"Germany's 'Brown Babies' Must Be Helped! Will You?": U.S. Adoption Plans for Afro-German Children, 1950-1955

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"GERMANY'S 'BROWN BABIES' MUST BE HELPED! WILL YOU?" U.S. Adoption Plans for Afro-German Children, 1950–1955

by Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria

> Scattered throughout Europe today there are thousands of "war orphans"—children of European girls and American soldiers who loved and left. Hundreds of these homeless children are the offspring of Negro soldiers and their mulatto status makes adoption by European families extremely unlikely. But in America there are hundreds of childless Negro couples who wish to adopt these "war babies" and bring them to the U.S. Up to now government red tape has prevented all but a trickle from being adopted. ("German War Babies")

In January 1951, an article was published in the African-American magazine *Ebony* with the above-cited headline. The article chronicled the story of an African-American teacher, Margaret Ethel Butler, who since 1947 had been attempting to adopt two Afro-German children and arrange their immigration to the United States. On 4 October 1951, nine months after the article appeared, Margaret E. Butler was finally able to welcome her much longed-for adopted children at the Chicago airport. These two German children, born of African-American occupation soldiers and German women, are considered the first such children to be adopted and arrive in the U.S. after the war.

The adoption of these two Afro-German children (a boy and a girl of five and six years of age) who, until their departure for the U.S., had lived in a Rheingau orphanage was the result of a bureaucratic battle waged by Margaret E. Butler over a period of many years. It was in 1947 that she first learned of the discrimination facing many Afro-German children in Germany through an article in the *Chicago Tribune*, at which point she decided to adopt two of these children. Her initial inquiries, including a journey to the children's orphanage in Germany, were followed by countless requests and petitions, as well as further visits to Germany. Soon Margaret E. Butler became known as the Butler Case, a phenomenon widely documented in both the West German and the African-American press.[1]

In the following pages, I will explore several aspects of the public response to this group of German occupation children in Germany and the U.S. I begin with an examination of the motives which led German and American organizations and individuals in both countries to perceive Afro-German children as potential adoptees for the U.S. The first section looks at the crucial role of the Black press and the NAACP

in alerting African Americans to the fate of Afro-German children in their country of origin.[2] The second section focuses on the legal undertakings that allowed Afro-German children to immigrate to the U.S., in spite of the fact that German immigration quotas had already been exceeded. Finally, I end with a reconstruction of the history of the so-called Brown Baby Plan, through which a large number of Afro-German children were adopted by African Americans. The article demonstrates that Afro-German children were not only the object of intense interest after the war on both sides of the Atlantic, but explains that this was the case because these children came to represent and embody other struggles (chief among these the fight for civil rights and democratization) in which both the postwar African-American and German communities were already engaged.

Afro-German Migrations I:
Transnationanal Adoption in the United States

The Butler Case would come to play a crucial role in future international adoptions of Afro-German children. The two children adopted by Margaret Butler were granted DP 2(f) visas reserved for orphans under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 (amended June 16, 1950).[3] These visas entitled certain orphaned children to a privileged immigration status in the U.S., exempting them from the normal quotas allotted for their countries of birth. Until that time, this type of visa had been available only to war orphans, refugees, and abducted children. It was with the Butler Case that Afro-German children were recognized for the first time by the U.S. State Department as orphans under the Displaced Persons Act in 1951. This new status was due in large part to the initiative of three women: Evelyn Rauch and Lois S. McVey, administrators for the Child Welfare Division of the U.S. Displaced Persons Commission and Elisabeth Nägelsbach of the National Association of the Inner Mission [Landesverein Innere Mission]. In March 1951, Lois McVey proposed to Wilhelm Kitz (at that time the Director of the Social Welfare Department of the Ministry of the Interior) that "mixed-race Negro" children be included in the adoption program for displaced children, since "There was and never would be any possibility of assimilating these mixed-race children in Europe."[4]

The actions of these three women were in no way an isolated incident. Shortly after the first Afro-German children were born in 1946, military government officials, politicians, and youth welfare bureaus in West Germany began to speculate about the existence and future of these children. In a memo dated November 1950 addressed to all federal, county, and municipal youth welfare bureaus, as well as to the two major sectarian associations, the Catholic National Caritas Association and the protestant National Association of the Inner Mission, the Interior Ministry requested these agencies to comment on the question of the "deportation of mixed-race negro children to Africa."[5] The overwhelming majority of the responses favored the idea of sending these children to foreign countries, preferably to the United States. The approval expressed toward this proposal was based on two arguments. First, it was assumed

that these children, because of their "racial peculiarity," could not be integrated into West German society. "Racial peculiarity" was primarily defined by the assumption of inferior intelligence, an impetuous temperament, and precociousness, all of which were thought to be the children's dominant behavioral traits. A second argument focused less on the children themselves, foregrounding instead West German society. The West German public, it was argued, regarded these children with such hostility that the children, if they remained in Germany, would face an unhappy future. Should they remain in Germany, they would have to struggle with discrimination and prejudice on a daily basis. Regardless of which of these two arguments were emphasized, their impact was effectively the same: both state youth welfare bureaus and sectarian associations were convinced of the necessity to act in the best interests of Afro-German children. For their own protection, Afro-German children were seen to be best cared for "among their own kind"—in Africa, South America, or the United States.

Curiously, the wishes of the mothers of these children were completely ignored by youth welfare officials and politicians in this debate. Statistical surveys conducted by the Public Health Division of the U.S. Military Government, the German Association for Public and Private Welfare (*Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge*) and the Inner Mission showed that 76 percent of these children lived with their mothers or other relatives and only 12% lived in orphanages. Thus, only a small percentage of this population was available for adoption. As a result of these findings, the focus of the discussion shifted to the question of whether to integrate these children into or separate them from German society. However, some individuals, like the three women discussed above, continued to push for an opportunity to realize the immigration of at least some of the children to the U.S.

The Butler Case had a tremendous impact on discussions of the immigration of Afro-German children to the United States, both in the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany. On 15 December 1951, under the headline, "Mrs. Butler Conquers the Bureaucracy," the German magazine *Revue* celebrated the adoption of these two children as a "juridical precedent in international law" by means of which new homes could be found for Afro-German orphans.[6] The *Revue*'s report on the successful placement of Mrs. Butler's two Afro-German children was also published in various African-American newspapers, in response to which approximately 160 inquiries were received by the state youth welfare department in Munich from African-American families stationed in Germany and others in the United States.[7] Particular expediency was required, as the displaced person quota was set to expire on 30 June 1952.[8] The Butler Case, which might seem on initial examination a sad story with a happy ending, is in fact the result of a protracted and extremely complex debate between 1947 and 1960 on the living situation and future of Black children born in Germany.

