

Manfred George's *Aufbau*: Reconstructing the News  
Episode 27 of *Exile*  
A Production of the Leo Baeck Institute – New York | Berlin  
Released March 10, 2026

**JOSHUA MALINA:** On July 15, 1939, just six weeks before the outbreak of World War II, shocking news from Europe reached the pages of a US newspaper.

**NEWSREADER:** The reader should grit his teeth and read this report, which was given by a former German front officer of Jewish nationality and faith...

**JOSHUA MALINA:** The somewhat cryptic story gave a detailed account of the transport of 60 German Jews, accompanied by a young SS officer, to “Camp B.” It was titled “A Report from Hell”.

**NEWSREADER:** The SS man declared the following: I set fire to the synagogue this morning at 5:00 a.m. At 7:00 a.m., I crushed hundreds of watches and silver rings with these feet, and an hour later, I smashed hundreds of typewriters belonging to the accursed Jews with my hands.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** The story went from bad to worse. An early portent of the terrible years to come. The thing is, even for an avid reader of the news, this story was easy to miss. “The Report From Hell” didn’t come from a major national newspaper. Instead, it was published by a German-Jewish refugee named Manfred George, in the pages of a tiny German language paper based on New York’s Upper West Side. The national news wasn’t talking about what was happening across the ocean. But *Aufbau* was.

*THEME MUSIC*

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Welcome to *Exile*, a podcast from LBI, the Leo Baeck Institute, New York. I’m Joshua Malina. When everything is taken away, then what? From LBI’s archives, untold stories of Jewish lives in the shadow of fascism. Today, the small publication that became an unlikely voice for German-Jewish exiles around the world.

## THEME MUSIC OUT

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Manfred Georg Cohn was born in Berlin in 1893, the son of a businessman. His studies led him first to law, but while he was a student at the University of Berlin, Manfred also tried his hand at writing articles at a weekly newspaper. It wasn't long before he was hooked. In Berlin, Manfred worked at some of the leading newspapers of the day. He was managing editor at the *Deutsche Montagszeitung*, a weekly with a circulation of 800,000, before becoming editor-in-chief at a daily paper called the *Berliner Abendpost*. He later turned his attention to arts reporting, joining the innovative paper *Tempo*—initially published three times every evening to report on breaking news and events.

**ANDREAS MINK:** That was a modern mass market, kind of sophisticated, but still a yellow press kind of publication, cutting edge for its time. But it was about celebrities and he knew all these people.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** This is Andreas Mink. He's a German journalist and long time fan of Manfred's work.

**ANDREAS MINK:** There were pictures from the 1920s, thirties of the Berlin Times. This one image really struck me. And it showed, vacation in the Swiss Alps, in the snow. A couple people wearing, like this, winter sweaters and standing on skis, and there was Georg next to Max Schmeling the famous boxer they were just chatting, happily. They knew each other from Berlin.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Max Schmeling was one of Germany's most famous celebrities at the time. Between 1930 and 1932 he was the heavyweight champion of the world. There was someone else in the picture too, just as famous as Schmeling, but much more surprising. It was Leni Riefenstahl, the future director of the notorious 1935 Nazi propaganda film, *Triumph of the Will*.

**ANDREAS MINK:** She was standing there, and Riefenstahl at that time, she was a movie star. These were kind of like German celebrities of the time which in and of itself it shows you, you know, what kind of place Weimar Germany was. There was a fair amount of integration of Jews.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** But this idyllic life as a respected writer in Berlin didn't last long. With the rise of the Nazi party, Manfred became an active opponent of them, serving for several months as president of the Republican party of Germany. And when the Nazis took control in 1933, Manfred knew he was a target who ticked too many boxes on their enemies list. A left-leaning Jew, an editor at a liberal paper that consistently skewered the Nazis, and a well-connected exemplar of Weimar's decadent culture. As soon as he could, he set out on foot, crossing the Ore Mountains into Czechoslovakia. In exile, he continued his work as an editor and journalist. But by 1938, it was clear to Manfred that he should head even further afield.

