# The educator
# Karl Mützelfeldt

Volker Stolle

Karl Mützelfeldt arrived in Adelaide with his family on 5 August 1934. There he was received with great acclaim: 'We regard Reverend Mützelfeldt as a real gift of God to our Church and are sure that our expectations will not lack fulfilment', proclaimed Dr Johannes Stolz (1878–1962), the General President of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia (UELCA), into whose service the pastor now entered.[1] With his help – and as Mützelfeldt himself hoped – the German language and tradition within this church was to be given new strength.

Mützelfeldt had felt forced to leave Germany because his understanding of *Deutschtum* ('Germanness', but perhaps best translated as 'German culture and identity') was at odds with the ideology of National Socialism. He hoped that in overseas German Lutheran communities he would be able to continue to observe his beliefs and pass them on to his children.

It was because he considered himself to be German that he chose the path of emigration. He was at odds with the new National Socialist or Nazi state as a result of the passing of new laws in two ways. First of all, in his view the future of his children was compromised, because, on the basis of having a Jewish maternal grandfather, they were now regarded as partly 'non-Aryan'. And, secondly, Mützelfeldt felt he could not meet the requirement imposed on him as a school principal that he 'support the national state without reservation and at all times'. How had it come to this?

## Life and work in Germany

Karl Mützelfeldt came from a Lutheran pastor's family. When

he was born on 30 April 1881 in Hermannsburg, his father was inspector at the missionary seminary there, and he was actively involved in the training of missionaries.

After his school education Mützelfeldt studied theology and philosophy. Having passed his first theology exam in 1907, he did not enter the preparatory service for a career in the church, choosing instead the path of teaching. He became a teacher at the Evangelisches Pädagogium in Bad Godesberg, a private school for boys with a clear *reformist* approach. He subsequently continued his studies and, after successfully completing the exams for a state diploma in education (in the subjects religion, philosophy and Hebrew), he was appointed to the position of Senior Teacher of Religion at the school where he already worked.

What distinguished this time in Bad Godesberg was Mützelfeldt's work in the *Keplerbund* (Kepler League), a body which had been formed in 1907 that held the conviction 'that the truth bears within itself the harmony of scientific facts alongside philosophical awareness and religious experience'. Through his authorship of a pamphlet titled 'Allerlei Missbrauch der Naturwissenschaft'[2] ('Various Abuses of the Natural Sciences'), he signalled his opposition to the rise of a materialistic world view. As early as in this work he expressed convictions that were to lead him later to reject the Nazi doctrine of race.

In the autumn of 1913 he transferred to the Städtisches Oberlyzeum in Düsseldorf, a school for girls with an attached college for the training of women teachers for high schools. His work here was interrupted by the First World War and on the fourth day of the war he was deployed to the Western front. He was awarded the Iron Cross First Class and Second Class and before his discharge had entered the officer ranks. A sermon he delivered during the war gives an indication of his patriotism: in a situation in which his homeland on earth appears far away and perhaps beyond reach, he stresses the certainty of heaven as one's final destination, but he also keeps in view the temporal perspective of Germany's calling in this world. After the war, too, Mützelfeldt continued to be guided decisively by his sense of national identity, even if he had been greatly disappointed by the outcome of the war and its consequences.

From the beginning of October 1923 he was appointed Director of the Secondary Lyceum at the Institute for Deaconesses in Kaiserswerth, a position for which he felt ideally suited. The education system in Kaiserswerth was in a state of acute crisis when he took up his position, with its financial foundations having been eaten away by inflation. Furthermore, the education system, directed as it was toward preparing female students for jobs considered appropriate for women, experienced massive turmoil in the conditions which prevailed in the Weimar Republic, when identical standards of education for girls and boys were demanded. Previously the higher education of women had been the domain of the social work of churches. And, compounding this, Kaiserswerth was located in the area which was occupied by allied troops whose role it was to ensure that Germany made its reparations payments. Mützelfeldt quite consciously formed a link with the Kaiserswerth tradition as articulated in the motto: 'You have just one Lord: Christ'. He devoted himself with great energy to renewal in both the curriculum and administration. With clear goals in mind he successfully built up the institution in a new style as a Protestant denominational school. At the same time he was responsible for the overall administration of Kaiserswerth's extensive school system.