Between 1945 and 1955, an estimated 67,770 children were born to soldiers of the occupying forces and German women in the Federal Republic of Germany. Of these children, 4,776 were the children of African-American and Moroccan soldiers. Very little is known about the fathers. Desperate and angry letters written by African-American GIs to the U.S. military government, asking for permission to marry their

German girlfriends or protesting their transferal back to the United States despite the fact that they had families in Germany, dispute the prevalent perception of allegedly irresponsible Black soldiers with girlfriends and children in numerous German towns.[9] In the late 1940s and 1950s an interracial couple with or without a mixed-race child faced countless obstacles, many of which seemed insurmountable. In thirty out of forty-eight states of the Union during this period, interracial marriage was legally prohibited by anti-miscegenation laws. In Germany it was common practice among military officials to transfer Black soldiers to a different city or back to the United States when he applied to his superior officer for permission to marry or if it was known that he had fathered a child. As explained by the Office of the Chief of Staff in August 1945, these couples had to be separated, because "the marriage between a Negro and a white person is considered against the best interest of the service [since] a marriage of a Negro and a white foreign person would create a social problem upon return to the United States."[10] Many soldiers stationed in Germany came from southern states and might potentially "be hanged or . . . burned alive at public lynchings by the white men of the South" should they return home.[11]

While German social workers stressed that African-American soldiers cared much better for their girlfriends and children than white U.S. soldiers while they were stationed in Germany, only a few of these fathers kept their promises to remain in contact and provide for their families after their departure to the U.S. As a result the majority of the postwar generation of Afro-German children grew up in entirely white environments, either with their mothers, relatives, and foster parents or in children's homes.

The fate of this generation of Afro-German children (or "brown babies" as they were called in the U.S.) was the focus of public interest both in Germany and the U.S. During the 1940s and 1950s detailed journalistic reports on these children were published in popular and scholarly publications in both countries. They were the subject of intense political and pedagogical debate and controversy. Indeed, both state institutions and private organizations in Germany and in the U.S. devoted considerable time and effort to planning these children's existence. What underlay the public debate on the fate of Afro-German children both in postwar Germany and the U.S. was a very specific construction of their racial heritage as Blacks of mixed-racial heritage—one that constituted them as essentially *fremd* (both in the sense of "strange" and "Other" and at the same time "foreign" or "alien"), not belonging and at risk in Germany. The children's nationality as Germans and their socialization in Germany as such was only of secondary interest. In other words, the national and cultural heritage of these children was seen to be in direct contrast to their race. Consequently, an ambivalent and contradictory attitude developed in relation to the children, both in hypothetical discussions and in the concrete actions taken in their names. As we will see, the debate around these Afro-German children reveals a paradoxical and shifting dynamic of caretaking and marginalization, inclusion and exclusion.

The significance of the debates surrounding Afro-German children in the U.S. context can best be illustrated through an examination of the response articulated in two of the most prevalent forums of African-American public life and popular

opinion of the time: the Black press (in particular, three of the most widely read newspapers, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Afro-American*, and the *Chicago Defender* and *Ebony* magazine) and the African-American civil rights organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The Black press and the NAACP were sites of Black voices which spoke out vehemently against the social exclusion of Afro-German children in Germany in the years between 1947 and 1960. In the course of this debate, two opposing positions emerged. On the one hand, it was argued that these children should be integrated into German society and be given the opportunity of a secure life with equal rights in their homeland. On the other hand, it was maintained that the children could not be guaranteed a secure future in Germany and thus should be immediately removed (i.e., rescued) and brought to the United States. Clearly, both positions—the integration of the children into German society and their adoption by African Americans—were not only expressed in political and pedagogical debates in West Germany but were also prevalently discussed within African-American institutions and among individual members of the community. In both countries these initially abstract debates were later followed by practical measures of social intervention.

The remaining sections of this article explore first the discussions around Afro-German children in the Black press and within the NAACP, and present the discourse on these children articulated by two of the dominant Black voices in this debate. The concluding section examines the Brown Baby Plan, an adoption program through which several hundred Afro-German children were placed with African-American adoptive parents stationed in Germany or living in the U.S.[12] This program not only tells the story of a successful transnational adoption service but, more importantly, it represents a Black initiative that fought white German and American welfare institutions for the right to apply its own standards in determining the fitness of African-American adoptive parents.

Kindred Reflections: Representations of Afro-German Children in the Black Press

During the first years of the post-World War II occupation, Germany was visited repeatedly by journalists and editors of the African-American daily and weekly press. The intention behind these so-called inspection trips was, among other things, to look at the standards and the morale of the Black soldiers and to examine the relationship of white and Black soldiers to the German population.[13] During their travels in Germany the correspondents encountered numerous children of African-American occupation soldiers and German women. In general, the reports of African-American journalists described the situation of the post-WWII Afro-German children in Germany as problematic, hopeless, or at risk. The color of the children's skin and not, for example, their position as occupation babies and illegitimate children was stated to be the primary problem.

Parzival L. Prattis, a reporter for the *Pittsburgh Courier*, and other correspondents characterized Afro-German children as a "social and historical phenomenon because they were born in a country that until then had been considered 'a white man's country.'" Douglass Hall, writing for the *Afro-American*, described Afro-German children as being "deserted, hungry, born amidst the ruins of Hitler's Kingdom, hated because of his color, dirty for the lack of soap, diseased for the lack of medical attention" (Hall, "What's Become"). In another issue of the same newspaper one journalist stated that Germany, "this land of the Aryans . . . which has known colored people only through the weird stories of man-eating ape-men Africans who have never existed," would now be confronted with an historical reality which had never existed in Germany prior to that time ("What to Do"). Obviously this is not an accurate statement since an Afro-German population had already existed in Germany long before, most notably following the First World War as a result of relationships between African soldiers deployed by the French in the occupation of the Rhineland and German women.[14] However, it is correct that until 1945 Germany had never been faced with such a proportionately large group of German-born Black children.

