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A STUDY OF THE FOREIGN LABOR RECRUITMENT
PROGRAM OF NAZI GERMANY,
1942-1945

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

BOWLING GREEN, OHIO

June, 1953

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROBLEM AND PREVIEW OF THESIS

In 1945, before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, the leaders and the organizations of Nazi Germany were accused of four war crimes. These accusations ranged from the planning and executing an aggressive war, common conspiracy, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is perhaps unnecessary to recall that the Nuremberg trial represents the first time in history that legal proceedings have been instituted against leaders of an enemy nation before an international tribunal. It is perhaps equally supererogatory to state here that there are no exact precedents for the charges made by the American, British, French, and Russian prosecutors that to plot or wage a war of aggression is a crime for which individuals may be punished. For these reasons the conclusions of the Tribunal are obscure. The evidence presented has been questioned, as has the manner of presentation. Yet, in spite of these doubts, the Tribunal pronounced guilt on the German leaders and organizations.

Among the alleged crimes perpetrated under the aegis of Nazism, was the crime of "enslavement" of vast numbers of foreign laborers. The prosecutors felt that the Germans deliberately attempted to enslave and weaken the peoples of

Europe, deemed inferior by Nazi racialists. The Germans maintained the position that the concept of total war permits the utilization of conquered resources and manpower. The prosecutors also claimed that there were numerous crimes of inhumanity committed under the labor program. They contended that even if the utilization of labor by a conquering nation was not a crime, that the manner in which this labor was recruited and transported, was criminal in nature. It is the purpose of this thesis to attempt to determine the methods that Germany used in her foreign labor program from 1942-1945. These dates are significant because only in March of 1942 was the foreign labor program united under one agency with direct supervision by a single man.

The foreign labor program in all of its ramifications is such a vast and complex subject that it will be necessary to restrict this discussion to a number of specific problems. The major task will be to describe the organization and administration of the program as it was connected to the office of central Plenipotentiary General for Manpower. Other agencies used foreign labor, but these groups will only be discussed in relation to the central program. Besides the question of description of the program, an attempt will be made to discern the amount and magnitude of the alleged abuses and discrepancies that were in the program.

The basic source material of this study, will be three

sets of government documents; The Trial of the Major War Criminals,¹ by the International Military Tribunal, which is a record of the court proceedings and evidence submitted at Nuremberg; the Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression² series, which is the American case as presented at Nuremberg and the Trials of War Criminals Before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10,³ which is the record of the later trials of minor Nazi leaders. The importance of these volumes, for the historian, is that both sides of questions are presented. Since this material is of recent publication, little if any interpretive study has been made using this wealth of information. This thesis, then, will represent one of the initial attempts to organize and evaluate the material presented at Nuremberg.

Most of the documents in these sources have been translated from their original German. There seem to be, in many cases, questions as to the validity of the translations.

¹International Military Tribunal, Trial of the Major War Criminals, Vol. 1-42, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), hereafter cited as Major War Criminals.

²Office of United States Chief of Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. 1-15, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1946).

³Trials of War Criminals Before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. 1-15 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1949), hereafter cited as Trials Under Control Council Law No. 10.

In these instances, as far as possible, the present writer will include, in brackets, the original German. This will help to minimize the effects of translation.

In a study of this type there is always the question of terminology. Many of the legal controversies at Nuremberg were over questions of definition. For the purposes of this paper, it would be best at the outset to define a number of these vexing words.

Foreign labor. Foreign labor was any labor, other than native German labor, which had been recruited or had volunteered to work in the Reich. This also included any prisoners of war that worked in any capacity other than required by international law, i.e., normal cleaning of camp area and agriculture.⁴ This use of foreign labor by Germany was clearly illegal under the fourth Hague Convention.⁵

⁴Trials Under Control Council Law No. 10, p. 471. The Hague Convention formulated rules which closely defined work, for prisoners of war. Prisoners might work provided their work was not dangerous or associated with the enemy war effort. This clause only applied to non-commissioned men. For further information, see Articles 27, 31, and 32 of the Geneva Convention.

⁵Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 451, quotes Article 52 of the fourth Hague Convention, as authorizing the requisitioning of services by an army of occupation under four conditions:

1. The rendering of services can be demanded only for the needs of the army of occupation. All requisitions made for the general economic needs of the occupying power are thus forbidden.

2. Services demanded by way of requisition must not entail an obligation to take part in military operations against the country of those rendering them....

3. Services rendered in a given area must be in proportion to its economic resources....

4. Finally, labor requisitions must, under the provision...of the occupation authority who has signed the requisition order. The transfer of conscripted workers from one part of the occupied area to another and, even more, their deportation to the country of the occupying power are prohibited.

Arbeitseinsatz. The Arbeitseinsatz was the main agency in the Reich which recruited and placed foreign labor. Created in 1942 by Hitler, it was to facilitate the control of all labor needs in the nation.

Irregular labor. Irregular labor was any labor recruited or used by any agency other than the Arbeitseinsatz.

Total war concept. Total war was the concept of complete utilization of all manpower and resources at a nation's disposal for the maximum military effort.

Thus, after limiting the problem of this thesis and defining some of its troublesome terms, there remains the question of organization. For the most part, this thesis will be organized chronologically. In Chapter II, the Arbeitseinsatz's establishment and its relationship to the Nazi philosophy will be discussed. The earlier attempts to organize foreign labor will also be noted. In Chapter III, careful attention will be given to the broad administrative planning of the program. In Chapter IV, the execution of the program will be discussed from the viewpoint of the higher echelons of the German government. Because of the uneven execution of the labor program, Chapter V will describe the workings of the program in various countries. Chapter VI will be primarily concerned with the difficulties in the program; the interferences of other agencies in relation to

labor problem and the abuses in the program. The last chapter will summarize the thesis and its conclusions and suggest an evaluation of the effectiveness of the German foreign labor program.

CHAPTER II

NAZI PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND AND EARLIER ATTEMPTS
AT FOREIGN LABOR RECRUITMENT

The concept of complete utilization of labor on a compulsory basis was nothing new to German thought. The National Socialist doctrine, by the pre-eminence which it gave to the idea of the State, by the contempt in which it held individuals and personal rights, contained a conception of work which agreed with the principles of its general philosophy.

For it, work was not one of the forms of the manifestation of individual personalities; it was a duty imposed by the community on its members.

The relationship of labor, according to National Socialist ideas was not a simple contractual relationship between the worker and his employer; it was a living phenomenon in which the worker became a cog in the National Socialist machine for collective production. The conception of compulsory labor was thus, for National Socialism, necessarily complementary to the conception of work itself.¹

Compulsory labor service was first of all imposed on the German youth. German labor service was instituted by a

¹Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 438.

law of June 26, 1935,² by order of Hitler and Wilhelm Frick, Minister of Interior.³ This labor conscription was for all German youths, male or female, of eighteen years. Before the war the minimum term of service was half a year; since 1940 it was one year. The work performed in the labor service campus does not compete with private industry. Work projects include drainage of land, and the construction or improvement of highways. In addition, the young men received a semi-military training, while young women were trained for tasks which were useful for the army in peace and war. But the main emphasis was on heavy labor.

From 1939 the mobilization and placement of workers was added to the compulsory labor service. Hermann Göring in his capacity as Delegate for the Four Year Plan and Dr. Mansfeld of the Reich Labor Service were the chief organizers of domestic labor.

The idea of utilization of vast numbers of foreign workers was conceived before Germany went to war. On May 23, 1939, a meeting was held in Hitler's study at the Reich

²As quoted in Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 439, from the Reichsgesetzblatt, Part I, page 769.

³Wilhelm Frick, the first Nazi to attain high political office in Germany as Thuringian Minister of the Interior, was floor leader of the Nazis in the Reichstag and became Reich's Minister of the Interior on Hitler's assumption of power in 1933. In 1942, he was appointed Protector of Bohemia-Moravia. He was hanged in Nuremberg.

Chancellery. Goring, Raeder,⁴ and Keitel⁵ were present.

According to the minutes of this meeting, Hitler stated that he intended to attack Poland at the first suitable opportunity. He further stated,

...If fate brings us into contact with the West, the possession of extensive areas in the East will be advantageous. We shall be able to rely upon record harvests, even less in time of war than in peace.

The population of non-German areas will perform no military service, and will be available as a source of labor.⁶

Hitler himself recognized on several occasions that the recruitment of foreign workers was in accordance with National Socialist doctrine. On November 9, 1941, Hitler in a speech reported by the Volkischer Beobachter,⁷ he said,

The territory which now works for us contains more than 250 million men, but the territory in Europe which works indirectly for this battle includes now more than 350 million.

⁴Grand Admiral Erich Raeder was born April 24, 1876. He was Supreme Commander of the Navy. Raeder received a sentence of life imprisonment from the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg in 1945.

⁵Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, born 1882, an officer from World War I, became chief of the Wehrmacht office of the Minister of War in 1935, succeeding General Walter von Reichenau, who had applied for an active command. Throughout World War II Keitel was chief of the Supreme Command of the German armed forces. He was hanged in Nuremberg in 1946 as a major war criminal.

⁶As quoted in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, pp. 798-99.

⁷Volkischer Beobachter was the official party newspaper edited by Alfred Rosenberg.

As far as German territory is concerned, the territory occupied by us and that which we have under our administration, there is no doubt that we shall succeed in harnessing every man for this work.⁸

Intimately connected with the use of foreign labor was the Nazi theory of racialism. The Nazi theory of racialism held that the fundamental reality was the German race. Germans as individuals would not exist and could not justify their existence except insofar as they belonged to the race or Volkstum, to the popular mass, which represented and amalgamated all Germans. Race was the matrix of the German people; proceeding therefrom this people lived and developed as an organism.

Said Alfred Rosenberg,⁹

Peoples whose health is dependent on their blood do not know individualism as a criterion on values any more than they recognize universalism. Individualism and universalism in the absolute sense and historically speaking, are the ideological concepts of decadence.¹⁰

⁸As quoted in Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 440.

⁹Alfred Rosenberg was the Nazi party Reichsleiter for ideological indoctrination. He was one of the bitterest opponents of Christianity and worked for its complete abolition in Germany. He was born in the Baltic States and educated in the University of Riga.

As the German armies swept eastward in 1941 after Germany's declaration of war on Soviet Russia, Hitler appointed Rosenberg Reich Minister for the Eastern Occupied Areas. Rosenberg was hanged in Nuremberg after the International Military Tribunal found him guilty of having committed major war crimes.

¹⁰Alfred Rosenberg, Der Mythos des 20 Jahrhunderts, (München: Hoheneinchen-Verlag, 1930), p. 539, Translation Mine.

Viewing man from this position, the racial theory of Nazism would classify nations and peoples into two groups: those who by their blood could be distinguished as superior men and those who are inferior. With this in mind the Nazis attempted to weaken and destroy people, deemed inferior or potentially hostile to Nazism. One of the methods used to accomplish this aim was the labor program.

The theory of the "master race", particularly underlay the Nazi labor policy in the East. This was expressed by Erich Koch, Reichskommissar for the Ukraine, at a meeting of the National Socialist Party on March 5, 1943 in Kiev:

1. We are the master race and must govern hard but just. . . .

2. I will draw the very last out of this country. I did not come to spread bliss. I have come to help the Führer. The population must work, work, and work again . . . for some people are getting excited, that the population may not get enough to eat. The population cannot demand that, one has only to remember what our heroes were deprived of in Stalingrad. . . . We definitely did not come here to give manna. We have come here to create the basis for victory.

3. We are a master race, which must remember that the lowliest German worker is racially and biologically a thousand times more valuable than the population here.¹¹

Hitler expressed his belief in the doctrine of racial superiority in this manner,

¹¹As quoted in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, pp. 798-99.

The distance between the lowest human being still worthy of this name, and our higher races, is greater than that between the lowest type of mankind and the best educated monkey.¹²

At Posen, in October of 1943, Himmler delivered a speech to a group of SS Generals in which he said,

. . .What happens to a Russian, to a Czech, does not interest me in the slightest. What the nations can offer in the way of good blood of our type, we will take, if necessary by kidnapping their children (die Kinder rauben) and raising them here with us. Whether nations live in prosperity or starve to death interests me only in so far as we need them as slaves for our Kultur: otherwise, it is of no interest to me. Whether 10,000 Russian females fall down from exhaustion while digging an anti-tank traps interests me only insofar as the ditch for Germany is finished. . . .¹³

Having discussed in part the intellectual background for the labor program, it is now possible to show how this idea of racialism and labor was used before the formation of the Arbeitseinsatz under Sauckel in 1942.

In 1936, when Hitler announced the inception of the new Four Year Plan before the Party Congress, he placed the execution of that program in Herman Goring's hands. Goring was to take all steps necessary to accomplish his task, and he was authorized to issue decrees of ordinances and general administrative directives. He was also empowered to receive reports from all governmental agencies, including the highest

¹²As quoted in Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 408.

¹³Major War Criminals, Vol. XXIX, pp. 122-23.

agencies of the Reich and from all party offices, their departments and attached organizations, and issue orders to them. Therefore the recruitment and allocation of manpower and determination of working conditions were included in his jurisdiction.¹⁴

Under the administration of the Four Year Plan, G"oring established an Office for the Allocation of Labor. Dr. Syrup, former President of the Reich Labor Office, was appointed as head of this office. Directly under Syrup, was the Ministerial Director, Dr. Mansfeld. Because of the illness of Dr. Syrup, Dr. Mansfeld functioned as the real head of this office. Basicly, Mansfeld was to coordinate the efforts of all German administration offices connected with labor. The main objective of Mansfeld was to insure an adequate supply of both domestic and foreign labor for the realization of the Four Year Plan.¹⁵

Under this administration of G"oring and Mansfeld, the first recruitment of foreign labor took place. With the conquest of Poland in 1939, G"oring ordered the recruitment of one million Polish workers. This fact was proven by Hans

¹⁴Major War Criminals, Vol. IV, p. 499.

¹⁵Under the Ministry of Labor, there was an office VI for European Labor Supply. This office was the only user of foreign labor until 1940.

Frank,¹⁶ the Governor General of Poland, when he reported in January of 1940, to Goring on his directive for the:

Supply and transportation of at least one million male and female agricultural and industrial workers to the Reich--among them at least 750,000 agricultural workers of which at least 50 per cent must be women in order to guarantee agricultural production in the Reich and as a replacement for industrial workers in the Reich.¹⁷

The care and control of these Polish laborers was under Himmler and Goring, therefore they established a number of disciplinary regulations for Polish civilian workers. These regulations provided that Polish workers were to have special photo cards, badges and identification papers. They also provided for curfews, restrictions on the consumption of alcohol, etc.¹⁸

Relationships between the Germans and the Poles were serious problems to Himmler. The pure German blood might be polluted. Therefore he ordered, in March of 1940, immediate arrest of German nationals who had sexual intercourse with male or female workers of Polish nationality, or who committed

¹⁶Hans Frank was another of Hitler's earliest adherents, in fact, he defended Hitler during the numerous political trials in which Hitler became involved. He wrote some sixty volumes of diary which proved most incriminating for him during the Nuremberg Trial.

¹⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 926.

¹⁸Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 254.

other improprieties, or carried on love affairs.¹⁹ In order to curb this situation, brothels with Polish girls were to be set up simultaneously with billets for male workers.²⁰

Male and female civilian workers of Polish nationality had to obtain written consent of the competent local police authorities before they could use public conveyances. Poles were not permitted to visit German cultural, church or social functions. But Himmler asked the Reich Minister for Church Affairs to issue the orders necessary for the spiritual welfare of the Poles, and above all for the holding of special church services.²¹

The pay and working conditions for the Poles were, for the most part, proportional to the type of work which was done. Polish agricultural workers' pay was lower than that of German workers, but for Polish industrial labor the working conditions were to be equal unless special provisions were issued. Also Polish laborers could send their savings to their home country.²²

The extent to which force was used in recruiting these one million Polish workers and the results achieved are moot

¹⁹Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 255.

²⁰Ibid., p. 259.

²¹Ibid., p. 267.

²²Ibid., p. 265.

points. Again Frank's diary offers much insight into the program. On March 6, 1940, Reichshauptamtsleiter, Dr. Frauendorfer reported that 73,000 Polish workers had been sent to the Reich; at that time 4,000 men were being transported daily. Besides, numerous letters from the agricultural workers to their families had already come from the Reich, in which the Polish agricultural workers expressed themselves very gratefully concerning their treatment in Germany.²³

On March 7, 1940, Brigadier General Buehrmann stated, at a conference discussing the shipment of Polish agricultural workers into the Reich, that Polish workers would be sent into the Reich under all circumstances, and, if necessary, a compulsory service should be enforced upon them. He also recommended to Frank, that the Governor General, for the time being, should not make a decision for the introduction of a compulsory service or employment of force against the Polish agricultural workers.

Also in March 1940, Dr. Frauendorfer reported to Frank that 81,477 Polish agricultural workers were sent to the Reich--of which 56,721 were men, and 24,756 women. Since February, 12,154 special trains had been sent off; that was the utmost that could have been accomplished at that time. To these figures just mentioned, there were added 42,000

²³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 887.

workers, who had been already in the Reich so that the number was increased to 130,000. Frank then stated that the 480,000 prisoners of war should be included in the sum of one million. He went on to make the point about recruitment, that on account of the railroads and the highway conditions it was not at that moment possible to do anything by force; also there were not sufficient police forces there at his disposal to carry such measures out. If any force were exercised, then it would be applied to workers who were concentrated in urban districts rather than rural areas, for these workers could be obtained with the minimum amount of effort.²⁴

On March 12, 1940, Frank expressed the numerous difficulties confronting him. The agricultural workers had too many forged medical certificates or statements, which purported to say that they were not fit for labor service. Other workers took refuge in the woods. Often the recruiter was in danger, for just some time before one of the German officers was fired upon. Beside that, the Poles would refuse to report to railroad stations where they had already been assigned.

All of the above evasions could be traced back to a psychosis of anxiety which affected the rural population,

²⁴Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 886.

without mentioning that the Poles might have organized themselves in the meantime.

In spite of all these difficulties, Frank still thought that in view of the propaganda, especially in America, any use of force should, if possible, be avoided. However, light pressure could be exerted by stopping the payment of unemployment relief for those categories which were concerned.²⁵

On March 16, 1940, Frank remarked that, while in Berlin, urgent demands had been made that Polish farm workers should be sent to the Reich in greater number. Frank made the statement that he, if it was demanded from him, could of course exercise force in some such manner: he could have the police surround a village and get the men and women in question out by force, and then send them to Germany. But he told Berlin, that he much preferred retaining unemployment compensation rather than using force.

However, these peaceful methods were changed. Frank revealed in his diary notes for May 10, 1940, that under the pressure from the Reich it had now been decreed that compulsion might be exercised in view of the fact that sufficient manpower was not voluntarily available for service inside the German Reich. This compulsion might mean the possibility of arrest of male and female Poles. Because of these measures

²⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 889.

a certain disquietude had developed which might produce difficulties. Up to that time only 160,000 Poles had been secured for work. However, great difficulties had to be overcome, therefore Frank considered it advisable to cooperate with district and town chiefs in the execution of compulsion so that he could be sure from the start that this action would be reasonably expedient. The arrest of young Poles when leaving church services or the movie would bring too much nervousness of the Poles. Generally speaking, Frank had no objections at all to the "rubbish capable of work yet often loitering about, being snatched from the streets." The best method for this however, would be the organization of a raid; and it would be absolutely justifiable to stop a Pole in the street and to question him as to what he was doing, where he was working, et cetera.²⁶

By 1941, the labor program reached new proportions, for most of Europe had been conquered, and the labor program was applied in these occupied countries. In an effort to eliminate employment of all German women, an idea of Hitler, which proved to be impractical under the high rate of production, an increasing number of prisoners of war were to be used. At that time, of the five million prisoners of war, only two million were employed in industries. Generally

²⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, pp. 884-85.

the employment of prisoners of war was in accordance with their nationality:

Frenchmen: Individual employment, transposition into the armament industry.

