meanwhile, they

18. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKLB," 151; *Der Familienfreund*: 1920, p. 125; Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 21; Schröder, *Brasilien und Wittenberg*, 357; *Allgemeine Lehrer-Zeitung für Rio Grande do Sul* (May, 1921), 4; Dedekind, *Brasilien*, 25.

19. *Allgemeine Lehrer-Zeitung* (May, 1921), 4. Cf. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 288–89.

had no opportunity to learn to read and write German, which was the language of the church. The result was that by the 1960s, illiteracy rates of over 50 percent were common in a district that years before had been entirely literate.<sup>20</sup>

## Societies and Business

For the scores of German ethnic voluntary associations, the post-war years represented a return to the *status quo ante bellum*. It is true that many *Vereine* did not survive the year of war, but most did, and within a relatively short time they were able to conduct their affairs as though nothing had happened. Recovery was closely related to the individual society's activities—school societies dealt with matters of greater moment than did bowling clubs. Location was also important; there was less tension in the rural colonies than there was in the cities. Some cities had had more difficulties than others. For example, in Bahia, located in the northeast where there were few Germans, the leading German society, Germania-Verein, held its first official assembly after the war on June 29, 1919; but in Porto Alegre, the city with the largest German subsociety and where the worst riots had occurred, the Germania-Verein (which became Sociedade Independência) did not convene again until April 12, 1920, at which time it took the first steps to rebuild its elegant clubhouse that had been destroyed three years earlier. In Rio de Janeiro, however, recovery was more rapid. By November, 1919, the Gesellschaft Germania was considering plans for the construction of a new, expanded clubhouse, to be erected at a new location. Ultimately this society chose to remodel its old quarters, but not because of faltering membership.<sup>21</sup> Anniversary publications and other reports of many other such societies often ignore the events of the war. No doubt this means that in many cases there were no unpleasant experiences to report; but it may also reflect a desire to ignore and forget them.

20. Fischer, "Geschichte der EKL B," 151; *Kalender für den deut.-ev. Gemeinden in Brasilien*, 1935; Braunschweig, "Die rechtliche Stellung," 53; Dressel, *Der deutschbrasilianische Kolonist*, 21–23.

21. *Fünfzig Jahre Deutscher Verein Germania*, 160; [Sociedade Independência], *Betrachtungen zu Ihrer Geschichte aus Anlass der Jahrhundert-Feier*, 31; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 524.

Teuto-Brazilian and German-owned economic enterprises also quickly returned to normal. Although it was impossible for such giants as Theodor Wille and Company and the German-owned banks to recapture their former dominance, most of the smaller Teuto-Brazilian companies prospered as they exploited attractive opportunities in the postwar period. In Porto Alegre, Germans could be found in all branches of commerce—export, import, wholesale, and retail. Although Germans constituted about one-eighth of the population of Porto Alegre in the mid-1920s, they accounted for nearly one-third of the commerce and industry in that city. Many of the largest firms continued to be German-owned, just as many German-born persons were part owners or managers of Luso-Brazilian firms. In Rio de Janeiro, the situation was much the same, as German-born businessmen and German-owned companies moved into industry and manufactured machines, beer, dyes, glass, textiles, and furniture.<sup>22</sup>

### The Tempo of Assimilation

Despite the success of Teuto-Brazilian business enterprise and despite the considerable efforts of the churches, the schools, the press, and the voluntary associations to sustain ethnic vitality, powerful sociological forces were at work that sapped the strength of the movement. Linguistic and marital assimilation was a natural process and it accelerated during the 1920s, especially in the cities and towns where frequent personal interaction of Germans with Luso-Brazilians was inevitable. Bilingualism became common in the less isolated communities, and by the 1930s, many young people in the German districts preferred to converse with each other in Portuguese. Similarly, the adoption of Portuguese forms of given or first names became standard. Even among wealthier and better-educated persons, who were often contemptuous of Luso-Brazilian culture and who saw assimilation as a menace, the shift to Portuguese could not be prevented. In the centers of urban population, linguistic acculturation was especially rapid

22. *Hundert Jahre Deutschtum*, 251–53; Hinden, *Deutsche und deutscher Handel*, 506.

among lower-class persons, who often perceived knowledge of Portuguese as a means to social and economic advancement.<sup>23</sup>

Yet sociological forces could work in other directions, too. Among German Catholics, the multi-ethnic character of the church tended to reduce enthusiasm for maintaining private German-language schools, with the result that such institutions were increasingly identified with Protestantism.<sup>24</sup> The sense of cultural distinctiveness was correspondingly increased, among Evangelicals in particular.