During the first years of reporting on postwar Germany, concerned military officers and nurses pointed out repeatedly to the NAACP that Black German children were starving as their mothers were being denied the benefits of the German social welfare system. A letter from 6 December 1946 to Walter White, president of the NAACP at the time, asserts, "Negro babies . . . of German, Russian and Polish girls are really starving to death. The United States Army makes no provision for such." The letter continues: "But of course babies by white soldiers are accepted by German authorities and the mothers get ration cards. Tales come to my office that the 'Bergermeister' [*sic*] mayor—refuses to give ration cards to 'nigger babies'—so I am told."[15]

The fear that Afro-German children would starve in Germany or that no medical care would be available to them, caused the *Pittsburgh Courier* and the *Afro-American* to issue an appeal for aid to their readership. Readers were requested to provide care packages, addressed with the label Brown Babies and to send them to German orphanages, aid organizations, assembly points, or directly to German mothers with Afro-German children. The packages generally contained basic foodstuffs, medication, and clothing but also sweets and toys. In addition, African Americans were called upon to sponsor one or more Afro-German children. The newspapers published names and addresses of German mothers, giving concerned African Americans the opportunity to establish direct contact with these women and their children. Aside from providing material support through donations, the aim of the sponsorship program was to establish and build a long-standing relationship with the sponsored child. At the same time, wives of African-American officers stationed in Mannheim established the Culture and Welfare Group of Mannheim to offer financial and moral support for both Afro-German children and their mothers. Founded in September 1948 by eight women, the group consisted of thirty-five members in 1950, who provided one hundred fifty Afro-German children and their mothers with food and clothing.[16]

As a result of the newspapers' campaign, the readership of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Chicago Defender*, the *Afro-American* and *Ebony* was well-informed about the situation of Afro-German children and, consequently, became intensely involved in their situation. African Americans were moved to support these children for many reasons. Certainly, many were deeply concerned about the future of the children in Germany out of sentiments of sympathy and charity. However, the following factors appear to have played a more crucial role than altruism and charity. First, as the following excerpts demonstrate, a sense of connection or kinship to Afro-German children on the basis of race and national affiliation played a significant role.

> The "Brown Babies" need help. Charity knows no colorline. We in America, who have been so often the victims of racial persecution should know . . . better than anyone else, just what problems these "babies" are facing. (Nunn, "'Brown Babies' Need Help")

> Germany's "Brown Babies" Must Be Helped! Will You? . . . There is done [*sic*] so much good for German children. Why not for these little children who are half-American. (Prattis 7)

Second, many African Americans were prompted to act by a feeling of shame about the behavior of their soldiers, which produced a sense of responsibility for these children. Black GIs were judged back home for their irresponsibility in bringing children into the world and leaving them behind. Sympathy was expressed not only for these fatherless children but also for their mothers who had been left to their own resources. European correspondent Ollie Stewart went so far as to suggest that:

> Any soldier who makes a German or DP-girl pregnant—and then sits here in a camp, or goes home for discharge, and leaves mother and child to starve to death—is less than a man and ought to be kicked in the pants. Unfortunately, there are hundreds of soldiers who have done just that—and now I know that a kick in the pants won't feed a hungry child, or buy medicine when it gets sick. Something more constructive has to be done. (Stewart)

A third motivation was the hope of improving the shattered reputation of Black soldiers in Germany, as well as an attempt to prevent the projection of these attitudes onto African Americans in general, through expressions of sympathy and support accompanied by concrete aid. Parzival L. Prattis anxiously posed this question to his readership:

> How are American Negroes to be judged by the German people? Are they to be judged in terms of the fathers who, bewildered, abandoned their children? Or will Germans, these German mothers particularly, judge American Negroes, if an evil day should come, in terms of the generosity and kindness of American Negroes as a people? (Prattis 7)

It seems that the intention of many in the African-American community was to counter German racism and the irresponsibility of many Black GIs towards their German girlfriends and children with financial and material support for Afro-German children and their mothers. In addition to reports on the medical neglect of Afro-German children, Black newspapers were filled with articles on public discrimination against the children in Germany, many of which culminated in teleological speculation on their ultimate and eventual persecution and extermination. One particularly powerful example is the following excerpt:

> How are the Germans, associating the color of the children as they grow older with the hated era of occupation, going to react to the new population element? There will perhaps be no more than ten thousand of these children and adults all told. There were 700,000 Jews. What might some future Hitler do to rid the nation of this dark minority which belies the claim of the purity of the German people? Would this minority be exterminated? The German people have demonstrated that they are capable of such an act. ("Brown Babes")

Although concern over the extermination of Afro-German children was expressed relatively seldom in Germany, the above quotation exemplifies a larger discourse in which Afro-German children and the Holocaust were inextricably woven together. This discourse was in no way specifically African-American or journalistic. Between 1945 and 1960 "Auschwitz" and the Holocaust were often the explicit, though primarily the implicit, point of reference in relation to which the present and future situation of the Afro-German children born following the Second World War was discussed by German and American politicians, educators, state and private welfare organizations, church councils, and private individuals. The urgent question raised in these discussions was what the present and future of this group of Black children would look like in the all too recent wake of Germany's National Socialist past.

Two primary positions crystallized out of these discussions. The first position was held by those who did not believe in the possibility of democratizing German society. These individuals—for the most part, German citizens, mothers of Afro-German children, as well as many individuals who held positions in state, organizational, and sectarian welfare institutions—saw Afro-German children to be at risk or, at the very least, potential objects of discrimination in Germany. Individuals who held this position argued for a rapid process of adoption in the U.S. The second position was held by those who were certain that the de-nazification, reeducation, and eventual democratization of German society could indeed succeed. These individuals, who belonged to the same groups and institutions mentioned above, argued for the equal rights of the children and their integration into German society. A third position (one discussed only in Germany by a very small group) envisaged the segregation of the children within Germany—for example, their placement in separate orphanages, schools, or other such programs.[17] The argument on which this most controversial position was based was that the children would be discriminated against by their white peers at school and in orphanages, and they should therefore be separated from

them. From this perspective the adoption of these children abroad was seen as merely an exportation of the problem they were perceived to pose to West German society. The responsibility for Afro-German children was seen to lie within German society and a segregated upbringing for these children was seen as one way of asserting this responsibility.

For both Germans and African Americans, the preoccupation with Afro-German children in Germany involved not only the material well-being of these children but also the children's living situation interpreted in political and institutional terms. German attempts to integrate Afro-German children into postwar society were monitored by the NAACP with great attentiveness. April 1952 was particularly important in this regard, as it was the date when the generation of children born in 1946 entered the German public school system.