Belgians: Individual employment, transposition into the armament industry.

Serbs: Preferably agriculture.

Poles: If feasible, no individual employment.²⁷

This transposition of French prisoners of war to the armament industry, was ordered by Göring, August 26, 1941. The directive was to cover all Frenchmen not then employed in armament industry and provided that there were to be assigned to such industries, especially the airplane industry. Gaps in manpower supply resulting therefrom would be filled by Russian prisoners of war. The transfer of French prisoners of war was to be accomplished by October 1, 1941. The Russian prisoners of war could be utilized only in larger concentrated groups under the well-known, tougher employment conditions, such as mining. In the civilian field the regional labor offices would have to determine those work projects where French prisoners of war could be withdrawn and replaced by Soviet groups. At that time no new additional assignment of Soviet prisoners of war could be considered. The Soviets were to be a labor pool, from which replacements were drawn

²⁷Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 396.

for French prisoners of war who were being transposed into the armament industries. Similarly, French prisoners of war were no longer to be channeled into agriculture and forestry, but exclusively into armament industry.

All branches of economic life employing French prisoners of war, with the exception of armament industry and mining, were to be encompassed in determining those work projects where exchanges were feasible. The absolute necessity that Soviet prisoners of war replacements be employed in larger concentrated groups, required, among other things special checking of all larger construction projects of any kind (including construction of the Reich railroads, navigational and cultivation projects). Reich Minister Todt²⁸ in his organization, had consented to the exchange of French prisoners of war employed by the Reich super highways. In agriculture the exchange could naturally be affected only in the case of large estates (especially estates with outlying farms).

Exchange of prisoners of war frequently encountered resistance. The factories concerned were reluctant to exchange the trained and proven French prisoners of war for

²⁸Dr. Fritz Todt constructed the Reichsautobahnen, or superhighways that proved so advantageous to the Allied armies as they swept through Germany. Next he constructed the gigantic Siegfried Line, or Westwall, and later started the Ostwall. In 1941 Hitler created a new Ministry of Munitions and appointed Todt to head it. The labor battalions which built the fortifications and followed directly behind the combat elements of the German Army to repair bridges and roads were called the Organisation Todt, or OT.

Soviet ones. In such cases the labor offices had to draw the factories attention to the necessities of the state, and to the directives of the Reich Marshal.

As soon as the regional labor offices had determined the work projects affected by the exchange, they were to inform the Service Commands Headquarters, indicating how many French prisoners of war were being made available and how many Soviet prisoners of war would be needed to replace the French ones. Without express consent of the Reich Labor Ministry not more than 120 Soviet prisoners of war could be requested for each 100 French prisoners of war made available. Since the determining factors in the allocation of Soviet prisoners of war were military and counter-intelligence considerations, final decision about the exchange rested with the Service Commands Military Districts Headquarters.

The first 100,000 French prisoners of war to be transposed from other industries to armament industries, were to be channeled into the aircraft industry. This meant that where French prisoners of war had already been employed in other types of work, now they were going to be shifted to war industries.²⁹

On November 7, 1941, Göring issued more directives as to the use of Russian prisoners of war in various areas. In

²⁹Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, pp. 392-93.

the interior zones,³⁰ Russians were to be used in industries of all types. In zones of operations they were to be employed particularly in building roads and railroads, in clearing work, clearing of mines, and in building airports. This would help to dissolve to a great extent German construction battalions, for German skilled workers belonged to the war industry, "it is not their task to shovel and to break stones, the Russian is there for that."³¹

In the Soviet Occupied Territories and in Poland, Russians were to be utilized in agriculture and coal mining. Within the Reich, the Russians were to be used according to the requirements. Generally there was this order of priorities:

Mining.

Railroad maintenance (including repair shops and construction of vehicles.)

War Industry (tank, artillery pieces, airplane parts.)

Agriculture.

Building Industry.

Large scale shops.

³⁰Interior zones were areas of Russia which were fifty to one hundred miles behind the front lines. They were under the Wehrmacht's control. It is interesting to note that the Germans were deeply impressed by Soviet industrialization and were quick to use it.

³¹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 835.

Special units for urgent, occasional and emergency work.³²

The Russian prisoners of war were to be only privates or lower noncommissioned officers.³³ These men were to be selected for work in Germany outside the Reich on the basis of physical fitness and mental indoctrination.³⁴

The utilization of labor in the Eastern Occupied territories was placed under Göring's Central Labor Office by a directive of November 14, 1941. This directive stated that all Russians who were not under the armed forces (prisoners of war and free workers) should be centrally directed by one office in the Reich, including the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, the Government General of Poland, as well as in the Reich Commissariats of Soviet Occupied Territories.³⁵

In review then, it has been shown how the foreign labor program agreed in principle with Nazi philosophy. It

³²Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 394.

³³It was a matter of principle that officers and commissars were not to be used, for the Germans considered them too imbued with Marxism.

³⁴For employment in the Reich certain racial groups were not allowed to work there. For example, prisoners of war of Asiatic origin (such as Mongolians) were by no means to be transported into the Reich. Moreover, only Russian speaking prisoners would be utilized because of the possibility of Bolshevik propaganda. The Germans were extremely sensitive about this point. Hitler always claimed Germany lost World War I, because of the Jews and Marists.

³⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 834.

has also been indicated that the Nazis after conquering a nation, used both their prisoners of war and civilian labor. Before 1942, the labor program was directed by Goring's Central Labor Office for the Four Year Plan. Poland was the first nation conquered, and immediately Goring ordered the recruitment of 1,000,000 Polish workers. Later in that same year with the fall of France, French prisoners of war were directed into the German economy. In 1941, with the occupation of the Balkens and the invasion of Russia great numbers of Eastern prisoners of war and civilians were recruited for labor in Germany. Still in comparison with Sauckel's later programs of foreign labor, the attempts by Goring between 1940-42 were small and incomplete.

CHAPTER III

THE PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION
OF THE FOREIGN LABOR PROGRAM

By 1942, the conditions of the war and general economy had changed radically. The utilization of prisoners of war and eastern foreign labor was not enough. In the early part of 1942, after the nearly fatal battles on the Eastern Front in the winter of 1941-42, it became evident that Germany's existence was at stake. Whereas up to that time no wholesale employment of foreign labor had been necessary, new equipment now had to be produced immediately. The German labor reserves were depleted due to the drafting of two million workers for services at the front. The employment of unskilled women and young people could not immediately relieve the situation. During the later stages of the war, especially because of aerial warfare, armament demands increased the employment of women and young people; the old production level could no longer be maintained. The means were exhausted.

The official figures which Sauckel made public in his speech in Posen in February 1943 proved that already in 1939, at the beginning of the second World War, more than twice as many women were being employed than at the end of the first World War. The number of women employed in Nazi industry in 1943 had increased by another two million to a

total of ten million. This figure exceeded the entire number of male and female workers in the armament industry at the end of the first World War. Yet in spite of that there was a shortage of labor. This was confirmed by the statements of Speer at the Nuremberg trials. If Germany was to continue the war, foreign labor was needed under all circumstances.¹

The crux of the matter did not concern the problem of female labor, where by introducing additional home labor the limit was attained, but that of procuring specialists and men for heavy labor. Among the ten million German women who were at work, there were also the wives of front-line officers and others from similar classes of society.²

The notion that in Britain the women were conscripted for work in a higher degree than in Germany is wrong. In Germany women up to 45 and later 50 years of age had to work and they actually worked in factories and did not have jobs of a social kind. Even school children beginning with the age of ten were required to work, and from 16 years onward they were switched to regular labor or occupied in other services. Families were disrupted; schools and universities were closed. Pupils and students worked in the armament

¹Major War Criminals, Vol. XXVII, pp. 573-612.

²Ibid., Vol. XVIII, p. 476.

industry, and even the wounded could not continue their studies. Speer's reserve of workers did not exist.

On January 29, 1942, Dr. Mansfeld, in order to increase mobilization of manpower for the German Reich from occupied territories and to prepare for mobilization by force, prepared the foundation of the labor program which followed in March of that year. Dr. Mansfeld pointed out, that the labor shortage had been rendered more acute by the draft for the Wehrmacht. Also there was to be an increase in armament production in the German Reich. This rendered it necessary that manpower for service in the Reich be recruited from the occupied territories to a much greater extent than heretofore, in order to relieve the shortage of labor. Therefore, any and all methods must be adopted which made possible the transportation, without exception and delay, for employment in the Reich, of manpower in the occupied territories which is unemployed or which can be released for use in Germany after most careful screening.

This mobilization was to be first of all, as heretofore, carried out on a voluntary basis. For this reason, the recruitment effort for employment in the German Reich was to be strengthened considerably. But if satisfactory results were not obtained, the German authorities who were functioning in the occupied territories would have to be able to exert any pressure necessary to support the voluntary

recruiting of labor for employment in Germany. Accordingly, to the extent that would be necessary, the regulations in force in the occupied territories in regard to shift in employment and withdrawal of unemployment compensation to work, were to be tightened. Supplementary regulations concerning shift in employment had above all to ensure that older personnel who were freed must be exchanged for younger personnel to make up for it, so that the latter would be made available for the Reich. A far-reaching decrease in the amount of relief granted by Public Welfare would also be effected in order to induce laborers to accept employment in the Reich. Unemployment relief must be set so low that the amount, in comparison with the average wages in the Reich and the possibilities there for sending remittances home, would serve as an inducement to accept employment in the Reich. When refusal to accept work in the Reich was not justified, the compensation would be reduced to an amount barely enough for subsistence, or even be cancelled. In this connection, partial withdrawal of ration cards and assignment to particularly heavy obligatory labor would be considered.³

However, warned Dr. Mansfeld, all misgivings had to give way before the necessity of supplying the deficit in

³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 831.

manpower caused by excessive draft calls into the Armed Forces, in order to avoid detriment to the armament industry. For this purpose the forcible mobilization of workers from the occupied territories could not be disregarded, in case the voluntary recruiting was unsuccessful. The mere possibility of mobilization by force would, in many cases, make recruiting easier.⁴

Therefore, Mansfeld asked all agencies immediately to take any measures in their district which would promote the employment of workers in the German Reich on a voluntary basis. He also requested them to prepare for publication regulations applying to forced mobilization of laborers from their territory for Germany, so that they could be decreed at once in case recruiting on a voluntary basis would not have the desired result, that is, relief of the manpower shortage in the Reich.⁵

With the possibility of heavier recruitment of foreign labor already expressed by Dr. Mansfeld, the German government in March of 1942, decided to activate this plan. The Führer called in Fritz Sauckel⁶ to offer him this gigantic

⁴Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 831.

⁵Ibid., p. 832.

⁶Fritz Sauckel, Gauleiter for Thuringia, was regarded as one of the toughest of the Old Guard Nazis, which explains why he was selected for this job. The treatment of labor from occupied countries was the reason the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal found him guilty, and had him hanged.

job of supplying labor for the nation. At this conference, Hitler briefly explained to Sauckel the motives which prompted his decision. Hitler described the situation at that time, at the end of the winter of 1941-42. Many hundreds of German locomotives, almost all the mechanized armed units, tanks, planes, and mechanical weapons had become useless as a result of the catastrophe of that abnormally hard winter. Hundreds of thousands of German soldiers had suffered terribly from the cold; many divisions had lost their arms and supplies. The Führer explained that if the race with the enemy for new arms, new munitions, and new dispositions of forces was not won, the Soviets would be as far as the Channel by the next winter.⁷

At that conference the question of international law was discussed in some detail. Hitler told Sauckel that the workers already in the Reich were to stay, for he had left half the French Army free and at home, and he had released the greater part of the Belgian Army and the whole of the Dutch Army from captivity, but under certain circumstances he might have to recall these prisoners of war for military reasons. As for Sauckel, he need not worry about international law, for in France and Belgium, the Arbeitseinsatz would work through the military commander and under the presidency of

⁷Major War Criminals, Vol. XIV, p. 622.

the German Ambassador in Paris, who would make the proper agreements with the French Government. With regard to the East, Hitler told him that Russia had not adhered to the Geneva Convention, and so Germany for her part was not bound by it. Hitler further said that in the Baltic countries and in other regions Soviet Russia had also claimed workers or people and that in addition about three million Chinese were working in Soviet Russia. As regards Poland, just as in the case of other countries, it was a case of total capitulation and on the grounds of this capitulation Germany was justified in introducing German regulations.⁸

With these vexing questions answered, Sauckel agreed to the job. On March 21, 1942, Hitler accordingly, appointed him Plenipotentiary General for the utilization of labor (Generalbevollmächtigter fver den Arbeitseinsatz). Reichsstaathalter and Gauleiter Sauckel was to carry out his task within the framework of the Four Years Plan. In that capacity he was to be directly responsible to the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan.⁹

Sections III, V, and VI of the Reich Labor Ministry, together with their subordinate authorities, were placed at the disposal of Sauckel for the accomplishment of his

⁸Major War Criminals, Vol. XIV, p. 623.

⁹Ibid., p. 617.

task.¹⁰ Section III of the Reich Ministry of Labor controlled labor laws, labor production, factory inspection, social administration, and wage and economic policy. Section V was in charge of unemployment assistance, and placement of both foreign and domestic workers. Section VI was the European Office for Labor Supply which had formerly cooperated with other nations in the procurement of transient workers. Germany before the war, needed many transit workers to help with her harvest, especially Polish workers. This order of the Führer in effect stripped the Labor ministry of most of its authority, and in turn placed it under the immediate supervision of the Four Year Plan.

In pursuance of the Führer's Decree, Göring, on March 27, 1942, abolished his manpower sections (Geschäftsgruppen Arbeitseinsatz). Their duties (recruitment and allocation of manpower, regulations for labor conditions) (Arbeitsbedingungen) were to be taken over by the Plenipotentiary General for Arbeitseinsatz.¹¹

In effect then, the regular Ministry of Labor, a cabinet position, and Göring labor offices were merged into one central agency under Sauckel. This placed the entire

¹⁰As quoted from the 1942 Reichsgesetzblatt, Part 1, p. 129, in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 182.

¹¹Ibid., p. 183.

field of labor both domestic and foreign labor under one office with far-reaching powers, directly under Goring and Hitler.

Thus, as a part of the Four Year Plan, Sauckel was to submit any new legislation or where existing laws required modification, to Goring or Hitler directly.¹²

Sauckel was also to have at his disposal, the right to issue instructions to the higher Reich authorities, their branches and the Party offices, and their associated organisms and also to the Reichprotector, the General-Governor of Poland, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Bohemia-Moravia, and heads of the civil administrations.¹³

When Sauckel took office, he found the situation somewhat like this: his problem was to replace with suitably skilled workers those men who had to be freed from industry for drafting into the Wehrmacht. Moreover, he had to obtain new labor for the new war industries which had been set up for food production as well as for the productions of armament.

In no way was his task defined. Sauckel had no contact with Dr. Mansfeld, the former labor organizer. So Sauckel reasoned that at that time about twenty-three million

¹²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 82.

¹³Ibid., p. 183.

to twenty-four million native German workers were available in the Reich but had not yet been fully integrated into the war economy.¹⁴ Furthermore, there were the prisoners of war who had not yet been assigned to war industry whose availability, however, was dependent on the army authorities. With these people in mind, Sauckel drew up a program which included a levee en masse, so to speak, of German women and young people. This program was rejected by Hitler. Hitler had nothing against the program as such if there was time but felt that in view of the situation he could not wait for such German women to become trained and experienced. Germany by that time had employed ten million German women, who had never done industrial or mechanical work. Foreign labor had to be used.¹⁵

Thereupon Sauckel drew up another program which was accepted. This program's aims were defined by Sauckel, as follows:

. . . . to use all the rich and tremendous sources, conquered and secured for us by our fighting Armed Forces under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, for the armament of the Armed Forces and also for the nutrition of the Homeland. The raw-materials as well as the fertility of the conquered territories and their human labor power are to be used completely and conscientiously to the profit of Germany and their allies.¹⁶

¹⁴Major War Criminals, Vol. XIV, p. 620.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 621-22.

¹⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 47.

With this aim in mind, all newly taken prisoners of war, from the territories of the West as well as of the East, actually in Germany, would have to be completely incorporated into the German armament and nutrition industries. Their production would have to be brought to the highest possible level. It must be emphasized, however, that an additional tremendous quantity of foreign labor had to be found for the Reich. The greatest pool for that purpose was the Occupied Territories of the East. Consequently, Sauckel labeled it an immediate necessity to use the human reserves of the conquered Soviet territory to the fullest extent. Should Germany not succeed in obtaining the necessary amount of labor on a voluntary basis, then she should immediately institute conscription or forced labor.¹⁷

On the other hand, one quarter of the total need for foreign labor could be procured in Europe's occupied territories West of Germany, according to existing possibilities.¹⁸

The complete employment of all prisoners of war as well as the use of a gigantic number of new foreign civilian workers, men and women, was to be an indisputable necessity for the solution of the mobilization of labor program in the war.

¹⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 52.

¹⁸Loc. cit.

The key to the program was;

All the men must be fed, sheltered and treated in such a way as to exploit them to the highest possible extent at the lowest conceivable degree of expenditure.¹⁹

Accordingly,

All action making the stay and work in Germany difficult and unnecessarily unbearable for the foreign workers and exceeding the restrictions and hardships imposed by the war must be avoided. We depend to a large extent on their good will and their production.

It is therefore only logical to make their stay and work in Germany as bearable as possible--without denying anything to ourselves.²⁰

The organization of the Arbeitseinsatz was to be extremely simple. The General plenipotentiary for Labor Allocation was to use with the help of the smallest personal staff of assistants, the existing party, state and economic institutions and assure the quickest success of his measures with the good will and the cooperation of all concerned.

On April 6, 1942, therefore Sauckel appointed the Gauleiter²¹ of the Nazi party as his plenipotentiaries for manpower within their respective Gaus.²²

¹⁹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 57.

²⁰Ibid., p. 58.

²¹Nazi Germany was divided into 45 Gaus or districts. Each Gau had a Gauleiter, who was the highest ranking party official, and also the highest civil official of the German government in his district. Thus, for example, Fritz Sauckel, who was the Gauleiter of Thuringia, was the head of the party in his district and also head of his civil government.

²²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 83.

Their task was to establish a harmonious cooperation of all agencies of the state, party, armed forces, and economy, charged with the problem of manpower and thus to create agreement between the different conceptions and requirements so as to obtain the highest efficiency in the field of manpower. It was considered that in the military districts, that were operational areas, it would be up to the Reich defense commissioner to guarantee cooperation between the civil authorities and the agencies of the Wehrmacht.

The presidents of the provincial labor offices and their staffs were directed to be at the disposal of the Gauleiter for information and to advise and fulfill the suggestions and demands of the Gau leaders for the purpose of improving manpower arrangements within the framework of the existing regulations, laws, and orderly business procedures.