**ANDREAS MINK:** He comes as part of this huge, last big inflow of refugees from Germany, Nazi Germany. It was a stroke of luck that he made it to New York. And right away, very quickly, he landed at Aufbau.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Aufbau was not the kind of paper Manfred was used to. In fact it wasn't a newspaper at all. Founded in 1934, Aufbau was actually a newsletter for the German-Jewish Club, a social and cultural organization for exiles living in New York. The name "Aufbau" means "Reconstruction".

**ANDREAS MINK:** Long paragraphs of earnest discussions about this or that organizational club matter. You have to look in the old issues. There's pages and pages of activities of the club. They have a soccer club. They have a chess club. They give advice for how to behave in public. English lessons, sewing lessons, job advice, all of that. And it's not that overtly political, it's not like a voice of a community yet.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** A membership to the German Jewish club was \$6 per year. Every member received a monthly edition of Aufbau. Alongside updates on club matters, the newsletter occasionally contained news reports. In June 1935, Aufbau warned readers of pro-Nazi groups forming in Manhattan's Yorkville neighbourhood. Later that year, it began to publish content about what was happening to Jewish people in German cities. But in 1938, when Aufbau hired Manfred for the meagre salary of \$4 per week, things began to change very quickly.

**ANDREAS MINK:** Finally, here's somebody who is of high credibility, who is well known, who is an excellent journalist. Let's take this guy on.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Within months, he was promoted to the position of editor.

**EVA GANS:** My parents were very proud of the Aufbau. Manfred George, of course, saw to it that the articles and everything were of the highest quality.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** This is Eva Lynn Gans. She grew up listening to her parents talk about Aufbau.

**EVA GANS:** My parents actually met at the New World Club, which at the time was actually called the German Jewish Club. It changed its name to the New World Club after World War II because they didn't like the idea of the word German in it. That was not a popular thing at the time.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Eva's mother, Lilo, was a secretary, and her father, Norbert Goldenberg, was vice president of the club, which made him part of the editorial board for Aufbau. He was one of the people who chose Manfred as the new editor—but the decision was not without controversy.

**EVA GANS:** When Aufbau needed someone of stature for an editor and hired Manfred George, unfortunately the editor they fired, Rudolf Brander, was very upset and wrote a thesis for the FBI claiming that the majority of the governing

board were communists. As a result, they were placed on the attorney general list as being subversive. None of the members of Aufbau New World Club could become American citizen after 1941.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Manfred's tenure as editor of the Aufbau was off to a dramatic start.

**EVA GANS:** They were very strongly liberal, anti-Nazi, and it caused concern on the board members that they would be damaged or their family affected somehow. And when I say that, you think family in the United States, but of course, a lot of these board members still had families in Germany. So if they wrote something that was anti-Nazi in the newspaper, they used fake names.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** We don't know whether Manfred himself feared for those he had left behind in Europe. But we do know that, in his editor's letters, there was a sudden change to his name. He added an E to his middle name, and dropped his last name entirely. The German-Jewish exile Manfred Georg Cohn became the newly Americanized journalist Manfred George. But just because Manfred was leaving behind his German name didn't mean he was leaving behind his passion for politics. Here, again, is Andreas Mink.

**ANDREAS MINK:** You have a guy as the leader at the head of the publication who actually knows what he's doing, and he quickly turns the Aufbau into a very open-minded and very well informed, a very high caliber political publication. They develop into this powerhouse.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** As the paper gained more subscribers, its production became more complicated. Aufbau still needed to cover the activities of the German-Jewish Club, but so much was happening overseas that it was hard to find the space.