The convictions which guided him through this period are articulated in his programmatic publication of the 1925 work *Evangelisches Führertum und höhere Schule: Ein Weckruf an die deutsche evangelische Christenheit*[3] (*Protestant Leadership and Secondary Education: An alarm call to German Protestant Christendom*). He recognised in the new conditions of the Republic a weakness of Protestant Christendom, evinced by its apparent shortage of 'personalities who in our spiritual and cultural life can somehow really play a leading role'. He proclaimed: 'Our Protestant Church thus has a pressing need, indeed it is a matter of its continuing influence on the German people, *to develop a leadership with firm roots in the gospel*. For this reason we need Protestant personalities in education, we need distinctively Protestant high schools.' In this belief he was being guided not by a desire to strengthen a particular denominationalism, but rather by a general interest in the German people. 'We hope that the keenly desired solid community of the people (*Volksgemeinschaft*) might be able

gradually to bring us closer to a spiritual unity. We believe that such an essentially German community of the people can grow only on the foundations of a national rebirth determined by Christian values. The school should help us toward this goal!'

In order to broaden the impact of his ideas, Mützelfeldt dedicated himself intensively to constructing and implementing the administrative framework for the school system. He became the President both of the *Vereinigung positiver evangelischer Religionslehrer an höheren Schulen* (Association of Positive Protestant Teachers of Religion in High Schools) and of the *Vereinigung privater evangelischer Mädchenschulen* (Association of Private Protestant Girls' Schools, which from 1926 was the *Bund evangelischer Mädchenschulen* or Federation of Protestant Girls' Schools). In addition, he played a leading role in the umbrella organisation *Evangelische Schulvereinigung* (Protestant School Association). At this time girls' schools were placed on the same footing as that of boys' schools, a move which brought with it a greater state influence on this type of school – previously within the domain of the church. Consequently, much depended on the energetic representation of the interests of private Protestant schools. With the assistance of others Mützelfeldt also founded the specialist journal *Schule und Evangelium* (*School and Gospel*) and edited the *Evangelische Religionsbuch für höhere Schule* (*Book of the Protestant Religion for High Schools*). Moreover, he took a lively interest in discussions concerning state curricula.

As for politics, Mützelfeldt became active in the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* (German National People's Party or DNVP). The policies of this national conservative party largely corresponded with Mützelfeldt's Christian-influenced nationalism. Nevertheless, in its political practice the DNVP was susceptible to anti-Semitic and National Socialist ideas. From the very beginning, however, Mützelfeldt developed, on the basis of his resolutely Christian attitudes, strong reservations about National Socialism, whose totalitarian claims left little space for a committed Christian upbringing.

On 28 August 1909 Mützelfeldt married Gertrud Herzfeld, who had been born in Stuttgart on 14 May 1886. She too had grown up in a self-consciously German and Christian family. However, her

father, Bruno Herzfeld (1855–1930) was a Jew who, after marrying a Christian, fully embraced the Protestant faith.

In the year Hitler came to power, 1933, the children born into the Mützelfeldt family, namely, Hanna, Elfriede, Bruno and Dorothea were 21, 18, 15 and three years of age respectively. The 'First Decree for the Implementation of the Law for the Restoration of the Civil Service (7 April 1933)', which came into effect on 11 April 1933, stated: 'Those who are descended from non-Aryan, in particular from Jewish, parents or grandparents, are to be regarded as non-Aryan. It suffices if just one parent or grandparent is non-Aryan.' For the Mützelfeldt children this meant that a career in the public service was closed to them, but subsequently their chances of studying or receiving higher education were severely compromised with the passing of the 'Law Against the Overfilling of German Schools and Universities' on 25 April 1933.

**Emigration**

After the end of Nazi rule Mützelfeldt recalled: 'I can still remember clearly the moment when I read about the establishment of the Gestapo. At that moment I felt almost instinctively that in a state of such arbitrariness there would be little room to operate.' The principle which he followed from the beginning he later articulated in the following way: 'Principiis obsta! Resist from the very beginning! Unconditional loyalty towards a country, a government, or a person, as it for example was demanded for Hitler in an oath of allegiance from public servants, can only end in idolatry.' From very early on in their regime the new rulers had him in their sights. He was spied upon and persecuted.