Even though a general spirit of tolerance prevailed in Brazil during the postwar decade, a residue of bitterness remained. Just as some Brazilian patriots continued to insist that national unity demanded programs of forced assimilation, there were Teuto-Brazilians who felt more disillusioned and more alienated than ever. Political involvement seemed pointless to such persons. Some Teuto-Brazilian leaders observed this apathy, and while they could not peer into the future, they recognized how unhealthy such isolation was and feared for its consequences; they urged Teuto-Brazilians to assume their political responsibilities as citizens of their adoptive fatherland. Although there were differences of opinion regarding the best means to achieve ethnic political goals, the Teuto-Brazilians were generally more unified than were their counterparts in the United States, who disputed endlessly about the proper strategy to follow.<sup>25</sup>

The times were such, however, that participation in the political process was not always easy. The 1920s were a decade of political ferment in Brazil, and violence was not uncommon. Rio Grande do Sul especially experienced revolutionary unrest reminiscent of the 1890s. In 1923, civil war engulfed some of the German rural colonies and self-protection against revolutionary bands became necessary in some communities. In Neu-Württemberg, for example, Germans formed a military organization of a thousand

23. Willems, "Linguistic Changes," 460–61. Cf. Fouquet, *Der deutsche Einwanderer*, 184.

24. Willems, "Linguistic Changes," 460.

25. Buchmann, "Die deutschsprachige Presse in Brasilien," 221; Fugmann, *Die Deutschen in Paraná*, 199. Cf. Frederick C. Luebke, "The Germans," in John Higham (ed.), *Ethnic Leadership in America* (Baltimore, 1978), 64–90.

men for such purposes. Taken together, the experiences of the postwar decade caused many German Brazilians with resentful hearts to be receptive to the siren song of *Volkspolitik*. When Nazi variations on that theme were played in the 1930s, some found the music irresistible.<sup>26</sup> Given this history, it is no surprise that the programs of forced assimilation undertaken by the Getúlio Vargas regime and thereafter were more intense and prolonged than were any such attempts during World War I.

The new wave of immigrants from Germany that entered Brazil after the war was a source of concern for some Teuto-Brazilian leaders. Most welcomed the newcomers, but some worried about the possibilities of backlash. One writer was especially frank as he composed ten commandments for them. His first injunction was: Don't be a disgrace to Germans and to Germany; another was to learn Portuguese, but never forget German; a third was even more pointed—Don't criticize Brazilian circumstances as long as you do not know the customs, usages, and ways of life of those who were born here.<sup>27</sup>

During the 1920s, immigration from Germany reached its highest level in history. The total for the decade was 75,839, a figure that was more than double that of any previous ten-year period. The banner year was 1924, when 22,170 persons fled runaway inflation in Weimar Germany for the promise of a better life in Brazil. Relatively few settled in the rural enclaves of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina, where the governments were anxious to restrict the growth of the German subsociety. Instead, the majority sought employment in such metropolitan centers as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Porto Alegre.<sup>28</sup>

Obviously the fact that Brazil had been an enemy of Germany in World War I had no effect upon the image Germans had of Brazil as a land to which they might migrate. It is unlikely that most newcomers had even heard of the anti-German riots of 1917, much less other, minor manifestations of cultural clash. More-

