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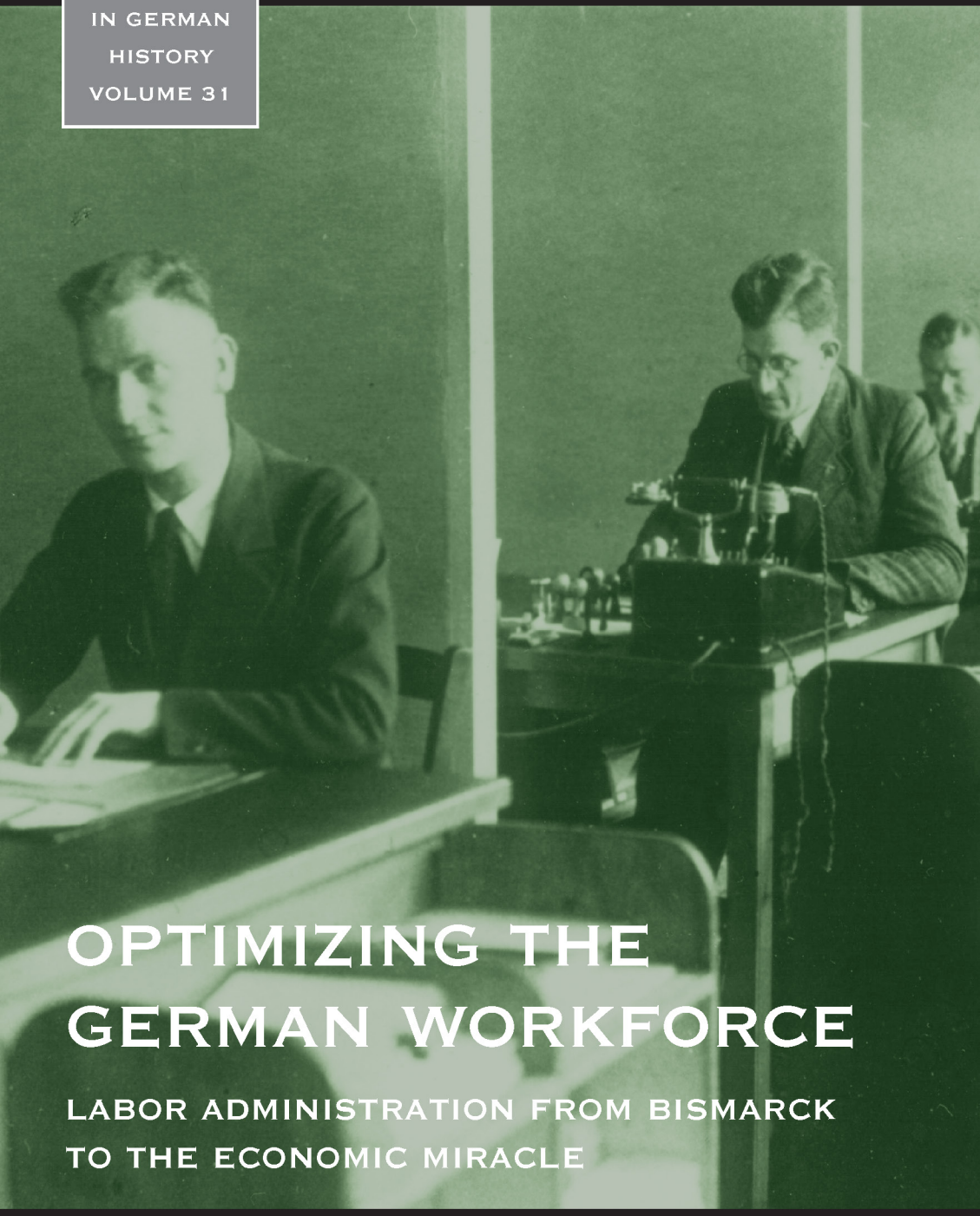

OPTIMIZING THE GERMAN WORKFORCE

LABOR ADMINISTRATION FROM BISMARCK TO THE ECONOMIC MIRACLE

DAVID MESKILL

Optimizing the German Workforce

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To John and Johanna Meskill,
loving parents, exemplary scholars

Contents

List of Abbreviations

ADGB	Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (All-German Trade Unions Congress, also Free Trade Union)
ANG	Arbeitsnachweisgesetz (Labor Exchange Law)
BDA	Bundesvereinigung deutscher Arbeitgeberverbände (Federation of German Industries)
BDI	Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie (Association of German Industry)
CVDI	Centralverband deutscher Industrieller (Central Association of German Industrialists)
DAF	Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front)
DATSCH	Deutscher Ausschuss für technisches Schulwesen (German Committee for Technical Schooling)
DHV	Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilfen-Verband (German National Union of Commercial Employees)
DINTA	Deutsches Institut für technische Arbeitsschulung (German Institute for Technical Labor Training)
DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei (German National People's Party)
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (German Trade Unions Congress, also Free Trade Union)
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (German Communist Party)
LAA	Landesarbeitsamt (State Labor Office)
LGA	Landesgewerbeamt (Prussian State Industrial Office)
RKW	Reichskuratorium für Wirtschaftlichkeit (National Productivity Board)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
USPD	Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany)
VDI	Verein deutscher Ingenieure (Association of German Engineers)
VDMA	Vereinigung deutscher Maschinenbau-Anstalten (Association of German Machine-Builders)
ZAG	Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft (Central Working Association)

Acknowledgements

The genesis of this book followed no straight or clear path. The question I started with became transformed in the process of research and writing until, in the end, it was no longer apparent, or only faintly so, in the book that emerged. Inspired by Ernest Gellner's stimulating meditations in *Plough, Sword, and Book* on the growth of knowledge, I had wondered about the impact on society of the application of social sciences, such as psychology. This interest led me eventually to the German Labor Administration's large psychological service. Soon the Labor Administration itself and its long-standing attempt to gain complete control of the labor market fascinated me even more. Researching their roots revealed the importance of a second labor force project, the German government's and industry's program to train German workers. My initial question about the growth of knowledge had led me, then, back to Gellner's other two themes: power and the economy.

During such a convoluted—and long—gestation, numerous teachers, colleagues, and friends have been invaluable guides and interlocutors. They helped both to spark my original interest and to rework it into something more specific and, I hope, more significant. Just as important, they provided the encouragement and motivation to continue with a project that at many times threatened to overwhelm its author. It is a pleasure to thank them here.

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istence—of the Labor Administration and its huge psychology wing. His advice to focus there launched the second, and much more fruitful, stage of my project. In a frigid January, Professor Gundlach hosted me at his Institute for the History of Psychology at the University of Passau, where I had access to valuable documents on the post–1945 Labor Administration. In Passau, Stefan Petri and Jeelka Reinhardt were generous enough to put me up in their apartment and provide stimulating conversations from their own work on applied psychology.

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With gratitude and pleasure, I dedicate this book to my parents.

Introduction

The German Labor Administration fits uneasily into the traditional periodization and concerns of modern German history. The *Arbeitsverwaltung* demonstrated remarkable continuity and received unusually broad support in its ambition to remake the country's workforce. Across regime changes from the end of the Kaiserreich, through the Weimar Republic and Nazi dictatorship, and into the early West German democracy, its nationwide network of several hundred local labor offices dominated the labor market. The administration claimed a de facto monopoly in job placement and vocational counseling, after its main competitors, commercial agencies and employer-run offices, were shut down in the Weimar period. Between the late 1930s and 1960, roughly 90 percent of German boys and girls leaving school visited their local *Arbeitsamt* for advice and a job. Likewise, the vast majority of employers obtained their personnel through the same offices.

Beyond a monopoly, the Administration aspired to the complete control—*Totalerfassung*—of all movements in the labor market. No one should find a job, no employer a worker, without its intervention. However, its ambitions extended in potentially incongruent directions, not merely toward static control, but also toward dynamic improvement. For in the Weimar and Nazi periods, the Administration played a pivotal role in channeling ever more young Germans into skilled apprenticeships, thus launching the "German skills machine." The Labor Administration aimed to bring workers under central, "organized" control, but also to give them skills and let them go. Ultimately, these goals grew from different visions of optimization, the possibilities of centralized knowledge, and the role of the individual in society.

This German project resembled efforts in other major industrial countries to bring labor markets under public control and improve human capital—but also differed from them in crucial ways. Both France and Britain wrestled with the same labor force problems as did Germany. In some regards, economic philoso-

Notes for this section begin on page 8.

phy and government policy constrained action in these countries. Thus, in Britain, from the late nineteenth century on there were widespread laments about the deteriorating quality of the workforce. However, the reigning liberal economic doctrine and the government's reticence to intervene in individual contracts between employers and workers or to mandate and fund more public education meant that efforts to improve worker training remained haphazard.[1] In other regards, though, before World War I, France and Britain adopted quite similar policies to Germany, in fact, often even more expeditiously and decisively than their rival. Thus, France passed a law in 1904, six years before Germany, which was designed to stifle commercial placement agencies, to the benefit of public offices. Britain created a national network of local labor offices in 1909, seven years in advance of wartime Germany; its pioneering unemployment insurance law of 1911 antedated the German one by sixteen years.

However, after the war these countries did not pursue their labor force policies with anything like the German determination. Though France and Britain subjected commercial and interest group job agencies to various political pressures, neither established a true monopoly for their public offices, let alone anything resembling the German *Totalerfassung*. Nor did either country pursue a coordinated vocational program at the *national* level. In Britain, vocational training remained the prerogative of individual firms. Vocational counseling remained primarily under the authority of Local Education Authorities and was not part of the national network of labor offices, which remained devoted mainly to job placement. France's local labor offices concerned themselves with vocational counseling from 1921 on, but those offices themselves were not united in a national system. Finally, in both countries, job placement and vocational counseling remained decoupled from unemployment insurance systems (assuming such a system even existed, which was not the case in France until 1958). In fact, it was only after World War II that both France and Britain began to take some of the decisive steps the Germans had taken after the previous conflict: in 1945 and 1948, respectively, they created unified national systems of job placement and vocational counseling, which enjoyed monopolies and aimed at "complete inclusion." Within a decade, however, the great postwar economic boom would begin to undermine the newfound public control of the labor force.[2]

The German Labor Administration thus not only stands out in modern German history for its continuity across regimes and unusually broad support. It also illustrates, in particularly heightened form, the widespread ambition of public authorities in the early and mid twentieth century to shape their workforces.

Despite its importance, the German workforce project has received almost no scholarly attention.[3] One reason for this dearth of research has been the focus on just one side of the Labor Administration, its unemployment wing, and in particular on the political conflicts in which that wing became enmeshed soon after the Administration was established in 1927. The creation of a system of unemployment insurance after decades of reform discussion and years of political wrangling has been regarded as the belated culmination and completion of the

insurance policies inaugurated by Bismarck in the 1880s.[4] Historians have also researched the unemployment insurance system because struggles over the levels of welfare spending, and in particular of unemployment contributions, contributed to the collapse of the last parliamentary government in Weimar. The onset of the Great Depression only two years after passage of the bill creating the Labor Administration—and the role of this economic upheaval in paving the way for the rise of the Nazis—has kept attention focused on this side of the Administration. By contrast, the Administration's role in steering the country's labor supply and shaping its workforce has remained largely unexamined.

General trends in German historiography have played an important role in diverting attention from the Administration. The predominant interest in National Socialism has colored, for obvious reasons, nearly every aspect of the historiography of modern Germany. It has directed attention to the fundamental political and economic tensions in an often divided society. From this vantage point, areas of German life in which consensus dominated have seemed less germane—unless the consensus could help to explain features of National Socialism. Moreover, the interest in National Socialism has tended to split all of German history, even on less obviously political topics, into epochs defined by political regime. Organizations and trends crossing one of these divides—not to mention several—often have been overlooked.

The very continuity of the Labor Administration across such different regimes as well as through war and peace is one of the aspects that most cries out for explanation. How could this system, whose skeleton was laid down in World War I, grow to maturity in the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany, and survive into the second decade of the Federal Republic?

Scholars such as Gerald Feldman and Charles Maier have analyzed the emergence of a new form of corporatist politics under the pressure of total war, recovery, and industrial concentration.[5] Corporatism depended on the settlement of basic economic and social questions not by parliament, but by compromise among major interest groups. While these scholars pay attention to the role of ideas, their accounts emphasize the "new primacy of interest politics and the eclipse of ideology."[6] Several of the Labor Administration's features do point to the centrality of such a basic compromise between interest groups—industry and labor—over labor policy. The 1916 Auxiliary Service Law that first established a national network of rudimentary labor offices depended on significant accommodation of organized labor by the state and industry.[7] Set up after the war, the governing structure of the Labor Administration exemplified this balance of interests. The Administration was not part of the state apparatus, strictly speaking. Rather, representatives of industry, unions, and public authorities shared power in the governing boards at each of the three levels of the bureaucracy—local, state, and national. The labor offices' role in the labor market also bespoke compromise. On the one hand, their monopoly status as providers of job placement and vocational counseling fulfilled the socialist unions' long-standing demands for eliminating commercial and employer placement agencies. On the other, the

Arbeitsämter could not *compel* youths or companies to use their services or to accept their recommendations. Therefore, in practice, they had to earn the trust and cooperation of individuals and, most importantly, local employers. The interests we must examine will thus include not only the national groups, but local actors as well.

Despite the importance such corporatist compromise had in the history of the Labor Administration, however, it cannot provide a complete account of this organization and its surprising continuity—unless we revise our understanding of corporatism's origins. Already before the war—the event usually thought to have launched the coordination between industry, unions, and state—important steps leading to public control of the labor market had occurred. Most notably, in 1910 the Reichstag unanimously passed a Job Placement Law with the intention, as the Interior Minister put it, that "public offices dedicated to the general welfare will become ever stronger and eventually achieve predominance."[8] This remarkable consensus at a time usually characterized as one dominated by great interest group tension suggests either that some of the building blocks of corporatist compromise, in particular that between industry and labor, predated the war—or that we must look beyond such interest-based solutions for an explanation.

The limits of an account revolving solely around corporatist interests become apparent if one considers the postwar development of the Labor Administration. By 1923, hyperinflation, resurgent unemployment, and electoral losses had diminished labor's power, leading employers to back out of the Central Working Association, the central institution of early postwar corporatism. Yet the Labor Administration, put on firm legal ground only in 1922 with the Labor Exchange Law, was *strengthened* by the 1927 Law on Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance. The nearly unanimous passage of this landmark bill by the Reichstag, which otherwise was so bitterly divided, hardly seems to fit with an account of the eclipse of parliament by interest groups. The rare unanimity suggests the diminished role of ideological *conflict*, at least in this one area, but not necessarily that of ideology per se. Similarly, though the Nazis abolished its corporatist governance structures, the Administration operated in the Third Reich much as it had in Weimar, for example, in continuing to seek the *willing* cooperation of jobseekers and, especially, employers. Finally, and conversely, a corporatism-based account struggles to explain why the Labor Administration's dominance of the labor market ended around 1960, when a second round of corporatism was still in its heyday.

We might begin resolving these puzzles if we add the undiminished impact, institutionally, strategically, and psychologically, of World War I to the undeniable role of corporatist compromise. The war was, of course, the most immediate source of the Labor Administration's institutionalized national network. In the crucial postwar years (1918–22), wartime workforce policies and programs served as templates for the structures that the new regime forged. This war-inspired Labor Administration then survived for decades thanks to bureaucratic

inertia. This argument for the role of path dependence after the war could be modified or complemented by pointing to ways in which the entire period from 1918 to roughly 1960 shared important traits with the years of total mobilization in World War I. Above all, Germany was—Germans felt their country to be—embattled, either in a direct military sense or in terms of harsh domestic and international economic conditions. The pivotal role played by Germany's loss in World War I is underlined by the fact that the trajectory of the German human economies now diverged from the path taken in France and England. In the victorious powers, the disparate projects of workforce improvement, which before the war had paralleled and even preceded developments in Germany, were not fused into a concentrated national program as they were in Germany. Such an explanation relying on the long term impact of the war, we should note, places less emphasis on interest groups, and more on ideas and perceptions and the national condition they addressed.

There is another aspect of the Labor Administration that strengthens the claim that World War I was decisive. It also suggests that interests alone are insufficient to explain the development and continuity of the Labor Administration. This is the insistence on achieving *Totalerfassung,* which can only be inadequately translated as "complete registration or inclusion." That is to say, the goal of the Labor Administration was not merely monopoly—excluding all competitors from job placement and vocational counseling. Rather, it was the "complete inclusion" of all job seekers and all employers by the Administration itself. This aspiration to *Totalerfassung* was not merely incidental to the Labor Administration, a minor and separable element. From beginning to end, the leaders and supporters of the Labor Administration saw "complete inclusion" as a sine qua non, an essential part of their mission.

Totalerfassung palpably breathes the spirit of the total mobilization of the 1916 Hindenburg Program and its Auxiliary Service Law. Yet it also—both as a phrase and, more importantly, as an idea—predates the war. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, numerous calls were heard for the registration and the conscious, most efficient use of all resources—from Frederick Winslow Taylor's "scientific management" of factories to urban reformers' plans for preventing contagion or stamping out invidious habits among the poor. Total war amplified this kind of thinking and applied it more broadly than ever before, but it did not invent it.

A second, central aspect of the Labor Administration confirms the need to probe beyond interest-based politics and even beyond the impact of the war. In addition to controlling the labor market and matching workers and jobs, the *Arbeitsverwaltung* aimed to create a specific type of German workforce, a highly skilled one. Its vocational counseling offices did all they could to encourage young people to forego the quick money of unskilled work and instead undertake apprenticeships. In the second half of the 1920s and then again in the 1930s, it cooperated closely with industry to produce a uniform national system

of vocational training, testing, and certification. As a result of this coordination, by the late 1930s, more than half a million young Germans were entering apprenticeships each year.

This skilling program was certainly not incompatible with the corporatist compromises between industry and labor unions. The latter, after all, drew their core membership from skilled workers and lent generic support to vocational training from the 1920s to the 1960s and beyond. Yet, as the unions admitted at the end of World War I, their focus on wages and working hours, and generally on standing up to employers, had led them to ignore vocational training for too long.[9] Even after this admission, however, especially after a vocational training law foundered on political differences between left and right, leaving apprenticeships a prerogative of employers, the unions never took the initiative on the issue.

Coordinated counseling and training programs were also compatible with the Labor Administration's monopoly status and goal of "complete inclusion." Indeed, the promoters of a skilled workforce within the Administration became at times the strongest advocates of "complete inclusion." At deeper levels, however, tensions existed. Labor administration and complete inclusion assumed given inputs and then manipulated them; it was basically a static undertaking—optimization by calculation. Vocational training forged new qualities; it was basically dynamic—optimization by facilitation. Labor administration and especially *Totalerfassung* revolved fundamentally around centralized control. Vocational counseling and training, on the other hand, while intermittently relying on the same control, prepared society for a fundamental decentralization in the form of *embourgeoisement,* a workforce with its skills as its property and with pride in its vocations. These were at heart differences of vision. And just as ideas of *Totalerfassung* predated the war, so too did an incipient program of skilling and embourgeoisement.