In general the recruitment of foreign labor in the areas occupied by Germany in allied, friendly, or neutral states was to be carried out either by Arbeitseinsatz commissioners or by the competent Germany military or civil agencies for the tasks of labor mobilization. In France and Italy the competent civil agencies were the labor offices. In occupied territories, other than Russia, the German civil government had appointed labor offices through which Sauckel acted. In the Soviet Union where there was a military government, of course all recruitment was in charge of the army.

Sauckel's commissioners in allied, friendly, or neutral foreign countries were to be the former foreign agencies of chief division V of the Reich Labor Ministry.

Other agencies, organizations or persons were not allowed to recruit foreign labor. Any exceptions needed Sauckel's express approval. He was also to determine whether, in what way, and to what extent enterprises, organizations, businesses, and administrations were to take part in the recruitment of foreign labor. Those taking part in the recruitment were subordinate, during the carrying out of recruiting, to Sauckel's commissioners or the competent military or civil agencies.²³

The care of foreign labor was to be carried out, up to the Reich border by Sauckel's commissioners or in the occupied areas, by the competent military or civil labor mobilization agencies. Care of labor would be carried out in cooperation with the respective competent foreign or German military organization.

Within the Reich, arrangements for the care of foreign labor was entrusted to the German Labor Front in the cases of non-agricultural workers.²⁴ In the cases of agricultural workers, the Reich Food Administration was the competent

²³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. V, p. 756.

²⁴Ibid., p. 757.

authority.²⁵

The actual recruiting was to be conducted in the following manner. First, before attempting any recruiting, complete information was to be given to the population, through the press of the land where recruiting took place or through other means of publicity explaining for what type of work the workers were needed. Second, the foreign workers were to be informed in detail at the time of recruiting about the pay and work conditions of the firm in the German Reich, to which they were to go so far as this was at all possible. In this regard, information on the approximate amount of pay deductions was also to be given, so that persons recruited received as clear a picture as possible of their actual earnings in the Reich. In no case were the persons recruited to be given promises which were false or impossible to fulfill.²⁶

The persons recruited were also to be informed exactly on the existing possibilities existing for transfer of savings from pay.²⁷

The foreign workers were to be informed at the time of recruiting that the living conditions in the German Reich

²⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. V, p. 758.

²⁶Loc. cit.

²⁷Ibid., p. 759.

were better than in the rest of Europe. In this connection, however, in order to avoid any misunderstanding it was to be pointed out that in Germany, just as at their home, the persons recruited were subject to limitations in housing, food, and other living conditions brought about by war.²⁸

Third, the recruiting official was to examine the professional suitability and physical fitness of the foreign worker. Then, if the worker was accepted, a written contract or certificate of recruitment which contained the pay and work conditions was drawn up.²⁹

As for the foreign worker, he was to bring with him clothing suitable for his work, including footwear. He also had to possess, on crossing the German border, validated papers either from his homeland or from the proper German occupational authorities.³⁰

After recruitment, the workers were to be taken in collective transports with special trains, or if necessary in group transports with regular trains.³¹ In all areas, except France and Italy, Sauckel's representatives supervised arrangements for transport of foreign labor from the point

²⁸Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. V, p. 759.

²⁹Loc. cit.

³⁰Loc. cit.

³¹Ibid., p. 760.

of recruitment to the German border; in France and Italy these powers were left in the hands of the local authorities. The French and Italian authorities were also responsible for supply of food, sanitation, etc. to the transports under their supervision until these reached the German frontier.³² Each transport was to have a Chief who was to take care of hygienic precautions to prevent overloading of cars, and to deal with any friction which might arise.³³

The food supply for the individual workers in transit within the Reich was the duty of the German Labor Front. For the rest, Sauckel's offices furnished the food supply for the transport.

In order to prevent disease, the foreign workers were if necessary to be decontaminated several times. The second decontamination was to be combined with a repeated medical check-up. This second decontamination was to take place within the borders of the Reich in transient camps specifically provided for this purpose.³⁴

The placement of the foreign labor, once in the Reich, was dependent upon the requirements established by the Central Planning Board. The Central Planning Board consisted

³²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. V, p. 760.

³³Loc. cit.

³⁴Ibid., p. 761.

of three men; Albert Speer,³⁵ Director of War Productions, Field Marshal Erhard Milch³⁶ of the Luftwaffe, and State Secretary in the Prussian State Ministry, Paul Körner.³⁷

This board's functions were the distribution of raw materials and labor to the various military groups which held quotas, such as the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and for civilian requirements for branches such as industry, mining, industrial and private building, et cetera, and the compilation of labor requirements, which were passed on to Sauckel.³⁸ Usually the Central Planning Board met every three months in order to fix the quotas of material and manpower for the following quarter.

By virtue of a decree of Göring, September 17, 1942, the following regulations were set up for cooperation between the Central Planning Board and Sauckel's offices.

³⁵Prof. Albert Speer, born 1905, an architect by profession, joined the Nazi party early--1933--and met with Hitler's favor, who had very decided views on architecture. Speer rebuilt the Reich Chancellery at Berlin and Party buildings at Nuremberg. After the death of Minister of Munitions Todt, Hitler in 1942, appointed him in Todt's place. Among added duties gradually heaped upon him were those of Director of War Production, Director of Roads, Water and Power, and Plenary General for the Supervision and Reconstruction of Bombed Cities. Speer was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment at Nuremberg.

³⁶Field Marshal Erhard Milch was second in command of the Luftwaffe.

³⁷Paul Körner was the Chief Deputy of the Four Year Plan, hence he represented Göring at the Central Planning Board.

³⁸Major War Criminals, Vol. IX, pp. 162-63.

First, Speer was to decide on all questions of priority for all armament assignments and the urgency in providing the labor needs involved in the armament programs. To the extent that an outline of quotas for assignment of foreign labor had not already been established in the Central Planning Board, Speer was to ascertain them and bring them to the attention of Sauckel, submitting to him at the same time lists of the factories needing foreign labor.³⁹

Second, Sauckel within the framework of his jurisdiction over labor commitment as a whole was to make available and direct laborers according to the requirements of armament economy as established by Speer.⁴⁰

To insure cooperation between Speer's and Sauckel's offices in regard to execution of individual labor assignments, joint investigation committees were to be appointed. These committees were to include one representative of Speer's office and one of Sauckel's office. By means of this close cooperation between Speer and Sauckel, it was hoped that there would be the highest possible labor yield in all armaments establishments.

It is interesting to note that this joint cooperation between agencies was also to be carried out in respect to the

³⁹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 716.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 717.

care of foreign labor. Only this time Sauckel was to cooperate with the German Labor Front. On June 2, 1943, Dr. Robert Ley of the German Labor Front and Sauckel ordered that a central inspection for the care of foreign workers be created.⁴¹ This group was to be solely responsible for the supervision of all welfare measures in the realm of the employment of foreign workers. Complaints about bad quarters, food deficiencies, provision of free time activities and propaganda for the workers were to be directed to the Central Inspection for investigation and elimination of possible deficiencies.⁴² This group was empowered to make on-the-spot removals of defects.⁴³ In the Ministry of Eastern Occupied Territories there was to be a special liaison office for the Central Inspection for the care of foreign laborers.⁴⁴ Another was to be established in Goebbels' office.⁴⁵ Still a third similar group was organized in the Security Police.⁴⁶ All of these central inspection agencies for the care of foreign workers were to be continuously in touch with the

⁴¹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 547.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 548-49.

⁴³Ibid., p. 548.

⁴⁴Loc. cit.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 550-51.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 552.

main office VI of the General Plenipotentiary for Labor Allocation. They were to instruct the main office on general observations made and their suggested changes, if any should become necessary.⁴⁷

In review then, the Arbeitseinsatz was organized to achieve greater unity in the allocation of labor. Fritz Sauckel was appointed by Hitler in March 1942 as the head of this new organization. The administration of the Arbeitseinsatz was simple. Four offices of the Reich Ministry of Labor were placed at Sauckel's disposal. Besides the Labor Ministry, Sauckel was to use any other existing civil or military agencies to accomplish his task. The whole organization was part of the Four Year Plan under Goring.

There now remains the question of how the program functioned in actuality. What was its assigned mission, and how successfully did Sauckel achieve it?

⁴⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 548.

CHAPTER IV

THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ARBEITSEINSATZ

The functioning of the Arbeitseinsatz may be divided into four general programs. In these programs or drives, there was an intensive effort by the German government, to recruit new foreign labor for industry. The first program began in April of 1942, the second in September of 1942, the third in 1943 and the fourth in January 1944. The first three programs were successful in varying degrees. But the fourth program, which started on January 4, 1944, and which was to last throughout the year, was never completed for in the middle of that year Allied armies overran much of the territory from which the intended labor was to be drawn.

In each of these drives, new problems were encountered. With every new problem, Sauckel's office and indeed, the whole German governmental machinery, had to be revised to cope with the situation. Consequently, the Arbeitseinsatz was to change quite radically, both administratively and functionally. Throughout its existence then, the Arbeitseinsatz would have to be classified as a dynamic entity, evolving and changing.

I. THE PROGRAM FROM APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 1942

By the spring of 1942, it had become evident that

German losses on the eastern front were much greater than originally anticipated. For the period from June 22, 1941, to February 20, 1942, the German losses in the East were 199,448 dead, 708,351 wounded, 44,342 missing--a total of 952,141.¹

Up to February 20, 1942, 112,627 cases of freezing or frostbite were reported, including 14,357 third-degree and 62,000 second-degree cases.²

According to these figures it would appear that the Germans had almost one million casualties in the first seven months of the campaign in the East, among them about 200,000 fatalities. These heavy losses lead to a spirit of defeatism in some officers in the OKW and the OKH.³ But, of even greater importance, these losses had to be quickly made up, mostly from the available German manpower, if Germany was to launch a summer offensive in Russia.⁴ Many of the replacements would have to come from vital defense industries.

Consequently, in the spring of 1942, the employers of

¹Louis P. Lochner, editor, The Goebbels Diaries, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1948), p. 112, henceforth cited as The Goebbels Diaries.

²Loc. cit.

³OKW stands for Ober-Kommando der Wehrmacht, or Supreme Command of the Armed Forces. OKH stands for Ober-Kommando des Heeres, or Supreme Command of the Army.

⁴Goebbels Diaries, p. 34.

labor in the Reich, i.e., the Economic Ministry, the Armament Ministry, the Agricultural Ministry, the various trades, the State Railways, the mines, et cetera, all big undertakings, in conjunction with the army, established the labor requirements for the entire economy. It was estimated that in addition to more German labor, about one million six hundred thousand foreign workers were needed.⁵ With this figure as a basis, Sauckel started his first program.

The large scale placing of such enormous numbers of workers, necessarily taking place within the shortest possible time, was only possible after overcoming countless difficulties. These could only be mastered thanks to the support of all party, military and civil authorities concerned. The result was achieved mainly through the increased employment of Eastern workers, and it was therefore particularly in connection with them that all difficulties had to be mastered.

The transportation of several hundred thousand Eastern workers per month was only possible after Sauckel ordered that the transports to be provided were to be tripled and after the Reich Minister of Communications had made the corresponding transport space available.⁶ This space was used

⁵Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 53.

⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 377.

for the transportation both of civilian workers and of prisoners of war.

The danger of infection, particularly through spotted fever, gave rise to difficulties. Far-reaching sanitary preventive measures had therefore to be taken. For this purpose hundreds of installations such as collecting camps, disinfection installations, examination offices, were prepared or newly constructed with great speed. In this activity the Wehrmacht with its installations and medical officers readily supported Sauckel.⁷

The problem of billeting the foreign labor in the factories also had to be solved very quickly. The construction of approximately 300,000 new dwellings was put into full swing.⁸ For the transitional period Sauckel had ordered the procurement of emergency billets through the party labor offices, in sheds, factories and halls with the assistance of the Reich Minister for Ordnance, the Reich Labor leader, the Reich Minister of the Interior and the German Labor Front.⁹

The conditions for the employment of Eastern Workers were examined by the Council of Ministers and by a decree of June 30, 1942, were improved. Also, apart from an improvement

⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 378.

⁸Loc. cit.

⁹Loc. cit.

in wages, with special regard to the principle of performance, arrangements for savings books and savings stamps for the eastern workers was begun.¹⁰

As for regulating food, Sauckel started from the assumption that this food must be sufficient for ensuring a useful output of work. The food situation in Germany was at that time extremely difficult. Beginning April 6, all food rations were reduced. Emphasis was laid upon the fact, however, that workers performing hardest labor and children were not to be affected too much.¹¹ Still, there could be no doubt that the rations in force after April 6 would no longer be sufficient to guarantee health and the maintenance of reserves of human labor power.¹²

The food situation in the occupied areas was even worse than in Germany. Goebbels labeled the situation "exceptionally precarious." "Thousands and tens of thousands of people are dying of hunger without anybody even raising a finger."¹³ Sauckel, in cooperation with Backe, Secretary of State for Food and Agriculture, managed to work out some improvements in food rationing for the foreign labor.¹⁴

¹⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 378.

¹¹The Goebbels Diaries, p. 75.

¹²Loc. cit.

¹³Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁴Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 378.

Many problems were caused by the recruiting at short notice of hundreds of thousands of workers in the former Soviet territories. Not only spotted fever, difficulties resulting from frost and the cold and from the period of mud and the defective state of communications made the recruitment extremely difficult, but also there were the problems arising from the passive and open resistance, the mistrust of the population, and the counter-propaganda which was carried out according to a plan. The obstacles were particularly increased by the ever growing guerilla activity.¹⁵ Finally many difficulties had to be overcome which resulted from the fact that, in the Occupied Eastern Territories the local labor needs for tasks of importance to the war had to be increasingly safe-guarded, apart from the recruitment for the Reich.

Even considering these tremendous difficulties, Sauckel's labor program moved quite calmly through the summer of 1942. Many top Germans expected violent reactions in the occupied territories. None was forthcoming. Goebbels remarked,

. . . difficulties in all occupied areas are enormous. For some time to come we shall not be able to overcome them. The wonder to me is that the peoples in the occupied areas are remaining so quiet.¹⁶

¹⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 379.

¹⁶The Goebbels Diaries, p. 93.

Numerically, (if one accepts Sauckel's figures) Sauckel's first program was a success. By late July, the original figure of one million six hundred thousand workers was exceeded. On July 27, Sauckel reported to Lammers,¹⁷ the Reich Minister and Head of the Reich Chancellery, that since he (Sauckel) had received his special commission in March of 1942, a total of 1,639,794 foreign workers had been obtained for employment in the armaments and food industries in the Reich. These numbers were made up as follows:

(a) From the newly occupied Eastern Territories:

	April	May	June	July	Total
Eastern Workers	110,149	273,128	324,066	264,489	971,832
Galicians District Laborers	20,525	17,496	9,013	61,118	108,152
Soviet Russian Ps. W.	43,074	53,600	38,335	86,000	221,009
Total	173,748	344,224	371,414	411,607	1,300,993

The figure for July contained approximately 147,000 workers

¹⁷Dr. Hans Heinrich Lammers had slowly climbed the ladder of German bureaucracy as an administrative official under the aegis of the German Nationalist party until Adolf Hitler loomed large on the political horizon. Lammers then joined the Nazi party. When Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, he needed someone with long administrative experience to organize and run his chancellery. Lammers was given the post. By the time World War II started he had risen to the rank of a Reich or cabinet minister although his job was still that of Chief of the Reich Chancellery.

who had already been dispatched to the Reich and are currently being put to work.

(b) Other foreign workers:

	April	May	June	July	Total
Bohemia-Moravia	6,000	4,000	4,900	8,800	23,700
Poland	27,402	20,265	8,907	7,596	64,170
Wartheland	12,305	11,195	7,558	1,107	32,165
Belgium	8,000	8,000	6,200	7,900	30,100
France	7,000	7,000	5,500	11,800	31,300
Italy	14,250	28,534	8,842	4,100	55,726
Holland	5,905	12,895	8,100	4,400	31,300
Serbia	3,769	1,724	929	1,008	7,430
Croatia	1,057	2,045	4,093	4,400	11,595
Slovakia	13,324	335	1,406	200	15,265
Other Terr.	13,409	7,084	9,000	6,557	36,050
Total	112,421	103,077	65,435	57,868	338,801

Total of (a)	1,300,993
(b)	338,801
Grand Total	1,639,794 ¹⁸

In this same report to Lammers, Sauckel reviewed the total number of foreign workers and prisoners of war, working in the Reich, as of July 29, 1942, as:

(a) From newly occupied Eastern territories 1,148,000
(b) From other recruiting areas 2,400,000
(c) Prisoners of war <u>1,576,000</u>
Total 5,124,000¹⁹

¹⁸Major War Criminals, Vol. XVIII, pp. 116-17.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 121.

II. THE SECOND PROGRAM IN SEPTEMBER 1942

On September 3, 1942, a conference, under the presidency of Sauckel, of the representatives of the highest Reich authorities, the Party Chancellory, as well as of the German Labor front was held in Berlin for the discussion of the pending importation of domestic workers from the East and particularly the Ukraine into the Reich. Sauckel declared at this time that it was the definite wish of the Führer that the law over the duty year for German women was not to be extended, that all German girls must work only one additional year in housekeeping.²⁰ Therefore the housekeeping problem had to be solved in a different way. So Hitler ordered the immediate importation of 400,000 to 500,000 female domestic workers from the Ukraine between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five and he charged Sauckel with the execution of this action which was to end in about three months.²¹

These household workers were to be employed in better class city and country households, preferably in families with many children and of strong National Socialist convictions,

²⁰In Germany under compulsory labor laws all young German women were to work two years. The German women usually worked one year in a factory and one year in a housekeeping position. Under the pressure of war, many people wanted to extend the work period from two to three years. Hitler opposed this suggestion.

²¹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 67.

so that 200,000 of them would be furnished to city families and 200,000 to country families.²²

Backe, the Reich minister who supervised nutrition and agriculture, opposed this idea for foreign household workers. Backe thought that Sauckel should refrain from the execution of these measures at least until the food situation of the German people would permit the importation of more foreign labor forces and a better diet for the workers from the East could be assured. At this point Sauckel told Backe that he refused to discuss an order of the Führer.²³ He added, furthermore, that, irrespective of the importation of domestic workers, the mobilization of one million more workers from the East was being planned. This was the only way to realize in the years to come the Führer's armament and steel production program for the execution of the great plans in the West and for the annihilation of the greatest war economy of the world, America.²⁴

Thus, Sauckel announced the second great recruitment of 1942. Later Sauckel confirmed this program and added that

²²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 68.

²³Although Sauckel had refused to discuss the problem of household workers with Backe, the program was never carried out. As late as 1944 Sauckel was still attempting to secure foreign women for household work. But, by this time he had turned to France instead of the East. Backe again opposed the plan and it failed.

²⁴Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 69.

Hitler had asked for two million new workers. Of these two million workers, one million were to be foreign workers.²⁵

With this basic figure, Sauckel wrote to Rosenberg, Reich Minister for the Eastern Occupied Areas, on October 5, that the Führer had granted new powers for his (Sauckel's) duties and had especially authorized him to take whatever measures he thought necessary in the Reich, the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, the Government General of Poland, as well as in the occupied territories, in order to assure at all costs an orderly mobilization of labor. The majority of the additional required labor forces would have to be drafted from the recently occupied eastern territories, especially from the Reichskommissariat Ukraine. Therefore the Ukraine was to furnish 225,000 labor forces by December 31, 1942, and 225,000 more by May 1, 1943.²⁶

Beside new foreign labor Sauckel was determined to use more prisoners of war. On October 28, 1942, at the 17th Conference of the Central Planning Board, the use of prisoners of war in mining industry was discussed. Coal production in the Ruhr district had been increased to 390,000 tons per day. Any further increase depended on whether the increased requirements for labor were met. About 104,000 men were

²⁵Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 53.

²⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 60.

required. Furthermore, 7,800 men were needed for the supplementary coal industries, six thousand eight hundred more for the machine industry. Furthermore five thousand more unskilled workers were required for the transport of mine-timber which was essential for increased production.²⁷

The intake capacity of the mining industry for the month of November was to be 44,000 prisoners of war and 12,600 eastern foreign workers. By November the total requirements for the coal industry amounted to 191,000 laborers. On October 24, 1942, Sauckel reported that a total of 123,000 were already allocated.²⁸ Besides that, Sauckel was preparing to transfer another 32,000 prisoners of war from their camps into the coal industry.²⁹ Even considering these various moves by Sauckel the coal industry was short about 36,000 workers. This deficit was presumably made up by the transfer of foreign civilian workers into the coal industry.

The details surrounding the second drive in September of 1942 are obscure. There are no further reports by Sauckel on this particular drive, nor any statistical data regarding the areas from whence the workers were drawn. The only other definite fact is that Sauckel at the Nuremberg Trial

²⁷Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 459.

²⁸Ibid., p. 460.

²⁹Loc. cit.

in 1946 reported that one million foreign workers had been recruited in this drive.³⁰

III. THE THIRD PROGRAM FOR 1943

In 1943, Hitler ordered Sauckel to obtain one million additional foreign workers for the Reich.³¹ This number was also to include at least 200,000 skilled workers.³² In search of skilled workers, Sauckel went to France. On January 13, 1943, Sauckel conferred with the French civilian authorities and the German military and civilian authorities in France.³³ At this conference Sauckel explained that the German divisions in the East were not sufficiently armed against the Russian heavy armor. Therefore the German divisions had to be rearmed. For that reason, it had been considered to draft all 15-year-old boys and 17-year-old girls in the Reich for the signal corps and antiaircraft units.³⁴ The situation on the fronts required that 700,000 soldiers be fitted for front-line service; for this purpose the armament industry would have to drop 200,000 workers by

³⁰Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 53.

³¹Loc. cit.

³²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 382.

³³Ibid., p. 381.

³⁴Ibid., p. 382.

the middle of March. Therefore Sauckel needed 150,000 French skilled workers, while the remaining 50,000 would be extracted from Holland, Belgium, and other occupied territories.³⁵ In addition Sauckel requested another 100,000 unskilled French workers for the Reich by March of 1943.³⁶

Sauckel returned to Berlin and reported to the Central Planning Board on the labor program. In the East, Sauckel reported that the supply of labor was coming in ever diminishing numbers. He thought that the East was almost completely exhausted. Eastern laborers, during the first six weeks of 1943, arrived only in smaller numbers than in former times so that they could hardly be included to an appreciable amount on the credit side of the supply account. In any case their numbers were small. The foremost reason was that in former months most recruitment was in the Ukraine, but the German army had retreated from there so that much of the area was no longer in German hands or else the areas had become operational zones. Still Sauckel prepared measures which would enable the Germans, on conservative calculation, to transfer during the month of March 400,000 foreign laborers.³⁷ These

³⁵Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 468.

³⁶Loc. cit.

³⁷Ibid., p. 467.

foreign laborers were to come from:

Soviet Russia	200,000
Poland	40,000
France	60,000
Belgium	40,000
Holland	30,000
Slovakia	20,000
Bohemia-Moravia	10,000 ³⁸

On April 14, 1943, Sauckel reported to Hitler on one year's activity in the Arbeitseinsatz. Firstly, he stated that he was going to the eastern areas in order to secure one million workers from the East for the German war economy in the coming months. The result of his last trip to France was that, after exact fulfilment of the last program, another 450,000 workers from the western areas were to come into the Reich by the beginning of the summer of 1943.³⁹

Sauckel estimated that in addition to 150,000 more workers which were to be obtained in the East, it would then be possible by summer again to put half a million workers at the disposal of German agriculture and one million workers at the disposal of the armament and other war industries.

³⁸Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 468.

³⁹Ibid., p. 418.

These workers would include new foreign labor and German labor recruited.⁴⁰

Sauckel then briefly reviewed his first year of activity. He reported to Hitler that 3,638,056 new foreign workers had been added to the German war economy from April 1, 1942, to March 31, 1943.⁴¹ In addition to the foreign civilian workers, 1,622,829 prisoners of war were also employed in the German economy.⁴²

The 3,638,056 civilian foreign workers were distributed amongst the following branches of the German war economy:

Armament	1,568,801
Mining Industry	163,632
Building	218,707
Transportation	199,074
Agriculture and forestry	1,007,544
Other branches of the economy	480,298 ⁴³

On April 22, 1943, Sauckel and Speer in the Central Planning Board returned to the problem of labor in coal production. On January 1, 1943, 69,000 additional men were reported needed for hauling coal. Sauckel wanted to cover

⁴⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 391.

⁴¹Loc. cit.

⁴²Ibid., p. 392.

⁴³Loc. cit.

this deficiency by finding 23,000 men within the Reich, viz., healthy prisoners of war, et cetera, who were especially suitable for mining, and by dispatching 50,000 Poles from the General Government. Out of these, about 30,000 men had been supplied up to April 24, so that about 39,000 men were still outstanding from January to April. The demand for May was reported at 35,600. Difficulties existed, especially with regard to recruitment in the General Government of Poland, since in every district surrounding Germany there was an extraordinary resistance to recruitment. In all countries the Germans had been compelled to change over more or less to registering the men by age groups and to conscripting them in age groups. Men often appeared for registration as such but as soon as transport was available they did not come back, so that the dispatch of the men to Germany had become more or less a question for the police.⁴⁴

Especially in Poland the situation in April, 1943, was extraordinarily serious. It was well known that vehement battles occurred just because of these compulsive measures. Quite a number of Germans had been exposed to increased dangers, and the head of the labor office in Warsaw had been shot in his office on April 8, 1943.⁴⁵ This was how matters

⁴⁴Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 472.

⁴⁵Loc. cit.

stood, and the recruitment itself, even if done with the best will remained extremely difficult unless police reinforcements were at hand.

In an effort to correct the deficit in the coal industry, Speer suggested the use of Soviet prisoners of war already at work in the Reich. According to Speer there were 338,000 Soviet prisoners of war at work. These Soviet prisoners of war were allocated to the following industries:

Agriculture	101,000
Mining	94,000
Building	15,000
Iron and metal	26,000
Iron manufacturing	29,000
Machine and car	63,000
Chemical	10,000

Agriculture had received by far the most of them, and the men employed there could in the course of time be exchanged for women. This would release men for mining.⁴⁶

This plan for releasing Soviet prisoners of war for mining was immediately placed into effect. It aimed both at freeing Russian labor, fit for work in the mining industry and at replacing it by additionally imported labor consisting of eastern workers and Poles. Thus about 50,000 additional

⁴⁶Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, pp. 475-76.

foreign workmen were expected to be made available for the mining industry up to the end of July 1943.⁴⁷

On June 3, 1943, Sauckel reported to Hitler on the situation of the labor allocation for the first five months of 1943.

Sauckel reported that the following number of new foreigners and prisoners of war were for the first time placed at the disposal of the German war industry:

January 1943	120,085
February 1943	138,354
March 1943	257,382
April 1943	160,535
May 1943	<u>170,155</u>
Total	846,511 ⁴⁸

In addition to the foreign labor forces placed at the disposal of the economy within the Reich, several hundred thousand foreign laborers were made available within the occupied territories by the Arbeitseinsatz to the Organization Todt as well as to the enterprises working for the German war economy in the East and West occupied territories.

Thus, by June of 1943, Sauckel's original quota of one million new foreign workers for the Third Recruitment Program

⁴⁷Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 476.

⁴⁸Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 395.

was nearly completed. Recruitment throughout the rest of 1943 was carried out on a small scale and the remaining 150,000 workers were obtained.⁴⁹

IV. THE FOURTH PROGRAM FOR 1944

On January 4, 1944, a conference was held by the Führer in an effort to determine long-range plans for war production. Besides Hitler, Sauckel, Speer, Keitel, Milch, Backe, and Himmler attended the conference. Hitler opened the conference by saying:

"I want a clear picture:

(1) How many workers are required for the maintenance of German War Economy?

(a) For the maintenance of present output?

(b) To increase its output?

(2) How many workers can be obtained from Occupied Countries, or how many can still be gained in the Reich by suitable means?

For one thing, it is this matter of making up for losses by death, infirmity, the constant fluctuation of workers, and so forth, and further it is a matter of procuring additional workers."⁵⁰

Sauckel told Hitler that, in order to maintain the status of activity in the whole of the war economy including agriculture, taking into account the replacement of deficiencies due to drafts into the army, deaths, illness, expiration of contract, et cetera, he would have to add at

⁴⁹Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 53.

⁵⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 866.

least two and a half million but probably three million new workers in 1944. Otherwise production would fall off. Speer declared he needed an additional one million three hundred thousand workers. However, this was dependent on whether it would be possible to increase production of iron ore. Should this not be possible, Speer needed no additional workers. Speer insisted that procurement of additional workers from the occupied territories was subject to the condition that these workers were not to be withdrawn from armament and auxiliary industries already working there. For this would mean a decrease of production of these industries which could not be tolerated. Those, for instance, who were already working in France, in industries mentioned above, had to be protected against being sent to work in Germany by Sauckel. Hitler agreed with Speer and emphasized that the measures taken by Sauckel were not to lead to the withdrawal of workers from armament and auxiliary industries working in occupied territories because such a shift of workers only caused disturbance of production in occupied countries. Thus Sauckel and Speer arranged a system to protect vital industries in occupied territories. These protected industries or S-plants as they were called, were exempted from labor recruitment by Sauckel.⁵¹

⁵¹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 867.

Hitler further called attention to the fact that at least two hundred and fifty thousand laborers were needed for preparations against air attacks in the field of civilian air raid protection. Therefore, Sauckel had to add at least 4,050,000 workers to the manpower pool, considering that he required two and a half million workers for maintenance of the present level, that Speer needed one million three hundred thousand workers, and that the above-mentioned preparations for security measures against air attacks called for a quarter million laborers.⁵²

On February 16, 1944, the Central Planning Board met in an effort to determine the foreign labor needs and placements for specific sectors of the war economy for the first quarter and the whole year of 1944. On the basis of 4,050,000, as established by Hitler, this was to be the breakdown:

	First Quarter 1944	The rest of 1944 in 1000's	Total
Agriculture	70	70	140
Forestry and Timber Industry	40	--	40
Armament and War Production .	544	3,000	3,544
Air Raid Damages	100	50	150
Transportation	85	265	350
Public Administration	62	--	62
<u>Wehrmacht</u> Administration . .	130	--	130 ⁵³

⁵²Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 479.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 459-60. The difference between this figure and the original quota is explained by the duplication of count of workers between industries. For example, in the harvest season a great number of workers was to be transferred to agriculture from other industries. After the harvest they were again transferred to their former positions.

Sauckel's estimated coverage of the requirements for 4.05 million additional laborers was:

1. Native Germans	500,000
2. Italian Labor	1,500,000
3. French Labor	1,000,000
4. Labor from Belgium	250,000
5. Labor from Holland	250,000
6. Labor from the eastern territories (occupied former Soviet territories, Baltic states, and Poland	600,000
7. Labor from other European countries	<u>100,000</u>

Approximately . . . 4,200,000⁵⁴

With a basis of four million two hundred thousand, Sauckel started the 1944 program. He had no real intention of completely fulfilling the impossible quota. He knew there were no longer the labor resources available. On March 1, at a meeting of the Central Planning Board, he regretfully explained that he could not guarantee the delivery of the laborers asked for.⁵⁵ His program in the West was nearly destroyed. He reported that the French Government had sent out general secret orders not to satisfy his demands. Throughout the West, even the German authorities

⁵⁴Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 481.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 484.

gave up hope.⁵⁶

On July 7, 1944, Sauckel reported to Hitler on the accomplishments of the Arbeitseinsatz for the first half of the year. Sauckel reported that according to the quota of 4,050,000 laborers set for that year, two million new workers had to be secured in the first half of the year. Because of the increased difficulties in Italy and in the occupied Western countries, one-half million less than that were found. The 1,500,000 laborers that were mobilized represented the maximum effort of all German groups.⁵⁷

Sauckel in his report, listed the program as follows:

A. Entire Economy:

Total number of New Labor Recruits	1,482,000
Of these were: Germans	848,000
Foreigners	537,400
Prisoners of war	96,600

B. Breakdown of allocation of persons under A:

Agriculture and Forestry	231,000
Of them, foreigners	156,000
Mining	46,000
Of them, foreigners	34,000
Metal Industry	415,000
Of them, foreigners	250,000
All other branches of economy	790,000
Of them, foreigners	194,000

⁵⁶Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 484.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 428.

C. Origin of Foreign Labor:

Occupied Eastern Territories	284,000
General Government of Poland	52,000
Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia	23,000
France, including Northern France	33,000
Belgium, including Northern France	16,000
Netherlands	15,000
Italy	37,000
Rest of Europe	77,400 ⁵⁸

On July 11, 1944, at a meeting at the Reich Chancellery, new and far-reaching measures were planned in order to recruit the needed foreign labor.⁵⁹ The new plans were never activated, for the Allied armies advanced too quickly to the frontiers of the Third Reich. Therefore the fourth program of 1944 was never completed. Between July and December of 1944 Sauckel managed to recruit another one and a half million native Germans, but even with these native Germans, Sauckel's program of 1944 fell nearly one million short of its original quota of four million.⁶⁰

In summary, there were four programs of labor recruitment planned by Sauckel from April 1942 to July of 1944. The

⁵⁸Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 428.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 431.

⁶⁰Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 53.

first program began in April of 1942 and demanded one million six hundred thousand workers; one million six hundred thousand were supplied, the entire figure being made up of foreigners.

The second program beginning in September 1942, demanded two million workers and two million were supplied, of which one million were foreigners.

The third program was in 1943 and demanded one million workers; one million were supplied, the entire figure being made up of foreign workers.

The last program was for the year of 1944; the demand was for four million workers and Sauckel met the demand with three million, of which nine hundred thousand were foreigners.⁶¹

Thus Sauckel, in four programs, placed into the German economy a total of about four and a half million new foreign civilian and prisoners of war workers. The methods used to obtain these workers in foreign countries, varied from country to country.

⁶¹Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 53.

CHAPTER V

THE METHODS FOR RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN LABOR

The actual method of recruitment of foreign labor for Germany varied from country to country. With the conquest of each nation a new and particular set of circumstances confronted the Germans. Even considering this, there was a great amount of similarity in the German methods in all countries. But the differences were great and profound. Many of the differences could be traced back to Nazi racial thought. They divided their recruitment methods between those to be used in the Eastern Occupied Territories and those of Western Occupied Territories.

This division by the Nazis then will be the division used in this thesis. This chapter will give a description of the labor program in both areas with particular emphasis on the differences between the two areas.

I. IN THE WESTERN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

To a considerable extent, the German recruitment program sought to induce foreign workers to work in their own countries for the German army of occupation and the services connected with it. The German military and civil authorities organized yards and workshops in order to carry out on-the-spot work useful to their war policy. The yards

and workshops of the Todt Organization, which were under the direction of Speer after the death of their founder, and those of the Wehrmacht, Luftwaffe, and Kriegsmarine employed foreign workers in all areas of Western Europe.

But the essential undertaking of the Germans was the recruitment of foreign workers for the munition factories of the Reich. The most varied means were used to this end. They were built up into a recruiting policy which could be analyzed as follows:

In the beginning, this policy was effected by means of the voluntary recruitment of workers, to whom the Germans offered labor contracts.

Later when these measures proved inadequate the Germans pressed prisoners of war into work. When even that failed to fulfill their needs they established compulsory labor service in the areas which they occupied. Sometimes they directly promulgated orders bearing the signature of military commanders or Reich commissioners; this was the case with Belgium and Holland. Sometimes they got the local authorities to take legislative measures themselves; this was particularly the case with France and Norway. Sometimes they simply took direct action, that was, they transferred foreign workers to factories in Germany without issuing regulations providing for such action; this happened in Denmark. Finally, in certain occupied areas where they had carried out Germanization,

the Germans incorporated the inhabitants of those territories in the labor service of the Reich. This happened in the French provinces of Haut-Rhin, Bas-Rhin, Moselle, and in Luxembourg.¹

At first the recruitment program in the West was under the control of the military commanders. General Von Falkenhausen, Military Governor of Belgium and Northern France, reported at the Nuremberg Trials that before Sauckel came into power, that was March of 1942, he had in his service a Bureau of Labor. This labor office functioned as an employment office for labor to be sent to Germany, that is, it concerned itself with demands for labor.²

However, Hitler's decree of September 30, 1942, gave Sauckel considerable power of the civil and military authorities of the territories occupied by the German Armed Forces. It made it possible for Sauckel to introduce into the staffs of the occupying authorities personal representatives to whom he gave his orders directly.³

The varied methods employed by the Germans in recruitment in Western Europe can best be illustrated by the example of France. France presented the largest pool of workers in

¹Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 443.

²Ibid., p. 445.

³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, pp. 546-47.

the Western Occupied Territories. The methods used in France were generally typical of the methods adopted in the rest of the Western countries.

France. The first move of the Germans to obtain manpower in France to replace young German factory workers who had been conscripted occurred in April, 1941. At this time they made their first appeal for volunteers, accompanied by an intensive propaganda showing the attractions of work in Germany, notably the high salaries. They founded apprentice schools, the most important of which was located at the arsenal of Puteaux. Moreover, to further their campaign, they agreed in May, 1941, to a uniform rise in French salaries of one franc for each working-hour. German services were set up to recruit French workers in the Occupied Zone. The French Government had not authorized the functioning of these services in the unoccupied Southern Zone.⁴ Volunteer workers were given one-year contracts which could be extended by the Germans for one more year. It was difficult to estimate the number of workers who left for Germany before May 1942 (i.e. before Sauckel's appointment as head of labor recruitment), but the total was around 150,000.⁵

⁴José Laval, editor, The Diary of Pierre Laval, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. lll, henceforth cited as The Diary of Pierre Laval.

⁵Loc. cit.

The first of four recruiting programs by Sauckel in France was initiated in the spring of 1942, soon after his appointment as Plenipotentiary for Allocation of Labor. The German armament industry had an urgent need of workers. The service of the Arbeitseinsatz had decided to recruit 150,000 skilled workers and 100,000 unskilled workers in France before the end of July. Sauckel came to Paris in the month of June 1942 and had several conversations with French ministers.⁶ Otto Abetz, German ambassador in Paris, presided over these meetings.

Laval claimed that at these meetings Sauckel stated that the French could have the choice between stimulating the departure of volunteer workers and a draft which would be imposed by the German authorities, the workers to be drawn from among the repatriated prisoner of war.⁷ Sauckel further intimated, moreover, that if the French did not produce the workers he would see that they were denied vital shipments of coal and other combustibles and lubricants, thus upsetting their economic machinery and swelling the ranks of unemployed, whom he would immediately draft for his purpose.⁸

⁶Major War Criminals, Vol. V., p. 484.

⁷The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 112.

⁸Loc. cit.