**EVA GANS:** I know that my father was very involved with some of the discussion on just the finances of it. For example, if you had a lot of news one week, did you add an extra section, another page, which was very expensive. But was this

news important enough that you wanted to add that time? They would have long conferences with Manfred George and with, you know, some of the leading board members on what do we do this week? Do we push some things off? Do we put it all in now? And because of these discussions, I think that led to the quality of the newspaper.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Over time, Aufbau got longer, and it published more frequently.-The paper now reported on the realities faced by Jewish communities in Europe. The very same communities which the writers, and readers, had so recently managed to escape.

**NEWSREADER:** Hands on their knees, head between their knees. The journey lasted 23 hours. After a few hours, the SS man said, "I can be pleasant too, head up, everyone put a cigarette in their mouth, anyone who drops ashes on the ground will lick the floor."

**JOSHUA MALINA:** In July 1939, this shocking account landed on Manfred's desk at Aufbau, thanks to a retired Jewish officer in the German Army. There were many details missing, including the name of the source, the name of the town where the 60 Jewish men were rounded up, and the location of so-called "Camp B."

**NEWSREADER:** An hour before Camp B, the SS man explained, "I just received the message that it is forbidden to take...any valuables you have with you." He ordered us to put everything down and throw it into a pile. There were many thousands of marks.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Even though the story didn't technically meet the journalistic standards of bigger papers, Manfred knew he had to publish it. He wanted to tell his growing readership in the US about the terrible things they'd escaped, and the awful reality that still lay ahead for their friends and family in Europe. And when World War II broke out six weeks later, Aufbau's coverage of the dire situation continued. Under Manfred's leadership, the paper went from a monthly newsletter to a weekly newspaper, and one of the leading anti-Nazi publications of the German press in exile. But until the

United States joined the war efforts two years later, Aufbau made sure to tread an incredibly fine line.

**PETER SCHRAG:** Aufbau was a great celebrant of American life and American culture.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** This is journalist Peter Schrag. He's speaking at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York in September 2019, to celebrate the publication of his book *The World of Aufbau*. Peter has read nearly every issue of the paper, and says that during the war, Aufbau's coverage was targeted. As critical as they were of Hitler and Germany, they didn't want to criticise the country that had taken them in.

**PETER SCHRAG:** It ignored pretty much all the warts. Some very bad warts, like the racism. Pretty much ignored, at the beginning of the war, the internment of the Japanese.

In fact, it championed the integration and Americanisation of their local readers. Here's Andreas Mink again.

**ANDREAS MINK:** The mission of the Aufbau and, and Georg spoke to that many times was to turn this disparate group of refugees into American citizens.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** In 1941, when the United States joined the war, Aufbau readers wanted to help.

**ANDREAS MINK:** The Aufbau readership, it's really touching. I mean, most of these people were really hard up, but they start immediately collecting money for a fighter plane. There was also like a big to-do, a big ceremony, how the check was handed over.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** That same year, Aufbau published "The Immigrants Handbook". The 192-page guide for German-Jewish immigrants detailed the peculiarities of

American life, and other relevant information you might need, such as the lyrics to “The Star Spangled Banner”. For a time, the paper even added the subtitle, “Serving the Interests and the Americanization of the Immigrants” in English on the front page.

**PETER SCHRAG:** Their mission was to talk up America. And of course, compared to Nazi Germany, it was like night and day, but it was not without warts. Of course, they loved FDR, I mean, FDR was like a God to Aufbau, even though FDR of course didn't do very much to ease the immigration numbers. The State Department was still riddled with antisemites. And so never admitted anywhere near the number of people, Jews, who were, in theory allowed under the quota laws. But they never reminded FDR, how about all those Jewish refugees who were still sitting in Marseille or Lisbon or God knows where in North Africa? How, what are you gonna do about them?

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Instead of devoting too much attention to the Jews unable to reach America's shores, Manfred's Aufbau ran a regular feature called "Our Boys in the Army" about young Jewish soldiers heading back to Europe to fight for their new country. One headline read, “Yesterday Refugees, Today Soldiers,” and shared details of a half-dozen now-enlisted refugees, who had distinguished themselves in combat zones in Italy, France, Holland, and Germany.