> As the children, Negroid in appearance and born out of wedlock, answered school bells, observers expressed grave doubt as to whether they could possibly experience equal treatment in schools where a few years ago the ABC's of Hitler's racial superiority myth were taught with fanatic zeal. ("Tan Tots")

The entry of Afro-German children into the German public school system in 1952 can be seen as a cornerstone in Afro-German history. The extensive and controversial debate over the imminent entry of Afro-German children into public life provides important insight into the significance of integrated versus segregated upbringing and education of Afro-German children for their future. At the same time, it offers equally significant information on Germany's self-perception as a democratic state and the postwar image of democracy Germany hoped to project to the world abroad.

On 26 February 1952, the Ministry of Education and the Arts of North Rhine-Westphalia issued a directive to all school administrators on the treatment of Negro children, who would be admitted to schools for the first time at Easter. This directive set out a series of guidelines which emphasized that,

> Attention must be paid to the development of a feeling of natural camaraderie between all children from the first day onwards, and that every step should be taken against possible risks posed by self-interest. The efforts on the part of the school can only be effective when they are supported by the parents of the school-children. I therefore recommend that the problem also be discussed in detail, with care and thoroughness, with parents everywhere where Negro children are being admitted in Easter 1952, in order to establish the conditions for a true sense of community between all children. ("Schulaufnahme von Negerkindern")

Parallel to the recommendations of the Ministry of Education and the Arts, a north German group, Bremer School e.V., in collaboration with the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation (*Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit*), published a

comprehensive fifty-page booklet, "Maxi, Our Negro Lad," for the purpose of educating teachers, parents, and classmates (Simon). The booklet was primarily based on the results and recommendations of a series of conferences held on the topics of mixed-race children and school and the fate of mixed-race children in Germany[18] in July and August 1952 in Nuremberg and Wiesbaden. Each of these conferences was attended by approximately fifty educators, welfare administrators, and social workers. The booklet was explicitly intended to offer information and develop pedagogical strategies on the situation of Afro-German children and at the same time prepare the children's environment for their entrance into public life. On a surface level the booklet offered information on the situation of Afro-German children in Germany, yet its main focus was explaining the origin and gradual elimination of racist and anti-Semitic prejudice.

The directive of the Ministry of Education and the pedagogical conferences, as well as the publication of "Maxi, Our Negro Lad," each of which were explicitly intended to contribute to the integration of Afro-German children into German society, were welcomed and closely followed by the NAACP and the African-American press. On 23 July 1952, J. Oscar Lee of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations wrote to Walter White:

> It may interest you to know that this was a meeting of about forty German educators and social workers who were discussing the problem of Negro children in Germany because the first of these children are now entering school. These educators gave excellent reports of the steps which they have taken to educate their teachers to deal with this situation in a wholesome and creative manner. You would be interested also to know that these educators voted that the only right, just and sensible way to deal with this matter is to have the children attend school on a basis of full integration and without any type of segregation based on race. These educators have issued a statement to this effect.[19]

In response, White published the following press announcement on 18 September 1952:

> What is most interesting and immensely significant in view of the racist doctrine of the Nazis is what is now being done in Germany to assimilate these children . . . It was most interesting, in light of the impending argument in the U.S. Supreme Court dealing with segregation in education, that the German teachers who had lived under Hitler voted unanimously that the only right, just and sensible way to handle the situation is on a basis of full integration and without any kind of segregation based on race. The Bavarian Minister of Education has issued a law to all school superintendents, supervisors, principals and teachers that Negro children must be fully integrated into the schools, and any practices of segregation based on race are contrary to policy and will be dealt with accordingly . . . It is significant that two nations [Germany and Japan] which have recently undergone

> violent indoctrination in racism appear to have recovered from the virus of racial supremacy to a greater extent than some of the sections of the United States.[20]

It is clear from these statements and the above cited articles that African-American correspondents and the NAACP compared the process of integration of these Afro-German children into German public schools with the American school system at the time, which, until the Supreme Court's ruling on 17 May 1954 (*Brown v. Board of Education*), remained segregated by law. In this way, the German and U.S. education systems were critically measured against one another. Interestingly, in this comparison it was Germany, and not the United States, that was deemed the more democratic. As Walter White stated, in spite of its "enormous racial indoctrination" in the past, Germany had obviously "recovered" from the "virus of racial superiority," which stood in stark contrast to parts of the U.S., where Jim Crow laws continued to determine the lives of many African Americans, particularly in the southern states of the U.S. Remarkably, in this respect, Germany—the country to be democratized by the U.S.—functioned paradoxically as a yardstick against which the success of the democratic process in the U.S. was measured.

The equal rights shared by Black and white children within the German educational system received significant attention in the Black press in the summer of 1952. Integrated classes in the Federal Republic were regarded as an indication that Germany had renounced its former racial politics and had dedicated itself to becoming a democratic social system. On 24 July 1952, only a few months after the first of this generation of Afro-German children had entered school, *Jet* magazine reported:

> Now a testing ground of racial good will, Germany leans over backwards to rid herself of the stigma of having been a bastion of Nordic supremacy beliefs. Efforts to educate her Negro children seem an indication of an increasing willingness to become a world democracy. ("Tan Tots")

A similar evaluation of the German process of democratization appeared in 1960, the year in which the first Afro-German children began German professional training and entered the work force. In November 1960, *Ebony* magazine published the following commentary:

> With much determination and deliberate speed, Germany moved to mend its race-baiting ways of yesterday by integrating some 1,500 Negro GI-fathered adolescents in its heretofore all white work force . . . For the first time since ratifying their new constitution, Germans have been put to the test of demonstrating their sincerity and willingness to abide by that document's Article III, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race or ancestry. ("Brown Babies Go to Work")

Taken together, comments such as these in the Black press and public statements made by the NAACP on the situation of these children point to a particular interpretation of the relationship between the African-American community and these Afro-German children. Because of the fact that African Americans continued to be denied equal rights in their own country, Germany's treatment of these children was regarded by African Americans not only as a measure of its status as a democracy, it also functioned as a surface onto which their own hopes and wishes for a democratic and non-racist society were projected.