After the introduction of the 'Aryan Paragraph', contained within the 'Law for the Restoration of the Civil Service', and after his most intensive efforts, Mützelfeldt also recognised that his children were unlikely to be granted exceptional status. 'My wife on many occasions confronted the danger of a complete psychological breakdown, and I do not need to tell you how things were under the surface for my adult children,' he reported in the summer of 1933 to a friend from his student days. He saw no alternative but to emigrate with his family. As his destination Mützelfeldt envisaged one of the overseas German Lutheran communities of the kind that existed in

North America, South America, South Africa and Australia, where Lutheran Churches with a German character had been established by immigrants.

Friedrich Ulmer (1877–1946), Professor of Practical Theology in Erlangen and at the same time President of the Martin Luther Federation, an aid agency for minority Lutheran churches in a non-Protestant environment, interceded on his behalf and wrote a letter of recommendation to President Stolz of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia. For its part UELCA saw in Mützelfeldt's enquiry 'clearly a gift from God to our Church'. For some time the organisation had been looking for a man of Mützelfeldt's qualifications to build up its church education system. At the time the church was in the process of introducing a two-year preliminary course at the seminary and engaged Mützelfeldt primarily as a lecturer for this course. This was despite the costs that would be incurred, which they justified in the tight financial situation only with the 'courage of faith' and in the hope that by expanding their offerings they would gain more students.

In a letter which reached Mützelfeldt on 11 December 1933, General President Stolz, while accepting Mützelfeldt's application for the position, described frankly the straitened circumstances in Adelaide: 'If after receiving the description of our smallness and modesty it still appeals to you to come then we would welcome your coming with great joy and regard you as a gift to our Church by God … who made this gift to us in such a special way through the great political events.'

Mützelfeldt was happy 'that [he had] received the call to Australia, not only as a Lutheran but expressly as a German, of whom it is expected that [he] will maintain, cultivate and expand the German cultural heritage'. He accepted the appointment immediately.

Mützelfeldt submitted his resignation, his position formally ending on 31 March 1934, and began to prepare for emigration. Bearing in mind that in Australia he was to be employed in the education of pastors, he then completed his own theological training, which he had interrupted in 1907 after his first theological exam. He passed his second theological exam and was ordained on 13 May. After 'thoroughly tedious negotiations with the authorities'

Karl Mützelfeldt and his family soon after their arrival in Australia.
(Lutheran Archives Adelaide)

concerning emigration, the Mützelfeldt family was able to board the Norddeutscher-Lloyd freighter *Witram* in Bremen on 11 June, bound for Australia via the Cape of Good Hope.

On the day of his departure he recorded in his sister's guest book the question, 'Will it [that is, Australia] become a new homeland for us after our old, much-loved fatherland can no longer offer us an honourable place to live?' He provided an answer to that question 12 years later when he wrote in a letter to his sister on 2 July 1946: 'God has allowed me to find in a land of freedom not just refuge but a new homeland'.

Mützelfeldt saw the path he trod as already decided for all those people who, like his family, were affected by the racial laws. From the outset Mützelfeldt's efforts to seek a future overseas for his own family were, for that reason, closely linked to his dogged commitment to establishing an aid office for other German Protestants affected by racial policy, so that emigration would be made easier.

As early as in summer of 1933 he demanded: 'The Protestant Churches *must* in some way support these poor, innocent Protestant "Non-Aryans" who in countless cases have fallen into spiritual

and in some cases the most acute material need. That is the most pressing social task!'

He attempted to win broader church support for his endeavours. He expanded contact with the German branch of the Moravian Church, an organisation called the *Deutsche Brüder-Unität* which was prepared to assist through the establishment of special homes. On 11 November 1933, in a meeting held in the Reich Church Office, Mützelfeldt presented his suggestion that the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirche* (DEK, the German Evangelical Church) set up a specialist agency with the task of solving problems caused by the situation confronting Christians of Jewish descent. He nominated three practical fields of activity for the proposed Church agency:

1. Special boarding schools, for example in cooperation with the Moravian Church, for Protestant children of non-Aryan Descent,
2. A limited employment service for those non-Aryan whose commitment to a Protestant world-view was beyond question,
3. Arrangement of settlement possibilities, for example in South America.

At the end of 1933 he learned of a similar initiative by the Berlin gynaecologist Dr Karl August Fiessler, in whom he found a partner with whom he could work. In April of 1934 he reported to the Church Office of the DEK that plans would soon be approved by the Reich Interior Ministry. He expected that the State of Prussia would make space available for settler schools. The intention was to form a working group titled *Christliches Jugendwerk für deutsche Auslandssiedlung* (Christian Youth Service for German Overseas Settlement) after permission had been gained from the state.