It was at this point that Laval decided to link the question of workers for Germany with the return of French prisoners of war from the Reich. He suggested to Sauckel that in compensation for the departure of workers, the French would receive an equal number of liberated prisoners.⁹ Sauckel told Laval this was impossible. Whereupon, Laval answered that the French Government would not give even the slightest degree of support to the German plan to draft workers for Germany, unless the German Government were at least to admit in principle that the French ought to receive compensation in the form of liberated French prisoners of war.¹⁰

Laval was so insistent that Sauckel telephoned Hitler, and on the following day he promised Laval that if 150,000 industrial workers should leave for Germany, 50,000 French agricultural workers would be liberated from the prison camps.¹¹ Sauckel explained, "We cannot possibly admit an exchange on an equal basis, because these French prisoners are already working in Germany and, in addition to losing control of them, we shall lose the benefit of their work."¹²

⁹Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, pp. 49-50.

¹⁰The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 112.

¹¹Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 484.

¹²The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 113.

This system of exchange of prisoners of war for French civilian workers at the ratio of 1:3 was called the Releve. The prisoners of war released were to be of all types, not just the sick or disabled.¹³ The French civilians exchanged were to work in Germany on a contract basis. The duration of the contract was to average nine months.¹⁴ Later arrangements were made for what was called "transformation". This provided that French prisoners of war in Germany were given the same contracts and the same status as all other French civilian workers. In effect, the French prisoners of war signed a contract in which they gave up all their rights as prisoners of war under the Geneva Convention, in order to be converted or transformed into civilian workers in Germany.¹⁵

Besides arranging for new labor from France, Sauckel, with the help of Laval, reorganized the labor offices in France. German recruiting offices were placed in major cities in France. These offices were under Departments III and V of the Reich Ministry of Labor. It must be noted that Departments III and V were connected with Sauckel's office, and under Sauckel's authority.¹⁶

¹³Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 49.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 81.

In order to solve the great manpower demands on France, there was also immediately set up a stronger and better German labor organization possessing the necessary powers and means. This was done by a system of sponsorship by Gaue.¹⁷ France had about eighty départements. Greater Germany was divided into forty-two political Gaue, and for the purposes of manpower recruitment was divided into forty-two Gau labor office districts. Each German Gau labor office district was to take over and sponsor, say, two French départements. Each German Gau labor office furnished for the départements sponsored a commission of specialists, made up of the ablest and most reliable experts whose function was to reorganize the French labor offices to make them more efficient.¹⁸ Even the French later admitted at Nuremberg that the German reorganization of French labor offices had had beneficial effects.¹⁹

The purpose of this arrangement was to clear up unsolved problems between the French Government, départements, industrialists and factories on the one hand, and the administrative offices in Germany where the French workers were to be employed on the other hand. This did not mean that the

¹⁷Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 77.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 78.

¹⁹Loc. cit.

workers from a particular French département would necessarily work in the Gau which sponsored the arrangement. The sponsorship idea was to help spread favorable propaganda about working conditions in Germany. That was the real purpose: to advise and to settle complaints, distribute propaganda, thereby clearing away mistrust.²⁰

There was no doubt that this projected system of sponsorship by Gaue gave the prospective French worker in Germany a better notion of what he was to expect when he reached the Reich.

In July and August, 1942, very few volunteers offered themselves. Sauckel accused the French Government of bad faith in recruiting workers and decided to institute a system of compulsory labor, applicable to all men and women in all countries administered or occupied by Germany.²¹ The needs of Germany in manpower and material were mounting daily. The battle of Stalingrad had just begun.

This decision of Sauckel was communicated to the French in a circular of August 20, 1942, which all the newspapers of the Occupied Zone were obliged to publish. Laval succeeded in obtaining a delay in the application of this decision, but he could assure an extension of the delay only

²⁰Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 80.

²¹Ibid., Vol. V, pp. 484-85.

by publishing a law which seemed to follow the general line of Sauckel's directive.²²

This was the law of September 4, 1942, which could oblige men between eighteen and sixty and unmarried women between twenty-one and thirty-five to work, away from their place of residence if necessary. It must be added however, that this law applied only to those Frenchmen who did not work at least thirty hours a week. Those Frenchmen who worked less than thirty hours had to state this fact at their local town hall. Decrees on the 19th and 22nd of September provided regulations as to how this declaration had to be made.²³

Thus Sauckel's first recruitment campaign in France was facilitated by a legislative plan; Sauckel apparently had merely to dip into the labor resources which were established by it. Sauckel encountered considerable resistance from the French workers. Also, Laval later claimed that he had issued secret instructions to the Prefects which rendered this law of September 4, 1942, difficult to enforce.²⁴

Three months of rest passed for France. At the end of 1942 Sauckel had by voluntary recruitment netted about 400,000 French workers.²⁵

²²The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 114.

²³Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 485.

²⁴The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 116.

²⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 402.

On January 2, 1943, Sauckel returned to France to begin his second recruitment campaign. He told Laval that another draft of French workers totalling 250,000, of whom 150,000 had to be specialists, was needed for the Reich. These new French workers were to be obtained by means of a compulsory labor law.²⁶

Compulsory labor in France was established by two measures. A directive of February 2, 1943, prescribed a general census of all French males born between January 1, 1912, and January 1, 1923. The census took place between February 15th and 23rd. It had just been begun when the law and decree of February 16, 1943, appeared. These regulations introduced compulsory labor for all young men born between January 1, 1920, and December 31, 1922.²⁷

These laws although made by the French Government occurred only at Sauckel's insistence. This fact was confirmed by Sauckel when on February 16 he said to the Central Planning Board,

My collaborators and I having succeeded, after difficult discussions, in persuading Laval to introduce the law of compulsory labor in France, this law has now been so successfully extended, thanks to our pressure, that by yesterday three French age-groups had already been called up. So we are now legally qualified to recruit in France, with the assistance of the French Government,

²⁶The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 116.

²⁷Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 486.

workers of three age-groups whom we shall be able to employ henceforth in French factories, but among whom we shall also be able to choose some for our own needs in the Reich and send them to Germany.²⁸

Sauckel and Laval also in February agreed upon a continuation of the Releve. Under this agreed system another 50,000 French prisoners of war were to be exchanged for 150,000 French civilian workers. In addition, the "transformation" of other French prisoners of war in Germany was started. These "transformed" prisoners of war were to be given adequate salaries and the right of a two-weeks' leave in France.²⁹ The "transformed" workers were also to count on the labor quota of 250,000.

During these labor drafts the French administration intervened only to prevent the most flagrant injustices in the choice of individuals. Most of the drafting took place in factories and there was a public outcry because in many cases older men were drafted while the younger ones were spared. It was in response to this outcry that it was decided to recruit the 1940 and 1941 classes, and the last third of the class of 1939 with the exception of agricultural workers.³⁰

²⁸Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 487.

²⁹Ibid., Vol. XV, p. 51.

³⁰The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 117. By the 1939, 1940, 1941 classes was meant all men who became of age for military service during those years. The military service age was generally eighteen.

By April 10, 1943, a total of 250,000 French workers had left for Germany of whom 170,000 came from factories. Eighty thousand were drawn from the younger men of the three classes called up under the French draft.³¹

The tempo of the recruiting program in France slowed down in the month of April. Immediately Sauckel formulated new requirements. On April 9, 1943, Sauckel asked the French authorities to furnish him with 120,000 workers during the month of May and 100,000 during the month of June. In June he made it known that he wished to effect the transfer of 500,000 workers up to December 31, 1943.³²

Coupled with these new demands was a new policy of radically shutting down inefficient or not absolutely vital plants and the changing of non-armament plants to armament production.³³ Also Laval claimed that Sauckel's moves coincided with the transfer to France of Gestapo units.³⁴

Sauckel's third recruitment campaign was about to begin. It was marked, on June 3, 1943, by the total mobilization of the French 1942 class. All exemptions, provided by the law of February 16, for special hardship cases, specialists

³¹The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 117.

³²Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 489.

³³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 383.

³⁴The Diary of Pierre Laval, pp. 114-15.

and agricultural workers, et cetera, were withdrawn, and the young men of the 1942 class were tracked down.³⁵ The response to this measure was inevitable. There was a mass flight of young men to the French resistance movement. The German Ambassador, Hemmen, in Paris said,

There is no doubt that the same (sic) "Sauckel" sounds today pretty bad to French ears. The mere announcement in the press of an impending visit of the Gauleiter is sufficient for one to see for days hundreds of young people hurrying to the various Paris stations with their little suitcases.³⁶

By July 30, 1943, 170,000 men had left under this draft. Whereupon Laval decided that the moment had come to inform the German Government that the French Government had decided not to permit any further recruiting.³⁷

With this announcement, Sauckel hurried to Paris to protest and to register new demands. He announced that a million men and women must be put to work in the French factories in addition to those who were already at work. This million, Sauckel said, would free 500,000 trained workers to be shipped to Germany. Moreover, he demanded heavy drafts of French workers for the Todt Organization, which previous to 1944 had, in fact, employed only 20,000.

³⁵The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 117.

³⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 403.

³⁷The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 118.

Laval pointed out to Sauckel that these demands were inflated beyond any remote possibility of realization.³⁸

At this point the Germans tried a new strategy. They attempted to blackmail the French Government by arresting forty of the highest officials of the Government selected from several ministries. Laval protested immediately. Towards the end of September, 1943, Herr Ritter, Sauckel's representative in Paris, was assassinated.³⁹ Tension mounted between the two governments.

Finally, on October 16, 1943, Laval obtained a delay in all labor departures for Germany. This delay in October granted a rest period of three months for France in preparation for a new conscription for the year of 1944.⁴⁰

M. Bichelonne, of the French Government, had the primary responsibility in meeting German demands for French workers. Therefore it was M. Bichelonne who hit on the idea of setting up an exempt class of French factories, to be known as the 'S' factories, whose workers would not be drafted by the Germans. Although Bichelonne originated the idea of 'S' plants, Speer was the man that had the power to

³⁸The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 118.

³⁹Ibid., p. 119.

⁴⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, pp. 402-03.

enforce this idea. Speer told Hitler that it was better to leave French workers at home in their own factories producing war material, than to transport the French workers to Germany. Hitler agreed with Speer, much to the chagrin of Sauckel. Whereupon Speer and M. Bichelonne succeeded in placing ten thousand French factories in this category and finally, on October 7, 1943, Bichelonne obtained German agreement to an exemption from the Labor draft of the innumerable workers whose names had been previously called and who had sought work in these factories. The Germans refused a request that prisoners of war who had failed to return to Germany at the end of their fifteen days' leave and who were working in these factories, should be exempted.⁴¹

The ultimate success or failure of Sauckel's program in France in 1943, can in a sense be measured by the actual number of French workers allocated to work in Germany. The Frenchmen employed within the Reich represented more than a quarter of all foreign male labor working in Germany in the late autumn of 1943. They were thus the biggest group, more numerous than the Soviet civilian workers and Prisoners of War and larger than the Polish group.

Amongst the foreign female workers in Germany the French women formed the third largest group. Their number

⁴¹The Diary of Pierre Laval, pp. 119-20.

was, however, considerably smaller than those of Eastern and Polish women workers as can be seen in the following chart.

The Employment of Foreign Labor in Germany's Economy

Autumn 1943

Numbers in thousands

From	Men ⁴² civilians	Prisoners of war	Total	%	Women	%
France	605	739	1341	26.3	44	2.6
Soviet Union	817	496	1313	23.8	899	52.4
Poland	1094	29	1123	22.0	527	30.7
Belgium	195	53	248	4.9	33	1.9
Bohemia-Moravia	244	--	244	4.8	42	2.5
Holland	236	--	236	4.6	20	1.2
Serbia	34	94	128	2.5	11	0.7
Italy	103	--	103	2.0	14	0.8
Others	303	54	357	7.1	124	7.2
TOTAL	3631	1462	5093	100.0	1714	100.0 ⁴³

In January, 1944, the German Government informed the French that, apart from any prisoners, 670,000 French workers had been drafted and had gone to Germany, but that this number had fallen to 400,000 because of the failure of workers to return to Germany from France upon the expiration of their leaves. As punishment for this failure, Sauckel then demanded that a million workers be sent to Germany and that

⁴²Including the prisoners of war turned into civilian workers. These figures are in a sense misleading, for Sauckel did not recruit prisoners of war. The army controlled these prisoners of war and Sauckel merely had them placed at work in war industries. There was no accurate report on exactly how many Frenchmen that were recruited by Sauckel.

⁴³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 874.

another million be recruited for work in France.⁴⁴ This last attempt in 1944 was Sauckel's fourth recruitment program.

The fourth Sauckel program consisted of two distinct measures: The adoption of the procedure known as the "combing" of industries, and the publication of the law of February 1, 1944, which widened the sphere of application of compulsory labor. The system of combing French industries led the labor administration to carry out direct deportation of French workers in the industrial enterprises. The system of "combing" industries was twofold. The Germans first tried to "comb out" all non-essential industries and close them down. Second, the Germans then "combed out" all non-essential workers in the war plants in France. In order to facilitate this "combing" system mixed Franco-German commissions were set up in each country. In France, this organization for the purpose of "combing" the French labor field had branches even in the smallest towns. The commissions determined the percentage of workers in each factory to be deported. The French were placed on these commissions in order to equalize the burden of requisitioning in French factories. The French felt that if the Germans were left alone to determine which industries were to be closed or

⁴⁴The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 120.

restricted, that they, the Germans, might be partial to certain French factories.⁴⁵

The practice of "combing" the industries represented the realization of projects elaborated by Sauckel as early as 1943. As for the French participation in this project, Laval later claimed that the French Government persuaded the Germans to agree to attach French officials to this service in a consultative capacity. However, said Laval, "The real purpose of this move was to hamper and delay the Germans as much as possible."⁴⁶

The law of February 1, 1944, marked the culminating point of Sauckel's legislative measures. It extended the scope of the law of September 4, 1942. As from February, 1944, all men between the ages of sixteen and sixty and all women between the ages of eighteen and forty-five were subject to compulsory labor.⁴⁷

Besides these two measures the Germans continued also to maintain the immunity of the 'S' factories, placed somewhat under the protection of the Speer organization, much to the disgust of Sauckel, who termed them "the authorized maquis."⁴⁸

⁴⁵Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 494.

⁴⁶The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 120.

⁴⁷Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 494.

⁴⁸The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 121.

In the first three months of 1944 only 30,000 men left for Germany and these were mostly foreigners in France. This total was, in fact, less than the number of workers who returned to France during the same period and who remained behind upon the expiration of their leave.⁴⁹ By April the recruiting program in France had stopped. The French labor reserves were completely depleted. Therefore, France was granted another rest period of four months in anticipation of another labor drive. With the landing of Allied troops on French soil in June of 1944, the foreign labor program officially ended.

Thus Sauckel in four programs attempted to recruit the labor resources of France. His methods were simple: compulsory labor laws to extract idle labor, coupled with a systematic "combing" of the non-essential industries to release labor into the larger pool of the unemployed.

As regards the methods used in the rest of the Western Occupied Territories, it is enough to say that the case of France was typical of the methods employed by the Germans. For example, compulsory labor service was introduced in Norway in the same manner as in France. In Belgium and in Holland the compulsory labor service was organized by ordinances of the occupying power.

⁴⁹The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 121.

It is notable that in the West the Germans made use of the existing governments in formulating and enforcing their labor demands. There were scattered cases of violence in the West, but violence was the exception rather than the rule.

II. IN THE EASTERN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The German methods for the recruitment of foreign labor in the Eastern Occupied Territories up to late 1941 have already been discussed in Chapter Two. With the invasion of Russia in July, 1941, went a shift in emphasis of the foreign labor program from Poland to the Soviet Union. From 1941 to 1945 Russia labor amounted to one-third of all foreign labor recruited and transported into the Reich.

Unlike the Western Occupied Territories, in the East there was no one country which was typical of the German methods of labor recruitment. The German methods varied from place to place, so it will be necessary to discuss recruitment in the East on a much wider scale than was done in the West.

In the Eastern Occupied Territories the labor recruitment revolved around the establishment of compulsory labor laws and the drafting of workers by age classes. The use of violence in the recruitment in the East stands out in sharp contrast with the West. There were many reasons for it: the

East was in a constant state of flux, recruitment areas became military operational sectors time and time again; the proximity of the battle lines also stimulated partisan guerilla activity, with the normal consequences that the Germans became more severe in their methods. In the East, there was also a ready supply of German troops to enforce the police measures against the native population. Besides the above mentioned reasons, there was the fundamental attitude of the Nazis that in the East, unlike the West, they were dealing with racially inferior peoples.

Administratively the East was divided into three areas: the Government General of Poland; the Reich Commissariat Ostland which included the Baltic states (Latvia, Esthonia and Lithuania) and the northern occupied areas of Russia and the Reich Commissariat Ukraine. All three of these areas were ruled by German Commissioners responsible to the special Reich Minister for the Eastern Occupied Territories, Alfred Rosenberg. The labor recruitment program then functioned under this ministry. The actual recruitment of eastern labor was the responsibility of the administrative officials of Rosenberg's office who received the labor quotas from Sauckel and apportioned them over the districts according to numbers and age groups so they would be most reasonably met.⁵⁰

⁵⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, pp. 436-37.

The first labor recruitment program in the East was the introduction of compulsory labor by a decree dated December 19, 1941. This decree provided that all inhabitants of the Eastern Occupied Territories between the ages of eighteen and forty-five were liable for compulsory work, according to their capability for work.⁵¹ The decree also ordered the Reich Commissioners for the Ostland and Ukraine to increase or restrict the liability for compulsory labor in regard to specific groups of the population.⁵² Anyone who failed to comply with these terms was subjected to punishment of six weeks in a Forced Labor Camp.⁵³

On March 6, 1942, detailed instructions were sent from Goring's office of the Four Year Plan on the methods to be used in the recruitment and transportation of Eastern foreign workers.⁵⁴ These instructions stressed that requirements for labor in the Reich had priority over the local requirements for workers and that all workers were to be recruited. Forced enlistments were to be avoided. Instead, for political reasons the enlistments were to be kept on a voluntary basis.⁵⁵

⁵¹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 406.

⁵²Ibid., p. 410.

⁵³Ibid., p. 412.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 346-49.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 348.

The first quota was for 247,900 industrial workers and 380,000 farm workers.⁵⁶

On March 18, 1942, Sauckel raised Goring's original Quota to one million workers for Germany from the East by September 1942.⁵⁷ The next day, a Major Christiansen, Commander of the Security Service Police in the Ukraine, issued the following instructions:

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3. The activity of the labor offices, especially of recruiting commissions, is to be supported to the greatest extent possible. It will not be possible always to refrain from using force. During a conference with the chief of the labor commitment staffs, an agreement was reached stating that wherever prisoners can be released, they should be put at the disposal of the commissioner of the labor office. When searching villages the whole population will be put at the disposal of the commissioner by force.

4. As a rule, no more children will be shot.

5. The prisons have to be kept empty, as a rule The most important thing is the recruiting of workers. No check of persons to be sent into the Reich will be made.⁵⁸

The fury of the German recruitment methods in the East mounted in the year 1942. In an interdepartmental report of the Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territories dated September 30, 1942, there was the comment that the drafting of eastern

⁵⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, pp. 349-50.