This study explains the emergence and remarkable durability of the Labor Administration, with its complete inclusion and vocational system, in terms of political and economic compromises—but also in terms of the long-range power of ideas. To emphasize the influence of ideas is to challenge prevailing assumptions about Wilhelmine and Weimar politics. Scholars of these periods debate whether German politics was defined more by *milieus* or by *camps.* Common patterns of socialization and positive group identification separated the Social Democrat, Catholic, and Liberal and Conservative Protestant *milieus* from each other. Each *camp*, on the other hand, found common ground primarily through its opposition to a common enemy, with the primary fault line running between the socialists on the one hand, and all the middle class parties, on the other.[10] The present study recognizes the importance of these categories rooted in deep psychological structures of socialization and friend-foe distinctions. However, it demonstrates that powerfully attractive ideas could draw actors together across *milieus* and even camps. In light of the long-range power of this attraction and

the loose, but effective coalitions it produced, we introduce a third category to the debate and speak here of *ideational constellations.*[11]

The first and by far most compelling idea, attracting leaders and intellectuals from across the political spectrum, was that of "organization"—solving problems by centralizing knowledge and control. Its appeal drew on the momentous successes of science and the seemingly inevitable rise of democratic political engagement, two of the dominant forces of the day, as well as on the ongoing experience of forging a new nation-state and on the very real successes of such organizations as the railroads and mammoth business corporations. The corporatist compact itself was not merely a balance of interests, but an expression of this dominant mode of thinking. The other main idea, weaker than and often contradicting organization, was that of individuality and individual independence deriving from economic independence. It was sustained, before it spread more widely, in enclaves of the urban *Bürgertum.*

These ideas were not static platonic entities, of course, but rather existed in the minds of real people—politicians, social reformers, bureaucrats, and common people. The strength of their appeal underwent changes depending on circumstances, as did the product of their intermingling and implementation in the Labor Administration. We therefore must pay close attention to the evolution of the ideas of organization and individual independence through the different eras of affluence and exiguity, peace and war.

The first two chapters of the book address the attempts to manage Germany's transformative and turbulent first economic miracle in the decades before 1914. Chapter 1 examines the efforts to maintain domestic stability by "organizing" the labor market, which culminated in the 1910 law promising public labor offices predominance. The following chapter considers the comparatively halting steps authorities and industrialists took to create a skilled workforce, which would sustain Germany's international competitiveness, while also fostering a different basis of domestic stability. Chapter 3 shows how the experience of "total war" put its stamp—politically, institutionally, and intellectually—on the new national Labor Administration created in the war and perpetuated after it. The following chapter turns to vocational counseling and training under the dire domestic and economic conditions after World War I. It shows, first, how public authorities sought to breathe life into the project of creating a skilled workforce. Second, it explains the decisive shift in industry's views of its own workers, a "reframing" of the skilled worker that allowed the subsequent creation of the German skills machine. Chapter 5 shows how the Nazis, partly by intent and partly by accident, helped to consolidate both the Labor Administration and the rest of the vocational system. The final chapter explains, first, why the Labor Administration was restored in the anxious years after 1945 to its earlier form. It then shows how and why the system of public dominance of the labor market that had emerged from World War I and the even older age of organization finally ended around 1960, in the second economic miracle.

Notes

1. Kathleen Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan* (New York, 2004), 92–147.
2. On the French and English experiences see respectively Martine Muller, *Le Pointage ou le Placement: Histoire de l'ANPE* (Paris, 1991), passim, esp. 36–38, 43, 48–49, 66–67, 75–76, 105; John Killeen and Jennifer M. Kidd, "The Careers Service," in A.G. Watts, Bill Law, John Killeen, Jennifer M. Kidd, Ruth Hawthorne, *Rethinking Careers, Education, and Guidance: Theory, Policy, and Practice* (London, 1996), 155–172, 155–159. Neither national development, though, has been thoroughly explored in the literature. Once that has been accomplished, a systematic comparison between the three countries' labor policies will become possible.
3. The only book-length historical study of the Labor Administration so far has been Hans-Walter Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik und Arbeitsverwaltung in Deutschland 1871–2002. Zwischen Fürsorge, Hoheit und Markt* (Nürnberg, 2003). Schmuhl's study, however, is not based, for the most part, on primary research and does not advance any strong theses.
4. Karl Christian Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit und die Entstehung der Arbeitslosenversicherung in Deutschland 1902–1927* (Berlin, 1990).
5. Gerald D. Feldman, *Army, Industry and Labor in Germany, 1914–1918* (Providence, 1992); Charles S. Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilization in France, Germany, and Italy in the Decade after World War I* (Princeton, 1988).
6. Maier, *Recasting,* 484–85.
7. Feldman, *Army.*
8. Clemens von Delbrück, 15 February 1910, Reichstag speech, *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages,* XII. Legislaturperiode, 1271.
9. Robert Ebert, *Zur Entstehung der Kategorie Facharbeiter als Problem der Erziehungswissenschaft: Historische Studie zur Berufspädagogik* (Bielefeld, 1984), 262.
10. James Retallack, *Germany in the Age of Kaiser Wilhelm II* (New York, 1996).
11. Several recent books have made forceful cases for the constitutive importance of organizing ideas, or visions, for social policy. See Kevin Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity: Anti-Politics and the Search for Alternatives, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, 2000); Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue and the Origins of Modernity* (Los Angeles, 1992); Mary Nolan, *Visions of Modernity: American Business and the Modernization of Germany* (New York, 1994); Daniel T. Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, 1998).

Chapter 1

"Organizing" the Labor Market in the Dynamic *Kaiserreich*

In the years before World War I, Germany's highest authorities and major political parties made no secret of their intention to assume public control of the labor market. A Job Placement law passed unanimously by the Reichstag in 1910 decisively tilted the balance against commercial job-placement agencies and in favor of public labor offices. The Minister of the Interior explained the ultimate purpose of the law's stipulation that private agencies would only receive a license if no adequate public office existed in the area: "This requirement will mean that in the course of time private job placement will become ever rarer and in its place public offices dedicated to the general welfare will become ever stronger and eventually achieve predominance."[1] This milestone on the road to national "organization" of the labor market came about only after a development that began decades earlier with grassroots, heterogeneous efforts to confront problems in Germany's rapidly expanding industrial economy. In that development, the 1890s were a turning point, as control of the labor market now became a vital stake in the political struggles between agriculture and industry and between employers and unions.

Germany's First Economic Miracle

Germany's dynamic economic growth around the turn of the twentieth century set the stage for all that followed with the Labor Administration. Already expanding since the 1850s, Germany's economy grew even more rapidly, though un-

Notes for this section begin on page 34.

evenly, in the decades after unification. Particularly in the twenty years between 1895 and the outbreak of the Great War, Germany experienced nearly uninterrupted growth at an unprecedented rate. In this "first economic miracle,"[2] the country's GDP increased by an average of 3.2 percent annually, which resulted in an economy nearly 90 percent bigger in 1913 than it had been just two decades earlier.[3] With a growth rate second only to that of the other major rising power, the United States of America, Germany, by the turn of the century, was challenging England for second place among the great economic powers. While the agricultural sector itself became more productive, it was industrial expansion, at a 4 percent annual rate, that fueled this growth. Already in the 1890s, industry and crafts surpassed agriculture in terms of gross value produced. In the words of a heated contemporary debate, Germany was fast turning from an "agrarian" to an "industrial state."[4]

This economic transition and expansion occurred, however, by no means smoothly. Sharp downturns interrupted the general upward trend. Undoubtedly, the most severe downturn occurred in the two decades after the stock market crash of 1873. The years of zero or even negative growth were particularly frequent in the decade between 1873 and 1882. While it is now widely recognized that the period from the mid 1870s to the mid 1890s cannot be described in terms of a "great depression," as an earlier generation of historians postulated,[5] there can be no doubt that this period had a profound psychological effect on many Germans. The cycles of growth punctuated by sharp slowdowns and even occasional declines of production, stock collapses, and spikes of unemployment helped shake the confidence in the idea, never widely or firmly held in Germany in any case, that the free market could regulate itself. They greatly strengthened the hand of those calling for a greater public role in economic affairs. Among employers, the instability contributed to efforts to minimize risk through cartels and employer organizations.

Even the years of extremely rapid, nearly uninterrupted, expansion from 1895 to 1914, while boosting Germans' confidence (and even feelings of superiority), could not eliminate that potential sense of insecurity. The very success of most of the period made the few setbacks seem all the more unsettling. Relatively short, mild recessions in 1900–1902 and 1907–1908 sparked exaggerated, gloom-laden reactions.[6] These shocking reminders of the economy's vulnerability would strengthen the movement that arose before the war to bring the labor market under public control.

In addition to this interruption of rapid overall growth by occasional downturns, differences in sectoral growth rates were another salient feature of the Kaiserreich's economy. Agriculture's aforementioned loss of relative position to industry and craft production was but the most general of these shifts. Within manufacturing itself, the varying fortunes of and within the sectors had significant political, economic, and also intellectual ramifications. The broad category of *Handwerk,* encompassing craft enterprises from the one-man or family bakery to machine-building firms with dozens of journeymen and apprentices, experi-

enced a range of fates. Craftsmen who competed directly with industrial enterprises, such as cobblers, suffered a steady decline. Those, however, who could compete on quality or who complemented industry in various ways, for example, in repair work, survived and often even thrived.[7]

Still, even if *Handwerk* as a whole did not decline, and in fact expanded, like agriculture, it too faced a relative loss of importance. The fastest growing, increasingly dominant sector of the economy was large-scale industry. Mining and iron and steelmaking, aided by political-territorial gains after the Franco-Prussian war, technological breakthroughs, and the seemingly insatiable demand for the building blocks of the newly united nation's infrastructure, grew at prodigious rates.[8] More dynamic still were the largely export-oriented firms of the "second industrial revolution" in chemicals and electrical products, along with the engineering sector. In the last two decades before the war, innovations by BASF, Hoechst, Bayer, and numerous smaller firms in such processes as artificial dies and pharmaceuticals propelled the chemicals industry to more than an annual 6 percent growth rate.[9] After Siemens' breakthrough in the long distance transmission of electricity around 1890 opened the door to the widespread dissemination of electrical generators, machines, and appliances, the electrical industry experienced a massive boom. Exports drove the explosive growth of the machinery industry. In the two decades between 1893 and 1913, these grew ten-fold,[10] vaulting the sector into first place in this regard. Firms' revenues in its core area, machine tool production, soared more than 200 percent between 1897 and 1912.[11] This most dynamic of German industries would play a key role in launching the country's vocational training system, as we will see in the next chapter.

Despite the expectations of many political economists at the time and the assessments of later historians, German industry's growth in the decades around 1900 followed no simple pattern, for example, with large-scale enterprises invariably squeezing out medium- and small-sized firms.[12] Not only did parts of *Handwerk* manage to stay afloat, adapt, and even flourish. Industry proper, as recent scholarship has shown, varied greatly according to region and structure. The large firms in the mining, iron, and steel producing sectors often pursued "autarkic" policies in relatively infrastructure-weak regions, and some companies in chemical manufacturing, electrical manufacturing, and machine building did the same as well. But many of the latter, especially in machine-building, where the borders with *Handwerk* were fluid, thrived in regions of decentralized production with traditions of cooperation and political provision of infrastructure.[13] The open-ended nature of Germany's industrial development left room, then, for influences from interest groups and governments.

Wilhelmine Germany's rapid industrial growth not only added to the country's overall wealth and began to overturn the previous balance among economic sectors, it also provoked a massive, unprecedented redistribution of Germany's workforce. Germany's burgeoning new factories and companies and even whole new industries exerted enough of a demand for workers to redirect the flood of Germans emigrees, who since the early decades of the century had sought to es-

cape crushing rural poverty and dissolving social ties at home by going overseas. Instead, by the 1890s, an even greater number of Germans were migrating internally. Between 1880 and 1914, in the "greatest mass-movement of German history,"[14] millions of Germans moved within the Empire's borders, overwhelmingly from rural regions in the east to the burgeoning industrial centers around Berlin and the Rhine and Ruhr rivers.[15] This flight from the land, as worried observers called it, changed the basic composition of the German workforce, turning millions of former peasants or farmhands into factory workers. Whereas in 1882, 42 percent of the workforce had been in agriculture and only 35 percent in industry, 25 years later the proportions were more than reversed, with only 28 percent in agriculture and 42 percent in industry.[16] The growth of employment within industry was not evenly distributed, but occurred at the fastest rates within "metal working," which included electrical products and machinery. Siemens-Schuckert, for example, one of the two leading electrical products companies in the country, expanded its workforce between 1890 and 1913 nearly twenty-fold.[17] If the metal-working sector had employed 356,000 workers, or 5.6 percent of the industrial workforce, in 1882, on the eve of World War I, its 1.9 million workers constituted 17 percent of the industrial labor force, making it the single largest sector in industry.[18] Machine-building, in particular, showed a peculiar dynamic. One of the fastest growing sectors in terms of output, it relied less than other burgeoning fields on increased energy and capital inputs and more on a rapidly expanding workforce. Between 1895 and 1907, the number of employees in the machine-building industry more than doubled from 443,000 to 908,000.[19]

This economic dynamism, though not alone and not always immediately, underlay the widely held feeling in Wilhelmine Germany that many realms were in a state of flux. Everything from politics to economics itself to social relations and culture seemed to require, depending on one's point of view, defense, reform or overturning.[20]

Finding Jobs, Finding Workers

Germany's dynamic economic growth after 1870 posed challenges for workers and employers, while the accompanying waves of migration and urbanization seemed to threaten public order. People seeking jobs, especially immigrants from the countryside, needed help finding positions amidst the confusion of new kinds of work and in unfamiliar settings. Many depended simply on the haphazard method of "knocking on the factory gate" or gathering at informal "open air labor markets."[21] Firms needed to fill their expanding workforces; municipalities had to manage the difficulties posed by unprecedented urbanization. In response, a variety of forces sprang up in the second half of the nineteenth century, at first mainly at the local level, to organize job finding and worker selection. These ranged from commercial agencies and newspaper ads to craft-, union-, and industry-run labor exchanges, and philanthropic and municipal offices. Before

1914, however, assisted job-placements of whatever kind still made up probably less than half of all job entries, and perhaps far less than that.[22] So while the trend, especially from the 1890s, was away from diverse local solutions to a narrower range of more comprehensive ones, and ultimately to public control, before the war the organization of the labor market still affected only a minority of people looking for work.

Commercial agencies placed more people in work than any other kind of office, though their preeminence faced increasingly severe challenges from the mid 1890s onward. The liberal Trade Regulations of 1869 had freed commercial job-placement agencies from state regulation, and their numbers grew rapidly, particularly in the big cities. These *Makler* spanned the range from large establishments with comfortable offices and large staff, to one-man operations based in train stations where immigrants from the countryside set their first foot in the cities. In 1894, the more than 5,000 such agencies in Prussia accounted for nearly two-thirds of all registered job-placements.[23] Between 1895 and 1907, the number of commercial agencies in the entire Reich rose from 6,077 to 7,205.[24] No data exists on the number of placements they performed in Germany as a whole; however, reports from Bavaria and Baden indicate that the commercial agencies were able to maintain, or even slightly increase, the number of job-seekers they placed.[25] By now, however, tough legal controls and the flourishing of other forms of job-placement agencies had almost certainly reduced the commercial enterprises' *share* of all placements.

A variety of non-commercial services competed with the commercial agencies. The single most important kind of non-commercial exchange and the only one aside from the employer exchanges eventually to achieve more than a 10 percent share was the public municipal labor office. Of all the public and non-commercial bodies, municipal associations and governments were closest to the front lines of upheaval caused by industrialization, migration, and economic liberalization. Even before rapid industrialization changed the nature of work and created new challenges for city governments, the ending of restrictions on immigration to cities—in Prussia in 1810, and in the rest of Germany later, generally in the 1850s and 1860s—exposed them to burdens for which they were ill-prepared. In the fastest growing regions of the Rhine-Ruhr area, the onrush of job-seekers now burst the limits of old communities and even spawned brand new urban settlements.[26]

Before industrialization began to absorb great numbers of workers in the 1870s and 1880s, the flood of rural paupers and urban dispossessed seeking work or aid in the cities overwhelmed municipal budgets. Poor relief—the usual measure in response to unemployment—was the responsibility of the local community. This financial burden, which became especially acute during economic downturns, would provide a major incentive for municipal authorities to establish labor exchanges and other services to complement or replace individuals' independent searches for work. Such fiscal crises, in combination with the *Bürgertum's* growing concerns about the revolutionary implications of the "worker question,"

further energized urban reform movements that were already promoting civic improvements.[27]

Bürgerlich associations pioneered the development of neutral, non-specialized labor exchanges. Even before 1848, humanitarian associations in Dresden, Leipzig, Dusseldorf, and Frankfurt an der Oder had begun to try to match job-seekers with employers. Above all, they dealt with indigent and unskilled workers—a defining characteristic of the municipal labor offices well into the twentieth century. Their basic method was to collect lists of openings and available workers, who were referred in the order of their appearance. In contrast to these philanthropic, middle-class undertakings, the establishment in 1865 of a labor exchange office in Stuttgart by the joint effort of employers and workers' association signaled the possibility of new organizational forms.[28] It was only thirty years later, however, that other cities would begin to adopt Stuttgart's parity-model. Until the 1890s, then, an array of commercial, philanthropic, municipal, and other organizations played a limited role in matching workers and jobs.

The Politics of the Labor Market

The 1890s, it is now widely agreed among historians, opened a tumultuous new chapter in the Kaiserreich's history.[29] After another wrenching recession at the beginning of the decade, the economy in 1895 entered a twenty-year phase of unprecedented, booming growth. Emigration overseas dwindled to a trickle, while the stream of migrants into and between cities swelled to a flood. Managing these flows became a matter of public order. Politics, too, came to be played in a new key. Economic interests—the Social Democrats (SPD) and socialist unions, especially after the lapsing of the Anti-Socialist law in 1890, employers' organizations, peasant leagues, a revived *Handwerk* movement, and others—mobilized as never before to influence ministerial bureaucracies, the Reichstag, and the public sphere. The end of Bismarck's long domination of German politics in 1890 and the rise of young Kaiser Wilhelm II, who promised a "new course" in social policy, also contributed to the mounting hope—or fear—of dynamic change and impending choices for the country.[30] Not coincidentally, the 1890s were also a turning point for the organization of the labor market. Control of the workforce became the object of multifaceted political contention, while urban reformers and elements of state and national government promoted a burgeoning movement to bring the labor market under public control.

From the 1890s onward, contention over the labor market became engulfed in the increasingly confrontational struggle between business and labor. The growing size and assertiveness of the socialist movement after the end of the discriminatory legislation, the backlash by employers, and, after 1895, growing labor shortages made control of jobs and workers a volatile issue. Unions and employers' organizations were interested in establishing labor offices for the sake of their respective members, but also for the purpose of gaining leverage over the op-

posing camp. In contrast to the municipal labor offices, which overwhelmingly served low or unskilled workers, both the unions' and the employers' bureaus placed skilled workers.