When Mützelfeldt left Germany in June 1934 he was assuming with confidence that the initiative being pursued would soon be realised. In reality, things by no means developed as favourably as Mützelfeldt had expected. Because so many different interests had to be accommodated, negotiations went on and on, with the project ultimately relying on the favourable convergence of foreign policy, interior policy and educational and financial concerns. Realisation was continually delayed until, at the beginning of 1936, it was abandoned altogether.

**Impact in Australia**

Mützelfeldt emphasised 'that in our decision to leave Germany the thought of our children's future was paramount'. Yet the educational and career prospects for the children in Australia were not particularly favourable, although ultimately all the children made their way. Even before the war the family made an application for naturalisation, which was suspended after the outbreak of war. Gertrud Mützelfeldt died, at the age of just 57, on 2 November 1943.

Although hard of hearing as a result of an injury incurred in the First World War, Karl Mützelfeldt was able to make a substantial impact in Australia, as he had in Germany. His first task was to establish the two-year preliminary seminary program conducted at Immanuel Seminary. In the UELCA education system this course was positioned between college and the main seminary at North Adelaide, and its function was to impart the basic knowledge required for theological training at the seminary but also, and above all, to teach a detailed knowledge of German history and literature – in German. At the seminary itself most of the teaching was done in German. In the following year Mützelfeldt participated in the teaching program at Immanuel Seminary. He took over Biblical history, Old Testament exegesis, philosophy and, in particular, the teaching of the catechism. Despite his hearing difficulties, he managed the adjustment to teaching in English in 1943 in response to student demands. He retired in 1953. Although he did not come to Australia until the advanced age of 53, his work at Immanuel Seminary in Adelaide spanned a longer period (19 years) than his employment at Kaiserswerth (just over 10 years). Mützelfeldt died on 30 November 1955.

Mützelfeldt's particular task – and at the same time that closest to his heart – was the maintenance and cultivation of German culture, which to a significant degree had long been suppressed by the dominance of English language. He devoted himself to this task with great commitment, although he was immediately aware of the difficulties, to which he gave considerable thought. The language problem, he reported back to Germany, was 'a very fundamental aspect of the basically very baffling lives of Germans in foreign countries.' The youth converted 'with a rather rapid tempo to the English language', with German could only being maintained in

a bilingual context. The practice of speaking German was largely confined to church life since immigrants had not brought with them the written language of New High German but rather various dialects. Moreover, the German typescript made language learning more difficult (since in those times German was in most cases not yet written with Latin letters).

> Now I am attempting through my whole approach to teaching to awaken joy in the German language and German culture, and where possible also a little pride in the German cultural heritage, at least a serious sense of responsibility for the preservation and rejuvenation of the heritage passed on by the German forefathers who immigrated. And it appears that I have found receptive hearts and minds. To provide this service for the Australian Lutheran Church and at the same time for the fatherland is a great joy for me and my family, because all of us have this goal, everyone in his own way.

This commitment seemed important to him, because it was his firm belief that there was a close connection between Lutheranism and German culture. He was of the view that the future of the Lutheran Church in Australia depended on the preservation of the German language. In the 1930s he further consolidated his views with the argument that a world war was inevitable, and that in the aftermath of it many German Lutherans would flee to Australia; consequently, the Lutheran Church would have to be equipped to integrate these immigrants into their congregations.

The issue of preserving the German language within the Australian Lutheran Church was analysed in detail by Mützelfeldt in an essay he wrote for a *Festschrift* dedicated to Professor Ulmer on his sixtieth birthday in 1936. On the basis of the historical background of church statistics on the proportional usage of German and English in church work and of his own experiences and observations, he paints a detailed picture of the 'unavoidable process of anglicisation' and indicates what conscious efforts, adapted to the great variety of circumstances, were necessary to preserve a place for the German language.

In this regard he considered it essential to clarify the exact nature of the relationship between German culture and the Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Church could not be perceived

to be limited to any one nation; rather, the 'awakening of a feeling of solidarity in world Lutheranism' had to be embraced with determination in order to counter the danger of 'a certain Australian particularism'. Mützelfeldt drew attention to the fact that, in 1935, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia joined not only the Lutheran World Convention (LWC), the forerunner of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), but also the Martin Luther Federation, the goal being to serve the multilingual community of the Lutheran churches – as had been done in Australia among the Estonian community in Sydney and the missions to the Aborigines of central Australia. Equally important was retaining an association 'with the wealthy spiritual and intellectual stream flowing from the Lutheran Mother Church in Germany'.