26. Love, *Rio Grande do Sul*, 204–11; Becker, *Deutsche Siedler*, 84; Königk, *Die Politik Brasiliens*, 66.

27. Fugmann, *Die Deutschen in Paraná*, 40.

28. Carneiro, *Imigração e colonização no Brasil*, table facing p. 60; Becker, *Deutsche Siedler*, 84.

over, it is clear that Teuto-Brazilian society had not been changed in any fundamental way by the war. There were minor changes, of course, as we have seen. Assimilation was accelerated in some respects, but at the same time, the war experiences had accentuated the sense of differentness, if not of cultural superiority, that some German Brazilians had, especially persons closely associated with the Evangelical synods and most persons in positions of ethnic group leadership. For them, the siege mentality that often develops among ethnic minorities was intensified. At the same time, a substantial part of the rural Teuto-Brazilian population—marginal farmers struggling for survival in an indifferent milieu—were quite unaffected by the war and its concomitants. They sensed no change; they had no reason to modify their behavior. For them assimilation was a glacially slow process of which they were scarcely aware and which still remained incomplete decades later.

### Comparisons with the United States

The great majority of non-German Brazilians—blacks, *caboclos*, immigrants from Italy, Spain, and Portugal, as well as impoverished Luso-Brazilians—continued to perceive the Germans in the 1920s as they always had, some with envy, most with indifference. But some of the Luso-Brazilian elite—members of the leadership classes in that stratified society—were disturbed by the failure of the Germans to assimilate and were determined to accelerate the rate of change through legislation. In this respect, the Brazilian experience was sharply different from that of the United States. Brazil had nothing equivalent to the U.S. Supreme Court decision (*Meyer v. Nebraska*, 1923) that declared unconstitutional the efforts of state governments to eliminate foreign-language instruction in American schools. Nor did Brazil restrict immigration as the U.S. Congress did by means of the National Origins Act of 1924.<sup>29</sup>

But the differences were more basic than that. In the United States the natural process of assimilation (which is related to such variables as rate of immigration, density of settlement, occupation patterns, wealth, education, and degrees of cultural differences)

29. Luebke, "Legal Restrictions," 1–19.

had advanced more rapidly than it had in Brazil. This meant that when the crisis of a war with the homeland of a substantial ethnic minority came in 1917 and 1918, the Germans in the United States could adapt more quickly and effectively, and in the postwar years consciously and deliberately make decisions to speed up the process.<sup>30</sup> In Brazil, where the social and cultural variations between the German ethnic group and the host society were greater and where the size of the German group was proportionately smaller but at the same time spatially more highly concentrated, the war produced destructive riots in addition to restrictive measures that severely curtailed the freedom of Teuto-Brazilian citizens. In the United States, the rate of assimilation continued at such a pace during the 1920s and 1930s that when World War II arrived in 1941, the country experienced no repetition of the anti-Germanism of World War I. In Brazil, where the rate of assimilation continued at a much slower tempo, and where German ethnic institutions and behavior patterns had been only slightly modified by war-inspired riots and restrictions, severe though they were, World War II was the more traumatic experience. Once again, Brazilian programs of forced assimilation were pushed far beyond anything perceived at any time to be necessary in the United States.

Still, the experiences of the German ethnic groups in Brazil and the United States provide a series of remarkable parallels. Both countries received large numbers of immigrants from roughly the same parts of German-speaking Europe at approximately the same times in the nineteenth century and generally for the same reasons. Both developed important German-speaking subsocieties that evolved and maintained full complements of the same ethnic institutions—German-language newspapers, churches, schools, and voluntary associations of all kinds. In both countries, the German groups confronted the same crisis—war against the old fatherland—in much the same way. Presumably, circumstances in both countries illuminate how “enemy” minorities respond in times of national or international crises and how modern societies in turn treat such “foreign” elements.

When world war engulfed Europe in 1914, the governments of both the United States and Brazil declared their neutrality. For

30. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 329.

most ordinary people in both countries, but especially in Brazil, the war in Europe was a distant affair of no particular consequence. It seemed to affect their daily lives in no direct or discernible fashion. Still, the war tended to evoke sympathies for one side or the other. Immigrants and their descendants naturally felt an emotional bond with their ancestral homeland and were convinced of the justice of its cause. Leaders of the German ethnic groups in both countries tended to be extravagant in their partisanship for Germany. They delivered speeches and wrote editorials defending German war aims and behaviors; their newspapers eagerly reported glorious German victories over French and British arms; they organized rallies and bazaars to collect contributions for the German Red Cross and for war widows and orphans; and they bought German war bonds as German reservists in both countries responded to the call to colors. The two German subsocieties experienced similar excitement and rejuvenation as a horrible war was fought on distant battlefields.