Since their inception in the 1860s and 1870s, labor unions had recognized the potential political role of labor offices. It was only after their reorganization in 1889 and the lapsing of the Anti-Socialist law in 1890, however, that the unions began to establish labor exchanges in greater numbers.[31]

Soon, employers and their associations were founding labor exchanges at an even faster rate. They thus responded both to the political threat from potential union control of the labor supply and to the general problem of securing a stable and capable workforce in times of mounting labor scarcity and high turnover rates. The first employers' labor exchange conference, in 1901, identified a "well-trained, reliable, and capable labor force that is as little subject to fluctuation as possible, as an absolute necessity of an industrial economy."[32] By 1904, the employer exchanges had garnered a 21.1 percent share of the non-commercial placements, nearly double the union figure of 10.9 percent. Eight years later, the employers' proportion had grown substantially, to 33.5 percent, drawing them nearly even with the leading share of the public municipal exchanges (36.1 percent), while the union exchanges had slipped to 9.8 percent.[33] In the face of these trends, the unions around the turn of the century abandoned their aspiration one day to have sole control of all labor exchanges and accepted exchanges run jointly with employers as the best they could expect to achieve. Around the same time, the Social Democrats in the Reichstag began demanding the establishment of a national labor office (*Reichsarbeitsamt*) to centralize control of public labor exchanges.

This conflict between the two industrial camps was not the only political struggle for control of labor. Agrarian interests, which themselves had become better organized in this period, especially with the founding of the Agrarian League in 1893, saw it as a matter of collective life and death. The migration of hundreds of thousands of former agricultural laborers to the booming industrial cities deprived agriculture of sufficient hands. Much of the blame for this "people shortage" was placed by agriculture on ostensibly unscrupulous commercial job-placement firms and agents, who lured people from the land with false promises. Farm interests responded by establishing more agricultural placement agencies, though this proved slow going.[34] Above all, they attacked their putative adversaries: in 1894, the German Agricultural Council launched the first salvo in what would become a fifteen-year campaign by agricultural interests to impose restrictions on, and even eliminate, commercial agencies.[35]

Public Influence in the Labor Market

Finally, the other major effort of this decade to "organize" the labor market opposed both partisanship and commercialism. The municipal labor exchange move-

ment that took off in the early 1890s hoped to replace employers' labor exchanges as well as commercial agencies with neutral public offices. The immediate inspiration for the surge in founding municipal labor exchanges emerged from a crisis of public order. The economic downturn that began in 1890, which placed municipal poor-relief budgets under severe strain, made cities amenable to new thinking about addressing economic and social challenges. Riots by unemployed Berliners in February 1892 even had been addressed by the Prussian cabinet, which encouraged the local labor office to try to place the unemployed in agricultural jobs.[36] This Prussian pressure, in turn, may have inspired the head of the Berlin office, Richard Freund, to send copies of its annual report to all of the major towns of the country as encouragement to set up their own labor exchanges.[37]

The German *Bürgertum* and its response to modernization have been the focus of intense historiographic debates and revisions for at least three decades.[38] While some scholars continue to describe urban citizens as purely defensive and backward looking, detailed case studies of nineteenth century German cities have built a convincing case for viewing urban citizens as actively, if cautiously, shaping the new conditions.[39] A common feature of the cities under study was that the local elites and broader middle classes did not simply reject the encroachments brought about by the end of the political ancien régime and by industrialization, but rather drew on local traditions to strike their own balance between change and stability. In regard to social policy, in particular, there is ample evidence that many German urban middle classes engaged with the challenges of industrialization. Thanks to their restricted franchises, German city governments were still dominated by the middle and upper classes long after manhood suffrage had been introduced in Reichstag elections. Feeling less threatened by the rise of the socialists than did their counterparts in the Reichstag, *Bürger*-dominated administrations turned their cities into a "field of experimentation for the emerging interventionist state."[40] The sheer numbers seem to bear this out, however crudely. Over the course of the Kaiserreich, cities' expenditures rose eleven-fold, and in the two decades before World War I, their budgets grew considerably faster than those of either the states or the national government.[41] Numerous foreigners came away highly impressed by German cities. British and US social reformers such as William Dawson and Frederic Howe sang effusive praises to their administrations and social policies.[42] Official delegations, including ones by William Beveridge, Lloyd George, and Winston Churchill in 1907 and 1908, often returned home with specific new inspirations for municipal reform.[43]

In the early 1890s, national politics established propitious conditions for urban reformers to expand public involvement in the labor market. The 1893 elections to the Reichstag, in which the SPD increased its number of seats from 35 to 44, seemed to indicate the failure of the Emperor's New Course to undermine support for the socialists—and hence the need for a new tack. Social reformers in Frankfurt am Main took the initiative, thereby sparking a broader, national movement to found municipal offices. The western German city had pioneered municipal reforms since the 1870s.[44] In October 1893, the Frankfurt

reformers invited leading men of business, labor, communal politics, and social science from across Germany to discuss "unemployment and labor exchanges in industrial and commercial cities."[45] A unanimous declaration at the end of the conference called for setting up labor exchanges by communities, regular contact among the exchanges, free service, and equal representation of laborers and employers on a supervisory board—the parity arrangement pioneered by Stuttgart in 1865.[46] Urban reformers would contribute various impulses to the Labor Administration, including their emphasis on the central importance of vocation (as we will see in chapter 2). At the conception of the national movement to create public labor offices in 1893, however, other concerns were paramount. As the inspiration for the conference—worries about the financial and social implications of significant unemployment—and the principle of labor-capital parity adopted there suggested, maintaining public order and tamping down political conflict were priorities.

Within a year of the Frankfurt conference, Esslingen, Heilbronn, Erfurt, Elberfeld, and Trier all had implemented the recommendations,[47] and within several years, more than fifty cities had followed suit. By 1912, 44 percent of German cities with more than 10,000 inhabitants had their own *Arbeitsnachweis.*[48] Some were organized on a parity-basis, with workers and employers having an equal number of seats on the supervisory boards, while others were run purely as public offices. In the same year, the public exchanges accounted for a third of all non-commercial job-placements, putting them in first place just ahead of the burgeoning employer offices.[49] The model recommended at the Frankfurt conference and implemented in the following years would become the basis, at the municipal level, for the national system of labor and vocational counseling offices established after World War I.

The municipal officials who established these local exchanges also followed another principle advocated at Frankfurt. They began to connect the local exchanges to each other in regional and statewide networks, with the aim of facilitating workers' movement between high and low unemployment areas. Networks were established in Baden in 1896, in the Rhine-Main area in 1898, for Bavaria in 1900, and for Thuringia, East Prussia, and Posen in 1913. Before the outbreak of war, nearly all of the regions of Germany were covered by at least regional labor exchange networks.[50] From 1897 onward, Ignatz Jastrow, an associate professor at the University of Berlin and leftist editor of the leading reform journal *Social Practice,* began to compile statistics from the numerous labor exchanges in order to obtain the first statistical record of the labor market for the entire nation.[51] Early in the process of coordination, in 1898, a national association of labor exchanges was founded and began publishing its own journal, *The Labor Market.*[52]

The regional, and especially the national, labor exchange associations created by 1900 brought together academics and municipal reformers.[53] Initially, one of their main goals was to improve the flow of information about labor market conditions. Periodic economic crises, such as the recession just after the turn of the

century, in which some regions had very high unemployment while others barely suffered, galvanized the associations toward greater centralization of data.[54] The associations also acted as political lobbies and conduits to authorities in Berlin for public labor exchanges. The statistical reporting to the Imperial Bureau and a small grant from the Reich Interior Ministry established the first official ties in 1903.[55] A couple of years later, the Association of German Labor Exchanges would play a very vocal and influential role in the campaign for a law restricting commercial placement agencies. Yet before the war, regional and national associations hardly facilitated interregional labor placements.[56] The daily business of matching men and jobs remained a local affair.

Social Reformers and State Interventions: The Appeal of "Organization"

The seminal Frankfurt conference of 1893 and subsequent grassroots organizing revealed connections between municipal social policy and two other important contexts: Germany's vibrant social reform movements and Prussian and national government interventions in the economy. Of course, the distinctions between the three realms are in many ways artificial ones. Frankfurt's reforms, for example, inspired numerous other cities and influenced the national debate about the social question at least as much as did the writings of the "socialists of the lectern." The city's officials, such as the mayors Johannes Miquel and Franz Adickes, and administrator Karl Flesch, and philanthropists, preeminently Wilhelm Merton, pioneered the local public provision of medical care and housing, as well as the institution of industrial courts to bring workers and employers together to adjudicate their conflicts. By taking such steps as setting up the Association of German Industrial Courts in 1892 and hosting the seminal conference on labor exchanges the following year, Frankfurt's reformers helped to build national structures from the bottom up. Merton's Institute for Public Welfare, its national progeny, and his leading reform journal *Social Practice* shaped the national debate about social policy.

Social reformers engaged not only in "anti-politics," as Kevin Repp has argued; many sat in Berlin ministries with their hands on or at least near the levers of power. A review of social reform ideas and state policies will help us better understand how the various local responses to the turbulent labor market, and political battles over it, were channeled in particular directions and became national policy. As a comparison of this section on the theme of "organization" and the following chapter's treatment of the contrasting paradigm of individual improvement suggests, scholarship on German social policy has focused on one dichotomy of social reform while overlooking another of at least equal importance.

Recent scholarship in these fields has revealed not only the vibrancy of thinking about social reform in Wilhelmine Germany, but also the power of ideas to shape policy. Concerned less with finding antecedents to Nazism than earlier

generations of scholars were, Kevin Repp, Rüdiger vom Bruch, Franz Josef Stegmann, Renate Zitt, Gangolf Hübinger, Manfred Hettling, and others have explored the vast, flourishing landscape of reform groups, thinkers, and advocates.[57] These groups varied greatly in scope—from the narrowly focused Garden City associations to the Association for Social Policy and Society for Social Reform, whose names revealed the breadth of their concerns. In their philosophical provenance as well, they were quite distinct, with Catholic (Worker Welfare, Caritas) and Protestant (Inner Mission, Evangelical-Social Congress) groups operating alongside, and often competing with, secular-academic ones (the Association for Social Policy, the Society for Social Reform). The walls separating Germany's different "milieus," for example the one between Protestants and Catholics, often remained high.[58]

Nonetheless, the impermeability of the milieus, especially between the *bürgerliche* groups, can be exaggerated. Another approach by scholars has discerned "camps" defined primarily by their common enemies and bringing together several milieus.[59] Uniting nearly all of the middle-class reformers was the goal of staving off the radical break of a socialist revolution. From the 1890s, when commercial and military rivalries with European powers and the US escalated, potential foreign enemies joined the domestic ones. Many reformers now began to see their task in terms of promoting national fitness as well.[60]

Beyond the perception of a common foe, as Kevin Repp has convincingly shown, deep-seated assumptions and aspirations often bridged ostensible divides, channeling reformers' thoughts and actions in the same direction.[61] Indeed, as we suggest in this section and in the following chapter, common ideas—visions of desirable and achievable ends and paradigms of the best means—could prove to be just as powerful and long-lived as milieus or enemies in forging working coalitions. Like gravity, the force of ideas was not always perceptible over short distances or times, but formative in the long term.

Perhaps the most influential of the ideas relevant to solving Germany's social problem around the turn of the century was that of "organization." A sense of inevitability pervaded this line of thinking. Surveying the "new German economy" of mammoth businesses and bureaucracies, the influential left liberal reformer Friedrich Naumann, who hoped to preserve "individuality," nonetheless descried (and even welcomed) the coming trend.

> All relations are pervaded by the thought of organization, that is, the regulation of the masses. It will be a man's pride to belong to great associations, societies, unions, syndicates, to serve in great enterprises, to be drawn into extended ties. Often this pride is mixed with a painful look back to past times, when the individual by himself meant something. But what's the use?[62]

If organization would dominate, as Naumann and many others were certain, the most important remaining question was what exactly this entailed. A common distinction since the 1860s in regard to the social question was that between "state-help" and "self-help," i.e., worker cooperatives and unions. The premier

social reform group, the Association for Social Policy, was divided precisely along these lines, with the dominant wing under Gustav Schmoller and Adolf Wagner favoring some kind of "state socialism" and a minority around Lujo Brentano advocating worker associations. Naumann himself suggested a symbiosis of the principles of "monarchy" and "democracy."[63] Beyond the common sense of inevitability of organization, each of its two variants tapped into powerful faiths of the time: science and democracy, respectively.

The technocratic fascination with centralized knowledge and control in the decades around 1900 had many roots and could be found in all advanced countries.[64] Germany's deep Cameralist tradition predisposed its academics, bureaucrats, and reformers to be especially fond of informed administrative control.[65] For the generation that came of age after 1870, in particular, recent discoveries and trends exalted their confidence in centralized knowledge.[66] The development of correlational methods in statistics promised to illuminate previously unsuspected causal connections. The dramatic growth in these years of statistical surveys as a research method attested to the hunger for more, and more reliable, information about all manner of social conditions.[67] In addition to economics and statistics, fields focusing more directly on human nature and behavior, above all physiology, anthropology, and psychology, flourished as well.[68] The explanations of social problems offered by these sciences shifted responsibility for parlous conditions from the individual's failure or God's plan to causes that often were amenable to relief. Education, living conditions, and hygiene might be improved; even cases with ostensibly hereditary origins might be dealt with more effectively. In each of these areas, discoveries of apparent causal regularities inspired growing confidence—and often overconfidence—in how much further research might uncover. Especially for the Protestant educated middle class (*Bildungsbürgertum*), among whom traditional religiosity was eroding, science was becoming an ersatz faith.[69]

These advances were but one part of the march of science in the late nineteenth century. Scientific truths, it seemed, were building toward a single, unified picture of the world; in time, nothing would be left unaccounted.[70] Seeking a total grasp of reality had become plausible, and, indeed, obligatory.

Real triumphs of centralized organization both reinforced this "cult of science"[71] and manifested its practical utility. The young German Reich had been busy since 1871 asserting sovereign control: unifying laws, institutions, and bureaucracies. In the economic sphere, as Alfred Chandler has argued in the case of the US, the creation and operation of the massive infrastructure of a national railroad system required coordination on an unprecedented scale, with ramifications in numerous other spheres.[72] These organizational triumphs by railways and business corporations inspired a widespread confidence in planning per se.[73] Reflecting the intense interest in centralizing knowledge and control, the US engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor's paeans to "scientific management" were translated quickly into German and published in multiple editions in the years before World War I.[74] If Germany continued to import theories of centralized

"organization," it was already exporting practical applications. A young Winston Churchill returned highly impressed from a visit there in 1908 and recommended that the Liberal Party subscribe to Germany's principles of "social organization" and "network of State intervention and regulation."[75]

Enlightened central control found eager advocates throughout the German social reform world. Within city governments, experts increasingly displaced local notables from the 1890s, which was part of the broader transformation and intensification of German politics referred to earlier.[76] In Frankfurt am Main, for example, the Institute for Public Welfare, founded in 1890 by the industrialist Wilhelm Merton, provided a platform for myriad social science inspired reform endeavors.[77] Many of these had an impact far beyond the western German city. For example, the Institute's journal *Social Practice* became one of the leading forums of the national reform debate after its founding in 1897.

Nonetheless, it was among the academics and other *Bildungsbürger* leading the national reform groups that the enthusiasm for expert knowledge and centralization was most palpable.[78] The strongest faction among the "socialists of the lectern," that faction who in 1872 founded the Association for Social Policy, believed their investigations would contribute to a "rationally steered" and just solution of the social question.[79] According to Schmoller, only the leadership of the "monarchy and civil service … these most appropriate representatives of the idea of the state, the only neutral elements in the social class war," operating under the rule of law and in combination with the "best elements of parliamentarism," could hope to solve the social question.[80] From the 1890s onward, as the political conflicts over economic and welfare policy mounted, the drift of thought within the Association and many other reform organizations moved steadily in the direction of public, "neutral" control. In the years just before the war, senior members of the Association were pushing to have private entrepreneurs replaced by public officials.[81]

Alongside centralized control, advocates of working class "self-help," such as Lujo Brentano, embodied the other major strand of organizational thinking. Like its state-centered counterpart, the idea of collective self-help had many roots. The German *Bürgertum*'s own history and values provided important supports. Each of the two major confessions esteemed community for its own reasons. For Protestantism, the communal ideal was ultimately rooted in the Reformation principle of a "priesthood of all believers."[82] Since the Enlightenment and the growth of liberal Protestantism (*Kulturprotestantismus*), the association and cooperation of free individuals for common purposes, as manifested in the explosive growth of associations (*Vereine*) during the nineteenth century, became one of the pillars of Protestant identity.[83] In social policy, the Protestant emphasis on self-guided cooperation could be found at the center of the thinking of both the moderate, influential government official and leading figure of the Inner Mission Theodor Lohmann and the more charismatic "reform entrepreneur" Friedrich Naumann. Both men thought that "democratizing" factories and the economy generally was necessary to bring social peace.[84]

Among Catholics, similar ideas about collective self-help were gaining ground, as part of a broader reorientation of thought. Catholic social doctrine had long revolved around the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity,[85] but, in the late nineteenth century, thinking about community emphasized new, smaller units. Under the influence of neighboring Belgian and French liberal Catholic thought and the dramatic industrialization of the last third of the century, leading Rhineland Catholics such as Georg von Hertling and Franz Hitze repudiated the conservative emphasis on the sole importance of good morals and the restoration of an entirely corporatist social order. Instead, they accepted a capitalist, industrial society and worked out the details of a moderate welfare state. Groups such as Worker Welfare, founded by Catholic employers in 1880, and the Popular Association for Catholic Germany, founded as a mass organization a decade later, agitated for various measures to allow workers to improve their own lot in a capitalist order. Interest focused on English-inspired associational plans. The progressive Catholics embraced Schulze-Delitzsch's call to allow craftsmen to pool resources in the face of competition from industry, as well as Ferdinand Lassalle's call to help make even industrial workers property owners, in part through profit sharing and giving them a say in running their firms. Especially after the end of the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf,* as the Catholic Center Party became the most important "governmental" party, the attitudes of the Catholic reformers to the state's role in these welfare measures softened.[86]

For the urban *Bürgertum,* in particular, it was undoubtedly the vivid, recurring experience of governing their own urban affairs that made the paradigm of collective self-help so attractive. Especially in the half century after 1815, as many cities struggled to maintain their prerogatives in the face of increasingly assertive central states, urban *Bürger* conceived of their own form of constitutionalism as an attractive model for the larger polity; in their eyes, maintaining local self-governance may have ranked above even economic liberalization and parliamentarization.[87]

Workers' own past and present also could suggest the feasibility and attractiveness of self-governance or self-help.[88] Memories of the recently disbanded guilds were still fresh. In the present, trade unions, especially the moderate ones in Britain to which Brentano looked with great admiration,[89] provided one contemporary template for stability-enhancing worker organization and self-help. A slightly different one followed from the movements, led by Schulze-Delitzsch and Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen, to establish consumer, producer, and financial cooperatives among people threatened by the competition of big business, such as farmers, craftsmen, and industrial workers.