Moreover, it was absolutely necessary, Mützelfeldt argued, 'to clarify the difference between allegiance to a state and ethnic identity in all respects, including theological aspects'. Apart from the linguistic dimension of German culture, he also dealt, at least in passing, with issues of customs. He was motivated by the idea of 'creating for Lutherans in the southern hemisphere Church practices which are appropriate to the climatic and other features of the country, which at the same time would have to reflect the depth and intensity of the German temperament'.

The extent to which he devoted himself to this issue is evident. His concern with the actual circumstances in which overseas Germans lived in Australia led Mützelfeldt to reflect more deeply on his own ideas and convictions. To some extent this process of intellectual deliberation was overtaken by the tumultuous political developments, which ran contrary to any consolidation of German culture in Australia, especially as after the outbreak of the war any open efforts in this direction could raise suspicions of collaboration with the enemy, and so became impossible.

Although Mützelfeldt's children had grown up entirely with the German language, Mützelfeldt became aware just how strongly the new environment influenced even them. 'How infinitely difficult it is to maintain the German tongue with the children, who otherwise speak only English. One can appreciate this only if one has experienced it with one's own children. Every day new efforts are required, along with dogged consistency and conscious teaching.'

In the Mützelfeldt family the children often spoke German with their parents, especially with their father in his last years, but among themselves they spoke English.

Moreover, there was little Mützelfeldt could do to separate his efforts for German language and culture from its political connotations, as the following episode illustrates. In 1935 he received an official request from the German Consul General in Sydney to consult with him regarding the plan to establish a German–Australian college. Mützelfeldt was delighted that a representative of the German Reich wanted to accept his help in this matter, so he travelled to Sydney and thereafter submitted a memorandum, not realising that by doing so he had supported the policies of Hitler's Germany, promoting its ideas and goals overseas. However, it must be said that the Nazi Party, for its part, had not even been requested his assistance. When the party's Foreign Organisation, the AO, examined the initiative, he was categorised as an 'enemy of the state of the highest order', and the project failed.

By emigrating to Australia, Mützelfeldt had by no means left his confrontation with National Socialism behind. As it happened, the attention of Hitler himself had been drawn to Mützelfeldt's fate, as the German–American Marie Gallison-Reuter, herself an alumna of Kaiserswerth, reports in her recollections of a conversation she had with Hitler.[4] Immediately upon Mützelfeldt's arrival in Adelaide someone let him know – in German – that he was still under surveillance by the Nazi Party. Refusing to be intimidated, he received a group of musicians called the Comedy Harmonists in his house, a group that had been formed by the Jewish members of the Comedian Harmonists, who under pressure from the Reich Music Chamber were expelled from Germany and forced into emigration. In 1937 and 1939 the new version of the group made successful tours of Australia.

Apart from his teaching activity, Mützelfeldt also undertook a full travelling program of teaching and lecturing. In doing so he participated assiduously and willingly in the church life of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia. One important aspect of this was his promotion of a reinvigorated parish school system.

A law had forced the closure of all its parish schools in 1917,

but in 1924 the UELCA regained the right to maintain private church schools, and from 1929 became entitled to teach the German language to a small extent, although initially for not more than one hour per day. Parish schools such as these could not expect to receive any kind of state subsidy; the financial burden had to be carried entirely by private interests, while the state school system of course imposed no fees. At the time Mützelfeldt arrived in Australia, not even one new parish school had been established. Mützelfeldt now set about translating the recently achieved rights into practical reality.

From the beginning an important element of his thinking was the idea that, in the areas where the Lutheran parishes were in close proximity to each other (in the Barossa Valley and further to the north), 'German could be maintained or revived as the everyday language'. At the same time he conceded that: 'The maintenance of German culture is not the reason for Church schools – the reason is to be found solely in the realm of religion', but it was certainly valid 'to preserve the heritage of the fathers and if possible to bring it to bear once more'. He developed a program based on his educational convictions and which was designed to accommodate Australian conditions.