**ANDREAS MINK:** A lot of the young German Jews, they volunteer. Interestingly, people like, famously, Henry Kissinger, they become translators. They become actually fairly important, for the American military.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Manfred's work to document the stories of the refugees was recognised by Franklin D. Roosevelt himself in a message printed in the paper on its tenth anniversary in 1944: "The well-known newspaper Aufbau voices the aspirations of men and women eager to learn the meaning, the opportunities, and the responsibilities of free citizenship in a free America". In just ten years, the newsletter of the German Jewish Club of New York had become almost unrecognizable. Its circulation had rocketed to 30,000, reaching more than 45 countries. Some claimed each copy was

read by ten people. They published some of the most well-known German writers of the day, like Thomas Mann, Stefan Zweig, Hannah Arendt, and even Albert Einstein. In a piece he wrote for a summer 1941 issue, Manfred was reflective. But he had one eye on the future of the publication as well.

**MANFRED GEORGE:** Writing a history of Aufbau would mean telling the story of the German-Jewish immigration to New York and the tumultuous fates of the immigrants. But that story is neither fully formed nor finished.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** In 1945, soon after the war, Aufbau turned its attention to reuniting friends and family members—those who had fled Europe and been scattered across the globe or interned in camps. Aufbau published lists of thousands of names of people who had been liberated from concentration camps, and invited readers to place ads searching for relatives and friends.

**PETER SCHRAG:** There was an enormous outpouring of these “being sought” notices. Lists of thousands of names of people looking for other people. You had people in Shanghai running ads looking for relatives in South Africa or in the Middle East, looking for relatives or loved ones.

**BERTHA ISLER:** Bertha Isler of 709 West 169th Street is looking for Mr. and Mrs. Moor, formerly of Nuremberg (most recently in Haiti);

**KURT SCHWERIN:** Kurt Schwerin of 205 West 87th Street is looking for Bruno Buchwald, formerly with the Berlin Stock Exchange.

**FEDERICO KAUFFMANN:** Else Nathansohn of Chicago, formerly of Bremen, being sought by Federico Kauffmann, Casilla 9509, Santiago de Chile.

**PETER SCHRAG:** There were many by camp survivors looking for people, loved ones overseas, and many from people in this country, particularly hoping to find

relatives who had been in the camps hoping they were still alive. In most cases, of course, they were not.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** In September 1945 one notice appeared in search of Anne Frank.

**ARTHUR MAY:** I'm looking for Margot Betty Frank, birthday 16th February, 1925, and Annelies Marie Frank, birthday 12th June, 1928.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** The ad's authors knew that Anne's mother, Edith, had been killed in Birkenau, but they didn't yet know Anne's tragic fate. But others were successful in reuniting family members.

**EMMI LOWENSTERN:** We started to contact people who we knew in America through Aufbau.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** This is Emmi Lowenstern. In early 1945 she was being held by German soldiers in Kiel and forced to sort bricks until she was rescued by the Swedish diplomat Count Bernadotte.

**EMMI LOWENSTEIN:** Our names were published that we were safe and sound in Sweden. The first mail, I believe, we got was from a mother of my sister's boyfriend, who had left Germany in '38. And his mother had seen our names in the Aufbau. They contacted us and we wrote to them. But most of all, we had found my mother's sister, who on their way to Israel from Germany had stopped in Sweden, were not able to leave Sweden anymore, and had lived there. They came of course, they were the first family we had seen in many years. They helped us. They bought clothes for us, and we felt like family again.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** As well as helping to sort out the chaos of the war, Manfred's editorials turned to thoughts of justice for all the Jews had suffered under Nazi rule. In 1948, the Aufbau began to campaign for reparations to be paid by the German

government to the refugees. But Manfred was always clear: he felt there was little point in assigning collective blame to all of Germany.