By 1900, a powerful caucus within the *bürgerliche* social reform movement had come to see securing labor union rights as the key to solving the country's most serious domestic problem. Over the previous decade it had become clear that other forms of social policy, including Bismarck's insurance programs and workplace regulations, were not slowing the growth of the SPD or socialist unions. Many middle-class reformers' own sympathies for collective self-governance and

self-help made them amenable to, and even enthusiastic about, the unions' demands for full recognition. Conversely, the internal socialist debate about Eduard Bernstein's "revisionism" seemed to hold out the prospect of rapprochement between moderate socialists and *bürgerliche* social reformers.

Although the SPD disappointingly rejected proposals to cooperate, in 1900, politicians from the Center, National Liberal, and Left Liberal parties, and prominent academics from the Association for Social Policy launched a major new initiative of social reform. Given its prominent leadership, including the former reformist Prussian Minister of Trade Berlepsch, and its support from a wide array of groups, the Society for Social Reform quickly became the most influential reform group in the country.[90] Reflecting the degree to which support for economic democracy had penetrated, as Werner Sombart put it, "ever further into circles of the bourgeoisie,"[91] this catholic group made union rights the centerpiece of its demands. The hopes reformers attached to unions were two-fold. On the one hand, the democratic practices and procedures within the unions, for example, in deciding whether to strike, would inculcate these habits within the proletariat.[92] On the other, the collective power of the unions would allow them to counteract the concentrated power of the employers, which had made a "fiction" out of the free labor contract.[93]

The single most prominent figure among the reformers after 1900, Friedrich Naumann, also made democratic organization of the economy the lynchpin of his program. A student of Brentano's during the 1880s and an observer of Frankfurt am Main's social policies during his time there in the 1890s as pastor in the Inner Mission, Naumann worked tirelessly—launching a new political association, editing a journal, writing books and articles, and finally reuniting the fissiparous Left Liberals—to create a reform coalition from the National Liberal Bassermann to the Socialist Bebel. According to Naumann, economic democracy would operate through multiple channels, including strong unions able to stand up to employers, but also factory parliaments representing management and workers.[94] In addition to the intrinsic appeal of these democratic elements, the pastor Naumann, more than any other reformer, was moved by a prophetic sense of the inevitability of "organization" permeating all parts of society.

Contemporary scholars, adopting the terms of the debate between Lassalle and Schulze-Delitzsch in the 1860s, often have focused on the dichotomy between the two answers to the social problem that we have just surveyed: *Staatshilfe* vs. *Selbsthilfe,* the state or strong unions and economic democracy.[95] And certainly, the divide was important, one we will encounter later in the struggles over state or corporatist control of the labor offices and administration. However, the attention paid to the tensions between *Staatshilfe* and one particular form of *Selbsthilfe—collective* self-help—has obscured the central element they shared: a common commitment to "organization," i.e., collective, political decision-making of one kind or another. This commonality helps explain the widespread support for public organization of the labor market after 1900, which is a central theme of this book. It could also manifest itself in the thinking of somebody such

as Naumann, for whom *both* technocracy and democracy held magnetic appeal.[96] The conceptual reduction of *Selbsthilfe* to collective self-help explains the fact that the scholarly literature has overlooked the commonalities between the two variants of organization and instead emphasized only the differences.

Social reformers influenced public policy both directly and indirectly. Their ties to government officials and parliamentarians were often personal or even ones of identity, blurring the boundaries between the groups. In the early 1890s, the "socialists of the lectern" Schmoller and Wagner counseled Theodor Lohmann, who wielded enormous influence from the second-tier of the Prussian Trade Ministry, as he crafted the worker protection legislation. Both men used their seats in the Prussian Upper Chamber, contacts to numerous members of the Lower House and Reichstag, and (at least in Schmoller's case) close acquaintance with Reich-Chancellor Bülow to influence legislation in the 1900s.[97] The Trade Ministry official Lohmann himself bridged the milieus, as both influential civil servant and leading figure in the Protestant Inner Mission.[98] Berlepsch no longer may have been Prussian Trade Minister when he helped found the Society for Social Reform in 1900, but his presence helped attract parliamentarians from the Center, National Liberal, and Left Liberal Parties and opened numerous doors for the group in Berlin. For example, dynamic officials from the Trade Ministry, whose efforts on behalf of an individual-centered reform strategy we will encounter in the next chapter, contributed to the Society's publications.[99] The semi-official Prussian Central Bureau for Popular Welfare (before 1906, the Central Bureau for Organizations for Worker Welfare) provided a forum for nearly all major reform groups to interact with government officials, in some cases offering the latter the chance to test out their proposals for new legislation.[100] At the level of vibrant municipal reform, a figure such as Karl Flesch not only shaped Frankfurt's social policy, but also initiated or joined coordinating and advocacy groups, such as the Association of German Industrial Courts[101] and Association of German Labor Exchanges,[102] and contributed to such leading reform journals as *Social Practice.*

The indirect impact of the social reformers, the gravitational pull of their ideas, could be even greater. The highest Reich authorities often cited their arguments when they proposed new legislation. Less obvious were the profound ways in which the reformers set the agenda and the terms of debate in social policy, among the general public and within the government. The "socialists of the chair," in particular, dominated the public sphere through their publications, prominence, and near-monopoly of university economics departments. Thanks, in no small part, to them many liberals abandoned their faith in "laissez faire."[103] Holding nearly all economics chairs from the 1890s onward, they also shaped the views of a generation of officials who passed through their seminars. Through these and other channels—"specialized seminars, model institutions, statistical archives, petition drives and protests"—the reformers provided government authorities at all levels with common models of thought and action.[104] Above all, these close interactions of experts and officials encouraged the latter to view social problems as amenable to solutions based on detailed knowledge and "organization."

The state economic and welfare policy initiated and carried out by those government officials was the other crucial background piece for the development of national policy on the labor market. Here, too, recent scholarship has demonstrated the importance of ideas. Older studies, which treated Prussian and Reich governments largely as the puppets of economic interests, in particular heavy industry and agriculture, have made way for a new emphasis on the fragility of economic coalitions and the independent interests of the state and its functionaries.[105] These interests centered on developing Germany as a powerful, and hence ultimately industrial, nation, while maintaining social stability. If the ministries in Berlin could agree broadly on these goals, however, there was still considerable disagreement about the balance between growth and stability, what they entailed more concretely, and the means to achieve them. As a number of recent studies of particular aspects of the German welfare state have shown, the German state was itself hardly a monolithic entity. Different ideas about the paths to national strength and well being competed to shape policy.[106]

Predominant ideas regarding the "social question" influenced government policy in discrete stages, each one resulting from the apparent failure of its predecessor to achieve success. In the 1880s, Bismarck introduced pioneering *insurance* programs against the risks of illness, accident, and invalidity or old age in order to attach the growing working class to the state. The massive Ruhr miners' strike in 1889 and SPD successes in the Reichstag elections the following year led not only to Bismarck's dismissal and the end of the Anti-Socialist law, but also to a "new course" in social policy under Wilhelm II and his Prussian Trade Minister von Berlepsch.

During this veritable springtime of hope among social reformers,[107] the Reich government superceded the Bismarckian paradigm of social policy in a couple of directions, one in the spirit of *Staatshilfe* and the other of collective *Selbsthilfe.* First and foremost, the state initiated or deepened its involvement in worker protection: the budget for factory inspections was significantly increased; labor protection laws prescribed working hours and conditions for women and children, if not for men; factories had to publicize their internal work rules, which had to be approved by the local police; and, the basis was laid for a national labor census.[108] Second, the government sanctioned, if only very cautiously, elements of economic democracy: cities with more than 20,000 inhabitants gained the right to set up "industrial courts," with an equal number of worker and employer representatives and under a "neutral," usually public, chairman, to adjudicate disputes.[109] Also, for the first time, a revised industrial code gave a public role and sanction to the "worker committees" that already had existed in some firms to help run company welfare programs and also set up new committees in publicly owned works.[110]

Again, it was the apparent failure of one set of policies to "solve" the core of the social problem, as reflected in the growing strength of the socialist movement, which opened the door to a new approach. Worker unrest in the early 1890s and, especially, the SPD's electoral successes in the 1893 elections, brought the New

Course to an abrupt end. Contrary to otherwise exemplary accounts,[111] however, this did not spell the end of all positive measures of social policy. In fact, it was precisely in these years that the Prussian and Reich governments began to involve themselves in a new field of social policy, labor exchanges and job placement.

Toward Public "Predominance": The 1910 Law on Job-Placement

The Reich Law on Job-Placement of 1910 marked a turning point on the road to the Labor Administration. Even before the transforming experience of World War I, the German state committed itself to helping the public exchanges eventually "achieve predominance" in the entire labor market. The origins of the Job-Placement law reveal the interests and ideas pressing toward "organization." Among those ideas, both *Staatshilfe* and collective *Selbsthilfe* played galvanizing roles, channeling reform in a particular direction once early, tentative measures proved disappointing.

The apparent failure of the New Course to stem the growth of the SPD set the stage not only for the seminal grassroots initiative at Frankfurt, but also for national efforts to influence labor markets. It was another political problem, however, the accelerating flight from the land—the rush of agricultural workers to the booming cities—which first triggered expanding public oversight of the labor market. These early efforts extended worker protection and the protecting hand of the state, beyond the workplace, out into the labor market.

Already in 1892, the central authorities had responded to large-scale unemployment and urban unrest, especially among recent immigrants from the countryside, by advocating a greater role for local labor exchanges. It was only the sustained campaign, beginning in 1894, by agricultural interest groups against commercial job-placement agencies that prompted some state governments and the Reich to action, if at first only cautiously.[112] The Prussian Trade and Interior Ministries in 1894 encouraged towns to establish such offices, but refrained from material support.[113] Some states, such as Wurttemberg, took it upon themselves, once municipal exchanges had been set up locally, to unify them into a broader association, thereby obviating local initiative and control of the broader network. The Reich Interior Ministry's request for information from the states on abuses by the commercial agents and on any regulations the governments had imposed revealed a variety of limited restrictions—for example, that the agencies had to maintain records of their placements—but no great sense of urgency about reform.[114] Nonetheless, in some quarters in Berlin there was a hunger for bolder action. Johannes Miquel, who as mayor of Frankfurt in the 1880s had been a liberal reformer, but since becoming Prussian Finance Minister in 1890 had moved to the right, expressed his support for an "advancing organization of labor" to be headed by "a member of the authorities."[115]

By the end of the decade, intense battles over the renewal of the liberal Caprivi tariffs had further mobilized agricultural interests and created a political climate

more conducive to their concerns. Agriculture's persistent drumbeat of criticism of the placement agents now led to greater public supervision of the labor market. A petition by the Rhenish-Prussian agricultural association to the Bundesrat in 1897 demanded the introduction of mandatory licenses for commercial placement agencies.[116] The following year, a majority of the Reichstag endorsed the association's demand,[117] Prussian authorities encouraged local officials to crack down on unsavory agents, and they announced that a new law was in the works.[118] At this time, the government still rejected demands for a so-called "necessity requirement," which would have made a license for a placement agency dependent on there being no extant public labor office. As the Prussian cabinet concluded, such a step would "create a bone of contention between industry and agriculture and would give the authorities improper influence upon the competition of the workers."[119] At this stage, the authorities in Berlin were still resisting the calls by interest groups and political parties to assume a greater responsibility for the labor market.

By 1899, however, after the failure in the Reichstag of a repressive bill directed at the SPD, Reich Interior Minister Posadowsky had abandoned his laissez faire commitments and inaugurated his own New Course, albeit with less fanfare than the one begun nearly a decade earlier.[120] Posadowsky's new thinking and policies demonstrated the possibility of a surprisingly easy symbiosis between *Staatshilfe* and collective *Selbsthilfe.* Still viscerally opposed to international socialism, Posadowsky nonetheless insisted that "if one wants to pursue social political goals, the strong hand of the state must be present, in order to carry out the laws and thereby to maintain order and calm in the land."[121] Between 1900 and 1906, he expanded the state's role in worker protection, funding workers' housing, introducing a merchant marine code, and extending child labor laws to cottage industry.[122] On the other hand, with the help of the Center Party in particular, the Interior Minister promoted policies of worker self-help by, in 1901, making industrial courts mandatory in cities with more than 20,000 residents, introducing legislation to liberalize the laws governing unions, and proposing parity-based chambers of labor.[123]

The revised Commercial Code passed by the Reichstag in 1900 contained the first national regulations regarding job-placement. These compelled private agencies to obtain licenses, as agricultural interests had been demanding, and allowed the states to impose further regulations, such as those promulgated in Prussia in the following year. These regulations obliged the commercial agents to keep records of all of their transactions, limited them to working out of clearly marked offices, and forbad them from soliciting workers to change jobs.[124]

Within a few years, however, the 1900 regulations were widely deemed to be inadequate. Unabating complaints by agriculture, an energetic campaign against the agents by the public labor office movement, and, above all, the intensifying battle between employers and unions for control of the workforce overturned the government's previous reticence about further interventions in the labor market. In the face of continuing urban disorder and of the now multifaceted political

struggle for influence over the workforce, some form of public administration of the labor market became Berlin's long-term goal.

Licensing and the state regulations permitted by the 1900 legislation, critics of the private placement agencies argued, soon proved inadequate to the task. The number of agencies continued to grow, jumping 16 percent between the years 1895 and 1907.[125] They found creative ways to circumvent regulations, for example, by collecting the notices in newspapers of job openings and selling such lists. Furthermore, the variation in state regulations was said to impede improvement.[126] As the economy kept growing at a dizzying pace, migrants continued to stream from farms into factories. The Prussian government now even considered such drastic legal barriers to the flight from the land as laws hampering contract breaking[127] and banning the placement of rural workers in city jobs.[128]

The public labor office movement, which had established a national umbrella organization and media forum in 1897–98, significantly expanded its organizational work and attacks on private placement agencies after the turn of the century.[129] The recession of 1900–1902, which, though quantitatively mild, spread waves of anxiety throughout a country that had begun to expect uninterrupted growth, was a catalyst.[130] For the first time, Reich and Prussian authorities extended official aid. The Reich Statistical Office began to collect monthly reports from local labor offices, and the Interior Ministry now contributed a stipend to support the Association's hiring of an employee in order to get more local offices on their feet and to coordinate between all of them.[131] A perceived crisis of domestic stability had for the first time given the state a role in the Association of German Labor Offices.

In 1905, the Association launched "a major offensive" against the commercial agencies.[132] At its annual conference, participants bemoaned the inadequacies of the existing regulations and the main speaker, Franz Ludwig of Lübeck, presented a scathing 150-page booklet on *The Commercial Labor Exchange*.[133] Ludwig detailed the putative failings of the agencies: the dubious backgrounds and personal qualities of many agents, the exorbitant fees they charged, the false promises they made, and, above all, the unnecessary job changes they promoted. He and the others also pointed to labor market reforms in other countries. In some American states, in Hungary and, just the year before, in France, authorities had banned commercial agencies. These arguments no doubt impressed German officials and social reformers who (like their counterparts in other European countries) were keenly interested in learning from—and surpassing—the reforms of their neighbors and rivals.[134] Ludwig called for an outright ban on commercial agencies, or at least a tightening of the licensing requirements so that they would only be permitted if no adequate public office already existed. As the *Frankfurter Zeitung* noted, in the long run this would amount practically to the same thing as a ban. The campaign launched at the 1905 conference garnered widespread and generally quite positive attention from the media.[135] Its criticisms of the for-profit agencies and advocacy of a "necessity requirement" would be cited frequently in the efforts that led to the 1910 law on job-placement.

Another development after the turn of the century played an even more important role in creating a conducive atmosphere for such a law. After the SPD's resounding success in the 1903 Reichstag election and the resumption of rapid economic growth the same year, conflict between labor and industry became even more massive than before. The number of workers organized in unions had risen already from 256,000 in 1895 to 888,000 in 1903, and the average number of strikes per year had more than quadrupled from 104 between 1894 and 1898 to 476 between 1899 and 1903.[136] Inspired by the Russian revolution in 1905, radicals within the SPD propagated the idea of the general strike as a weapon of revolution. Particular labor conflicts, such as the month long strike of textile workers in Crimmitschau in 1903 and the Ruhr coal miners' strike of 1905 involving a quarter of a million workers, brought about a change in industry's policy. Alarmed by the obvious strength of labor, and by the public's support and the government's tolerance of their opponents, employers more actively began organizing themselves. In 1904, heavy industry and manufacturing set up the Headquarters of German Employers' Associations and the Association of German Employers' Associations, respectively, to better coordinate their interests. One of their main activities was to promote employer-run placement agencies, which between 1904 and 1912 increased their share of non-private placements by more than 50 percent, going from just over one-fifth to more than one-third. Employers' and unions' placement offices now sought to exclude the other side from control of the workforce. Even more than in the 1890s, influence over job placements became, after 1903/5, the object of intense partisan dispute.