Meanwhile, Germany sought to exploit pro-German sentiment in both countries and in the same ways. Efforts were made to acquire control of newspapers to propagandize for the German point of view. The German Red Cross was used as a cover for agents in both countries—Albert Dernburg in the United States had an equivalent in G. W. Zimmerli—and the latter's Germanische Bund was in some respects similar to the National German-American Alliance.

At the same time, dominant elements in both countries tended strongly to favor the Allies. Their presses were harshly critical of Germany, both warned against German spies and reported on strange and suspicious behaviors as alleged evidence of German plots and conspiracies. In the United States, organizations such as the National Security League and the American Defense Society propagandized for preparedness and for support for the Allies; Brazil had its equivalent in the Liga pelos Aliados. If Theodore Roosevelt can be identified as a major political figure who championed England and France, the eloquent Ruy Barbosa was his counterpart in Brazil. Both countries had foreign ministers—William Jennings Bryan and Lauro Müller—who opposed the pro-Ally drift in their respective countries during the neutrality period, and both men were forced by circumstances to resign



their positions, Bryan two years earlier than Müller. The United States and Brazil responded adversely to the British imposition of the Black List in 1916, but in neither case was the pro-Ally sentiment seriously modified as a consequence.

In 1917 the neutrality period came to an end as both the United States and Brazil declared war on Germany, ostensibly because vessels in their respective merchant marines had been torpedoed by German submarines. The ways in which the people of Brazil and the United States responded to the problem of having many Germans in their populations provide another set of comparisons.

In the United States, the war introduced a period of persecution for German Americans. Many citizens of German origin were suspected of disloyalty. Individuals were harassed in various ways as the American people were swept up in a wave of anti-German feeling. In effect, there was a war against the German language and culture. The climate of suspicion produced such measures as the ban on German-composed music and the renaming of persons, foods, streets, parks, and towns. German-language instruction in the schools was restricted or eliminated and German-language newspapers were closely regulated. There were scores of patriotic demonstrations in which German Americans were forced to kiss the American flag, buy war bonds, or sing the national anthem. There were other ceremonies in which German-language books were burned. There were frequent instances of vandalism, beatings, arrests for allegedly unpatriotic utterances, and even a lynching of a German alien in Illinois.<sup>31</sup>

But the American behavior pales in contrast to the Brazilian. Following the Brazilian break in diplomatic relations with Germany in April, 1917, German Brazilians were victims of numerous destructive riots. Property damage was enormous as hundreds of residences, German-language newspapers' offices, churches, schools, clubhouses, businesses of all kinds, factories, and warehouses were damaged or destroyed by mobs gone out of control. Six months later, following Brazil's declaration of war in October, a

31. *Ibid.*, 3–24; Wittke, *German-Americans and the World War*. A variety of studies on the local level have been published during the past decade, especially in state and local historical journals. See above, Chap. 8, n. 29. See also Phyllis Keller, *States of Belonging: German-American Intellectuals and the First World War* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979).

second series of riots resulted in more destruction. Martial law was declared in Rio de Janeiro and all southern states, where the great majority of the Teuto-Brazilians lived. All publications in the German language were forbidden. All instruction in the German language was banned in all schools at all levels. All German-language church services were outlawed. The president was empowered to seize the property of enemy aliens and to sell all goods consigned to them. While it is true that enforcement of these repressive measures was inconsistent and sometimes haphazard, the fact remains that Brazilian behavior was remarkably violent and repressive compared to the American.<sup>32</sup>