**ANDREAS MINK:** If you read these think pieces by Georg there was also this hope that, yeah, let's give them a chance. Let's see whether the Germans are able to, you know, do some reconstruction. They will need American help and they definitely will need supervision. And let's see how this pans out.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** This sympathetic approach to the fatherland resulted in the President of West Germany giving Aufbau an exclusive story about his government's decision to pay Jews for the loss of property under Hitler.

**ANDREAS MINK:** The German restitution compensation programs, they covered that in a special section for many, many years, decades. This is like hardcore information for the readership who had a right to these programs who were fairly, fairly complex, and hard to deal with.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Aufbau's extensive coverage of West Germany's restitution laws resulted in an explosion in circulation. At 50,000 copies per issue, more people were reading Aufbau than ever, from all over the world. But the editors made it clear that they planned to stay in the United States.

**ANDREAS MINK:** There were like two issues obviously. Are we going back to Germany? And are we gonna immigrate to Palestine and Israel? And they were jubilant about the foundation of Israel. But for them it was clear, we are going to be, we want to be Americans.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Manfred's commitment to his new home meant that he felt comfortable turning his pen on his adopted country, too.

**ANDREAS MINK:** Georg was really almost uncanny in his ability, as a geopolitical analyst. Georg himself, like, really agitates against McCarthyism in

the early '50s and he comes out, 54, 55, and warns against American involvement in Indo-China. He said, this can't go well. And this is obviously the time when the French get beaten by the Viet Minh and I really don't know in the American media landscape who was warning about that? Who didn't do the flag waving? "We need to fight against the Soviets..." But Aufbau advocates against that.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** It was about Aufbau, it was about the new world. And the old one is gone, and we can observe with a critical bemused eye what is happening in this new world, while continuing to be interested in our legacy.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** This is Atina Grossmann. Her family arrived in New York in 1947 via Iran and India. Her father subscribed to the Aufbau throughout their journey and continued to be an avid reader of European and global news once they settled in the United States.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** Aufbau was a regular steady presence. You know, as much part of the decor as the artifacts that had traveled from the transit spots from Iran and India, whether it was a Persian rug or whether it was an ivory elephant, the photographs of lost family members.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** For the German-speaking Jewish community in America after the war, Manfred moulded Aufbau into a publication that could unify a distinct group of refugees with different sensibilities to their American neighbours, whom they admired.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** My father refused to see any movie that had not been deemed "*sehr sehenswert*" by the Aufbau. That is to say, you know, very much worth seeing.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Aufbau also ran advertisements each week. Dealers in Persian rugs and quality china, vendors of shoe inlays for flat feet, and where to buy the best German sausage.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** And there would be housekeeping columns for bourgeois women, many of whom had had domestic help, now they were sort of left to their own devices. And, of course, not to be forgotten, the advertisements for the resorts in the Catskills.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** These resorts were wildly popular summer getaways for German-Jewish exiles. Ads boasted “first class Austrian and Hungarian cuisine” and “strict adherence” to kosher law alongside popular pursuits of the time, like “free mambo lessons”.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** You know, Lilo's Lodge, which was in Fleischmann's, New York, which was where we went. But of course there were many, many others. But there would also be, for example, the advertisements for the limousine services that would take people to these summer, fresh air camps.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Occasionally, the paper was criticized by international readers who didn't care that Mayer had opened a new sausage store in Washington Heights and thought the paper was wasting space. But the ads served Aufbau's fundamental mission: to help readers become more American.

**PETER SCHRAG:** There was an ad by a clothing store in Manhattan that said, “Americanize yourself, also your wardrobe.”

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Peter Schrag again.

**PETER SCHRAG:** Aufbau ran a whole lot of pieces about how you get to be an American. Pieces on US usage, idioms, and phrases. What is the meaning of “tight-fisted” or “that idea didn't pan out.” There was a lot of calls for swimming instructors to learn the crawl because the breast stroke from Europe identified yourself as a European, so you had to learn the crawl to be American.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** And in some important ways, Manfred and Aufbau's mission to Americanize their readers worked—almost too well.