Both sides' fears of losing out drove them into the arms of a "neutral" public solution. As already mentioned, since about 1900 the socialist unions consistently had been calling for centralized public control of the labor offices. At least some employers also perceived the benefits of public control. In the face of mounting worker turnover, the electrical giant Siemens, for instance, called in 1906 for a state-run "distribution of workers."[137]

Simultaneously, however, the other strand of "organization," collective self-help, was also being swept forward by strong political tailwinds. As we saw above, a broad and influential coalition of social reformers, gathered most prominently in the Society for Social Reform, had come by the turn of the century to see "economic democracy" as the key to assuaging working class discontent. Among the non-socialist parties, the Left Liberals had repeatedly demanded the legal clarification of the status of unions.[138] The government's most reliable supporters in the Reichstag on domestic policy, the Center Party, also strongly backed workers' committees and non-socialist unions.[139] Posadowsky, too, wanted to complement extended worker protection with steps toward more "economic democracy." Thus, when, in 1904, the Center social policy expert and Reichstag representative Karl Trimborn officially asked about the government's plans in regard to the legal status of unions and to the creation of "chambers of labor," in which workers and bosses could negotiate their differences, including control of labor offices, the Interior Minister enthusiastically seized the initiative.[140]

By the middle of the first decade of the century, then, significant pressure had built up to "organize" the labor market. Booming industrial cities continued to draw farmhands in from increasingly depopulated rural areas. On top of the long-simmering tensions between industry and agriculture in regard to the limited supply of workers, the mutually exclusive claims of industry and the unions to a predominant influence over the workforce now added a further, potentially even more troublesome, dimension to the conflict. Conversely, a newly assertive public labor office movement expressly defined itself as being above the partisan fray. The overall political environment was also quite favorable to legal intervention. After the lull of the late 1890s, both *Staatshilfe* and collective *Selbsthilfe* seemed to be in the ascendant again. Though Chancellor Bülow, after 1906, would turn his back on the Catholic Center Party, which had been a reliable backer of social policy, the new Reich Interior Minister, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, also advocated a judicious use of *Sozialpolitik* as part of a cautious modernization strategy.[141] In this Bethmann-Hollweg had an invaluable ally in the Chancellor himself. In the Reichstag and the German public, a veritable "social policy bloc"—stretching from the Left Liberals to the Center and the SPD—supported public interventions as the best or only means to alleviate the ills of modern society. On the particular issue of curtailing private job placement agencies and bolstering public ones, even the Conservatives, increasingly the mouthpiece of rural interests, were among the strongest advocates of state intervention. Revealing just how deeply support for public "organization" of economic life had penetrated the middle classes, National Liberals, too, favored the expansion of public labor offices.[142]

Under these auspicious conditions, the Reich Interior Ministry began the push to establish public predominance over the labor market, at this point still in connection with legislation on chambers of labor. It recommended "using legal measures to work toward the displacement of commercial by public labor offices, if at all possible."[143] Specifically, the Interior Minister rejected—"at least for the time being"—an outright ban on the private agencies, in part because this would mean, as it had in France, paying exorbitant compensation. Instead, he took up a proposal that had been broached by the Association of German Labor Offices, but ultimately rejected in the negotiations leading up to the 1900 regulations. In 1906, the Berlin police director revived the idea that would become the central mechanism by which public authorities would try to smother commercial agencies: introducing a "necessity test." Commercial placement agencies would receive operating licenses only if a public office was nonexistent or somehow deficient. The goal of the measure was plain. As the Berlin police director had put it, the necessity test, in conjunction with "robust police and financial support" of the best public labor offices, should lead to the "eventual extinction" of the commercial agencies.[144]

In addition to maximum fees and the necessity test, the Interior Ministry in June 1907 suggested expanding the state's role into a new realm. The law under consideration not only aimed to stifle private job-placement agencies, but would

also allow states to regulate non-commercial offices—above all, employer and union bureaus, as well as the various forms of "public interest" offices.[145] This aspiration to expand state influence to all job-placement activities represented a significant and telling turnaround from just a few years before. In 1903, a Berlin court had ruled against an employers' placement office for operating without a license, thus extending the 1900 regulations for the first time to non-commercial exchanges.[146] At the time, the Reich Justice Ministry, state governments, and the parties in the Reichstag all had criticized roundly the judicial ruling as exceeding the original intent of the 1900 regulations.[147] Just four years later, after the worst labor strife in recent memory, the Reich government itself pushed for such an extension of political oversight. Public authorities now claimed an interest in maintaining order not only between industry and agriculture, but also between labor and business.

In the negotiations that followed and that led to the 1910 law on job placement, the Interior Ministry eventually found "the basic agreement of nearly all state governments."[148] Doubts about the current quality of the public offices found expression in a revised necessity clause: only if "sufficient" public offices existed in a locality could the private agency be turned down for a license.[149] Another modification to the same clause specified explicitly the public nature of the preferred offices; rather than identifying these more generally as "offices serving the general welfare"—which included philanthropic agencies—the law's language now talked more narrowly of "public offices serving the general welfare."[150]

As these negotiations went on, a flood of condemnations of the private agencies poured in from the public and press, drowning out the isolated supportive voices and the commercial agents themselves.[151] The critical materials gathered for the Association of Labor Offices by Franz Ludwig in his 1906 booklet *The Commercial Labor Exchange* continued to provide ammunition against the private agencies, even meriting a citation by the Interior Minister, when he presented the bill to the Reichstag and subsequent references to it in the ensuing parliamentary discussion.[152] The influential Society for Social Reform called for a blanket ban on new licenses for commercial agencies so they would be "placed on a natural path to extinction."[153] A commentator in *Social Practice* drew attention to the more recent, complementary justification for the bill: its role in dampening conflict between employers and unions and thereby ensuring domestic political stability. Along with labor courts and arbitration offices, he wrote, job placement was one of the two most important problems arising from the labor contract, "this fundament of our national economy, our law, and therefore of our entire public life." As a monopoly in this matter would confer tremendous power, job placement was "a problem of social welfare, demanding public and state interest."[154]

In contrast to the deluge of vociferous denunciations of the commercial exchanges, critics of the proposed law stood out for their rarity and timidity. The fact that almost no one made a principled defense of the free market or questioned the advantages of "organization" suggested just how widespread support for the latter idea had become.

By this point, the job placement bill had become disconnected from the more comprehensive chambers of labor legislation, the legislation for which had become deadlocked. This did nothing, though, to hold up passage of the job placement law.

When Interior Minister Delbrück presented the law to the Reichstag on 15 February 1910, he wove together the various conditions and motivations into a single justification of the bill.

> Freedom of movement, railroad travel, the international connections of some businesses with their shifting seasonal demands … the attraction of the large cities, the rising demand for workers in industry, the lack of workers in agriculture, the increasing employment of foreign workers in agriculture.… the development of employee- and employer labor exchanges, which have gradually become weapons in the labor market: all of this presses toward a comprehensive organization of job placement and labor exchanges on the basis of public law and under the direction and supervision of the state.[155]

The government's proposal squeezed commercial placement agencies from several sides. It forbade them simultaneously to operate related businesses, such as offering accommodations to job-seekers, as they tended to do. It allowed states to set the fees they could charge, and more broadly to "regulate and supervise the agencies beyond these general stipulations." Most importantly, the government's bill required that commercial agencies obtain a license, which would only be given to "unsullied, reliable people."

Beyond these particulars for cleaning up an ostensibly dirty business, the proposed law delineated the steps toward a radically different labor market of the future. Commercial agencies would be able to obtain a license only when there was a need for such a placement agency. According to this "necessity clause," the very existence of an "adequate" public office obviated the need of a commercial placement agency. The Interior Minister expressed the government's expectation that the law, and especially its necessity clause, "should lead in the course of events to private job placement becoming increasingly rare and in its place public job placement dedicated to furthering the general welfare becoming ever stronger and eventually achieving predominance."[156] The law targeted not only commercial agencies, but also potentially all partisan, non-public offices. The bill's "most important provision," according to Delbrück, allowed states to decide whether and to what extent the regulations also applied to union and employer labor exchanges, among others. If Delbrück spoke openly only about the public offices one day achieving predominance over commercial agencies, the Reich Interior Minister also implied that a farther-reaching monopoly over all job placements was conceivable.

The government's bill met with nearly universal enthusiasm, and, indeed, with calls for even bolder action, in the Reichstag. Only the small Polish party and the Radical People's Party, whose free market roots had weakened but not completely withered since Eugen Richter's death in 1906, expressed reservations about the bill's apparent intent to eliminate commercial agencies, while still acknowledg-

ing the need to combat abuses.[157] The SPD, on the other hand, demanded the outright elimination of the commercial agents (as well as employer offices), rather than the gradual suffocation implied by the bill.[158] All of the other parties, including the Center, the Conservative parties, the National Liberals, and the Radical Coalition, embraced the government's proposal with enthusiasm, while pressing for even tougher action. In committee, these parties "very considerably" stiffened some of the bill's provisions. More openly than the Interior Minister had, these parties embraced the prospect of eliminating all partisan labor exchanges and giving the public labor offices a monopoly. Along with these measures to suppress commercial and partisan labor offices, all of the parties (with the exception of the Poles) called for significantly expanding Reich and state aid to the public ones.

In the end, all of the Reichstag parties voted for the bill—a most rare and remarkable instance of consensus in Imperial Germany and testimony to the by now nearly universal appeal of "organization" as a solution to social problems.[159] Not only the "social bloc" parties of Catholic Center, SPD, and Left Liberals, and even the National Liberals, supported the goal of defusing social conflict by "organization," whether through neutral administration or parity-control. In defense of their agrarian base, so too did the Conservatives. It was telling that at a time when the Reichstag parties were bitterly divided over finance reform, they could agree unanimously on the merits of "organization." The now widespread support for this goal combined with particular interests to mark a milestone on the way to public control of the labor market.

Almost immediately the law, which came into effect on 2 June 1910, began achieving Delbrück's purpose: the number of commercial offices plummeted and the number of placements fell as well, if more slowly.[160] The public offices, on the other hand, began to rebound from the setbacks they had suffered since the employers organized more effectively in 1904/5. In Prussia, for example, the number of public offices had fallen from 288 in 1905 to 256 in 1909 and the number of placements had risen modestly from 460,000 in 1906 to 538,000 in 1909. In the four years between the passage of the job placement law and World War I, both numbers surged. The number of offices jumped more than 40 percent to 376, and that of placements rose two and a half fold to 1.3 million.[161] Commercial agencies received a blow and public offices a significant boost from the government's efforts to "organize" the labor market.

In the quarter century before World War I, Germany's dynamic industrial growth made control of the labor market seem to be an urgent political task. Rapid urbanization and bouts of mass unemployment threatened to overwhelm city services and undermine order. Agriculture's loss of manpower to industry led the former to mobilize increasingly effectively from the mid 1890s onward in order to seek redress from the authorities. A decade later, the conflict between a surging, newly self-confident, labor movement and defensive employers increasingly turned labor offices into political weapons. Under these conditions, municipal officials in the Association of Labor Offices, intellectual advocates of social reform, agrarian and union interest groups, and authorities in Berlin, especially

in the Ministry of the Interior, could press successfully to begin transforming a more or less free labor market into an "organized" one. This process would be vastly accelerated by World War I and then carried to completion in the 1920s.

Notes

1. Clemens von Delbrück, 15 February 1910, Reichstag speech, *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages,* XII. Legislaturperiode, 1271.
2. Volker Ullrich, *Die nervöse Grossmacht 1871–1918: Aufstieg und Untergang des deutschen Kaiserreichs* (Frankfurt, 2004), 127.
3. Figures calculated from data in Gerd Hohorst, Jürgen Kocka, Gerhard A. Ritter, eds., *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch: Materialien zur Statistik des deutschen Kaiserreichs 1870–1914* (München, 1975), 88–89.
4. Kenneth Barkin, *The Controversy over German Industrialization, 1890–1902* (Chicago, 1970).
5. In his recent *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte,* vol. 3 (München, 1995), Hans-Ulrich Wehler has replaced his earlier characterization of a "Great Depression" by that of a "Great Deflation" (1995: 104). See also Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte, 1866–1918,* vol. 1: *Arbeitswelt und Bürgergeist* (München, 1991), 285–87.
6. See, for example, the discussion in the Prussian Parliament about the economic "crisis" in 1908. *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Preuss. Hauses der Abgeordneten, 21 Legislaturperiode, II Session 1908/9,* vol. 1, 763ff.
7. David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780–1918* (New York, 1998), 246–48.
8. Between 1870 and 1913, iron production grew at an average rate of 5.9 percent per year, while steel production surpassed even this at 6.3 percent per year. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte,* 230.
9. Walther G. Hoffman*, Das Wachstum der deutschen Wirtschaft seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1965), 63, 68.
10. Calculated from the chart in Ernst Barth, *Entwicklungslinien der deutschen Maschinenbauindustrie von 1870 bis 1914* (East Berlin, 1973), 181–82.
11. Ibid., 37, 57.
12. Volker Hentschel, *Wirtschaft und Wirtschaftspolitik im wilhelminischen Deutschland: Organisierter Kapitalismus und Interventionsstaat?* (Stuttgart, 1978), 53.
13. See Garry Herrigel, *Industrial Constructions: The Sources of German Industrial Power* (New York, 1996).
14. W. Köllmann, "Bevölkerungsgeschichte 1880–1970," as cited in Klaus J. Bade, "Transnationale Migration und Arbeitsmarkt im Kaiserreich: Vom Agrarstaat mit starker Industrie zum Industriestaat mit starker agrarischer Basis," in *Historische Arbeitsmarktforschung: Entstehung, Entwicklung und Probleme der Vermarktung von Arbeitskraft,* eds. Toni Pierenkemper and Richard Tilly (Göttingen, 1982), 185.
15. The most wrenching transition involved the migration of hundreds of thousands of rural workers from East and West Prussia and Posen to the western industrial centers, not only because of the geographic distance, but also because many of these workers belonged to the Polish-speaking population of the German east. Klaus J. Bade, ed., *Auswanderer—Wanderarbeiter—Gastarbeiter: Bevölkerung, Arbeitsmarkt und Wanderung in Deutschland seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern, 1985), 285. For a convincing argument about a sea-change around

1900 in the long-term relationship between emigration, population, and the labor market, see Oliver Grant, *Migration and Inequality in Germany 1870–1913* (Oxford, 2005).

16. Hohorst, Kocka, Ritter, *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch,* 66.
17. Calculated according to the figures in Heidrun Homburg, *Rationalisierung und Industriearbeit: Arbeitsmarkt—Management—Arbeiterschaft im Siemens-Konzern Berlin 1900–1939* (Berlin, 1991), 710.
18. Calculated from figures in Hohorst, Kocka, Ritter, *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch*, 66; Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte,* 230; Ebert, *Zur Entstehung,* 8.
19. Calculated from figures in Hentschel, *Wirtschaft und Wirtschaftspolitik,* 60.
20. For insightful assessments of the search by German intellectuals for new orientation, see Rüdiger vom Bruch, ed., *Weder Kommunismus noch Kapitalismus: Bürgerliche Sozialreform in Deutschland vom Vormärz bis zur Ära Adenauer* (Munich, 1985); Repp, *Reformers.* James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870–1920* (New York, 1986), and Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings,* address similar issues within a broader, Euro-American context.
21. See, for example, the workers' accounts in Georg Eckert, ed., *Aus den Lebensberichten deutscher Arbeiter* (Braunschweig, 1953), esp. 18, 60.
22. The exact proportion depends on the number of job-changes per year, about which only estimates exist, ranging from 9.5 million (Anselm Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik im Deutschen Kaiserreich: Arbeitsvermittlung, Arbeitsbeschaffung und Arbeitslosenunterstützung 1890–1918* [Stuttgart, 1986], 51) to over 20 million (Otto Uhlig, *Arbeit—amtlich angeboten: der Mensch auf seinem Markt* [Stuttgart, 1970], 219). The total number of placements in 1912 was about 3.6 million (Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 70).
23. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 288.
24. Hellmuth Wolf, "Der Ausbau des Arbeitsnachweises," in *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik,* vol. 41, 1911: 353. Wolf, an opponent of the commercial exchanges, cast doubt on the latter figure, suggesting it was actually closer to 4,550.
25. Ibid., 353.
26. David F. Crew, *Town in the Ruhr: A Social History of Bochum, 1860–1914* (New York, 1979).
27. Acknowledgement of the active role of local elites in creating urban social policy has compelled a rethinking of the origins of national social policy, especially that of the Weimar Republic. See, for example, George Steinmetz, *Regulating the Social: The Welfare State and Local Politics in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 1993). In the next chapter, we discuss urban social reform in more detail.
28. Uhlig, *Arbeit amtlich,* 46–68.
29. David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (New York, 1984); Geoff Eley, *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck* (Ann Arbor, 1990). For a note cautioning against focusing exclusively on the 1890s, however, see Retallack, *Germany in the Age,* 51.
30. See the works cited in the previous note as well as Hans-Jörg von Berlepsch, *"Neuer Kurs" im Kaiserreich? Die Arbeiterpolitik des Freiherrn von Berlepsch 1890 bis 1896* (Bonn, 1987); Repp, *Reformers,* 19–66.
31. Uhlig, *Arbeit amtlich,* 52.
32. Quoted in Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 19.
33. See the table in Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 289. In terms of the number of placements per office, employer exchanges claimed first place by a wide margin.
34. See the 1896 report by the central Agricultural Council, in BAB, R1501/6193, 232.
35. See the collection of pamphlets published by agricultural interest groups in BAB, R1501/6193.
36. Jürgen Kocka and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Die Protokolle des Preussischen Staatsministeriums, 1817–1934/38,* vol. 8/I (Hildesheim, 2003), cabinet meeting on 28 February 1892, 104.

37. On Freund's effort, in April 1892, see *Der Arbeitsmarkt,* Beilage, 5 May 1898: 101.
38. For a helpful review and analysis of the debates, see Jonathan Sperber, "*Bürger*, *Bürgertum*, *Bürgerlichkeit*, *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*: Studies of the German (Upper) Middle Class and Its Sociocultural World," in *The Journal of Modern History* 69, June 1997: 271–97.
39. Dieter Langewiesche, "Kommentar," in *Stadt und Bürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert,* ed. Lothar Gall (München, 1990), 230. Among others, including the impressive studies produced by Gall's students, see Ralf Roth, *Stadt und Bürgertum in Frankfurt am Main* (München, 1996); Ralf Zerback, *München und sein Stadtbürgertum: eine Residenzstadt als Bürgergemeinde 1780–1870* (München, 1997); Karin Schambach, *Stadtbürgertum und industrieller Umbruch: Dortmund, 1780–1870* (München, 1996); Frank Moeller, *Bürgerliche Herrschaft in Augsburg 1790–1880* (München, 1998); Hans-Werner Hahn, *Altstädtisches Bürgertum zwischen Beharrung und Wandel: Wetzlar, 1689–1870* (München, 1991). Also, see Jennifer Jenkins, *Provincial Modernity: Local Culture and Liberal Politics in Fin-de-Siecle Hamburg* (Ithaca, 2003); Brian Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany, 1860–1914* (Cambridge, 1990); Jan Palmowski, *Urban Liberalism in Imperial Germany*, *Frankfurt am Main, 1866–1914* (Oxford, 1999); Johanna Meskill, *"Improving Our Civic Conditions:" Social Reform and the Enlightenment in Nineteenth-Century Frankfurt* (forthcoming); Manfred Hettling, *Politische Bürgerlichkeit: Der Bürger zwischen Individualität und Vergesellschaftung in Deutschland und der Schweiz von 1860 bis 1918* (Göttingen, 1999).
40. Langewiesche, *Liberalism in Germany* (London, 2000), 218; Jürgen Reulecke makes much the same point in Reulecke, "Stadtbürgertum und bürgerliche Sozialreform im 19. Jahrhundert in Preussen," in Gall, *Stadt und Bürgertum.*
41. Andrew Lees, *Cities, Sin, and Social Reform in Imperial Germany* (Ann Arbor, 2002), 386.
42. Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings,* 61–62, 130–59.
43. Ibid., 231–32.
44. See Palmowski, *Urban Liberalism;* Meskill, *"Improving Our Civic Conditions."* See the next chapter for a more detailed discussion.
45. Participants included such important intellectual and reform figures as Heinrich Herkner, Conrad Haussmann, Ferdinand Tönnies, Friedrich Naumann, Carl Legien, Leopold Sonnemann, and Friedrich von Reitzenstein. See Uhlig, *Arbeit amtlich,* 92.
46. Ibid., 93. The principle of parity between representatives of labor and capital had been applied by the Stuttgart labor exchange thirty years earlier. In the meantime, the practice had been reinforced by the industrial courts (*Gewerbegerichte*) that had been pioneered at the local level. Cities such as Frankfurt had, since the late 1880s, instituted industrial courts with parity representations. Bismarck's social insurance programs also had relied on varying degrees of employer-employee representation.
47. Uhlig, *Arbeit amtlich,* 100.
48. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 63.
49. Ibid., 62.
50. See Uhlig, *Arbeit amtlich,* 154–55, for a list of these networks.
51. Gerd Vonderach, *Arbeitsnachweisbewegung und erste Arbeitsnachweisstatistik: der Beginn der landesweiten Koordinierung der Arbeitsvermittlung und die Anfänge der Arbeitsmarkt-Berichterstattung in Deutschland vor hundert Jahren* (Münster, 1997), 74–90.
52. Ibid., 61–90.
53. The board of the *Verein deutscher Arbeitsnachweise* included, among others, the Berlin associate professor Ignatz Jastrow, the director of the Berlin labor exchange, Richard Freund, and Frankfurt reforming official Karl Flesch.
54. See, for example, the meeting of the *Verein deutscher Arbeitsnachweise* from 9–11 October 1902, in which the uneven experiences of the local offices during the recent recession was a major theme. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Adhib 42, Bd 1, 170. In the following year, the Verein agreed to uniform standards for reporting data to the Imperial Statistics Bureau.