Afro-German Migrations II:
Administrative Debates on Transnational Adoption

Despite the pronounced interest of the NAACP and the Black Press in the integration of the children into German society, the adoption of Afro-German children in the U.S. was also supported by many Americans, Black and white, as an alternative solution to what was still articulated as their problematic situation in the Federal Republic. As the *Pittsburgh Courier* explained in 1948,

> American Negro families sincerely want to adopt "Brown Babies." They are not offering "help," they are offering names and homes for outcast children born of tan GIs and German girls in the European Command. Will U.S. officials heed this nationwide plea? (Nunn, "Brown Babies Turned")

On 29 January 1951, the Church World Service initiated the Committee to Consider Possibilities and Resources for the Immigration of a Group of German Orphans of Negro Blood. The Committee was comprised of representatives from the NAACP, the Urban League, the U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children, the Displaced Persons Commission (DP-Commission), the National Lutheran Council, and representatives of fourteen other state and church institutions. The goal of the committee was to formulate recommendations on the possibilities and resources available for the immigration and subsequent integration of Afro-German children into American society.[21] The committee's results were then to be presented to the DP-Commission because the Commission had expressed an interest in the children after it was informed by the Allied High Commission in Germany of a reported 500 Afro-German children to whom the German population reacted with hostility and whose integration into German society might prove difficult. Although Greece, Italy, and Austria attempted to send a large number of children to the U.S. under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 (amended in June 1950), Evelyn Rauch of the Displaced Persons Commission concisely pointed out that the Federal Republic of Germany had directly solicited the help of the U.S. because the children were "of Negro blood" (Library of Congress 2).

Numerous difficulties were discussed during the Committee's deliberations regarding the placement of this specific group of children in African-American homes.

Of particular significance was the question of whether mixed-race German children would experience less discrimination in the U.S. than in Germany. A Black child in Georgia, it was argued, would certainly be worse off than an Afro-German child in Germany. Another issue discussed by the committee was whether the U.S. social welfare system had not already reached its capacity in dealing with "the current situation of needy African American children" (Library of Congress 3). The committee also debated whether white couples should be considered as adoptive parents, for although no steps were to be taken without the cooperation of the Black community and its leadership, the committee wanted to avoid "any statements that this problem is one to be born by the Negro community alone."

The meeting adjourned by resolving that the Displaced Persons Commission recognize the planned program as a unilateral American initiative for which financial support should be secured "because of the limitations of opportunities upon the group of people most concerned." It was proposed that further work be done on these issues following the committee's deliberations and that the committee's resolutions be made known to the wider public, preferably by means of participating national organizations (Library of Congress 8). There exists no further documentation on what resulted from the efforts of this committee. However, it is safe to assume that the conference laid down the foundations which led nine months later to the first Afro-German children being allowed to enter the U.S. on DP-2(f) visas. These visas made it possible not only for Margaret Butler to adopt two Afro-German children; it also enabled Mabel A. Grammer, correspondent for the *Afro-American* in Mannheim, to arrange for the immigration of Afro-German children to the U.S. through what became a well-known adoption program, the much publicized Brown Baby Plan, a program through which at least fifty Afro-German children were placed in homes of African-American families.

Black Atlantic Crossings: The Brown Baby Plan

Mabel A. Grammer, an African-American journalist working for the *Afro-American* and wife of an administrative officer stationed in Mannheim from 1950 to 1954, initiated the Brown Baby Plan in 1951 in collaboration with her newspaper. By the time of her return to the U.S. in September 1954, the program had placed approximately 300 children with African-American couples stationed in Germany and 50 children with couples living in the U.S. Many of these children were adopted "by proxy," meaning that they had never seen their adoptive parents before their actual arrival in their new home.[22]

What was Mabel A. Grammer's interest in Afro-German children, and how did she manage to arrange for their placement and emigration to the U.S.? First, Grammer personally witnessed the discrimination against Afro-German children and their mothers on the streets of Mannheim. Second, she was directly approached by numerous mothers and asked to help to find homes for their children in the U.S. Unlike the debates initiated by the Ministry of Interior which ignored the concerns of the mothers

of these children, these mothers were the point of initiation for Mabel Grammer's adoption program. Several reasons led German mothers to separate themselves from their children. Poverty, illness, the stigma of being known as an "Ami-hussy" or labeled a "Nigger-whore," the return of their husbands from POW camps, a new marriage in which the Afro-German child was no longer wanted, or a situation where the child was the result of a rape are only a few of the reasons why German mothers decided to separate from their Afro-German children. Contrary to a common perception at the time, many mothers found the separation from their children difficult and heartbreaking. Nevertheless, adoption was often viewed as a last way out for the child. These mothers shared the prevalent conviction that a better future awaited their children in America. What they probably understood by the term "better" was, among other things, that the children would be better cared for in economic terms in the U.S. and that their children would be safer in a Black community where, in contrast to Germany, they would not necessarily be the objects of discrimination in their local communities and not be denounced within their own families as the personification of illegitimacy.[23]

Mabel A. Grammer maintained that as long as Germany was unable to guarantee the equal treatment of white and black children, black children would be in better hands in the African-American community (Schulz). As she wrote in 1953,

> There are 3,100 brown German-American children in Germany. If *Afro* readers are patient, and meet the qualifications of the State Department and the German authorities, it is possible to have such a youngster in your home. As long as I am in Germany I shall work faithfully to try to give a new life to these deserving children. (Grammer, "What to Do")

Grammer's initiative was welcomed by the German public. She was dubbed the "brown fairy" by one of the most popular daily newspapers, the *Bild-Zeitung*, for her work on behalf of Afro-German children. Newspaper reports described her project as a "children's airlift through which the mixed-race children traveled to the USA, where the 'mop-headed Toxis' were then taken into the arms of their 'new mommies'" ("Braune Fee aus USA").[24] The Mannheim-based *Abendpost* enthusiastically called Grammer "Mommie Mabel—mother of the colored occupation babies" (Schulz).

In more concrete terms, the Brown Baby Plan was a community project. While Grammer established contacts with mothers and children in Mannheim and wrote articles and made the administrative preparations for the adoptions in Germany, the *Afro-American* sought adoptive parents to match her reports by informing its readership about the Black children in Germany. The paper functioned as Grammer's contact address, often reporting on the front page of successfully arranged adoptions and the arrival of the children in the U.S. The one condition to be met by those adopting a child through Grammer's program was that exclusive publication rights regarding the arrival of the children and their first months in their new American home were to be granted to the *Afro-American*. The paper announced: "If you are shy and do NOT desire publication of a story about your adoption of a German baby and/

or photos showing you with your new child, please do NOT make application for a German baby through this newspaper" (Grammer, "How You Can"). Information about the Brown Baby Plan was distributed solely through the Black press or by word of mouth. There was no registered association or even an official public address from which to gain information or contact Mabel Grammer.