⁵⁷Ibid., Vol. V, p. 733.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 732.

male and female workers often occurred without the necessary examination of the capabilities of those concerned, so that from five to ten per cent sick and children were transported along. The report further observed that in those places where no volunteers were obtained, instead of recruiting them pursuant to labor conscription law, coercive measures were used by the police.⁵⁹

In another interdepartmental report dated October 7, 1942, from Captain Schmid, Commandant of Kharkov, other abuses in recruiting were noted. The native Russian militia was accused of dragging skilled workers from their beds for transportation to the Reich and justifying themselves by claiming that all was done in the name of the German army. The Captain noted however that, "In reality the latter have conducted themselves almost throughout in a highly understanding manner toward the skilled workers and the Ukrainian population."⁶⁰

In a secret memorandum by Otto Braeutigam⁶¹ on October 25, 1942, he stated that in the East a regular manhunt was

⁵⁹Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 408.

⁶⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 92.

⁶¹Otto Braeutigam was a member of the Economic Political Department of the Foreign Office. As of May 1941 he was detached by the German Foreign Office to Rosenberg's Agency, the Eastern Ministry.

inaugurated. Without consideration of health or age, the people were shipped to Germany, where it turned out immediately that many more than one hundred thousand had to be sent back because of serious illnesses and other incapacities for work.⁶² However, said Braeutigam, ". . . these methods were used only in the Soviet Union, and in no way remotely resembled this form in enemy countries like Holland or Norway."⁶³ In addition he noted the treatment of the Ukrainians in the Reich Commissariat itself.

With an unequalled arrogance, we put aside all political knowledge and, to the happy surprise of all the colored world, treat the peoples of the Occupied Eastern Territories as whites of Class 2, who apparently have only the task of serving as slaves for Germany and Europe.⁶⁴

Constantly reports came to Rosenberg's office about abuses in the Ukraine.

The importance of the Ukraine was that the Germans had found the people there to be friendly when the area was first invaded, but gradually the violence of compulsory labor alienated this friendship.⁶⁵ In a private letter to Rosenberg there was this description of the labor recruitment in the

⁶²Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II,

⁶³Loc. cit.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 413.

⁶⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 242.

Soviet Union.

At our place, new things have happened. People are being taken to Germany. On December 5, some people from the Kowkuski district were scheduled to go, but they didn't want to and the village was set afire. . . . During the fire the militia (Germans) went through the adjoining villages, seized the laborers, and placed them under arrest. Wherever they did not find any laborers, they detained the parents, until the children appeared. That is how they raged throughout the night in Bielosirka. The workers which had not yet appeared till then, were to be shot. All schools were closed and the married ones go to work in Germany. They are now catching humans like the dog-catchers used to catch dogs. They are already hunting for one week and have not yet enough. The imprisoned workers are locked in at the schoolhouse. They cannot even go out to perform their natural functions, but have to do it like pigs in the same room.⁶⁶

On February 25, 1943, Professor Kubijowytsch, Chairman of the Ukrainian Main Committee, reported sixteen special instances of violence in recruitment, ranging from arrests to killing of innocent people. Typical of these special incidents, was the shooting of forty-five Ukrainians, including eighteen children between the ages of three and fifteen on January 29, 1943, in a village of Sumyn (collective community of Tarnowatka, district of Lublin).⁶⁷ He also stated that the general nervousness in the Ukraine was still more enhanced by the wrong methods of finding labor which had been used more and more frequently in the last few months.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, pp. 64-65.

⁶⁷Ibid., Vol. IV, pp. 84-93.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 80.

The wild and ruthless man-hunts, as exercised everywhere in towns and country, in streets, squares, stations, even in churches, at night in houses, had badly shaken the feeling of security of the inhabitants. Everybody was exposed to the danger of being seized anywhere and at any time by members of the police, suddenly and unexpectedly, and being brought into an assembly camp.⁶⁹

In northern Russia the recruitment was just as violent. On June 28, 1943, in a report to the German Ministry of Agriculture, the recruitment measures in the last months and weeks were called "absolute manhunts, which have an irreparable political and economic effect."⁷⁰ Also the quotas were too high. In White Ruthenia with a total population of 2,400,000 the Germans wanted to obtain 180,000 workers. Freitag, the Chief of Main Office III (Agriculture) for this district, labeled the quotas "impossible".⁷¹

In an oral report to Rosenberg by Leyser, Commissioner General in the district of Zhitomir, he said, "It is certain that a recruitment of labor, in the sense of the word, can hardly be spoken of. In most cases, it is nowadays a matter

⁶⁹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. IV, p. 80.

⁷⁰Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 422.

⁷¹Loc. cit.

of actual conscription by force."⁷² Regardless, the commissioners in the various districts in the East were instructed to apply the severest measures in order to achieve the labor quotas set by Sauckel.⁷³

On August 17, 1943, Sauckel, with the approval of Speer, ordered the recruitment and the transportation to the Reich for work of all people born during the two years 1926 and 1927 in the Eastern Occupied Territories.⁷⁴ Recall and enlistment of Eastern labor born during 1926 and 1927 was to be effected without exception immediately. This action was to be completed by September 30, 1943.⁷⁵

The German recruitment drive in the East continued throughout the year of 1943. To increase the supply of labor from the East, Sauckel ordered the recruitment of all persons born between the years 1919 and 1924. This order was seconded by Rosenberg and placed in effect at the end of 1943.⁷⁶

The actual recruitment of 1944 was done by members of the Wehrmacht, police, local administrations and Sauckel's

⁷²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 236.

⁷³Loc. cit.

⁷⁴Ibid., Vol. V; pp. 728-29.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 730.

⁷⁶Ibid., Vol. III, p. 216.

office. Resistance by the local populace was tremendous, so that preparation of a larger number of German police forces was started.⁷⁷

In a letter to Rosenberg on June 2, 1944, Paul Raab, Nachwuchsführer in the Ukraine, reported that he, in fulfilling a charge by the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces, burned down a few houses in the territory of Wassilkow, Ukraine. These houses belonged to workers ordered to report to work but who had not.⁷⁸ In this letter Raab gave an accurate description of the labor methods used in his district from 1942 till 1944.

He stated that in the year 1942 the conscription of workers was accomplished by way of propaganda. Only very rarely was force necessary. Only in August, 1942, was the first measure of force used. In this case it consisted of burning houses of fugitives who had fled from labor collecting camps. Raab explained that this severe punishment was meant to be an example for the rest of the population. Apparently, the fugitives' families had ridiculed all the other anxious families who had sent their sons and daughters partly voluntarily to the labor commitment.⁷⁹

⁷⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 216.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 231.

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 231-32.

In 1943, with compulsory labor laws, the resistance in Raab's sector increased. Stern measures were then introduced. The reasons for these sterner measures stemmed partially from interference by the local native labor office which began to accept bribes in exchange for immunity from labor service in the Reich. This action made Raab start to use force in the form of arrests, confiscations, and the burning of houses.⁸⁰

Raab summarized his methods in 1944 as very similar to those used in 1943. He also added that his measures were thought to be just by the larger part of the native population.⁸¹

Generally, the methods used by Raab in his one sector bore a remarkable resemblance to the methods used throughout the Eastern Occupied Territories: the use of compulsory labor laws to pool the labor, then the use of force and violence when voluntary recruitment had proven inadequate.

To summarize the German recruitment methods, it may be said that in the Western Occupied Territories the Germans used the existing Governments to pass compulsory labor laws, which had the effect of both freezing and pooling the native labor into readily accessible groups. Then, by simple

⁸⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 231.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 234.

manipulation of these laws, the Germans could replenish the labor pool from which workers for Germany were to be drawn. When this method failed the Germans had Western labor called up by age classes. Coupled with these methods was a policy of closing down factories engaged in non-military production together with a systematic "combing" of the non-essential industries to release additional labor and the application of indirect economic pressures. The West was characterized by the lack of wide-spread violence in recruitment.

In the Eastern Occupied Territories the labor recruitment revolved around the establishment of compulsory labor laws and the drafting of workers by age classes. The use of violence in the recruitment in the East stands out in sharp contrast with the West. Violence in recruitment first started in 1943 when the Germans realized the futility of their Eastern military campaign. Hence, the Germans determined to save something from the East, and that something was labor. In the closing days of 1943, the Germans passed a wide-spread law conscripting all persons born between January 1919 to 1924. This mass deportation from the East, could only be attempted with tremendous pressure of the German army and large police units. The details of this mass drive of the Germans for labor in Russia were obscured by the confused conditions which surrounded Germany's retreat from the East.

CHAPTER VI

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN ADMINISTERING
THE FOREIGN LABOR PROGRAM

Besides the anticipated difficulties of recruiting labor from foreign countries for work in Germany, Sauckel's office had many other vexing problems. Generally, these problems can be divided into three major groups.

First, there was the problem of how to circumvent the opposition in foreign countries. This opposition in foreign countries usually took the form of passive resistance of the large mass of people, the actual resistance by a militant minority, and the Fabian tactics of many of the local governments. In order to complete successfully his labor program, Sauckel had to devise methods to combat these resisting forces. The methods used by Sauckel varied of course with the circumstances, but the methods used in France were typical of those used in the West, as was Russia typical of the East.

The second group of problems encountered by Sauckel was in Germany. These problems stemmed from interference by other organizations in Germany like Himmler's and Speer's. Also, Sauckel was involved in the dramatic struggle for power within the immediate circle of Nazi leaders.

The third major group of problems was, in a sense, the fundamental reason for the interference by other

organizations in the Reich. This was the short-ranged planning of the Nazi economic management. Although Sauckel as head of Arbeitseinsatz had had no voice in determining the initial war economy, he felt the effects of the short-range planning.

The purpose of this chapter will be a description of the problems other than actual recruitment of foreign labor. Major emphasis will be placed on Sauckel's methods of combatting resistance in France and Russia and his struggles with other German officials.

I. PROBLEMS IN THE OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

In this section of this chapter, the situation in France will be discussed as typical of the problems in the West. The East will be discussed only in relationship to Russia, as representative of that area.

In France, Sauckel's office was confronted with both passive and active resistance by the local population and delaying tactics of the French Government. In order to minimize the effect of this French resistance, Sauckel decided on a program of action.

This program consisted of seven cardinal points:¹

¹Sauckel never actually enumerated this exact program, but this writer felt that this was the essence of his program in France.

1. The closest collaboration between all German offices especially in dealing with the French services.

2. A constant, careful check on the French economy by joint French-German commissions as agreed upon by Sauckel's and Speer's offices and the French government.

3. Constant, skillful, and successful propaganda against the cliques of the De Gaulle and Giraud.

4. The guarantee of adequate food supplies to the French population working for Germany.

5. An emphatic insistence before the French Government of the urgency of the labor program, in particular before Marshal Petain, who still represented the main obstacle to the further recruiting of French women for compulsory labor.

6. A pronounced increase in the program for retaining workers in plants essential to war production. These were the protected or § plants.

7. An active campaign against the underground resistance movement in France.²

For all practical purposes, points one, two, and six of Sauckel's seven-point program depended on the close cooperation between Speer's and Sauckel's offices and the French government. But how close was the cooperation?

From 1940 until the middle of 1943, as already pointed

²Major War Criminals, Vol. V, pp. 490-91.

out earlier in this study, recruitment in France was on a small-scale with the Germans relying on voluntary recruitment.³ By the middle of 1943, however, the Germans began to experience great difficulty in obtaining labor from France. Up to that point very little "cooperation" had been needed. The real test was from June 1943 until the Germans retreated from France in 1944.

At the beginning of June, 1943, the German Ambassador in Paris, Hemmen, reported that Laval had made no preparation for a new recruitment action whatsoever, although Sauckel had told the French in January that a new labor action was needed.⁴ On the contrary, the opinion that additional labor drafting was no longer needed had gained ascendancy in France.⁵ Characteristic in this connection was also the fact that Laval, in the transformation of the government demanded by him since December of 1942, had delayed until January, 1943, in appointing a minister for labor, in spite of all efforts and urgings of the German embassy.⁶

Ambassador Hemmen also pointed out that it was likewise certain that, alongside the development of the military

³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 402.

⁴Major War Criminals, Vol. V, p. 486.

⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 403.

⁶Ibid., pp. 402-03.

and political situation since December 1942 and the "irresponsible political inactivity of Laval," and the question of labor, recruitment was responsible for the enormous increase in terroristic acts, sabotage and the insecurity of traffic and the resistance movement in general. Whatever propaganda, made with greatest emphasis by the Free French and the Western Powers, was unable to do to cause the French laborer to stop working and to sabotage the armament works working for Germany had been accomplished by the transport of skilled laborers and juveniles to the Reich, especially after force was employed by the French Government for this purpose. Hundreds of thousands quit their safe places of work, placed themselves at the disposal of terror groups and the secret army and took up the battle against the German occupation force and, also, against their own people who collaborated with the Germans.⁷

In order to stop these grave consequences of the German labor program in the future and to obtain the return of the fugitive laborers from the maquis, the French Government had attempted again and again in its negotiations with Sauckel to bring about a change in the sense that French laborers should be utilized, even if in more increased measure than before, in France itself. Therefore, the

⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, pp. 402-03.

Germans, in cooperation with the French, set up mixed armament commissions to check French industries and to equalize the burdens of recruitment of labor from these industries.⁸ It was hoped that these joint commissions would help to counteract the grave consequences of the labor program. Serving the same purpose was also the designation of some sixty-two hundred French enterprises as S plants.⁹

Both of these new plans, mixed commissions and S plants, created new problems for Sauckel. Immediately there began a "run" of laborers to these S plants.¹⁰ Sauckel rightly feared that these S plants soon would be excessively expanded because, in them, the French laborers sought shelter from shipment to Germany.

Sauckel had constantly opposed the idea of S plants and his opposition brought him into conflict with Speer. Sauckel, in regard to the S plants, had often repeated this thesis:

A French workman, if treated in the right way, does double the amount of work in Germany that he would do in France, and he has here twice the value he has in France. I want to state clearly and fearlessly--the exaggerated use of the idea of protected factories in connection with the labor supply from France in my

⁸Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 382.

⁹The Diary of Pierre Laval, p. 120.

¹⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 764.

submission (sic) implies a grave danger for the German labor supply.¹¹

Speer however argued,

As long as the most vital armament factories of the Reich are not protected against air raids, I am also interested in having an extensive distribution to as many factories as possible. For this I need above all unhampered production in the occupied territories.¹²

Although the idea of S plants was started in the fall of 1943, it had been under discussion for some time previously. On April 13, 1943, there had been a meeting on this idea between Sauckel, Goebbels, Speer and Milch. Goebbels reported the meeting in his diary as follows:

There were some very serious clashes between Sauckel on the one side and Speer and Milch on the other. The meeting was not particularly harmonious. Sauckel had prepared for this meeting whereas Speer and Milch unfortunately came totally unprepared. They had depended completely on my familiarity with the situation and on my professional knowledge, which alas was not available to them. As a result Sauckel had somewhat of an advantage and won the race by default.¹³

Regardless of the difference of opinions between Speer and Sauckel, the S plants idea was placed in operation in 1943. The situation in France over S plants became acute by March of 1944. At the Fifty-Fourth Conference of the Central Planning Board, March 1, 1944, Sauckel said:

¹¹Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, pp. 486-87.

¹²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 763.

¹³The Goebbels Diaries, pp. 326-27.

According to reports received within the last days these protected factories are to a great part filled to capacity, and still labor is sucked up into these areas. This strong suction very much obstructs our desire to dispatch labor to the Reich.¹⁴

Therefore, Sauckel wanted to insist on combing out the protected factories in the future, for the protected factories were working like a suction pump since it was known everywhere in France that every worker in a protected factory was immune from work in Germany.

The Central Planning Board could not solve Sauckel's problem, so he appealed his case to a higher authority. On March 17, 1944, Sauckel wrote to Hitler directly. He stated his case as follows,

The appointment of protected concerns for the purpose of safeguarding armament assignments and transferring civilian quotas occurred in the occupied western territories to such an extent and in such a form that it made a fluent and systematic commitment of labor impossible.¹⁵

Sauckel pointed out to Hitler that there were approximately one and a half million workers in French S plants. In addition to these there were about five and a half million workers in other protected occupations, such as transportation, agriculture, forestry, gendarmerie working for the German military services.¹⁶ Sauckel felt it essential that

¹⁴Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II p. 486.

¹⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 760.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 761.

he again be given a free hand in order to carry out a general, systematic commitment of labor, which was in the most urgent interest of the war economy. Of course, in requesting this authority from Hitler, Sauckel wanted to assume the full responsibility for labor commitment to war industries in the occupied territories.¹⁷

In order to avert this request by Sauckel for additional power, Speer, on April 5, 1944, wrote to Hitler answering Sauckel's arguments. Speer felt that if Sauckel were to be permitted to interfere with armament and war production, it would mean a first and serious invasion of Speer's area of work which he had laboriously built up and thus it would seriously endanger his further responsible leadership.¹⁸

Speer also felt that the present arrangement, whereby Sauckel had merely assigned workers to him for armament and war production enterprises, while he (Speer) alone made the decisions as to their use, had worked successfully.¹⁹

Speer reported that the total number of protected workers in the blocked or protected war production enterprises in the occupied western territories amounted only to about 2,700,000 employed; very soon, however, this number would

¹⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 762.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 764.

¹⁹Loc. cit.

have to be increased to about three million in order to meet the new demands. Since, argued Speer, the total population of the occupied western territories was fifty-seven millions, this was by no means a percentage. On the contrary, it was far below the comparable percentage of workers employed in armament and war production in Germany. (Occupied areas 1:21, Germany 1:8).²⁰

Speer ended his note to Hitler by saying,

I regret that Party Comrade Sauckel did not, before writing to you, my Fuehrer, endeavor to reach an agreement with me regarding the treatment of the blocked concerns (Speerbetriebe). Many of the disputed points could doubtless be solved in mutual agreement, especially in view of the principle, hitherto consistently recognized by him, that the manpower in the industries of armament and war production, also in the occupied territories, is chiefly my responsibility.

Please order that (1), the blocked concerns in the occupied territories and in Italy continue to be protected in accordance with the agreements; (2) and exceptions to this are to be allowed only by me or with my concurrence; and (3) the Plenipotentiary for Labor Commitment is to contact me for the purpose of clarifying matters further.²¹

At a conference in the Reich Chancellery on July 11, 1944, the issue of the S plants was finally decided and Hitler had agreed with Speer. The program in the West was to continue.²²

The fifth objective that Sauckel sought to achieve in

²⁰Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 764.

²¹Ibid., p. 765.

²²Ibid., p. 770.

France was to impress on Marshal Petain's Government the urgency of the labor program.

Sauckel's work in France was to be reasonably lightened by the formation of a new government in France. In April, 1942, a series of meetings between Petain, Darlan, and Laval, under the watchful eyes of Abetz, Hitler's ambassador to France, and of Fernand de Brinon, Vichy's own representative in Paris, concluded with the formation of a new government at Vichy. Petain entrusted Laval with "the effective direction of internal and foreign policy" and made him the virtual dictator of Unoccupied France.

Although the world thought Laval the classic example of collaboration, the Germans found him at times an indifferent ally. Shortly after Laval's appointment, Goebbels wrote this in his diary:

This is a tremendous advantage for us, and for that reason it causes alarm in London and in Washington. . . . In any case a France under Laval, even though this French politician is personally most unsympathetic, is far more acceptable than a France of attentisme,²³ with which you never know where you are at.²⁴

Goebbels' initial satisfaction in Laval's appointment apparently received a rude shock. In a letter from Alphonse de Chateaubriant, a pro-Nazi editor in France, to Goebbels,

²³Petain followed a policy of what the French call attentisme--something like the American "watchful waiting."