55. On the latter, see the letter of the Interior Minister to the Prussian Minister of Trade, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Adhib 42, Bd 1, 196.
56. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 68.
57. Repp, *Reformers;* vom Bruch, *Weder Kommunismus;* Franz Josef Stegmann and Peter Langhorst, "Geschichte der sozialen Ideen im deutschen Katholizismus," in *Geschichte der Sozialen Ideeen in Deutschland: Sozialismus, Katholische Lehre, Protestantische Sozialethik,* ed. Helga Grebing (Essen, 2000); Renate Zitt, *Zwischen Innerer Mission und staatlicher Sozialpolitik: Der protestantische Sozialreformer Theodor Lohmann (1831–1905)* (Heidelberg, 1997); Gangolf Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus und Politik: Zum Verhältnis von Liberalismus und Protestantismus im wilhelminischen Deutschland* (Tübingen, 1994); Hettling, *Politische Bürgerlichkeit.* For the international context see also Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings,* and Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory.*
58. For the original identification of the four milieus—Social Democratic, Catholic, Liberal Protestant, and Conservative Protestant—which segregated German society until at least the mid 1920s, see M. Rainer Lepsius, "Parteiensystem und Sozialstruktur: zum Problem der Demokratisierung der deutschen Gesellschaft," in *Die deutschen Parteien 1830–1914. Parteien und Gesellschaft im konstitutionellen Regierungssystem,* ed. Gerhard A. Ritter (Göttingen, 1985). Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus,* also emphasizes the separation between the milieus.
59. For the original argument about *Lager* as an alternative to milieus see Karl Rohe, *Wahlen und Wählertraditionen in Deutschland: kulturelle Grundlagen deutscher Parteien und Parteiensysteme im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt, 1992). Hettling, *Politische Bürgerlichkeit,* among others, finds *Lager* a more useful analytic tool than milieus.
60. Repp, *Reformers,* 53ff.; Matthias Weipert, *"Mehrung der Volkskraft": Die Debatte über Bevölkerung, Modernisierung, und Nation 1890–1933* (Paderborn, 2006). For the broader European context of such thought, see Mark Mazower, *Dark Century: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York, 1998), ch. 3: "Healthy Bodies, Sick Bodies."
61. Repp, *Reformers,* 224 and passim.
62. Friedrich Naumann, *Neudeutsche Wirtschaftspolitik* (Berlin, 1906), 26–27.
63. Ibid., 29.
64. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998).
65. Marc Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600–1800* (New Haven, 1983); Keith Tribe, *Governing Economy: the Reformation of German Economic Discourse 1750–1840* (Cambridge, 1988); Keith Tribe, *Strategies of Economic Order: German Economic Discourse, 1750–1950* (Cambridge, 1995).
66. Repp, *Reformers,* emphasizes the common formative experiences of this generation, though more in connection with the perception of the problem of social reform than with its solution. See 19–66.
67. Theodore Porter, *The Rise of Statistical Thinking, 1820–1900* (Princeton, 1986), 286–95.
68. On physiology and the sciences of health, see Paul Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism 1870–1945* (Cambridge, 1993); on criminal anthropology, see Richard Wetzell, *Inventing the Criminal: A History of German Criminology 1880–1945* (Chapel Hill, 2000).
69. See Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus,* on Protestants' faith in science.
70. Max Planck's teacher even advised him in 1870 against going into physics, as within two decades no new truths would remain to be discovered. On the widespread confidence in the scientific community that all basic truths had already been, or soon would be, discovered, see Lawrence Badash, "The Completeness of 19th Century Science," *Isis* 63 (1972): 48–68.
71. Tzvetan Todorov, *Hope and Memory: Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 2003), 21.
72. Alfred Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, 1977).

73. Martin L. van Creveld, *Command in War* (Cambridge, 1985), ch. 5: "The Timetable War."
74. Heidrun Homburg, "Anfänge des Taylorsystems in Deutschland vor dem ersten Weltkrieg," in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft,* nr. 4, 1978: 170–94.
75. Cited in Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings,* 232.
76. See Steinmetz, *Regulating,* 188–214, for the details and reasons for these changes in the cities.
77. Palmowski, *Urban Liberalism.*
78. On the *Bildungsbürgertum*'s predilection for comprehensive, abstract knowledge, see Werner Conze and Jürgen Kocka, "Einleitung," in *Bildungsbürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert,* eds. Conze and Kocka, vol. 1: *Bildungssystem und Professionalisierung in internationalen Vergleichen* (Stuttgart, 1985), 25.
79. Rüdiger vom Bruch, "Bürgerliche Sozialreform im deutschen Kaiserreich," in vom Bruch, *Weder Kommunismus,* 61–179, 78, and passim.
80. Karl Erich Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik seit Bismarcks Sturz* (Wiesbaden, 1957), 37.
81. Fritz Ringer, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Biography* (Chicago, 2004), 61.
82. Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus,* 219–20.
83. Hettling, *Politische Bürgerlichkeit;* Thomas Nipperdey, "Verein als soziale Struktur in Deutschland im späten 18. Jh. und frühen 19. Jh," in Thomas Nipperdey, *Gesellschaft, Kultur, Theorie: gesammelte Aufsätze zur neueren Geschichte* (Göttingen, 1976).
84. On Lohmann, see Zitt, *Zwischen Innerer.* On Naumann, see generally Theodor Heuss, *Friedrich Naumann: der Mann, das Werk, die Zeit* (München, 1968); Peter Theiner, "Friedrich Naumann und der soziale Liberalismus im Kaiserreich," in *Sozialer Liberalismus,* eds. Karl Holl et al. (Göttingen, 1986), 72–83; Repp, *Reformers,* 59–63.
85. Stegmann and Langhorst, "Geschichte der sozialen Ideen," 610. See the next chapter, however, for other, more individualistic strands of Protestant and Catholic thought.
86. Ibid., 599–862.
87. See Lothar Gall, ed., *Stadt und Bürgertum im Übergang von der traditionalen zur modernen Gesellschaft* (München, 1993), 339–65.
88. Thomas Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit: Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie vom Vormärz bis zum Sozialistengesetz* (Bonn, 2000).
89. James J. Sheehan, *The Career of Lujo Brentano: A Study of Liberalism and Social Reform in Imperial Germany* (Chicago, 1966).
90. Vom Bruch, "Bürgerliche Sozialreform"; Repp, *Reformers,* 177–83; Ursula Ratz, *Sozialreform und Arbeiterschaft: die "Gesellschaft für Soziale Reform" und die sozialdemokratische Arbeiterbewegung von der Jahrhundertwende bis zum Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Berlin, 1980).
91. As quoted in Repp, *Reformers,* 181.
92. See Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 96, on Berlepsch's hopes in this sense, occurring as early as 1889.
93. Ibid., 2, 45–47.
94. Naumann, *Neudeutsche Wirtschaftspolitik,* 308–32.
95. Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik.* Even scholars offering more complex taxonomies of the welfare state, such as Steinmetz, conceive of *Selbsthilfe* as *collective* self-help, i.e., unions or proto-corporatism.
96. On Naumann's ambivalences between technocracy and democracy, see Stefan-Georg Schnorr, *Liberalismus zwischen 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: Reformulierung liberaler politischer Theorie in Deutschland und England am Beispiel von Friedrich Naumann und Leonard T. Hobhouse* (Baden-Baden, 1990), 40–46; indeed, adding to Naumann's intellectual polymorphism, in the next chapter we will see that the reforming pastor *also* contributed to the individualistic strand of the German welfare state.
97. Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 44–45.
98. Zitt, *Zwischen Innerer Mission.*
99. Randolf Körzel, *Berufsbildung zwischen Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftspolitik* (Frankfurt, 1996), 261.

100. Rudi Kaerger, *Die Zentralstelle für Arbeiter-Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen. Das Selbstverständnis einer halbamtlichen Institution des Kaiserreichs im Spiegel ihrer Konferenzen und Debatten zur Arbeiterjugendfrage (1890–1920)* (Frankfurt, 1996).
101. Hedwig Brüchert-Schunk, *Städtische Sozialpolitik vom Wilhelminischen Reich bis zur Weltwirtschaftskrise: Eine Sozial- und Kommunalhistorische Untersuchung am Beispiel der Stadt Mainz, 1890–1930* (Stuttgart, 1994), 6.
102. See the Association's journal, *Der Arbeitsmarkt,* on whose board sat Flesch.
103. Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 45.
104. Repp, *Reformers,* 289–300 (quotation from 295).
105. See Blackbourn, *History of Germany,* 254–64, for a summary of the changed thinking.
106. See Eric Ross Dickinson, *The Politics of German Child Welfare from the Empire to the Federal Republic* (Cambridge, 1996); Greg Eghigian, *Making Security Social: Disability, Insurance, and the Birth of the Social Entitlement State in Germany* (Ann Arbor, 2000).
107. Repp, *Reformers,* 19–66.
108. See Berlepsch, *"Neuer Kurs"*; Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 98–100.
109. Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 106.
110. Ibid., 109.
111. Repp, *Reformers,* 26.
112. See BAB, R1501/6193, 63.
113. *Der Arbeitsmarkt,* vol. 1, nr. 7, 5 May 1898: 102.
114. BAB, R1501/6193, 257ff.
115. Kocka and Neugebauer, *Die Protokolle,* vol. 8/I, cabinet meeting on 28 February 1892, 158.
116. BAB, R1501/6193, 363.
117. See the account of negotiations, which led to a Reichstag endorsement on 29 April 1898, in BAB, R1501/6194, 10.
118. On the crackdown against agents with criminal records, see the Prussian edict from 12 February 1898, in BAB, R1501/6194, 4.
119. Kocka and Neugebauer, *Die Protokolle,* vol. 8/I, cabinet meeting on 22 December 1898, 331.
120. See Repp, *Reformers,* 63–66, for an account of Posadowsky's embrace of social reform.
121. Quoted in Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 171.
122. Repp, *Reformers,* 64.
123. Repp, *Reformers,* 64; Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 166–204.
124. BAB, R1501/6194, 21 August 1901, 53–54.
125. Wolf, "Der Ausbau," 353.
126. See the article "Die gewerbsmässigen Stellenvermittler im Kaufmannsgewerbe," in *Soziale Praxis,* nr. 44: 1903.
127. Kocka and Neugebauer, *Die Protokolle,* vol. 9, 27 April 1901, 63.
128. See the reference to a Prussian legal draft to this effect in the Reichstag debate of 16 June 1904, in BAB, R1501/6194, 101.
129. Generally, after 1900, interest groups stepped up their pressure on state and national parliaments. Herrigel, *Industrial Constructions,* 51.
130. The next recession, in 1907–8, triggered the same calls for greater centralization of the labor offices and improved statistical knowledge. See the discussion to this effect in the Prussian House of Representatives in 1908, in *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Preuss. Hauses der Abgeordneten, 21 Legislaturperiode, II Session 1908/9,* vol. 1: 763–84.
131. See the letter from the Reich Ministry of the Interior to the Prussian Trade Ministry from 6 May 1903, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Adhib 42, Bd. 1, 196.
132. See the 31 October 1905 article from the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* in BAB, R1501/6194, 133.
133. Franz Ludwig, *Der Gewerbsmässige Arbeitsnachweis* (Berlin, 1906).
134. See, for example, Ludwig's comments on the French law of 1904, as reported in the 31 October 1905 article from the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* in BAB, R1501/6194, 133. The Prussian Trade

Ministry took a keen interest in developments in England, France, and the United States. See, for example, the preparations for a three week trip to study English textile and girls' trade schools in the spring of 1914, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120, Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, LGA, Nr. 12, 217. Generally, on the cross-fertilization and rivalry among social reformers from different European countries and the United States, see Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings.*

135. See the numerous press clippings in BAB, R1501/6194. The liberal *Frankfurter Zeitung* represented the rare exception, but even its doubts were expressed only between the lines.
136. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte,* vol. I, 324, 329.
137. Homburg, *Rationalisierung und Industriearbeit,* 385.
138. Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 188–89.
139. Stegmann and Langhorst, "Geschichte der Sozialideen," 687–711.
140. Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 188–205.
141. See Thomas Kühne, *Dreiklassenwahlrecht und Wahlkultur in Preussen, 1867–1914: Landtagswahlen zwischen korporativer Tradition und politischem Massenmarkt* (Düsseldorf, 1994), 499.
142. See the article in the *National-Zeitung* from 22 August 1905, in BAB, R1501/6194, 123. In the face of the increasingly assertive socialist movement, the National Liberals hoped that neutral labor offices would contribute to the smooth operations of the economy as a whole. Born, *Staat und Sozialpolitik,* 70.
143. Letter from Reichsinnenministerium to the Prussian Handelsminister on 18 December 1906, in BAB, R1501/6195, 21.
144. Letter from the Berlin chief of police to the Prussian Minister of Trade on 6 April 1906, in BAB, R1501/6194, 223.
145. BAB, R1501/6195, 101–2.
146. See the alarmed commentary in the SPD newspaper *Vorwärts,* which perceived a threat to union-run exchanges, in BAB, R1501/6194, 69.
147. BAB, R1501/6194, 70f.
148. BAB, R1501/6196, 116.
149. An official explained that this qualification had been made "since at present public-service agencies are not remotely sufficient to meet needs in all areas." Transcript of Reich Interior Ministry meeting on 27 May 1909, in BAB, R1501/6196, 161.
150. Ibid., 161.
151. See, for example, the letters from the Association of Westfalian Labor Offices on 16 January 1908; from the Catholic Welfare Society for Girls, Women, and Children on 21 February 1908; from the Welfare Association, Johannes Foundation, on 28 February 1908; and the articles in the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* from 9 October 1909 and the *National-Zeitung* from 2 November 1909, in BAB, R1501/6196.
152. *Aktenstücke zu den Verhandlungen des Reichstags 1909/1910,* nr. 231: 1582; *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages*, *XII. Legislaturperiode,* 1275–78.
153. See the position paper of the *Gesellschaft* from 26 February 1910, in BAB, R1501/6198, 98.
154. See the article from *Soziale Praxis,* nr. 49, 1908, in BAB, R1501/6196, 119–20.
155. *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages*, *XII. Legislaturperiode,* 1271.
156. Ibid., 1271.
157. *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages, XII. Legislaturperiode,* 1278–80, 1283–84.
158. Ibid., 1280–83.
159. *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages, XII. Legislaturperiode,* 2894.
160. Uhlig, *Arbeit amtlich,* 216 (whose total number of offices differs from that in Faust), estimates that from 1910 to 1911, the number of commercial agencies dropped by more than 10 percent. While Faust provides no concrete evidence for his claim that the 1910 law did not significantly affect the overall number of placements (Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 50), Uhlig's data

for Stuttgart do suggest a dramatic change. From 1901 to 1909, the number of placements by commercial agencies had risen by more than 50 percent, from 7,105 to 10, 925. By 1913, they had fallen below the level of 1901, to 6,484. (Uhlig, *Arbeit amtlich,* 217). See also Brüchert-Schunk, *Städtische Sozialpolitik,* 122, for evidence of the law's significantly detrimental impact on the private agencies. Neither Faust nor Uhlig is able to make plausible their arguments that the success of the municipal offices, rather than the legal restrictions on the commercial agencies, should be regarded as the main reason for these developments.

161. Number calculated from figures in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 54, 1–55.

Chapter 2

Promoting a Skilled Workforce

*M*aintaining order and containing political conflict by means of public "organization" of the labor market was but one strand of the German project to optimize the workforce. Another one—institutionally anchored elsewhere and inspired by different ideas—aimed to create a high-skills workforce. As with public control of the labor market, these efforts began locally. They also coalesced around a guiding vision, in this case not that of organization, but of the independent, responsible worker and citizen. And, like the steps to bring the labor market under public control, the program of creating a high-skills workforce only subsequently became the focus of greater attention from Berlin authorities, though in this case a decade later, from 1900 to 1910.

For municipal authorities, social reformers, and interest groups in the late nineteenth century, Germany's rapid but uneven industrialization and tumultuous urban growth not only posed the challenge of helping people find work, any work, it also raised the question of what work they should go into, what kinds of workers, and even what kind of citizens, they should become. These changes were increasingly disrupting previous patterns of finding work and vocation. While migration and job changing earlier had been by no means unfamiliar phenomena,[1] in the pre-industrial age town or village, children usually had grown up in family-run businesses, including, of course, on farmsteads, or at least in neighborhoods small enough to give them some idea of their future work. The older paths to a vocation and position—following in the footsteps of the father or uncle, relying on local guilds—now became increasingly irrelevant. The new factories and industries produced their wares outside the ear- and eyeshot of households; the worlds of work and daily life increasingly became separated. Moreover, within

Notes for this section begin on page 62.

the factory walls, the number and variety of new jobs and vocations multiplied rapidly. The invention of new materials and products, technological progress, and the increasing division of labor in large-scale factories transformed many craft-based positions beyond recognition and created new ones, both skilled and unskilled. As a result, the choice of a particular line of work—whether through an apprenticeship in a vocation or paid labor—was itself increasingly haphazard. In the eyes of the reform-minded Central Association for the People's Welfare, which devoted its 1911 conference to vocational training:

> everything that appears necessary for an appropriate selection of a vocation and apprentice position is today to the greatest extent not considered and impossible to consider. Not only the disappearance of all tradition, but also the lack of any relationship to business life makes a vocational choice based on genuine inclination impossible…Thus it is chance that dominates everything.[2]

All too often, chance meant that young Germans chose unskilled work—which paid a wage immediately—over apprenticeships, whose rewards only accrued over time. Such decisions affected not only individual life chances, but also the nation's domestic politics and international standing.

Urban Reformers' Abiding Vision of a Deproletarianized Society

For some decades already, alarmed urban reformers had been at work trying not only to bring more order into vocational choice, but in particular also to steer young people away from unskilled work. The municipal concern described in the previous chapter to "organize" the labor market, especially for the unemployed or unskilled, was but one strand of local reform. Another strand centered on skilled work. While the urban reform movement would direct, over time, its attention and efforts to an ever-growing number of realms, vocation remained at the core of civic reform. What vision inspired their abiding commitment to the skilled worker? What concrete forms did it take?