In a 1936 synod lecture, 'Why Christian Day Schools?', he offered an explanation for his belief in the necessity for Christian schools, which assumes that a deficient sense of humanity is inherent to the secular school. For that reason a Christian school was necessary. 'The Word of God must really rule in the school, and Jesus Christ must really be her Lord in all things, so that not only all the teaching, but also the expression of the school-life, down to the last detail, must be permeated by a Christian spirit.' He reminded his audience of their duty to educate, a duty that God had given parents, and the possibility available through the parish for acting communally. It is noteworthy that there is now no longer a role for German as the language of instruction or as a subject for parish schools, and the idea of national solidarity with the German people is not even touched upon.

In 1935 the Light Pass parish opened the first UELCA parish school; Tanunda–Langmeil and Appila followed. Further schools were constructed, although by the time of Mützelfeldt's retirement,

the total number of students had only reached just 260. Greater support was not achieved until later.

In 1938 Mützelfeldt was also able to introduce special training for parish school teachers, even if the numbers were small; in that year, just one student, in 1941, four, with 10 in 1947, of whom four participated by correspondence.

Mützelfeldt was a member of the Intersynodical Committee, which in 1941 commenced a lengthy process of discussion of several doctrinal positions that until that time had divided the two Lutheran churches in Australia, namely, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELSA). These negotiations prepared the way for the amalgamation of the two churches, one characterised by close connections with German Lutheranism and one with American Lutheranism. During the time of this process ELSA changed its name in 1944 to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA). These negotiations, which experienced a decisive breakthrough in 1949, are manifested in the comprehensive *Theses of Agreement* document finally published in 1956. Another German played a significant role on this path to mutual understanding, namely, Professor Dr Hermann Sasse (1895–1976),[5] who came to Australia in 1949 and who taught at the same seminary as Mützelfeldt. In 1966 the unification of what is today the Lutheran Church of Australia was completed. Mützelfeldt's initiative in founding all-day schools had contributed to the amalgamation of the two churches, as had his suggestion to commence the training of deaconesses, which was agreed in 1947, the first course for which began in 1961. In both these areas ELSA/ELCA had been more advanced, but by the time of unification UELCA had also made considerable progress.

In February 1938 Mützelfeldt reported to the pastors' conference held in South Australia on the plight of the 'non-Aryans' in Germany, on queries he himself had received and on an aid society which had already been founded. A month later Stolz informed the equivalent committee in New South Wales about the 'German Emergency Fellowship Committee' (GEFC) and encouraged collaboration in a sub-committee which had been formed in South Australia. The Fellowship Committee had been founded in December 1937 in Sydney at the instigation of the

anthropologist Camilla Wedgwood (1901–55) and had links to a Quaker-organised central agency in London called the 'German Emergency Committee of the Society of Friends', an organisation devoted specifically to helping 'non-Aryan' Christians. The 'Lutheran Immigration Aid Society' (LIAS) was then established as a branch of it. Apart from Mützelfeldt, the General President of UELCA, Stolz, and two teachers at Immanuel College were committee members – G.A. Keller, who was the chair, with Mr Doecke the treasurer. A partnership developed between LIAS, the Berlin aid office run by Laura Livingstone and the 'Pastor Grüber Office', also in Berlin. At the beginning of November the Lutheran Immigration Aid Society gratefully acknowledged the cooperation of the Council of Churches, at the time Mützelfeldt also seeking to gain support in England and from ELSA. This contact was the source of the press release by the General President of ELSA, Dr William Janzow, of 17 November 1938, which led to the arrival of 73 letters pleading for assistance.

The process was extremely protracted. When a request from overseas was received by LIAS, the first step was to attempt to find employment in Australia for the applicant. If that were achieved, the applicant had to be informed and, at the same time, an application for an immigration permit sent to the Australian Government in Canberra. In most cases the required landing money (£200) also had to be found. Once the landing permit was finally issued by the government authorities, it had to be sent to the applicant. All of this consumed a great deal of time. However, beginning the journey to Australia immediately was still impossible, because in many cases a passage by ship had to be booked months in advance. Consequently, not only the refugee but also his prospective new employer was subjected to a test of patience with an uncertain outcome.

The Lutheran Immigration Aid Society reported continuously on the steps required, the progress made, its mode of operation, the requests received, offers of employment, immigration permits, arrivals in Australia and letters of gratitude in both the English-language magazine of UELCA, the *Lutheran Herald*, and in the German language *Kirchen-Blatt*. The reports in both publications were largely identical, but as no names were mentioned, it is not possible to know personal fates. Even the numbers cited do not allow

firm conclusions, because the periods referred to are not known. For example, in a report from 16 January 1939 it is stated: 'The LIAS is dealing at present with over fifty cases. Of these there are several family cases … Three young persons are expected to leave during this month; five are on their way.'