It is easy to explain the Brazilian response to the German problem in terms of the classic stereotype of the Latin temperament as irresponsible, unrestrained, volatile, emotional, and spontaneous. That was how the young Clarence H. Haring, already one of the most distinguished Latin Americanists in the United States, interpreted the phenomenon in 1920. He wrote that the "Brazilians' attitude toward the war may probably be explained by the difference between the Latin and Anglo-Saxon temperaments. The Brazilian is easily aroused, as the violent anti-German demonstrations in some of the cities reveal, but he also easily forgets."<sup>33</sup> Thus Haring also used the stereotype to explain the rapid return to normal attitudes and behaviors in the postwar era. Even though stereotypes are often founded in experience as interpreted by participants in a particular culture and in that sense convey a measure of "truth," it is also true that this interpretation in fact explains very little because it fails to penetrate surfaces. It is more useful to compare the Teuto-Brazilians' and the German Americans' circumstances in the decades before the war.

While Germans represented a much smaller proportion of Brazilian than of American society, their settlement patterns were more highly concentrated, exclusive, and isolated in Brazil. Usually better educated and often wealthier than the average Brazilian, the Germans there inevitably were more slowly assimilated, compared to German Americans. This was also true of many German farmers in the rural enclaves who experienced downward mo-

32. Cf. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 225–301.

33. Haring, *The Germans in South America*, 66.

bility as they struggled with the exigencies of a subtropical environment. As northern Europeans, the Teuto-Brazilians, in contrast to the more numerous Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese immigrants in Brazil, had a language and a culture that were significantly different from those of the host society. Differentness in turn promoted a heightened sense of minority group identity in addition to a full complement of ethnic institutions—churches, schools, social organizations, a German-language press—that tended to be more closely tied to Germany than were their equivalents in the United States. All this combined to promote a general sense of cultural superiority that had no real equal in the United States. Moreover, leadership among the Germans of Brazil was more often vested in the *Reichsdeutsche*, whose bonds with Germany were close. Finally, compared to their American cousins, the Germans in Brazil wielded greater economic power, but their political influence was weaker.

The comparison should be carried a step further. Brazilian society, compared to the American, was the more highly stratified: Its rich were richer and its poor poorer. Illiteracy was pervasive. Because its economy was less developed, it lacked the means to provide its citizens with universal, free education. Indeed, the notion of schooling the masses as the responsibility of the state was not advanced in Brazil, where education was the privilege of the few, not the right of the many, as it had become in both Germany and the United States by 1890. Moreover, Brazil had no long-standing constitutional tradition. Most Brazilians did not place the same high value as Americans did on freedoms of religion, press, and assembly. This was also true of the Teuto-Brazilians, both as Germans and Brazilians.

Was Brazil the more violent country? Surely that is a question that deserves more attention than what it can be given here. While the stereotype many Americans hold of Latin American culture answers affirmatively, it should be remembered that the United States only a few decades earlier had experienced a civil war of unprecedented proportions and that riots emerging from cultural differences were remarkably frequent in the nineteenth-century America. By the 1880s, cultural contrasts between immigrants and old-stock Americans informed much political debate at the state and local level, and conflict, sometimes violent, over alco-

holic drink, Sabbatarianism, and schools was endemic in many northern and western American communities. Ethnic antipathies and prejudices, one suspects, were more deeply rooted in the United States than in Brazil. Violence in Brazil, common though it was in the southern states where the Germans lived, especially in the 1890s and the 1920s, usually emerged from sources other than ethnocultural diversity. But when it was visited upon the German minority, it came with a severity surpassing anything generally experienced by the Germans in the United States.

As the spirit of nationalism swelled early in the twentieth century, the Brazilians, like the Americans, naturally acted on the basis of stereotypes that obscured individual differences and beclouded interpersonal relationships. Lacking both knowledge and understanding of the separatistic German subsociety, its manners and institutions, they demanded an unprecedented measure of conformity to established Brazilian ways. Had the Germans in the United States been as divergent from the American norms as the Teuto-Brazilians were from the Brazilian, it is likely that they too would have suffered from destructive riots, as the Chinese did in mining camps of the American West in the nineteenth century, or as American blacks did in Chicago, East St. Louis, Tulsa, and elsewhere in the immediate postwar period.



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