Again, research on Frankfurt, one of the best studied Wilhelminian cities, gives us a sense of the German *Bürgertum's* vision of reform and role in improving the German workforce.[3] Frankfurt's reforms, like those at the national level, reflected a range of means and sustaining ideals, including top-down protection and guidance of the weak (for example, in the form of a city doctor or public supervision of wayward children) and, especially, the encouragement of economic democracy (i.e., industrial courts or parity-based labor offices). However, the city's middle-class leaders most insistently aspired to a society of economically independent citizens. Such wherewithal, in their eyes, formed the very bedrock of citizenship.

As early as the 1830s and 1840s, when debates about free trade became acute, a broad consensus had formed in the Frankfurt *Bürgertum* around a "mediating" policy—neither simply protectionist nor laissez-faire, but one of helping crafts-

men adapt to the new competition and incipient industrialization. A cooperative bank was set up to help with productivity-enhancing investments, but most of the attention went into educational measures coordinated by an "industrial association."[4] Throughout the second half of the century, various measures promoted "mechanization, specialization, and improved quality" among artisans and the small industry that dominated the city's economy.[5] From the 1890s, Frankfurt encouraged the adoption of the small electrical motor, which promised to level the playing field for small, independent producers.[6]

The Frankfurt *Bürgertum* applied their vision of fostering an economically independent citizenry very broadly—not only to craftsmen, but also as much as possible to the flood of unskilled industrial workers pouring into the booming city—and especially to future workers, i.e., schoolchildren. In addition to the measures geared generally to education,[7] Frankfurt reformers promoted vocational training in particular. The philanthropic organization Youth Welfare in 1888 began combining apprenticeship-placement with individual counseling.[8] In the same years, a decade before the reform pedagogue Georg Kerschensteiner raised the issue nationally, the city's continuation schools offered schoolchildren craft and drawing lessons, through which, it was hoped, they would gain insight into their own "endowments, inclinations, and abilities."[9] The city's children's nurseries followed suit.[10] Despite the city's financial constraints, its welfare office offered indigent families an annual sixty-mark stipend if they enrolled their sons in apprenticeships rather than putting them to work in unskilled positions.[11] In 1890, the city set up, alongside the already extant, privately run Polytechnic Association, an industrial continuation school, which boys could attend after finishing basic schooling at age fourteen. It was hoped that this institution would channel them away from unskilled work and into a *Beruf*. The Frankfurt reformers advocated skilled work as both good economic and good social policy to much broader audiences as well. When he was in the directorate of the Association of German Labor Exchanges, Karl Flesch, more consistently than any other member, pressed labor exchanges to expand beyond their usual clientele of unskilled workers, and into placing apprentices.[12]

Manfred Hettling's impressive study of *bürgerliche* political ideas in a city on the other end of the Reich, Breslau, suggests that a program built around the central importance of economic independence was not limited to Frankfurt.[13] In the Silesian city, whose economy and politics, much like Frankfurt's, was dominated by trade and small-scale industry and left-liberalism, "the individual *Bürger* was still the basic element of the *bürgerliche* social model even at the end of the [nineteenth] century," despite coming under increasing strain.[14] The Breslau *Bürgertum's* individualism "manifested itself in the suggested answers with which they wanted to respond to the social problems of individual groups." Though Hettling does not explore the social policies toward the working class, he suggests that in regard to craftsmen, at least, Breslauer middle classes, especially the dominant Left Liberals, advocated associations and improving education and training, much like in the city on the Main.[15]

These detailed case studies of particular cities suggest that, in parts of Imperial Germany, the old *Bürger* concern to preserve and foster individuals' economic independence, including even that of the incipient proletariat, survived into the early twentieth century. They offer clues to the motivations of urban reformers elsewhere, who were taking similar steps to educate and train young people. As early as the first decades of the nineteenth century, philanthropic and business circles in some German cities, particularly in the southwest, established polytechnic associations, which among other things offered practical training to youths just out of school. By the 1870s, some cities had converted these associations into public institutions. In the same decade, a few German cities and states even were making attendance at continuation schools mandatory.[16] In Prussia, the legal basis to make attendance obligatory was lacking. However, the Prussian Trade Ministry, drawing explicitly on southern German models,[17] became a powerful advocate of such schools. All German states witnessed a rapid expansion of the number of such schools and of their attendees between 1885 and 1910. Nowhere was the growth so rapid as in Prussia, however, as we will explore further below.

Many municipal officials and social reformers came to see industrial continuation schools and public labor exchanges by themselves as insufficient. Offering basic vocational schooling, even mandating it, and helping match adult workers to job openings, the reformers concluded, did not by themselves lead to high levels of skilled workers. Rather, experience suggested that the "free choice" of the youths in deciding what work or training to seek produced undesirable results. It led, according to participants at the 1911 conference on the apprenticeship system, already mentioned above, to vocation "by chance"[18] and the absolute predominance of "external economic influences."[19] Too many youths, lured by the prospect of earning money right away, became unskilled laborers. When they did choose an apprenticeship, it was often in a line of work that promised to provide them with fancy clothing or social prestige.[20] Due to such temptations and to the widespread ignorance of the working world, too few youths made a proper choice of a vocation, as the reformers saw it—one based on genuine inclination and hence likely to contribute to long-term individual prosperity and social stability.[21] Firmer guidance of vocational choice would be therefore necessary.

For nearly two decades, urban institutions and private associations already had been at work, attempting to correct the perceived flaws of free vocational choice. In many reformers' eyes, the schools were the natural site for vocational guidance. Schoolteachers, it was thought, could best evaluate the abilities and interests of their students and should point them toward a suitable vocation. School physicians could determine whether they had the physical aptitude for particular lines of work. Increasingly after 1900, boys' crafts class gained popularity as a means of familiarizing youths in school with materials and tools that they might use in a later vocation, so that they might make more informed vocational choices.

Besides the urban initiatives in places like Frankfurt, organizations within the burgeoning women's movement were pioneers. In 1898, the Association of German

Women (*Bund Deutscher Frauen*) operated an "information center for women's occupations" in Berlin, which, in 1907, expanded its activities to include what was now called, for the first time, "vocational counseling."[22] In 1903, Hanover's Protestant Women's Association opened a "Central Office for Job Placement for Educated Ladies" that also dispensed advice on vocational choice.[23]

Whereas schools and philanthropic associations pioneered efforts to influence vocational choice, public labor exchanges began to extend their activities to this field only after the turn of the century, and even then only haltingly. For the most part, they served unskilled workers, "calling them up" in the order in which they had registered. In part, they began to concern themselves with vocational choice because companies, strategically the most important "clients" of the offices, were beginning themselves to care more about selecting workers with particular profiles. Several public labor offices extended their concerns beyond simply matching adult workers to jobs and began to coordinate youth apprenticeship-placement centrally, first in Munich in 1902, then in Strassburg in 1905, and soon thereafter in other cities.[24] These urban examples soon inspired officials at the state level to establish the same institutions.[25] By the end of the decade (1908), the first city had taken a step beyond job and even apprenticeship-placement. In Halle, the director of the labor exchange operated what he termed a "vocational office," which drew on inputs from schools, businesses, and unions in order to administer "organized vocational choice."[26] By 1911, however, no other public *Arbeitsnachweis* had followed Halle's example. In a sign of the still inchoate situation, several of the social reformers at the conference of the Central Association for the People's Welfare in that year reacted coolly to the degree of centralization in Halle.[27] Still, they all agreed that one of the urgent tasks ahead was to apply "planned organization" to vocational choice.[28]

In the same years, both the journal *The Labor Market* and the national Association of Labor Exchanges expressed similar convictions about the desirability of guided vocational choice. Yet their steps in this direction were tentative. In 1910, several authors in *The Labor Market* called for "order-bringing activity in the choice of a vocation" or for "vocational advocates" in the labor exchanges.[29] Yet, until the end of 1913, the journal continued to discuss youth-related matters under the rubric of "apprenticeship exchanges," while "vocational counseling" only appeared on the margins. Similarly, the national Association of Labor Exchanges discussed "apprenticeship placement" at its 1910 meeting—but not, however, vocational counseling. The latter was to be the topic of the conference scheduled for the fall of 1914. The events of that year overtook the plan, but the Association's new guidelines in 1915 described "apprenticeship exchange and vocational counseling" as being worthy of advancement through the labor exchanges.[30] Thus, the Labor Offices took tentative steps to expand their services beyond their main clientele, the unskilled.

On the eve of the war, a variety of parties contemplated subjecting vocational choice to greater "organization." For the urban reformers behind these efforts, steering as many youths as possible into skilled work would contribute to middle-

class stability in a rapidly changing society. However, no one as yet had taken decisive action on a national scale.

"Help to Self-Help"

These efforts by municipal reformers and national lobbying groups would have been less consequential if they had not converged with new thinking in other camps about the social problem. Just as the idea of "organization" attracted a broad coalition of social reformers and state officials, an emphasis on helping workers help themselves within a broadly capitalist framework, and especially helping them to some kind of independence, gained ground in important quarters around 1900. The progressive Catholic social reform movement and Protestant reformers not only lent support to workers' *collective* self-help in the form of unions and economic democracy, as discussed in the previous chapter. Less conspicuously, but nonetheless significantly, they also backed efforts to encourage economically independent *individual* workers. In contrast to *Staatshilfe* and collective self-help, this strand of helping individuals help themselves has been overlooked in the literature. After 1900, these religiously inspired movements, especially the Catholic one, would join hands with the Prussian Trade Ministry to pioneer the Prussian, and then German, creation of a high-skills workforce.

In Protestant thought, of course, the independent individual retained a very central position.[31] But also among the progressive Rhineland Catholics, the new social thinking represented by Georg von Hertling and Franz Hitze could push the redefinition of solidarity and subsidiarity so far that it became a kind of incipient Christian liberalism.[32] For both Protestants and Catholics, the common goals of "deproletarianization" and the creation of responsible, more independent workers and the common means of "self-help" could point, among other measures, toward steps to encourage individual improvement. The Protestant pastor Friedrich Naumann and the Catholic social reform politician Karl Trimborn exemplified the complex ways in which individualistic strands were often interwoven with projects of collective (and even state) help. Naumann not only propagated economic democracy in the form of strong unions and constitutional factories, but, in 1907, he also helped establish the *Werkbund,* an organization dedicated to preserving and advancing "quality work," which, it was hoped, would restore individuals' "joy in work."[33] Likewise, Trimborn was pivotal in promoting the Center Party's agenda of economic democracy, for example, pressing the government in 1904 on its plans in regard to new union laws and chambers of labor.[34] In precisely the same years, however, a legislative initiative by Trimborn also gave the Prussian Trade Ministry the opportunity to become the pacesetter of efforts to create a high-skills workforce (as we will see below). These individualistic strands within both the Protestant and Catholic social reform circles would significantly augment the abiding urban vision of a deproletarianized society of economically independent *Bürger.*

The Prussian Trade Ministry's Program to Create a High-Skills Workforce

Vocational counseling itself did not undergo the kind of national regulation before the war that job placement did in the 1910 Job Placement law. However, especially after the turn of the century, the Prussian Ministry of Trade took the lead in promoting a Prussian, and de facto a national, policy of creating a high-skills workforce. If the Reich Interior Ministry transposed urban reformers' concern for achieving stability through neutral control to the national stage, the Prussian Trade Ministry did the same for their emphasis on achieving stability through worker improvement. Even more than social stability, however, the Trade Ministry aimed with its program of creating a high-skills workforce to strengthen the country's economy in an era of growing global competition.

Germany's efforts to respond to late-nineteenth century globalization by improving its workforce have remained largely unrecognized in the scholarly literature. Attention has focused instead on the country's defensive recourse to protectionist tariffs.[35] It is time to correct this imbalance. Understanding the Trade Ministry's sustained program of improving the workforce requires a revision of our thinking about the Reich and Prussian governments' industrial policies, especially those regarding *Handwerk.*

According to *Sonderweg* historians of the 1960s and 1970s, landed interests (*Junkers*) and heavy industrialists tried to shore up their hold on power by appealing to the backward-looking, defensive strata of shopkeepers and craftsmen. The concessions to this so-called old *Mittelstand,* culminating in the 1897 restoration of modified guilds, fit into this defensive political strategy. Much scholarship of the past three decades has cast doubt on these claims. Studies have shown convincingly that the crafts sector was far more heterogeneous than earlier thought, with many segments surviving and even thriving amidst growing industry. Its moderate strand no longer rejected the trend toward large-scale capitalism, but wanted to adapt to it. Likewise, the ostensible wire-pullers of policy, the *Junkers* and heavy industrialists, were not nearly as united as once claimed.[36] The state itself, other scholars have demonstrated, was hardly the mere instrument of interest groups; ministers and bureaucrats pursued policies for multiple reasons, including what they believed was in the interest of a modernizing, powerful state.[37] David Blackbourn expresses the current revisionist synthesis when he writes that "[i]f there is a red thread that runs through state policy, it is … the recognition that a modern, efficient industry was indispensable for a successful great power." In this context, *Mittelstandspolitik,* including measures to shore up craftsmen, was "an exercise in rhetoric, not a policy designed to succeed."[38]

Recent work, however, suggests that this last claim about Germany's *Mittelstandspolitik* itself now stands in need of revision. A number of scholars have made a convincing case that at least part of the policy toward the crafts sector was not only designed to succeed, but in fact did succeed.[39] This reconceptualization of the Kaiserreich's economic policy draws, in turn, on the recently growing ap-

preciation of the varieties of capitalism and, in particular, of the incentives problems connected with the creation of a high-skills workforce.[40] In the following pages, we build upon these arguments to grasp the purpose behind the Prussian Trade Ministry's workforce policies.

The Trade Ministry's efforts to improve worker quality had unfolded, since the 1880s, against the backdrop of overall Reich and Prussian policy on the "labor question," which initially focused on other priorities.[41] In the 1880s, when Bismarck himself headed the Prussian Trade Ministry, Germany's pioneering social insurance programs were the dominant concern. During the "New Course" of the early 1890s, which represented a response to the great miners' strike of 1889 and generally the failure of repressive policy to hamstring the SPD, Trade Minister Berlepsch concentrated on augmenting labor protection regulations and introducing labor courts.[42]

Yet alongside these more openly political measures, from the mid 1880s onward, the Prussian Trade Ministry showed a growing interest in vocational training, schooling, and counseling. The disastrous reception of German products at the 1876 World's Fair in Philadelphia—where the Berlin engineering professor Franz Reuleaux famously judged many of them to be "cheap and shoddy"—helped to crystallize growing worries about the country's competitiveness vis-à-vis the US and other European powers. This stimulated a discussion already underway among social reformers about improving worker training, as discussed earlier. More concretely, concerns about Germany's economic, and ultimately strategic, power prompted the Trade Ministry in 1884 to wrest control over the state's Industrial Continuation Schools from the Education Ministry.[43] Practical training, rather than general learning, was henceforth to be the schools' focus.[44] If a concern for *die gute Polizei* and domestic order represented one stand of Cameralist thought, this emphasis on developing the country's resources represented another.

In these decades, the Prussian Trade Ministry became the national pacesetter of the schools' expansion. The state's expenditures on vocational schooling increased twenty-fold between 1880 and 1905.[45] The number of Prussian industrial continuation schools more than tripled, rising from 664 in 1885 to 2,162 in 1910, and the number of enrollees increased six-fold, from 58,400 to 352,000. By comparison, the number of students in Bavaria and Wurttemberg roughly doubled in the same period.[46] Though the schools' curricula initially included a variety of subjects, over time the schools focused increasingly on their main task: giving their charges practical training that could prepare them for a skilled trade.[47]

From the mid 1890s onward, after the end of Berlepsch's "New Course," the Trade Ministry made the vocational training system its top priority,[48] at precisely the same moment when Prussian and Reich authorities began to turn to the regulation of the labor market. Even more than in the previous decade, concerns about German industry's competitive position with other countries, including Japan, and social Darwinian thought provided a major spur to increased state activity in this field.[49] A major step occurred with the revision of the industrial code

in 1897, which reestablished modified craft guilds. For *Sonderweg* historians, this piece of legislation epitomized the reactionary, politically motivated nature of German *Mittelstandspolitik,* and, even for revisionists such as David Blackbourn, it only amounted to political gesturing meant to mollify the crafts sector, but not to address any real economic problems.[50] As Hal Hansen has shown, however, an appreciation of the incentives problems connected with any worker training scheme allows one to see the 1897 legislation in a completely new light.[51] Contrary to appearances, the reestablishment of modernized guilds belonged, at least in part, to a liberal economic strategy on the part of a German state intent on creating a high-skills workforce.

At the root of the "apprenticeship crisis" that had plagued *Handwerk* since the 1870s was an incentives problem. The German Empire's liberal industrial code of 1871 had abolished the guilds, which, while already in decline, had nonetheless still regulated apprenticeships and overseen certification of masters, however inadequately. In the absence of any authority to retain their apprentices at the end of their training period, masters were now even more likely than before to exploit their charges as cheap labor; with ever greater frequency, apprentices, seeing few prospects in being trained and being tempted by the initially higher wages and less onerous supervision in large industry, broke their contracts early; and, industrial employers had little way of judging the skills of those they hired away from *Handwerk.* As this game-theory informed approach teaches us, the incentive problems handicapping German vocational training in the first decades of the Kaiserreich were problems of any liberalized labor market.

The 1897 legislation began to address precisely these problems. Less than three decades after having been abolished, a modified form of the handicraft guild was reestablished at the regional level throughout Germany. Drawing on models in the southwest German states of Baden and Württemberg, these modernized guilds could establish standards for training, supervise apprenticeships and new apprenticeship contracts, and certify the results of qualifying exams. The legislation was meant not to protect *Handwerk* from competition, but rather to give artisans a chance of succeeding *in* the market. The system of standardized certification gave youths and handicraft masters the incentive to engage in vocational training. For the former, the certificates were portable, and hence valuable, attestations of the skills they had acquired. For the masters, the certificate system, coupled with new apprenticeship contracts, meant that they could count on their apprentices not running away and that, even if they could not retain them after their exams, any journeymen they hired from outside would have a similar level of training. The only apparently illiberal restoration of guilds thus provided a means of partly overcoming the disincentives to train and be trained inherent in a completely liberalized labor market.[52]

Yet if this model of collectively certifying training provided a blueprint for the future of the entire German vocational system, its realization in 1897 was only a partial success. The law established a patchwork of regional guilds, but no national framework, for agreeing on and enforcing collective training standards.

Over the subsequent years, the restored bodies made efforts to forge ever-broader associations, but this was slow going. A much more significant limitation of the 1897 reforms, however, was the fact that they applied only to handicrafts and not to industry. The main employer of skilled labor and the trainer, by 1907, of fully one-third of all skilled workers[53] played no role in collectively setting and certifying skill levels. This was partly due to the mistrust between handicrafts and industry,[54] and partly to industry's ambivalence about the future role of the skilled worker (see below). These limitations, however, should not obscure the 1897 legislation's real successes. In the short term, it began to alleviate the "apprenticeship crisis" in *Handwerk.* In the long term, the 1897 legislation's certification procedures would provide a model for a general solution to the incentives problem of creating a high-skills workforce, one that would be implemented starting in the late 1920s.