Adoptions usually proceeded in the following manner: after corresponding with the potential future adoptive parents who often had picked a child from photographs published in the *Afro-American*, the children (until this point living in orphanages or with their mothers or grandmothers) were transferred by Mabel Grammer to the St. Joseph's Children's Home in Mannheim-Käfertal. All of the children placed by Grammer resided in this particular children's home for at least two weeks (Grammer, "Is This the End"). The children remained at St. Joseph's until all necessary immigration arrangements had been resolved—for example entry visas, securing legal release of the child from the mother, and travel arrangements. In many cases these formalities took up to a year to complete.[25]

Unlike the children adopted by Margaret E. Butler, the majority of the children placed by Mabel A. Grammer did not enter as orphans under the Displaced Persons Act, which expired in June 1952. Instead these children were eligible for visas given to orphans from Germany, Italy, other European countries, and Asia under the auspices of Section 5 (a) of the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 (also known as Public Law 203). It was not necessary for children receiving this type of visa to have been declared refugees. Rather, they were required to be under the age of ten and have been deserted by one or both parents or have been surrendered for adoption.[26]

A tight network of institutions and individuals was responsible for the success of this, in many ways, exceptional private adoption program. The parties involved were Mabel Grammer, German mothers, the *Afro-American*, the St. Joseph's Children's Home in Mannheim, at least one judge at the guardianship court in Mannheim, and the future African-American adoptive parents. In addition, Grammer received considerable support from Scandinavian Airlines (SAS), which flew the Afro-German children to the U.S.—in many cases free of charge or at half-price (Grammer, "Is This the End" 6).

However, the youth welfare bureau in Mannheim, under whose jurisdiction many of the children fell, expressed displeasure with the program on many occasions, for Grammer refused to inform the bureau of the placement of or the arrangements for the transnational adoptions of their wards. The Youth Bureau's response to the activities of Mabel Grammer was one of fundamental disapproval, even if initially some of its lower officials eagerly took advantage of Grammer's contacts and aid. For example, on 7 November 1953 the Chief of Administration of the Association for Social Welfare in Roding proudly wrote to the Bavarian youth welfare department that "through the mediation of a certain Miss Mabel A. Grammer, Mannhein-Feudenheim, the District Welfare Association has been successful in finding adoption placements in the U.S. for the illegitimate colored children of members of the occupying forces." The successful placement of a twelve-month-old boy was then described, and it was emphasized that "the adoptive family is well-situated financially, lives a well-ordered economic existence, and also fulfills, in other respects, the prerequisites required of adoptive parents."[27] The delight and confidence expressed by those in

Roding was in no way shared by the Bavarian state youth welfare department. In the draft of their response to the Chief of Administration, the Chief of the Legislative Sector stressed that "Miss M. Grammer . . . is not authorized to make adoption placements. In addition to this, she has no connection with American welfare organizations which check up on and monitor the adoption placements. A child who is placed in an American family through her mediation has no protection and no help should it turn out that the child and the adoptive parents are unable to learn to live with one another."[28]

In the opinion of the German Child Welfare Office, Mabel Grammer was only barely equipped with any understanding of the legal aspects of transnational adoption. Four fundamental criticisms were leveled at the private placement of Afro-German children in the U.S. First, Grammer's failure to inform the German child welfare bureaus (who held the legal guardianship over all illegitimate children in Germany) of the removal of the children was sharply criticized. Secondly, it was argued that the program lacked detailed information on the future American adoptive parents. The third criticism regarded the program's selection of unacceptable adoptive parents, who, according to the standards of the authorities, were too old, failed to meet the required economic standards, were judged to be in "unfavorable pecuniary circumstances," or seen as already having "an overabundance of children."[29] The final criticism directed against the program was that it insufficiently examined the living situation of the adopted children after their arrival in the U.S.[30]

These criticisms and the consequent distancing of the Bavarian child welfare office from Mabel Grammer seem legitimate, if not appropriate. However, Grammer herself viewed her troubled relationship with official placement services as a very different problem. In her opinion, the German authorities and, in particular, the international organization supervising these transnational adoptions, the International Social Service (ISS), were creating unnecessary difficulties for her placement of Afro-German children—a fact which she generally interpreted as overzealous red tape and an affront to Black people in general (Schulz). In a letter to the ISS, Grammer expressed her anger with these organizations:

> We are not savages, but coloured Americans, and I am proud of the fact that despite the numerous sufferings of our people, we have progressed rapidly, and we certainly know how to treat other people . . . Why then must people, who are willing to help these poor, small children, be forced to give up in the face of so much narrow-mindedness and bureaucracy? Why do they face so much injustice? . . . Thousands flee from other countries and attempt to reach the United States, where they know that they will secure their future. I am trying to help the small, illegitimate children, to give them a chance for the future. But never in my life have I been so derided as now, where I am trying to be good. (Schulz)

Undoubtedly Grammer's fight for a better life for these Afro-German children was simultaneously a fight for the recognition of African Americans as equal American

citizens and competent adoptive parents. With her private placement service, Grammer claimed the right to make such decisions autonomously and more importantly to set her own standards for future African-American adoptive parents.[31]

To this day little is known about the fate of Afro-Germans who were adopted by African Americans after World War II, and even less about the experiences of Afro-Germans of this particular generation who grew up in Germany.[32] The question of whether these children were better off in their native, predominantly white country or in African-American families in the United States is one that can only be answered individually, and it is left to future research to unearth historical sources documenting this unfinished story. However, perhaps equally as important as the question of how these children fared in either one of the two countries is that of why numerous institutions and individuals in both countries devoted tremendous amounts of time, money, and energy sending these children to a foreign country.

The debate over the fate of Afro-German children as it was articulated in Germany and the U.S. between 1945 and 1960 reveals the particular importance attached to these children solely on the basis of their skin color. These children were confronted less with national or moral feelings of resentment as children of an occupying power, or illegitimate children, than with racial prejudices. Their skin color, features, and hair structure led Germans and Americans to declare these children different or foreign and consequently that they belonged not in Germany but in the U.S.—in the African-American community. Ultimately, racial characteristics served in their native country as a factor of exclusion, while in their fathers' country as an attribute of belonging.