These reports were always accompanied by fresh appeals for collaboration and support in the form of offers of employment, donations and loans and became ever more urgent as the situation in Germany for those hoping to leave the country deteriorated steadily. At the end of September 1938 it was reported: 'Father Bodelschwingh once said, "Hurry up, brethren, otherwise they will die" … This applies here.' In November 1938 the request was underlined with the well-known words of Jesus, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me (Matthew 25: 40)'. In early 1939, by citing the words of Jesus, 'I was a prisoner and ye came unto me' (Matthew 25: 36), attention was drawn to a string of cases in which the prospect of emigration would mean liberation from a concentration camp.

It is possible to retrace in some detail the fate of Horst Salomon, who died in 1994. From a Berlin Jewish family, he was brought up as a Christian and sent as a schoolboy initially to Denmark. When he was not able to remain there, he managed, with the assistance of GEFC and LIAS, to come to Australia, where he lived in Adelaide under the care of Mützelfeldt, until the latter arranged for him to be sent to a farm in the vicinity of Kadina on the Yorke Peninsula. After a few months his brother Ernst followed. The rather miserable conditions on the farm persuaded Horst Salomon to turn to Mützelfeldt, who encouraged him to persevere so as not to jeopardise assistance for others who might still be rescued from concentration camps. After the outbreak of war the young man applied in vain to join the army; he was subsequently employed in the armaments industry. For a time he was held by the authorities and interned until, finally, with his brother Ernst, he was allocated to a non-combatant logistics unit. They were accused of disloyalty because they were Germans. After the war Horst Salomon became a successful businessman.[6]

The work structures adopted by LIAS were very informal. Horst Salomon later recalled that Mützelfeldt had said to him: 'The

Lutheran Immigration Society is me'. This low level of organisation did however allow, in cooperation with the larger and more professional networks, an effective system of aid for 'non-Aryan' Lutherans in the period 1938–39, acting subsequently as a catalyst for a wide-ranging program of assistance for Jews. Nonetheless, a revival after the war along the lines suggested by Alfred Freund-Zinnbauer – in this instance no longer applied to immigrants of Jewish ancestry – did not take place.[7]

By organising aid packages for Germany after the war, Mützelfeldt helped to reduce privation among his family and his former colleagues. The deaconess Luise Fliedner, who lived through this period and who had succeeded Mützelfeldt as a director of the Theodor Fliedner School in Kaiserswerth, recalled: 'The postal services had only just recommenced when a stream of packages of gifts arrived here; they came from the Mützelfeldt household and from the most varied sources from within the Lutheran World Federation and were addressed to his friends at the school, to former colleagues, students, to those who had cared for his family in times of sickness, and they were a welcome relief in times of scarcity and need.'

## People and faith

Mützelfeldt came to Australia with quite specific expectations. He wanted above all to continue the life's work he had begun in Germany, but under changed circumstances. As an educator, he pursued the goal of working 'to affirm community and promote the people's wellbeing'. He approved a 'national state', in which 'the development of the individual's personality is limited only by the needs and wellbeing of the people as a whole' and which by renouncing 'internationalism and pacifism' gains living space for its people, by force if necessary. However, at the same time he rejected biologically based racial thinking.

Mützelfeldt had an unbounded admiration for the German people, shaped as they were by Christianity, and in particular by Lutheranism. He understood Catholicism as a competitor, if not a rival. Because he understood German culture and Protestant Christianity to be so tightly interwoven, he recognised that National Socialism's racial thinking was based on a materialistic world view.

Because of his philosophical approach, Mützelfeldt saw Judaism and German culture as clearly separate cultural and religious entities. In Mützelfeldt's view a Jew who followed the Christian faith had abandoned Judaism and become a member of a different community of people. It seemed to him that, by accepting the Christian faith, the previous Jewish identity was extinguished. Consequently, through his commitment to 'Christian non-Aryans' Mützelfeldt wanted to help a particular group of *Germans*. It cannot be regarded as a commitment to Jews.