²⁴The Goebbels Diaries, p. 171.

the Frenchman had this to say,

. . . the position of the collaborationists has become very difficult. Laval, . . . was forever stalling; he could be made to act only if a German of rank stood behind him and kept driving him.²⁵

On November 17, 1943, Goebbels made this observation about the French Government.

Rather disagreeable developments are observable in France. . . . Laval keeps hesitating. It's not quite clear whether he is stalling from apathy or intrigue. . . . Now both Petain and Laval have gone in for watchful waiting. Both, in their innermost hearts, are quite naturally opposed to the Reich and its interests. We therefore cannot trust them across the street.²⁶

Sauckel of course had direct connection with Laval. In a report to Hitler dated August 9, 1943, a photostat of which appears in Appendix V of The Diary of Pierre Laval, Sauckel told Hitler, after a conference with the French leader, that Laval obstinately refused to carry out a further program for recruiting and placing under contract the 500,000 French workers who were to go to Germany before the end of the year 1943. Sauckel claimed that Laval was unable to put forward any really sound reasons for refusal. Laval even refused to pledge himself to make the greatest efforts in an attempt to attain this objective. All of Laval's efforts appeared to Sauckel to be bent toward gaining political

²⁵The Goebbels Diaries, p. 486.

²⁶Ibid., p. 516.

advantages for France.²⁷ Therefore, Sauckel expressed himself in a letter to Schleier, a German minister, as follows:

After thinking the matter over calmly and coolly I must inform you that I have completely lost all faith in the honest goodwill of the French Prime Minister, Laval. His refusal amounts to pure and simple sabotage of Germany's struggle for life against Bolshevism.²⁸

The extent that Laval and Petain interfered with the labor program is hard to determine, but one may infer that the French Government's cooperation with Sauckel was not of the most cordial character.

Points three, four, and seven of Sauckel's program dealt with the effect of propaganda, food supply in France and the active campaign against the underground movement. As late as March 1, 1944, Sauckel reported on the food situation in France in relation to the labor program. Sauckel claimed the French did not feel the shortages caused by the war to any degree comparable with what Germany had to experience. The average French citizen could still buy everything he wished. Moreover, he could pay for what he bought. Therefore the French had no reason for wanting to go to Germany in order to get better food.²⁹ The Frenchman

²⁷The Diary of Pierre Laval, pp. 210-13.

²⁸Ibid., p. 214.

²⁹Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 492.

supplemented his diet, according to Sauckel, with food parcels which the Germans could not touch or by the black market.³⁰ In order to eliminate this situation the Germans were going to stop supplying their troops in France with food and let the French supply them.³¹ This idea was never carried out because the German army in France was greatly reinforced before the Allied invasion.³²

The German propaganda was also ineffective in France. Sauckel claimed that by 1944 belief in a German victory and in all propaganda statements which the Germans were still able to make had sunk below zero.³³ Since the attempt to produce food shortages in France failed and the propaganda campaign had failed to induce French workers to go to Germany, Sauckel was determined to use direct pressure. This plan was also inadequate, for, as Sauckel explained to Hitler in a report dated April 17, 1944, an energetic executive was of decisive importance for success in view of the attitude of the French population which, as a result of the Allied propaganda and the terror acts, was becoming more antagonistic toward voluntarily going to Germany.³⁴ Although the work

³⁰Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 493.

³¹Loc. cit.

³²Ibid., p. 494.

³³Ibid., p. 488.

³⁴Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 762.

done by the new police chief, Darnand, had helped to improve the French police, the fact remained that the French police had not successfully carried out its task in connection with the labor program. The police, Sauckel felt, were numerically too weak, not reliable as regards personnel, and inadequately armed. It hesitated to proceed against shirkers in order not to expose itself to retaliatory measures of the maquis. The resistance had grown daily. The maquis directed its terror against those who wanted to go to Germany, against their families and against the government and its organs.³⁵ It also threatened transportation, with the result that in entire departments there were no passable roads.³⁶

As for the German police force, Sauckel claimed that they were not strong enough numerically to be able to carry out a thorough search for labor service evaders in addition to regular police duties. Sauckel, in collaboration with the Gestapo and the Police Fuehrer, decided to organize a special protective corps supplementary to the other police organs which was to seize labor service evaders by force and send them off.³⁷ This special protective corp consisted of trained German and French policemen, who were directed by

³⁵Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, pp. 760-63.

³⁶Ibid., p. 762.

³⁷Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 108.

Sauckel's office.

The assertion of state authority in the field of labor commitment was merely a part of the question of total authority. Hence Sauckel felt the need for putting a stop to terrorist activity and thus guaranteeing that a state order would be obeyed. Therefore it was necessary that, besides supporting the constructive work of the French police, an increased number of troops be employed especially in cases where German troops or agencies were directly attacked.³⁸

By July 11, 1944, the Germans no longer made the slightest pretense of trying to recruit labor in France. From that day on, the Wehrmacht was to be used. The Deputy of the Head of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht, General Warlimont, referred to a recently issued Führer order according to which all German forces had to place themselves in the service of the work of acquiring manpower. Therefore, Warlimont ordered that wherever the Wehrmacht was not employed exclusively in pressing military duties it was to be available for labor recruitment but it was not to be actually assigned for this purpose. General Warlimont then made the following practical suggestions:

³⁸Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 104.

a. When large cities, due to the difficulty of providing food, are wholly or partly evacuated the population suitable for labor commitment is to be put to work with the assistance of the Wehrmacht.

b. The troops employed in fighting partisans are to take over in addition the task of acquiring manpower in the partisan areas. Everyone, who cannot fully prove the purpose of his stay in these areas, is to be seized forcibly.

c. The seizing of labor recruits among the refugees from the areas near the front should be handled especially intensively with the assistance of the Wehrmacht.³⁹

Speer was opposed to this idea of using the army, for he felt that German and French civilian officials were in a position to seize sufficient foreign workers with their present strength, as a relatively small number of men were sufficient for this purpose. All that was needed were stricter orders, but no violent measures nor large-scale raids should be carried out.⁴⁰

Ambassador Abetz confirmed these statements by Speer. The application of severe measures, such as the shooting of French functionaries and the use of the army was of no use; it only drove the population the more quickly into the maquis, so claimed Abetz.⁴¹ Thus the Germans themselves were divided over the use of the Wehrmacht in the labor commitment program.

³⁹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 768.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 770.

⁴¹Loc. cit.

Sauckel reported that in his opinion extensive portions of the Wehrmacht saw in the labor recruiting program something disreputable. Sauckel claimed that incidents actually occurred both in France and Russia where German soldiers endeavored to protect the population from being taken by the German labor service.⁴² Therefore Sauckel deemed it necessary to instruct the army on the extraordinary importance of the labor recruiting. It was also a question of executing the labor program in a consistent manner. Sauckel constantly maintained that if one quickly proceeded to make examples, then the passive and active resistance would change into active cooperation.⁴³ Sauckel also felt that one ought not shrink back from proceeding with drastic means against administrative heads and the small refractory offenders.⁴⁴

The interference by the army and other German offices in the occupied countries became so bad that Sauckel made this remark to the Central Planning Board,

. . . I have been called a fool who against all reason travelled around in these countries in order to extract labor. This went so far, I assure you, that all prefectures in France had general orders not to satisfy my demands since even the German authorities quarreled over whether or not Sauckel was a fool. If one's work is

⁴²Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 769.

⁴³Loc. cit.

⁴⁴Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 611.

smashed in such a way, repair is very, very difficult.⁴⁵

In the East, unlike the West, the recruitment of labor was carried out in a direct manner. This direct approach resulted in heightening resistance in the East. In Russia this was extremely noticeable. The forceful recruitment of labor in Russia had a number of results. First, the violence of the labor program created an unfavorable impression in the minds of the easterners of the Nazis and their form of government. Second, the foreign labor program increased the administrative problems in these eastern areas. Third, the foreign labor program gave the Soviet propaganda machine a fertile mass of material on which they could ply their trade. Rosenberg's office reported, not only the actual conditions and the reports which seeped through to Russia, but also the clumsy publications in the German press of the legal rulings relative to the matter gave the Soviets enough to manipulate.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the Soviets started a large scale propaganda campaign, which operated even into German administered territories, and was considered by the Central Office as the main reason for the stiffening of the Soviet resistance as well as the threatening increase of guerilla bands up to the borders of Poland.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 485.

⁴⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 132.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 134.

The initial policies in Russia were improved in respect to prisoners of war. But as Otto Bräutigam expressed it, "this improvement of the conditions is not to be ascribed to political acumen, but to the sudden realization that our labor market must be supplied with laborers at once."⁴⁸ The same Bräutigam described the labor recruitment program and its effects as follows,

We now experienced the grotesque picture of having to recruit millions of laborers from the occupied Eastern territories, after prisoners of war have died of hunger like flies, in order to fill the gaps that have formed within Germany. Now the food question no longer existed. In the prevailing limitless abuse of the Slavic humanity "recruiting" methods were used which probably have their origin only in the blackest period of the slave trade. . . . Actually we have made it quite easy for Soviet propaganda to augment the hate for Germany and the National Socialist system. The Soviet soldier fights more and more bravely in spite of the efforts of our politicians to find another name for this bravery. Valuable German blood must flow more and more, in order to break the resistance of the Red Army.⁴⁹

As has already been pointed out, the problems in the occupied territories were a definite handicap to the administration of Sauckel's labor program. It has also been mentioned that some of the interference in these areas stemmed from opposition of German agencies. Besides the opposition in occupied territories from German agencies, there was considerable interference within the Reich by these same or different German agencies.

⁴⁸Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 247.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 248.

II. PROBLEMS WITHIN THE REICH

The second major group of problems which Sauckel encountered, was the opposition and interference of other German agencies and some of the top Nazi leaders. In the preceding section of this chapter, the clash between Speer's and Sauckel's offices was noted. It was also mentioned in connection with this controversy over the S plants that Speer was backed by Dr. Goebbels. Although Goebbels was not immediately connected with the labor program, he had profound influence with Hitler. Goebbels furnished an interesting picture of the inner circle of the Nazi state in his diaries. He also presented an unusual account of Sauckel and the foreign labor program.

On March 28, 1942, Goebbels made this entry in his now famous diary.

Sauckel has been appointed Reich Plenipotentiary for man power. When he comes to Berlin the next time I am going to talk to him and present my wishes. Undoubtedly his strong National Socialist hand will achieve miracles.⁵⁰

This initial enthusiasm of Goebbels over Sauckel's appointment was rather short-lived. By March 9, 1943, Goebbels felt as follows:

The Fuehrer shares my worries about the carrying through of the 800,000-man program. He has now become

⁵⁰The Goebbels Diaries, p. 150.

somewhat distrustful of Sauckel. Sauckel does not have the ability to carry the necessary transition process for this program through in practice. He depends too much upon the labor offices, which are most unsuited to this purpose.⁵¹

On March 16, 1943, Goebbels made an acute observation on the conflicts between many of the German agencies connected with the labor program. This observation of Goebbels pointed out one of the fundamental flaws in the organization of the foreign labor program:

A new decree by the Fuehrer gives Sauckel complete authority over the departments of the Ministry of Labor now under his jurisdiction. Here we have another case of a ministry being hollowed out bit by bit without the head being removed. That is a very dangerous procedure which in the long run is quite harmful to authority. We are living in a form of state in which jurisdictions are not clearly defined. From this fact stem most quarrels among leading personalities and in the departments. In my opinion it would be best if Sauckel or, better still, Ley were put in the place of Seldte. That isn't done, however. Seldte is left at his post but is gradually undermined. The same thing is true of many other departments. As a result German domestic policy completely lacks direction.⁵²

Besides the overlapping of authority in the Labor Ministry, Goebbels felt that Sauckel had not organized his office too well. On April 11, 1943, Goebbels made this passing observation on Sauckel's organization and character.

Sauckel has delivered a lecture to the heads of his labor offices. He sounded off again about women's compulsory labor in a way that certainly does not help

⁵¹The Goebbels Diaries, p. 283.

⁵²Ibid., p. 301.

total war.⁵³ Sauckel is one of the dullest of dull. Unfortunately he has allowed the heads of his labor offices to take him completely in tow. These types are for the most part quite unregenerate. He still keeps a whole retinue of former Centrists and Social Democrats who naturally are having the time of their lives leading the dumb fool from Weimar around by the nose.⁵⁴

Again,

For our next meeting I am going to arm myself with material to hit back at Sauckel. Speer informed me about a so-called manifesto that Sauckel addressed to his organization within the Reich and the occupied areas. This manifesto is written in a pompous, terribly overladen, baroque style. It smells from afar and gives me a pain. Sauckel is suffering from paranoia. When he signs the manifesto with the words, "Written on the Fuehrer's Birthday in a Plane above Russia," that has the smell of the corniest Weimar style. It is high time that his wings be clipped.⁵⁵

As enlightening and amusing as Goebbels' estimation of Sauckel and his program was, the fact remained that Goebbels had interfered with the foreign labor program on occasions other than that already noted, namely when he backed Speer's proposal for the S plants. Another example

⁵³This is one of the incongruities in Goebbels character. Goebbels constantly maintained that a total war concept was needed in Germany. This was finally accomplished in late 1943. Yet, Goebbels like many of the other top Nazis refused to admit the importance of women in industry.

⁵⁴The Goebbels Diaries, p. 325.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 341-42. The meeting Goebbels mentioned has reference to the occasion when Sauckel bested Speer and Milch. CF. ante, footnote 13, page 111. Goebbels reference to Centrists and Social Democrats meant Dr. Timm and Walter Stothfang, whom Sauckel brought with him from Weimar when he was appointed by Hitler. Lochner felt they were sabotaging Sauckel's efforts.

of Goebbels interference was after the fall of Stalingrad and the proclamation of the state of total war. Goebbels ordered that in cases of persistent refusal to work in Germany or signs of resistance, compulsion was to be used in the occupied territories by refusing additional food rations, or even by withdrawal of ration cards.⁵⁶ Sauckel rejected these measures because he felt that, at least in the West, the so-called food ration card played a subordinate role and that supplies were provided for the resistance movement and its members on such a large scale that such measures would have been quite ineffective.⁵⁷

Besides the interference by Goebbels, Himmler, Leader of the SS (Reichsführer von die Schutzstaffeln), had a basic disagreement with Sauckel over the treatment of foreign labor inside Germany. Himmler in his official position was charged with the responsibility of protecting Germany from within, he naturally assumed control over the actions of the foreign labor once it was within the Reich. But, Himmler's ideas on the treatment of foreign labor differed from those of Sauckel. In order to clarify the difference between these two men it will be necessary to review the treatment of foreign labor in the Reich.

⁵⁶Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 9.

⁵⁷Loc. cit.

Before February of 1942, the care of foreign labor in the Reich was under the jurisdiction of the Four Year Plan, hence Göring released the first directive on the care of these workers. On November 7, 1941, Göring ordered his offices not to care for the foreign laborers like German workers.⁵⁸ Also the foreigners were not under any circumstance to use the welfare installations of the Labor Front.⁵⁹ Wages of the foreign workers were not to be raised nor assimilated to the wages of the Germans.⁶⁰ Göring also expressed the idea that all agencies using foreign workers were to promote maximum utilization of that labor.⁶¹

On February 20, 1942, Himmler issued a statement which charged the security police with the responsibility for regulating the behavior of foreign labor in the Reich.⁶² Himmler's directive called for nine major points. The first point dealt with general security measure, such as the administrative procedures. The second point concerned placement and supervision of the foreign workers in the factories. The remaining points dealt with combating violations against

⁵⁸Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 841.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 844.

⁶⁰Loc. cit.

⁶¹Loc. cit.

⁶²Ibid., Vol. V, p. 744.

discipline by the foreign workers. Included within these regulations was the statement that the police were to use physical power against the foreigners.⁶³ They also provided for transfer to concentration camps in some cases and, in what Himmler labeled "special treatment", hanging.⁶⁴

On the very same day that Himmler issued his order, Dr. Mansfeld filed an interesting report on the welfare of Russian prisoners-of-war and civilians. Dr. Mansfeld, who headed the Arbeitseinsatz before Sauckel, said that, of the 3,900,000 Russians either captured or recruited before February, 1942, only 1,100,000 were left.⁶⁵ Nearly half a million Russians died between November, 1941, and January, 1942.⁶⁶ Most of them died of typhus. Mansfeld added, "It is insane, to transport these laborers in open or closed unheated box cars, merely to unload corpses at the destination."⁶⁷

In a memorandum from one of the Krupp plants to Mr. Kupe, technical manager of Krupp's Cast Steel Works in Essen, dated March 14, 1942, it was stated that the food of the

⁶³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. V, p. 748.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 749.

⁶⁵Ibid., Supplement A, p. 362.

⁶⁶Loc. cit.

⁶⁷Loc. cit.

Russians working there was so pitifully bad that the Russians were getting weaker and weaker every day.⁶⁸ Investigations had shown, for example, that some Russians were not strong enough to tighten a turning part sufficiently for lack of physical strength.⁶⁹ Conditions were exactly the same at all other places in the Krupp plants where Russians were employed.⁷⁰

On March 21, 1942, Hitler, at a meeting with Speer, declared unequivocally and at great length that he did not agree that the Russians should be fed so poorly. The Russians said Hitler, "must receive an absolutely sufficient amount of food and Sauckel was to see to it that Backe would now make sure that such feeding measures were taken."⁷¹

Hitler was surprised that the civilian Russians were kept behind barbed wire fences like prisoners-of-war.⁷² He ordered the removal of the barbed wire fences. On April 25, 1942, the Gestapo issued orders whereby the barbed wire

⁶⁸Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. III, p. 874.

⁶⁹Loc. cit.

⁷⁰Loc. cit.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 877. It must also be remembered that just shortly before this Sauckel was appointed to his position. He immediately reorganized the labor program so that the Labor Front and Reich Food Administration had control over the housing and feeding of the foreigners.

⁷²Ibid., 878.

fences were removed from civilian workers' camps.⁷³ In addition to that instruction, orders were sent relaxing some of the security measures over the foreigners' living quarters.⁷⁴ By June 4, 1942, reliable Russian workers, by way of a reward, so to speak, were allowed to leave their billets in closed groups with sufficient German supervision.⁷⁵

It must be pointed out however that most of these regulations applied only to the Eastern workers. As for the lack of food for the Eastern workers, one German attached to Rosenberg's office remarked:

. . . Allegedly there were not enough food supplies on hand for them. It is especially peculiar that the food supplies are deficient only for prisoners of war from the Soviet Union, while complaints about the treatment of other prisoners of war, Polish, Serbian, French, and English, have not become loud.⁷⁶

This then was the general situation of foreign workers in the Reich up to the summer of 1942. Sauckel attempted to insure the health and protection of the workers, whereas Himmler in many instances countermanded Sauckel's orders by placing restrictions on the foreign workers, particularly those from the East. Gradually however, Sauckel, backed by

⁷³Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. IX, pp. 878-81.

⁷⁴Loc. cit.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 882.

⁷⁶Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 247.