The dual ethnic and cultural affiliation of these Afro-German children was considered problematic both by German society and in the African-American community. The mere existence of these children led individuals in both countries to propose and implement arrangements for their care and prematurely to initiate the planning of their future based solely on racial classifications. As the debates and programs for these children's adoption, integration, or separation show, neither the discussions nor actions undertaken were merely charitable ones but always also political ones. "Pedagogy," writes E.R. Dickinson in the introduction to his book, *The Politics of German Child Welfare*, "is always rooted in an explicit or implicit ideal of the kind of people and thus the kind of society it aims to create. Child welfare policy is therefore always 'about' politics, whether domestic or internationally, and usually both" (Dickinson 3). The exportation, both planned and realized, of these Afro-German children was deeply political in that it was often an external attempt to arbitrarily simplify the complex situation of a German-born, non-white population. In the final analysis, the foreign adoption of Afro-German children was a means of achieving a convenient resolution of the internal tensions of two societies confronting their own and each other's respective histories of oppression and domination—National Socialism and Jim Crow segregation—in the immediate postwar period.

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Abbreviations

AANA	*Afro-American* Newspaper Archives
ADW	Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes
BAK	Bundesarchiv Koblenz
BayHStA	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv
LoC	Library of Congress
NA	National Archives

1. See "Mammies für die Negerlein," "How to Adopt a German War Baby," "German Brown Babies in the U.S.," and "What Happened?"
2. It is important to note that the Black press was by no means homogenous and its relationship to its various constituencies was far more complex than my own limited discussion indicates here. Although such an analysis would certainly yield important insights, unfortunately, an extensive and more detailed explication of these relationships surpasses the scope of this particular article. For a fuller understanding of how specific African-American publications were located within the social and political landscape of postwar American society as a possible avenue for explaining and contextualizing how these different forms of the Black press negotiated the "cause" of brown babies, see the following histories of the Black press: Armistead Pride and Clint C. Wilson II's *A History of The Black Press* and Carl Senna's *The Black Press and the Struggle for Civil Rights*; see also my 1995 Master's Thesis, "Between Welfare and Marginalization: On the Situation and Representation on Afro-German Children in Germany and the USA, 1945–1960."
3. As defined in the Displaced Persons Act, "Displaced Person" means any person or refugee as defined in Annex I of the Constitution of the International Refugee Organization, which is the concern of the International Refugee Organization. Under Section 2 (f) of this act an eligible orphan is defined as "an orphan because of the death or disappearance of both parents or because of abandonment or desertion by, or separation or loss from, both parents, or who has only one parent due to the death or disappearance or abandonment or desertion by or separation or loss from the other parent and the remaining parent is incapable of providing care for such orphan and agrees to release him for emigration and adoption or guardianship." The eligible orphan, as stated in Section 5 of this act, has to be "at the time of issuance of a visa, under the age of ten years." The special nonquota immigration visas for orphans were not to exceed five thousand and were to be issued until July 1, 1952. See Displaced Persons Act of 1948 as amended 16 June 1950, House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary.
4. BAK, B 153, 342, Lois S. McVey, U.S. Displaced Persons Commission, Headquarters, Frankfurt am Main, and Dr. Wilhelm Kitz, Director of the Social Welfare Department V of the Bundesinnenministerium vom 14 March 1951.
5. ADW, HG 1161, Correspondence from the Inner Mission to the Ministry of the Interior, 19 October 1950.
6. BayHStA, MInn 81096, Correspondence from the editors of *Revue* to the State Youth Welfare Office, Marktredwitz, 22 February 1952.
7. BayHStA, MInn 81096, Correspondence from the Bavarian State Youth Welfare Office to the branch office of the State Youth Welfare Office in Oberfranken, 16 July 1954.
8. BayHStA, MInn 81096, Correspondence from the editors of *Revue* to the State Youth Welfare Office, Marktrediwitz, 22 February 1952.
9. See, for example, the case of Sgt. Robert N. Bennett, Jr., who was accused of stealing penicillin from the army depot and discharged from the army shortly after his application to marry his German girlfriend and mother of their two-month-old son. NA, RG 338, EUCOM, Secretary General, Office of the Chief of Staff, Confidential, Sgt. Robert N. Bennett, Jr., to Chief of Staff, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, United States Army, Washington, D.C. from 14 June 1947.
10. NA, RG 338, EUCOM, Secretary, General Office of the Chief of Staff, Confidential, Hq. IX Air Force Service Command, Policy No. 47 on Marriage of Colored Soldiers and White Women, 24 August 1945.

