

## For the launch of Andreas Mach's "Jüdische Familienunternehmer in Hitlers München" 25 February, 2025



### From Bea Green nee Siegel, daughter of Michael Siegel, Rechtsanwalt depicted on the cover of the book:

I left Munich on the Kindertransport because of Hitler in 1939. I escaped the Nazis and have survived to be nearly 100 years old. It is an honour for me to read Andreas Mach's book and realise that my history is part of an era that we have survived. I love Munich and although I am now British, I consider myself a **Bavarian** Brit! I still feel the loss of the Munich way of life, which I was exiled from at the age of just 14. I miss the Gemütlichkeit, the down-to-earth mentality, and – of course – the food.

It is very important for Andreas Mach to have written this book to help warn of, and prevent, another Hitler and I am proud that my family history and record has contributed to this outstanding work of scholarship and witness.

### From Jeremy Green, grandson of Michael Siegel:

I am sorry neither my mother nor I can be present in person for this book launch, but I am glad to have the opportunity to provide some thoughts on this occasion.

This deeply impressive book not only has my grandfather on its cover but also uncovers and documents the ruthless and oppressive destruction by the Nazi regime of Jewish life and society in Munich, a deeply interwoven part of civic life in Munich in general.

As the decades pass and the living memory of the rise of Nazism, the Holocaust, and the Second World War declines, too many people are now ignorant of the history. Many have developed a cartoonish view of the Nazi era, focusing on only the extremes of the concentration camps and the violence of war. This phenomenon has caused many to overlook a critical aspect of how antisemitism and oppression manifested and grew in 1930s Germany: the casual cruelty, the manipulation of ordinary fear, and ordinary greed that enabled and empowered increasingly evil actions.

Crucially, this book also successfully explains the willingness of some fellow citizens to take advantage of the undoing of their Jewish business rivals for their own gain, happy to look the other way as long as it suited their interests, while many were either too terrorized to object, or did not know how.

Nowadays, increasingly ugly attitudes are evident in many political trends around the world. From a young age, I have known from my mother's accounts how insidiously this type of xenophobia can be amplified to turn neighbour against neighbour and justify state oppression of the innocent.

I applaud Andreas Mach's book precisely for all its detail: it is the detail that will enable any reader to appreciate what this awful process feels like in real life.

I must return to my grandfather, and the story of the photograph on this book's cover. As you can read in the book, the story began when the Sturmabteilung smashed up the department store of one of Dr. Siegel's clients, after lodging a complaint with the police, Dr. Siegel was badly beaten by the SA and marched through the streets of Munich with a sign around his neck. Despite this, he remained in Munich until 1940. Until 1938, he was both restrained and supported by his deep roots in the civic community, but then threats to his family and the destruction of his business made it impossible to continue. His Munich life had been destroyed but, luckily, and unlike many others, he escaped and survived.

I wish success to the publication of Andreas's superb work, and to its translation into other languages since the history is of worldwide relevance.

Bea Green-Siegel, Jeremy Green, Paul Green, Daniel Green  
London, 21st of February 2025