He consistently made it his goal to preserve German culture among the 'non-Aryan' or not entirely 'Aryan' Christians in Germany by seeking to integrate them into the community of overseas Germans, in particular by strengthening and maintaining the German roots of the Protestant Church overseas. He himself provided a model in this regard. He did not question the fundamental value of the German character and spoke of 'my Germany beloved above all else, to which in all circumstances I shall remain forever true'.

However, his battle to maintain in an interconnected relationship the values of both – that is, the Lutheran faith and German language and culture – led him in reality to relativise German culture. He confessed: 'For me and my thinking on the Church it has become a matter of crucial significance that through God's wonderful leadership I am genuinely able to experience the ecumenical character of the Lutheran Church'. He does not appear to have followed further any paths towards a critical reconsideration of this. Nevertheless, the negative attitude towards everything English which grew out of his own national consciousness lost significance in the face of the practical circumstances with which he was confronted. And in his lecture 'Church and State', which he gave in 1946, he dealt with this topic without in any way enlarging on the notion of a community of the people encompassing all cultural, religious and social life. Rather, the starting point is an open society; the national idea no longer has a role.

Mützelfeldt's son Bruno (1918–2002) followed in his father's footsteps, going some distance further. Having married Helene Maria, the daughter of President Stolz, in 1947 he became pastor at the government migrant centre at Bonegilla, where by the following

year there were more than a thousand Lutherans. Later – from 1961 to 1980 – he was director of the Lutheran World Service in Geneva, a department of the Lutheran World Federation.

The German sensibility which had meant so much to Karl Mützelfeldt did not prevent him from devoting himself fully and absolutely to the life of the church and to tackling actual everyday needs pragmatically. Thus he performed an enduring service for the Lutheran Church in Australia by helping it to integrate more strongly and to develop its Lutheran identity independently from its German and American roots. In this regard he proved himself to be a gifted teacher and educator who promoted his students' development not by imposing his own convictions upon them but rather by encouraging them to think independently. Through the lively manner of his teaching, by which he encouraged his students' enthusiasm for their subject, he made a lasting impression on the next generation. On the fiftieth anniversary of his death a group of former students gathered in his memory.

*Translated by Peter Monteath*

## Notes

1 This chapter draws primarily from material held in private, church and state archives. A detailed presentation of these sources may be found in my book, *'Den christlichen Nichariern nimmt man alles': Der evangelische Pädagoge Karl Mützelfeldt angesichts der NS-Rassenpolitik*, LIT Verlag, Berlin, 2007.

2 Karl Mützelfeldt, 'Allerlei Missbrauch der Naturwissenschaft', *Schriften des Keplerbundes* 4, Naturwissenschaftlicher Verlag, Godesberg, 1909.

3 Karl Mützelfeldt, *Evangelisches Führertum und höhere Schule: Ein Weckruf an die deutsche evangelische Christenheit*, Wichern Verlag, Berlin, 1925.

4 Marie Gallison-Reuter, *Mein Leben in zwei Welten*, Eugen Salzer Verlag, Heilbronn, 1950, pp. 273–5. Hitler's response, as the author notes in her memoirs, was that he became 'more and more agitated', so she changed the topic.

5 See Ronald Raymond Feuerhahn, *Hermann Sasse as an Ecumenical Churchman*, rev. edn, Cambridge, Mass., 1994.

6 Salomon's reminiscences on his immigrant experiences are recorded in an interview given to Anthony Kaukas in 1983 ('Horst Salomon, 1920–1994, Immigrant's experiences: Extract from oral history', State Library of South Australia, OH 347/2/).

7 The Austrian pastor Alfred Freund-Zinnbauer, himself regarded in Germany as 'non-Aryan' because of his Jewish family, and his wife Helga came to Australia with the aid of Pastor Stolz and UELCA. They did not arrive until February 1940, after the outbreak of war. Interned some months later for most of the war, Freund-Zinnbauer devoted much of his energy after the war to helping migrants in Adelaide. See the contribution by Peter Monteath in this volume, also Erna Mayer-Lange, *Niemand hat grössere Liebe: Pastor Alfred Freund-Zinnbauer: Eine biographische Zusammenstellung aus persönlich Erlebtem, Dokumenten und Berichten von Zeitgenossen*, Lutheran Publishing House, Adelaide, 1989; Margaret Rilett, *And You Took Me In: Alfred and Helga Freund-Zinnbauer*, Lutheran Publishing House, Adelaide, 1992.