11. Alvin M. Owsley, Chairman of the American Legion National Americanism Endowment Fund to General Eisenhower, 16 September 1946, is quoted here from Richard M. Dalfiume's *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces* (133).
12. Estimates as to the number of Afro-German children adopted in this period range between 50 and 500 children. It can be assumed that between 50 and 100 children were actually sent to the U.S. through the Brown Baby Plan. Far more children were adopted by U.S. families who were stationed in Germany and eventually brought the children with them when they returned to the United States. See Charles P. Howard, Sr.,'s "Afro Revisits German Brown Babies" and "Die Kinder mit der 'goldenen Haut.'"
13. Between 18 March and 4 August 1945 a group of seven representative editors and correspondents for the Black press traveled through the U.S. occupation zones in Germany and Austria. The members of the group were: Dowdal H. Davis (*Kansas City Call*), Clifford W. Mackay (*Afro-American* newspaper), Louis E. Martin (*Detroit Chronicle*), William G. Nunn (*Pittsburgh Courier*), Frank L. Stanley (*Louisville Defender*), Carter Wesley (*Houston Informer*), and Thomas W. Young (*Norfolk Journal and Guide*). Occupation Forces in Europe Series, Negro Personnel in the European Command, 1 January 1946–30 June 1950. Compiled by Margaret L. Geiss, Chapter III: Assignment and Utilization, no. 41, "Tour of Newspaper Representatives," S. 72–75.
14. See Reiner Pommerin's *Sterilisierung der Rheinlandbastarde. Das Schicksal einer farbigen deutschen Minderheit 1918–1937,* Tina Campt's "Afro-German: The Convergence of Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Formation of a German Ethnic Identity," and Pascal Grosse's "Kolonialmigration in Deutschland, 1885–1945."
15. Memorandum to Walter White from Miss Weatherhead, 6 December 1946. See also Alice B. Shaw to Walter White, 29 November 1946, Papers of the NAACP, General Office File 1040–55, "Brown Babies in Europe."
16. Margaret L. Geiss, "Negro Personnel in the European Command," unpublished manuscript. Occupation Forces in Europe Series, 1 January 1946 – 30 June 1950, Karlsruhe 1952.
17. The most well known of this kind of institution is the Albert Schweitzer Children's Home for Racially Mixed Children, which was run by a parish couple in Hessen. See "Children Nobody Wants. German Pair Open 'Brown Baby' Home." For a consideration of all three positions and a reconstruction of the home's history, see also Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Between Welfare and Marginalization: On the Situation and Representation on Afro-German Children in Germany and the USA, 1945–1960."
18. In July 1952 the organization of World Brotherhood arranged a conference in Nuremberg to address the topic, "Racially Mixed Children and School"; on 15 and 16 August the World Brotherhood arranged a conference for teachers and youth welfare officers in Wiesbaden on the theme, "The Fate of the Racially Mixed Children in Germany." On 4 and 5 December 1953 a conference in Frankfurt am Main served to compile the purely statistical material and to collect reports on experiences with the children, who meanwhile were attending school.
19. J. Oscar Lee, Executive Director of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, Division of Christian Life and Work, Development of Racial and Cultural Relations, to Walter White, Executive Secretary of the NAACP, 23 July 1952, Frankfurt am Main, S. 1–2; Papers of the NAACP, General Office Files 1918–1955, "Brown Babies in Europe."
20. Press announcement by Walter White from 18 September 1952, Papers of the NAACP, General Office Files, 1918–1955, "Brown Babies in Europe."
21. Members of this committee were: Mr. Elliot (Church World Service), Mr. Climenke (New York State Commission for Displaced Persons), Mrs. Fielde (National Catholic Welfare Conference), Mr. Glover (Brooklyn Catholic Interracial Council), Miss Gordon (State Charities Aid Association), Mrs. Gordon (Child Welfare League of America), Mr. Granger (Urban League), Rev. Mr. Krebs (National Lutheran Council), Miss Marcuse (European-Jewish Children's Aid), Mr. Moon (NAACP), Miss Newhall (Church World Service), Miss Olsen (United States Committee for the Care of European Children), Mr. Quinn (Catholic Committee for Refugees), Miss Rauch (Displaced Persons Commission), Mrs. Sperry (U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children), Dr. Tobias (Phelps Stokes Fund), Dr. Warfield (Methodist Committee on Overseas Relief), Miss Winston (National Lutheran Council), and Mr. Wunowski (Catholic Committee for Refugees). See Library of Congress, Papers of the NAACP, General Office File 1940–55, "Brown Babies in Europe" (1).
22. See Charles P. Howard, Sr.'s "*Afro* Revisits German Brown Babies." See also "8 Negerlein nach Amerika."
23. Afro-American Newspaper Archives, "Two More War Babies En Route to Richmond," *Afro-American*, without date or page references. See also James L. Hicks' "*Afro* Arranges Adoption

of First Brown Babies" and "No Interpreters Needed When Germany Meets Brooklyn," and Mabel A. Grammer's "What to Do About Adopting War Babies," "Six New Americans Due from Germany," and "Is This the End of the Brown Baby Plan?"

24. On 26 September 1953 it was already reported on the front page of the *Bild-Zeitung* under the heading, "8 Negerlein nach Amerika" ("8 Little Negroes Come to America") of the "eight dark-skinned and frizzy-headed little Negroes . . . , who suffer greatly from the fate that they look different from other German children," and whose journey took them "over the Atlantic to their new home." "Toxi" was a cinema film about an Afro-German girl, which was screened in 1952 in all of the big cities to help prepare German society for the entrance into the public school system for the first school year of children who had been born after the war. The name "Toxi" has since been used as a synonym for "black child of the occupation."
25. Without entering into the complicated legal questions of guardianship in any detail here, I would like to indicate that this declaration of consent which enables a child to be given up for adoption represents one of the greatest legal dilemmas, as the consent of the mother, the Home, the Youth Affairs Office, the guardianship court and, when known, also the consent of the father of the child are required. These legal requirements were not carried out in the instances of the Grammer Cases, as the giving up of the child by the mother or the Home was considered adequate by the U.S. immigration authorities. In these cases, the declaration of consent had merely to be witnessed by a notary. What the U.S. immigration authorities obviously did not know was that illegitimate children born in Germany automatically received the Youth Welfare Office as their state appointed guardian and thus also required the permission of this body in order to be given up for adoption. It was often years later that the Youth Welfare Offices first learned that their "wards" were living in the U.S.
26. See Frank L. Auerbach's "The Refugee Relief Act of 1953."
27. BayHStA, MInn 81096, Correspondence from the Head of Administration of the Landkreis Roding to the Head of Administration of the Bavarian Youth Welfare Administration, dated 7 November 1953 (received by the Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior on the 16 November 1953).
28. BayHStA, MInn 81096, Draft of a letter from Dr. Laubenthal, Senior Administrator of the Bavarian State Youth Welfare Office, reporting on the Administration of the Landkreis Roding, dated 7 November 1953; received by the latter on 23 November 1953.
29. ADW, HGSt 1161, reply to Pastor Forell, 11 January 1951. Sender unknown.
30. BayHStA, MInn 81096, Correspondence from Dr. Phillip Körner, Director of the Diocesan Caritas Association, Bamberg, to the Youth Welfare Authorities, Munich, dated 16 June 1953.
31. It is important to note that after numerous Afro-German children had been placed in African-American families, criticism against the increasing adoption of mixed-race babies from abroad was voiced within the African-Amercan community. In December 1959 two employees of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society anxiously voiced their concern in *Ebony* magazine that African Americans were showing such great interest in adopting "mixed-race" children from Germany, despite the difficulty that they consistently encountered finding adoptive homes for light-skinned African-American orphans. Those children, explained one of the social workers, were seen as a problem-within-a-problem in some parts of the country, because "they are what we call unusual babies, children of mixed parentage, who are harder to place because of their unusual looks. They are too fair for many Negroes and too Negroid for most whites." See "Problems of America's Brown Babies."
32. The book *Showing Our Colors. Afro-German Women Speak Out*, edited by May Opitz, Katharina Oguntoye, and Dagmar Schultz (Amherst, 1992) includes a collection of interviews with Afro-Germans of the post-war generation.

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