Speer and Backe, forced Himmler to relax some of the restrictions on foreign workers. By September, 1942, Sauckel, in a personal consultation with Hitler, had persuaded Hitler to modify Himmler's regulations.⁷⁷

By March, 1943, at the suggestion of Goebbels, Sauckel and Speer a uniform treatment of foreigners was secured.⁷⁸ This new policy was the major plan used throughout the Reich until its collapse. The new plan called for uniform treatment of Eastern and Western workers. The plan stated,

. . . The changes introduced herewith in the treatment of the foreigners will mainly affect the hitherto prevailing Security Police measures of the Reichsfuehrer SS and of the Main Security Office.⁷⁹

Unlike the old regulations the new ones called for the separation of various nationalities in camps and factories.⁸⁰ The food supply was to be equal except for those workers doing heavy labor; they were to receive additional rations. A new wage scale was introduced which equalized Eastern workers wages with those of the West, and provided for additional payments for extra work.⁸¹

Besides Himmler's interferences, Sauckel had to deal

⁷⁷Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 145.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 251.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 252.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 253.

⁸¹Loc. cit.

with the problem of outside recruitment by industrialists like Krupp. When Krupp, it appears, found it difficult to procure foreign labor from Sauckel's office, he contacted Himmler's office and made arrangements for the use of concentration camp inmates.⁸² These inmates would receive food, shelter and medical care from the individual factories where they were employed, but their wages were forfeited to the SS.⁸³ Since the SS had control over who was placed in concentration camps and for what, it seems possible that an unwholesome situation existed. Although the extent of these arrangements cannot be ascertained, one thing was certain, Krupp paid special bonuses to Gestapo agents for the use of inmates.⁸⁴ Since the SS and its concentration camps fell outside of Sauckel's jurisdiction, Sauckel could do nothing to curb that situation.

Even considering the amount of interference within the Reich, Sauckel's program for caring for foreign workers within Germany achieved some success. Over the combined opposition of Speer, Goebbels and Himmler, Sauckel managed at least to raise the wages of the foreign workers in the Reich. When Sauckel started in 1942, the Eastern worker, after his

⁸²Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. IX, p. 945.

⁸³Ibid., p. 967.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 944.

expenses for food and lodging had been deducted, had about four marks sixty pfennigs per week left over, if one takes as an example the rate of sixty pfennigs an hour for an average foreign worker in German industry.⁸⁵ By June, 1942, this wage was increased to nine marks ten pfennigs.⁸⁶ In April of 1943, Sauckel had this wage increased to twelve marks per week and in 1944 to eighteen marks per week.⁸⁷ This was at least one incident where Sauckel managed to overcome opposition in the Reich and secure a part of his foreign labor program.

III. THE PROBLEM OF SHORT RANGE PLANNING

The fundamental interference with Sauckel's office stemmed from the inadequate initial planning of the German war economy. As has already been pointed out in the first two sections of this chapter, there was a great deal of interference due to the fact that jurisdictions of various offices were not clearly defined. John Galbraith, the editor of Fortune, claimed that this lack of direction of German domestic policy stemmed from overconfidence and undermobilization.⁸⁸

⁸⁵Major War Criminals, Vol. XV, p. 45.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 46.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 47.

⁸⁸John Kenneth Galbraith, "Germany Was Badly Run," Fortune, Vol. XXXII, No. 6, pp. 173-78. Henceforth cited as Germany Was Badly Run.

Overconfidence affected the foreign labor program to the extent that Germany had not prepared for a long war. Outside Germany it was commonly believed that Hitler's Reich, as a totalitarian state, was a regimented society in which all manpower and all economic resources were harnessed to a war machine that was driven according to a master plan. However, prior to the appointment of Speer, there had been no attempt to mobilize the resources of the Reich or the occupied countries for total war. There was little increase in the length of the pre-war working week or in the number of workers engaged in war production, and there was only a minor rise in the output of arms and munitions, for Hitler's plans had been based on the assumption that the war would be of short duration and limited scope.⁸⁹ Under these conditions it is easily seen how improvised administrative arrangements and overlapping of authority interfered with all agencies in the Reich, including the labor program.

Although overconfidence in the early stages of the war affected Sauckel's foreign labor program, this was an indirect interference. Much more direct was the problem of undermobilization. This undermobilization served to aggravate the manpower problem in Germany.⁹⁰ This was particularly clear

⁸⁹Chester Wilmot, The Struggle for Europe, (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1952), p. 148. Henceforth cited as The Struggle for Europe.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 556.

in relation to women in war work, for had Speer and Sauckel been able to bring in women workers to take the place of the men called to the army to the extent they wished the German manpower crisis would not have been so acute.⁹¹

To summarize the problems encountered in administering the foreign labor program, it may be said they were threefold: First, there were the problems in the occupied territories of achieving cooperation with the local government and people and between the German agencies. In France, Sauckel fell into basic disagreement with Speer over the S plant issue. Also, because of the recruitment methods in France, Sauckel failed to maintain harmony with the French people or Laval's government. In Russia, the violence of the recruitment program quickly eliminated any possibility of peaceful cooperation. The second major problem encountered by Sauckel was the opposition and interference of other German agencies within the Reich. Besides the disagreement with Speer, Sauckel ran into opposition from Goebbels, Himmler and some German industrialists particularly regarding the treatment of foreign workers in Germany. Much of this opposition could be traced back to the third major problem, that of the inadequate and confused overall planning of the German war effort, which helped to create conflicts between Sauckel's office and those of other German offices.

⁹¹The Struggle for Europe, p. 557.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The major problem of this thesis was a description of the German foreign labor recruitment program from 1942 to 1945. This labor program dealt only with the acquisition of foreign labor and their placement in the hands of Speer, the director of the German economy. The foreign labor program had its ideological basis in the Nazi philosophy. Nazi thought stressed the idea that work for a state was more than a contractual relationship; work was a living phenomenon in which the worker became a cog in the state's collective production. The Germans had little difficulty in extending this idea to the people of conquered areas.

Before 1942, the foreign labor program was under the direction of Goring's Four-Year Plan. Dr. Mansfeld, the director of the Arbeitseinsatz, undertook the first major draft of one million Polish workers in January of 1940. Besides the utilization of Polish laborers, prisoners-of-war were gradually incorporated into the German economy. By spring of 1942, the Nazis decided that because of the changing complexities of the war and the acute shortage of manpower, the foreign labor program should be reorganized under the Four Year Plan by incorporating offices IV, V, and VI of the Reich Labor Ministry. On March 21, 1942, Hitler appointed

Fritz Sauckel, then Gauleiter of Thuringia, as head of the newly reorganized Arbeitseinsatz.

Administratively, Sauckel depended on the existing party and government offices to execute the labor program. From April, 1942 until the close of the war in 1945, Sauckel obtained, in four large scale recruitment drives, a total of four and a half million foreign workers or prisoners of war for the German economy. The methods of recruiting this labor varied according to the country, but generally in the West the labor recruitment was conducted through the German occupation authorities or the native foreign government. In the East the recruitment program was carried out solely by the German authorities. The recruitment of foreign labor in the East showed a tendency toward violence that was usually absent in the West.

Besides the problems of recruiting foreign labor, Sauckel's office encountered numerous other problems. Foremost among these problems was the active and passive opposition of the people in the foreign countries. In France, particularly, Sauckel found Laval's government at times uncooperative, as were the people. In Russia, as throughout the East, the brutality of the methods used in labor recruitment seriously interfered with the labor program by alienating the native population. In Germany, Sauckel also had to combat interference by Speer, Goebbels and Himmler.

One of the fundamental reasons for this opposition was the lack of clear lines of administrative authority resulting from overconfidence and undermobilization of the total German economy.

But what were the effects of the foreign labor program? Did it accomplish its purpose of supplying the labor necessary? In short, was it worth Germany's while to go out and recruit this foreign labor and if not, how else was Germany's labor demand to be satisfied?

First, there must be answered the question of how the labor program affected German war effort in the occupied territories. In France, and the other western occupied territories, it has already been noted that Sauckel's program had the effect of forcing some labor into the resistance movement. Germans like Hemmen, Abetz and Sauckel, on various occasions expressed the view that the labor program did what Allied propaganda could not do, namely, encourage the workers to leave their safe jobs and enter the resistance movement.¹ Besides that, the labor program encouraged passive resistance and sabotage in industry. Also, the labor program placed an enormous amount of extra pressure on the local foreign governments and the German occupation authorities. The already high tension that existed between the Germans on the one

¹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, pp. 402-03.

hand, and the people in the occupied areas on the other, was greatly heightened by the extra burden of recruitment. This made the normal process of governing these areas that much more difficult. Sauckel expressed this idea while addressing the Central Planning Board Meeting of March 1, 1944, when he said,

Numerous German authorities, even such as had no connections with economics and labor supply, inquired of me, why do you fetch these people to Germany at all? You make trouble for this area and render our existence there more difficult. To which I can only reply: It is my duty to insist on it that labor supply comes from abroad.²

As great as was the effect that the labor program had in the West, it was nothing in comparison with the East. Perhaps the generally harsh policy towards the Slavic peoples in the East was one of the major mistakes of the Nazis. The foreign labor program became an intimate part of this all inclusive harsh policy. Also, the commitment and treatment of foreign Eastern laborers not only affected German war production and food supply significantly but also reacted on the carrying out of German administrative tasks in former Soviet areas. Two large fields of action were affected by the way in which the problems connected with the inclusion of millions of Eastern nationals in the Reich were solved: 1. Development of the war situation, 2. The

²Trials under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. II, p. 488.

establishment of the German claim to leadership in the East after the war.

When the call for labor in Germany was increased in January, 1942, this set up a situation among those classes of Russian and Ukrainian civilians concerned which was fraught with promise and risk so far as Germany was concerned. Even if one group (the volunteers) set excessive hopes on the journey into the Reich, under the impression of irresponsible promises, the other group (forced laborers) left their homes reluctantly or at least with misgivings because of memories of former Bolshevist deportations as well as planted anti-German rumors. Still the fact remains that the trip to Germany appeared as journey into the unknown not only for the two groups concerned but also for those relatives who remained behind, because of the isolation of the Soviet Union from Europe for decades. The public judgment of the Reich and its leadership was dependent upon the outcome of this measure taken by the German military and civilian authorities in the occupied eastern territories. Employment in Germany offered an unusual opportunity to learn to know the Germans by personal experience, a knowledge which no amount of Soviet propaganda could replace. The Reich was much slandered by the Soviet press, and the Nazis position on the working class was the favorite target of the Soviets. Had the Germans treated the eastern workers better they might perhaps

have gained a favorable basis of comparison with the corresponding Communistic doctrines and methods.

Also if the Germans, by their liberal treatment of the eastern workers, could have kindled greater enthusiasm in the occupied eastern territories, this enthusiasm would have had its reaction on the force of resistance of the Red Army. The Red Army man might possibly have said to himself: "I fight for a system that is throughout worse than that which awaits me in the case of a defeat. I will be better off in every respect among the Germans than I have been until now."³

But no, instead of taking into consideration the great war potential value of a favorable frame of mind for the eastern peoples, the Germans ignored it. Instead, the Germans took care of the drafting and the employment as well as the housing, treatment et cetera, of the eastern laborers exclusively according to labor, technical and security police points of view. The result was that Sauckel's office was able to report the due numerical fulfilment of the program as well as the security of the German nationality and of German businesses. At the same time, however, facts had to be hushed which could have been avoided, not only in the interests of German prestige but also in the interest of an

³Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, p. 244.

effective German occupation in the East. Once these facts leaked out, they materially strengthened the spirit of resistance in the East.⁴ Many Germans realized this as early as October 1942. Otto Braeutigam warned:

If we do not accomplish this change of course at once, then one can say with certainty that the power of resistance of the Red Army and of the whole Russian people will mount still more, and Germany must continue to sacrifice her best blood. Yes, it must be openly stated that the possibility of a German defeat approaches in a tangible proximity, all the more so if the partisan movement for which Stalin is striving with every means, should spread over a greater part of the Ukraine.⁵

Braeutigam's warning went unheeded; the rest of the story is history.

In spite of the adverse effects that the labor program caused in the occupied territories, it must be conceded that the program achieved its primary objective of supplying foreign labor to German industry. There has been a great deal of uncertainty as to the exact number of foreign workers and prisoners of war recruited to work in Germany. Some estimates run as low as four million,⁶ others as high as fourteen million.⁷ By Sauckel's own figures there were five

⁴Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. III, pp. 239-49.

⁵Ibid., p. 250.

⁶Peter A. Speek, "Foreign Workers and Manpower in Germany," Monthly Labor Review, 57:495-98, September, 1943.

⁷Heinrich Fraenkel, "Germany's Slave Labor," The New Republic, 111:456-57, October 9, 1944.

million foreign workers in the Reich in July, 1942. Within the next three years he recruited another three million workers. This would place the total number of foreign workers recruited at about eight million. Of course there never was that total number of foreign laborers working at any one time in Germany, because of the rapid turnover due to expiring of contracts, deaths and other causes. It appeared that as early as 1941 there were about four million foreign workers in the Reich. This total number was gradually increased until it reached its peak in 1944 when there were about six and half to seven million foreign workers in the Reich. By 1945, this total was six and a half million foreign workers. Edward L. Deuss, an economic analyst during the war, certified the following chart which was accepted at the Nuremberg War Trials.

There immediately comes to mind the question, "How efficient were these foreign workers?" Although there are no exact reports on the value or efficiency of the foreign workers in the Reich, still one may infer a partial answer to this question from opinion and other sources of material. John Galbraith, editor of Fortune claimed that everyone in Germany with whom he talked thought that the foreigners had done an extremely good job.⁸ Considering the fact that many

⁸Germany Was Badly Run, p. 177.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF FOREIGNERS PUT TO WORK FOR THE
GERMAN WAR EFFORT IN THE OLD REICH

(Status January 1945)

Nationality	Workers	P/W's	Politicals	Total
Russians	1,900,000	600,000	11,000	2,500,000
French	764,000	750,000	- - -	1,525,000
Poles	851,000	60,000	- - -	911,000
Italians	227,000	400,000	- - -	627,000
Dutch	274,000	- - - -	2,300	276,300
Belgians	183,000	63,000	8,900	254,000
Yugoslavs	230,000	- - - -	- - -	230,000
Czechoslovaks	140,000	- - - -	- - -	140,000
Balts	130,000	- - - -	- - -	130,000
Greeks	15,000	- - - -	- - -	15,000
Luxemburgers	14,000	- - - -	1,000	15,000
Hungarians	10,000	- - - -	- - -	10,000
Rumanians	5,000	- - - -	- - -	5,000
Bulgarians	2,000	- - - -	- - -	2,000
Others	50,000	- - - -	- - -	50,000
Totals	4,795,000	1,873,000	23,200	6,691,000 ⁹

⁹Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. V, 257.

of these foreign laborers came from the hinterlands of Europe, and were ignorant and illiterate, not to mention the difficulty of the maze of languages, it was remarkable that the Germans did so well. Another fact of importance was that German production increased throughout the war.¹⁰ The utilization of foreign labor undoubtedly contributed in a major way to this increase in production.

As to the question of sabotage in industry, it seemed to be confined to the occupied territories, for Ernest Hauser, a reporter with the American Third Army reported there was not one single incident where a German plant lost as much as a day from a strike or sabotage by the foreigners.¹¹ Of course much of the credit for this success must be given to the Germans for their strict preventive measures,¹² but a part of the success must certainly be attributed to the cooperation of the foreign workers themselves.

There remains but one last question to answer: "Could Germany have devised another method to solve her manpower shortage?" Throughout this thesis it has been pointed out that Germany never fully used her own woman-power in industry. During the first five years of the war, for reasons of social

¹⁰The Struggle for Europe, pp. 147-59.

¹¹Ernest O. Hauser, "Hitler's Slave Plan Worked," Saturday Evening Post, 218:19-20, July 14, 1945.

¹²Loc. cit.

policy, there had been no drastic mobilization of German women for war work. In Britain conscription of women was introduced in 1941; in Germany only in 1943 and even then it was not strictly enforced. The comparative statistics show that between May, 1939, and May, 1944, the total number of women employed in Germany increased by only 182,000, but by 2,283,000 in Britain. In the Reich the number of women engaged in industry during this period actually decreased, while in Britain it rose by nearly fifty per cent. The Germans even continued their pre-war employment of domestic servants at a total of close on a million and a half, but the number of domestic servants in Britain declined from 1,200,000 in 1939 to less than half a million in 1944.¹³

In the autumn of 1944, when the Germans desperately needed to make use of their untapped reserve of woman-power, it could not be mobilized. By this time the administrative machine was over-burdened with problems created by the air offensive: re-housing the bombed out, repairing damaged factories, and preservation of essential services and food supplies. It was now incapable of organizing any large-scale transfer of women to industry. Nor could this have been done without disturbing still further the lives of those who were working. In the larger cities normal domestic life

¹³The Struggle for Europe, p. 557.

had become so precarious that the mere task of maintaining homes and caring for children absorbed the energies of most of the women who were not already employed.¹⁴

This then was the situation: Germany was reluctant to use her women-power, and she also had prepared for a short war; therefore, Germany had undermobilized her manpower resources.¹⁵ In part to compensate for this, Germany turned to foreign labor, forgetting the basic economic principle that wars are won not by increasing one means of production but by the effective utilization of the total potential at a nation's disposal.

The sum total of the effects of the foreign labor program in the occupied territories of the West was that it stimulated unrest, frustrated German administrative planning and accentuated the already over-burdened economies of these nations. In the East, in addition to this, where the labor program could have been a powerful weapon in the ideological struggle between two totalitarian states, the execution of the labor program was a distinct failure. Although the foreign labor program was a success in supplying

¹⁴The Struggle for Europe, p. 558.

¹⁵Both Chester Wilmot and John Galbraith seem to infer that Nazi Germany also failed to effectively use her male manpower. There seems to be evidence to support their view in the earlier stages of the war, however as was pointed out by the Monthly Labor Review, February, 1944, pp. 314-16, Germany by 1944 had reached the bottom of her labor supply.

the manpower for German industry, it still represented a hasty, ill-advised answer to the greater question of complete mobilization of the total war potential of the German nation.

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An Abstract of
A STUDY OF THE FOREIGN LABOR RECRUITMENT
PROGRAM OF NAZI GERMANY,
1942-1945

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

BOWLING GREEN, OHIO

June, 1953

HOMZE, EDWARD L., M. A., June, 1953. History.

A Study of the Foreign Labor Recruitment Program of Nazi Germany, 1942-1945. (154 pp.) No.

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Grover Platt.

The major problem of this thesis was a description of the German foreign labor recruitment program from 1942 to 1945.

The foreign labor program had its ideological basis in the Nazi philosophy. Nazi thought stressed the idea that work was a living phenomenon in which the worker became a cog in the State's collective production.

Before 1942, the foreign labor program was under Goring's direction. The first draft of one million Polish workers occurred in January of 1940. Besides the utilization of Polish laborers, prisoners of war were gradually incorporated into the German economy. By spring of 1942, the changing complexities of the war forced the Germans to reorganize the foreign labor program. This was done by a merger of Goring's labor office with three offices of the Reich Labor Ministry.

Fritz Sauckel was appointed head of the new Arbeitseinsatz. From April, 1942, until the close of the war in 1945, Sauckel obtained, in four large scale recruitment drives, a total of four and a half million foreign workers or prisoners of war for the German economy.

The methods of recruiting foreign labor varied according to the country, but generally in the West the labor recruitment was conducted through the German occupation authorities or the native foreign government. In the East, the recruitment program was carried out solely by the German authorities, and showed a tendency toward violence that was usually absent in the West.

Sauckel encountered numerous interferences from other German agencies, but he succeeded in supplying the needed labor.

The foreign labor program succeeded in supplying labor for Germany, but it alienated populations in the occupied territories. In the last analysis the foreign labor program was in part, a hasty answer to the greater question of an incomplete mobilization of Germany's own labor resources.