**EVA GANS:** When I was born in 1941, my parents spoke German at home, and when I, at three years old, would go with my mother on a bus, I would be shouting, "*Fenster auf, Fenster zu.*" This is the middle of World War II. My mother would say, "Yes, dear, I will open the window for you. Yes, dear. I will close the window for you," and after that, they only spoke English at home.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Eva Lynn Gans again. As members of the New World Club, her parents were very concerned with making sure their children were as American as possible. But that came at a cost.

**EVA GANS:** My parents were unhappy that we didn't get more involved. My husband also was a refugee from Germany, and German was his first language. But he was trying very hard to speak English, so he didn't want to read the Aufbau as much as he'd want to read the Times, because that would improve his English.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** The integration of the younger generation into US society, which had been championed by the Aufbau for decades, led to a crisis of identity for Aufbau. In fulfilling its mission—the Americanization of the immigrant—their audience of readers was dwindling fast. Over the years, there were attempts to draw new audiences in.

**MARLIES PLOTNICK:** I had written to them because it dawned on me that the Aufbau came, was all in German, and I said to myself, they're losing my generation.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Marlies Plotnick arrived in the United States with her parents in 1939 at just 11 years old. Marlies eventually went to Barnard University, and wrote to Aufbau asking for a job one summer.

**MARLIES PLOTNICK:** I proposed to them that there should be an English page, and lo and behold, they went for it. Manfred Georg was the editor and they would hand me what they thought was important in that week's news, and then I wrote it up in English. They nitpicked every word. Everything was challenged because they were all these prima donnas. But it was fascinating because they were all super intelligent and just terrific people.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** A single page written in English didn't do much to draw in younger generations of readers, and for aspiring journalists, the prospect of writing in German wasn't very appealing either. Andreas Mink, again.

**ANDREAS MINK:** I went to the event at the synagogue up there in Washington Heights when Max Frankel, the then retired editor-in-chief of the New York Times, German-Jewish refugee, presents his memoirs. And, years later, I interviewed him. And so, okay, this is like the early '50s again, Max Frankel, he's a student at Columbia. An ambitious young guy, wants to become a journalist. He became a college stringer for the New York Times. Really fights hard to get into this place. He speaks English, right? He doesn't think about becoming an intern or an editor at the Aufbau. He fulfills the mission of the Aufbau, has become an American, he works for the New York Times, right?

**JOSHUA MALINA:** By the mid '60s, the people who had once been such devoted Aufbau readers were starting to pass away. Suddenly, the most important pages in the paper were the obituaries.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** My father would joke that the only reason that he read the Aufbau still was to see, "*ob ich noch lebe*" you know, was to see whether he was alive. Because as long as his obit wasn't in the Aufbau, he was still present.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** At times, Aufbau would publish as many as 10 obituaries a week, over 500 a year. And in January 1966, the paper carried the obituary of the man who had built Aufbau into what it was. After a lifetime of telling German-Jewish stories and

speaking truth to power, Manfred George died at age 72 in 1965. Here is his obituary: “Manfred George stood at the helm of the paper for 26 years, and with tireless dedication and self-sacrificing zeal for duty, he gave it the importance, prestige, greatness, and intellectual level that the Aufbau enjoys. We know what we owe him; we know what he has done, achieved, and accomplished for our newspaper, and we know what the Jewish refugees from Germany, the entire anti-Hitler freedom movement, and the worldwide community of liberal and decent people owe him. He championed the ideas and people with whom he sympathized with superhuman dedication: never tired, never "too busy," never slacking in vigilance and determination for action, never indifferent to suffering and injustice.” Manfred George was succeeded as editor by another German Jew, Hans Steinitz. Steinitz had first discovered Aufbau at Gurs, a concentration camp in the French Pyrenees, where a single copy edited under Manfred’s watchful eye had been passed among the inmates. A man who had turned to Aufbau in his time of need was now at the helm of the paper, ready to continue Manfred’s mission.-But over the next 30 years, Aufbau’s role in connecting the German-Jewish community slowly changed. What once had been a lifeline for this fractured and unsettled group became less essential as time went on. Andreas Mink worked at Aufbau in those fading years. He was hired in 1997, when the paper was two years shy of its 75th birthday.

**ANDREAS MINK:** When I arrived in 1997 in September, it was typewriters, old office furniture, big old rooms, thin windows, and one laptop.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** By the 1990s, Aufbau was still devoted to Jewish interests, but by this point, many of its staff were gentiles. The paper limped on with financial support from the German government, and the personal funds of its most recent editor, Monika Ziegler.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** The Aufbau, when it finally did close, was way past its expiration date.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Atina Grossmann again.

**ATINA GROSSMAN:** It was a kind of a signifier of a certain kind of very particular, and therefore not everlasting, community, trying to maintain connections.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** The paper was acquired by a Swiss-Jewish publishing group called AG Jüdische Medien and reissued as a glossy monthly magazine where the editorial team continues to draw inspiration from the tone Manfred set to this day.

**ANDREAS MINK:** I found Georg extremely inspirational, having a knack for a nice headline and finding a good topic, but at the same time, being daring enough to venture into bigger questions geopolitical or societal considerations. This guy keeps impressing me the more I read of him. And I have read a lot of him in the last almost 30 years.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** In total, just under 3000 issues of Aufbau were published before its acquisition in 2004. Today, the entire run of Aufbau from 1934 to 2004 takes up 24 linear feet in the stacks at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York. In 2017, Eva Lynn Gans took her mother to go see it.

**EVA GANS:** It was extraordinary. I mean, for all of us, we went with the whole family. But when my mother, in particular, saw all that and we showed her some special, you know, ads like from her wedding and such, she was just sitting there crying and all of us started crying. It was one of the most memorable moments that I can remember. It's a family history. And if you look through these issues, it tells you what the world was like then. The articles, the letters to the editor in particular, in addition to all the brilliant things done by Manfred George, the whole issue was always full of something worthwhile.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** It's a physical testament to the collective processing of 70 years of history, and the monumental efforts of countless journalists, many of whom were refugees themselves, to document the hopes and needs of their scattered audience.

**PETER SCHRAG:** Aufbau was a portrait, a window, into a very untypical generation of immigrants to America. Different from the classic image of, you're tired huddled masses, yearning to be free. This was a more cosmopolitan generation. More educated, more skilled. And Aufbau reflected everything in that generation of immigrants.

**JOSHUA MALINA:** Through Aufbau, Manfred George helped a community come together—even when everything was falling apart.

*THEME MUSIC UP*

**JOSHUA MALINA:** In addition to the complete run of Aufbau from 1934–2004, which the LBI has digitized and made freely accessible online with the permission of JM Juedische Medien, our collections include the papers of Norbert and Lilo Goldenberg, who were both heavily involved in the publication of Aufbau in their respective roles as director, executive secretary, and later, board member. Learn more at [lbi.org/exile](http://lbi.org/exile). Exile is a production of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York and Antica Productions. I'm your narrator, Joshua Malina. This episode was written by Nadia Mehdi. Our executive producers are Laura Regehr and Stuart Coxe. Our producer is Emily Morantz. Research and translation by Isabella Kempf. Voice acting by Adi Braun, Patrick Garrow, Gordon Hecht, Cyrus Lane, and Athena Karkanis. Sound design and audio mix by Gaëtan Harris, with additional mixing by Philip Wilson. Theme music by Oliver Wickham. This episode of Exile is made possible in part by a grant from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, which is supported by the German Federal Ministry of Finance and the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future.

*THEME MUSIC OUT*