The revival of the guilds in the modified industrial code hardly exhausted Prussian/German efforts to create a high-skills workforce. The next decade and a half witnessed a sharp rise in the activities of the Prussian Trade Ministry, even as the disputes over training and youths, between crafts and industry, and within the Prussian government grew fiercer. The founding of a Prussian State Industrial Office (*Landesgewerbeamt,* LGA) in 1905 was a milestone, for the LGA quickly became the general staff coordinating efforts to develop a skilled workforce. Both the origins of the LGA, which stemmed from an initiative of the ostensibly conservative Center Party, and its progressive staff and policies compel a further revision of our thinking about the Prussian and German *Mittelstandspolitik.* They demonstrate both the surprising breadth of support for these policies across the political spectrum and their basic orientation to the market.

A motion by the Center Party's Karl Trimborn gave the initial impulse for setting up the Industrial Office. In the Prussian Lower House in 1902, he proposed the "systematic encouragement of small business by a central state organ."[55] Trimborn's purpose was neither politically reactionary nor merely rhetorical. Rather, he hoped to allow *Handwerk* and small industrial firms to compete with large-scale industry, to encourage them "to adapt as much as possible to the demands of modern business ways."[56] Pointing to the successes of such an office and the "new style of industrial policy" in Austria since 1892, Trimborn insisted that a central agency was needed to systematize the previously disparate programs and to develop new initiatives. Of special importance were various steps to encourage craftsmen to introduce machinery into their shops, the pooling of resources in cooperatives, and measures to improve vocational training. Although there were differences of opinion over details, Trimborn's proposal garnered an unusually wide spectrum of support. All of the parties in the parliament approved of the thrust of Trimborn's ideas, as did the Trade Minister, who promised to personally attend the commission meetings tasked with working out the particulars.

The Prussian State Industrial Office that emerged three years later under the aegis of the Trade Ministry aimed to promote a "generation that thanks to proper education is technically and theoretically, productively and commercially well

developed. It must be capable, and place great confidence in itself and its abilities, and remain aware of the limits of its capacity to compete with large-scale producers."[57] As Trimborn had envisaged, the LGA brought focus and heightened attention to the Prussian state's efforts to improve the training of both young and established workers, including responsibility for continuation schools of various kinds, industrial exhibitions, vocational training—and eventually vocational counseling.

In its choice of personnel for the LGA, the Trade Ministry proved to have an eye for exceptionally capable men who combined energy, vision, and (for the most part) political sensibility.[58] Nor did it shy from controversy in pursuit of its goal of modernizing *Handwerk.* The LGA's staff included Hermann Muthesius, a prominent engineer-architect who had helped to found the *Werkbund.*[59] In an indication of the LGA's overall approach, Muthesius commented in an article on one branch of industry, that Germany needed "to have mass furniture of high quality and great simplicity, exactly as a well organized machine production could achieve."[60] When some craft organizations launched a loud campaign against Muthesius, accusing him of demeaning the "perfectly justified, healthy, conservative element in *Handwerk,*"[61] the LGA and the Trade Minister personally backed the reformer.[62] In the two decades between the LGA's founding in 1905 and the crucial steps in the mid 1920s to create a nationwide vocational training system, the Prussian office would play a decisive role. Even as ministers, Reichstag coalitions, and regimes changed, the men of the LGA—capable, committed to promoting a high-skills workforce, and with an esprit de corps—provided essential continuity.[63] Their expertise, as well as that of other non-political, mid-level officials, often "far exceeded that of ministers and deputy ministers," granting them "an extraordinarily strong influence."[64]

Despite *Handwerk*'s centrality in the origins of the LGA, the new office and the Trade Ministry concerned themselves with worker training in the broadest terms. When disputes over training arose in the following years between handicrafts and industry, the Trade Ministry intervened repeatedly, coaxing the two sides to work together.[65]

By the second half of the decade, pressure was growing for more decisive steps in Prussia's policy toward young workers. In 1906, the Trade Ministry was concerned enough about the supply and movement of skilled workers between *Handwerk* and industry to conduct a sample survey of skilled workers in industry.[66] The following year's comprehensive occupational survey, the first since 1895, revealed the dramatic changes Germany's rapid industrialization was causing in the workforce, especially the rising numbers of unskilled and female workers.[67] The percentage of skilled *Facharbeiter* had declined from 65 to 58 percent.[68] At the same time, the highest levels of Prussian government were taking a greater interest in the political implications of the "youth question." Alarmed by the SPD's increasing inroads among the young, but rejecting repressive measures, Prussian Minister President Bülow and Interior Minister Bethman-Hollweg called on their cabinet colleagues in late 1907 to develop a "positive" youth cultivation policy.[69]

How, precisely, to achieve this general aim became the object of bitter debate within the Prussian government over the following three years. On the one side, conservatives in the Culture, Interior, and War Ministries wanted to imbue the young with patriotism and religious values, inoculating them against the allures of socialism. To this end, they proposed making continuation schools mandatory and shifting their focus from practical training to political and moral indoctrination. Opposing this group were the Ministers of Trade and Agriculture. While they agreed that socialism must be combated, they insisted that the best way to do this was indirectly, by giving young people a stake in society. The schools' emphasis should be on "education for proficiency, for pleasure in productive work, and for sympathy for the importance of our … polity, the traditions and institutions of which give every citizen a secure existence and the opportunity freely to exercise his creative abilities."[70] The values learned by training for skilled work—"industry, care, conscientiousness, perseverance, attention to detail, honesty, patience self-discipline, devotion to a clear goal standing outside ourselves"[71]—would also constitute a form, indeed the best form, of "citizenship education," Trade Minister Reinhold Sydow argued.[72] By encouraging individual economic development, one would strengthen social stability. Moreover, economic success per se, and not political education, was the most important purpose of these schools. "[O]ur commerce, our artisanate, and our industry" all depended on the practical training the continuation schools provided.[73]

This clash within the Prussian government prompted the Trade Ministry to become even more active in advancing its own vision of political order and economic progress. Partly in response to the conservatives' charge that the continuation schools were not reaching enough young people, the Trade Ministry in 1907 proposed a bill compelling all municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants to establish compulsory institutions. Although disagreement over conservatives' demands that these schools include more religious instruction ultimately scuttled the bill in 1911, the Trade Ministry continued with its piecemeal efforts to extend vocational schooling.[74] It also played a catalytic role in industry's first steps to organize its own vocational training, as we will see below.

The Trade Ministry's encouragement of a high-skills workforce, as reflected in such measures as the creation of certification procedures, the establishment of an energetic State Industrial Office, and the cooperation with industry, also extended to vocational counseling. Since the turn of the century, the grassroots labor exchange movement and social reformers had discussed influencing young people's choice of work and had even taken a few tentative steps in this direction. After 1900, several municipal, and subsequently state, labor offices had expanded their efforts to include apprenticeship placement, and at least one had begun to collect information from schools, employers, and unions for the sake of "organized vocational choice." Within the Prussian Association of Labor Exchanges, the Frankfurt social reformer Karl Flesch consistently prompted the offices to concern themselves with skilled workers, and hence vocational choice. Women's groups also had set up offices to counsel girls on future vocations.

By 1910, the Prussian Trade Ministry began to lend official encouragement to such activities. In a major programmatic article, the high-ranking official Alfred Kühne made the case for planned vocational counseling and placement. The proper choice of a vocation had important consequences for the individual—for his "joy in work and fortune in life"—but even more so it had "great macroeconomic significance."[75] Above all, the choice separated the unskilled and the skilled. Of the former—who composed 31 percent of the boys between fourteen and eighteen years old in industry and 44 percent in commerce, and 52 percent and 48 percent respectively, of girls of the same age—there were "many, far more than one would wish for a healthy national education." The unskilled faced the greatest risks: they lacked the "salutary effects of a regular vocational education"; they spent their earnings on morally dubious entertainments such as "alcohol, dancing, cinema, smutty literature, and worse"; all too easily, they could find themselves on a slippery slope downward and end up in reform school. And it was not only the unskilled who suffered from a lack of proper vocational counseling. Those who overestimated the availability or attractiveness of office work, and those who were misled by the overly pessimistic prognoses for *Handwerk*, could also benefit from informed choice. Such matters, Kühne continued, had a profound impact on the country's economic success: "The competitiveness, the future of Germany's industry depends on superior quality, and this in turn presupposes a well-trained workforce." This programmatic article suggested the close linkage, in the eyes of the Trade Ministry, between the challenges of domestic social order and national economic success.

Germany therefore must not let the number of unskilled workers increase even more, Kühne continued. To this end, the Trade Ministry welcomed contributions from several sources. Parents must assume greater responsibility; school doctors and teachers had a role to play, as did, for the unskilled, the continuation schools. Yet none of these resources promised the comprehensive and concentrated guidance that the Trade Ministry representative advocated. For that, "an office is necessary that is capable of judging the prospects of particular vocations and the labor market and that if possible can also place them in apprenticeships and work." In fact, such offices existed already, in the form of the municipal labor offices organized on a parity basis in such southern German cities as Munich and Strassburg. In the Bavarian capital, for example, the labor office and teachers consulted; while the teachers invited the children and parents to the school to talk about the importance of the matter, the labor office sent families surveys to be filled out by them and the teachers. The city's doctors would determine whether the children were suitable for various skilled professions. Meanwhile, the labor office would collect lists of open apprenticeships and have the craft guild vouch for the trustworthiness of the firms. This kind of coordination by the southern German labor exchanges, Kühne suggested, was "immediately exemplary."

The Prussian official's endorsement of a centrally organized vocational counseling and placement office anticipated the institutional framework that would

become reality after World War I. His concerns also adumbrated a telling shift in thinking among advocates of a skilled workforce, a partial blending of the "organizational" and individual improvement strands. Namely, it was no accident that while justifying the program primarily in terms of Germany's economic vitality, Kühne emphasized the necessarily comprehensive nature of vocational counseling and steering. National goals, it seemed, justified more compulsory measures. It would be a short step to the Trade Ministry's advocacy toward the end of the war of legally binding "complete inclusion" for a national system of vocational counseling and training.

In 1910, however, attention still focused on local offices. Furthermore, the appreciation of public labor exchanges' importance did not prevent the Trade Ministry from also pursuing other avenues toward its goal of a high-skills workforce. Thus, later in the same year, Kühne strongly encouraged the industrialists organized in the German Committee on Technical Education (see below) to systematize vocational choice, as *Handwerk* was beginning to do, but he did not specify the means.[76] By the eve of the Great War, however, advocates of publicly organized vocational counseling had taken the first, tentative steps to coordinate and mobilize support for their plans. In 1913, the quasi-public, reform-minded Central Association for the People's Welfare founded a German Committee on Vocational Counseling, which brought together many important advocates of public vocational counseling, including industrialists, craftsmen, social and pedagogical reformers, as well as a representative of the Prussian Trade Ministry. Though the committee's work would be cut short by the outbreak of the war, the chairman, Johannes Altenrath, who was also director of the Central Association, delineated its consensus, thereby anticipating later developments:

> Today one strives for a planned organization of vocational counseling and placement primarily in the interest of the youths. They should be placed whenever possible in beginning positions and apprenticeships that accord with their abilities and inclinations and in which they can obtain an education and vocational training matching their age and natures. On the other side, however, general economic considerations are also decisive. The various branches of industry should receive an appropriate selection of new workers necessary for the increase of their productivity.[77]

Rationalization versus Quality Production: The Ambiguous Future of German Industry

The success of these government programs to keep the number of unskilled workers as low as possible and create a broad class of skilled workers depended on the cooperation (or at least tolerance) of important social actors, including *Handwerk,* the unions, and industry. The crafts movement had, of course, long clamored for public support. The unions, especially the socialist Free Trade Union, with their eye on political matters such as strike laws and collective bargaining

arrangements, tended to overlook vocational training until the Weimar period.[78] Above all, if Germany's rapidly growing industry did not commit itself to the skilled *Facharbeiter,* no amount of public support would matter in the end. In the decades before the outbreak of the Great War, however, considerable ambivalence about its future production methods and kind of workforce characterized German industry. Rapidly evolving labor demographics, mounting domestic political and international economic challenges, and—crucially—the availability of alternative models of industrial production undercut consensus. In regard to their workforce and production methods, German industrialists were, to use Charles Sabel's and Jonathan Zeitlin's distinction,[79] not merely maximizing, but also strategizing actors—they did not simply accept the institutional environment as it was, but tried to shape it as well.

The source and nature of the industrial workforce had not been a particularly salient problem during the first decades of the Kaiserreich. In matters of vocational training—as in all economic areas—the liberal 1869/1871 Trade Regulations established the legal framework for all subsequent developments in the Kaiserreich (and, indeed, well beyond 1918). The regulations had abolished the guilds, which had previously controlled vocational training and certification, and left these matters to the free play of market forces. In the following decades, both the lack of an overarching legal framework for vocational training and the piecemeal attempts to address perceived detrimental effects of the same shaped the course of German employers' policies on worker training.

Despite the abolition of guilds and all regulations pertaining to apprenticeships, craft masters continued to train the vast bulk of the German economy's skilled workers—including those required by the rapidly expanding industrial sector. Industrial firms, after all, had themselves often grown from handicrafts roots and since then had continued to rely on the training provided in smaller workshops; industrial production techniques and those techniques craftsmen could teach still largely overlapped, at least at first. Worker protection laws also contributed to industry's reluctance to train its own workers: an 1878 statute limiting the working hours of youths meant that large-scale manufacturers, in whose factories instruction was more clearly separated from production, would have to pay more dearly for the lost productivity.[80] Another, perhaps more serious, reason militating against widespread worker training by industrial firms was the possibility that other firms would poach skilled workers, thus depriving the original firm of its investment. *Handwerk* did not face the problem of lost investments in nearly the same degree, as handicrafts firms could integrate instruction and production to a far greater extent than could industry, and as their small size and still relatively intimate setting allowed the masters to bind at least a minimum number of apprentices to them. As the few studies of an industrial firm's production/labor market strategies in this period have shown, companies cared a great deal about preserving a *stable* core of skilled workers[81]—a fact which made them even more leery of losing workers they themselves had trained.

In the 1870s, when an ostensible "apprenticeship crisis" occupied the educated public,[82] at least some manufacturers took part in discussions about revamping training.[83] The discussion of the crisis focused not only on the complaints of *Handwerk* masters, who lamented their loss of authority over their trainees since 1869/71, but more generally on recent and alarming signs that the quality of German products had fallen behind that of other nations.[84] In the following decade, several of the largest industrial companies established their own worker training facilities and programs, when the growing divergence between craft and industrial production methods made the transition between the two increasingly difficult.[85] Still, firms such as Krupp, Bosch, and Siemens were exceptional in starting their own training programs before the 1890s.

As with the struggles over control of the labor market and the Prussian program to develop a high-skills workforce, the return of rapid and sustained economic growth in the mid 1890s marked a turning point here as well. Sporadic and desultory interest in the kinds of workers industry needed gave way to more sustained—though by no means harmonious—attention. The often explosive growth of new industries and firms—Siemens' workforce alone increased by 400 percent in the decade after 1895[86]—raised questions about how the new workers were to be integrated into increasingly massive production facilities, how they were to be trained and to work, and who would supervise them. If previously hiring the sons of employees allowed firms to count on a disciplined core workforce,[87] the influx of immigrants from Germany's rural reservoirs made this increasingly difficult. The sheer growth of German industry began to turn a surplus of labor into a deficit. In the two and a half decades before World War I, unemployment averaged 2.6 percent.[88] Even with the infusion of cheap, largely Polish foreign labor, employers could no longer count on a virtually unlimited pool of cheap labor. Economic good times and the resulting low levels of unemployment contributed to a much more rapid turnover of the workforce, especially among the unskilled, but also among trained workers looking to move up.[89] Such poaching between employers significantly raised the costs of worker training. The increased contacts between workers in different firms and regions could also add to employers' political headaches, by paving the way for unionization.[90] In light of both the economic problem of screening and retaining capable workers and the political one of keeping unions out, employers at their inaugural job placement conference in 1901 identified a "well-trained, reliable, and capable labor force that is as little subject to fluctuation as possible, as an absolute necessity of an industrial economy."[91]

The pressure to make better use of the workforce came not only from these domestic changes, but also from an increasingly competitive international environment. If German manufacturers had in the meantime restored their reputation damaged by the devastating critiques of their shoddy work made at the 1876 World's Fair, they now faced an array of competitors, especially from the US, in precisely the key areas of the "second industrial revolution": electronics,

chemicals, and machine tools. In the 1890s and 1900s, the pressure from foreign competitors became considerably fiercer. In particular, US firms such as General Electric and Westinghouse in the electrical industry, DuPont in chemicals, and a host of smaller firms in machine tools began to threaten German companies' positions domestically and in world trade.[92] While the German electrical giants Siemens and AEG, for example, had dominated world sales into the 1890s without serious challenge, by 1913, US companies nearly had matched their output.[93] American innovations in mass production threatened German quality production with cheap prices (and sufficient quality). It also appeared to offer some German manufacturers an attractive model of their own future.

In the two decades before World War I, no consensus response to these challenges emerged. The 1897 reconstitution of craft guilds, whose certification procedures would provide a general model after World War I for solving the incentives problem of worker training, in the short-term mobilized parts of manufacturing industry, but it also divided it. The legal privileging of *Handwerk* led immediately to demands for equal treatment of the growing number of workers trained by industry. However, the issue revealed divisions among industrialists about how equal access should be guaranteed, and even whether it mattered. As representatives of the General Association of Metal Producers and of the Association of German Machine-Builders reported with regret in March 1914, "currently the views within industry on the usefulness and organizational form of exams [equivalent to those in *Handwerk*] are still far apart."[94]

It was no accident that machine-producing and metal-working firms stood at the forefront of efforts to institutionalize industrial training of skilled workers. By their very nature, these firms were closer to crafts: more dependent on individualized work and less capable of standardized mass production. After 1900, the number of engineering companies maintaining their own training workshops and company schools for apprentices, though still only a small minority, also grew rapidly.[95] By 1907, while *Handwerk* still trained the bulk of all apprentices, industry's share had already risen to a third.[96]

More important in the long-term than these steps by individual companies was the effort to create common standards for worker training, even in the absence of a legal framework. Under the prodding of the Prussian Trade Ministry, the Association of German Engineers (VDI), the Machine-Builders Association, and others in 1908 established the *Deutsche Auschuss für technisches Schulwesen* (DATSCH)—the German Committee on Technical Education.[97] Though founded for the purpose of establishing and disseminating uniform norms for engineers' education, DATSCH's purview quickly expanded to include the entire vocational training system. Anton Rieppel and Fritz Frölich, directors of the large engineering firm MAN and longtime advocates of industry's vocational training, were among the most forceful promoters of a broader mandate.[98] By the fall of 1909, DATSCH had put apprenticeship training on its agenda.[99] One of its main goals was to agree on clear vocational descriptions and uniform training methods. In this program to create uniform standards for skilled workers lay the origins

of the German vocational system as it took shape after 1925. The very first of DATSCH's "guiding principles" from 1912 expressed the nature and significance of what the Association now perceived as its main task, as well its motivation:

> The mechanical industry is compelled to an ever greater degree, especially as a result of competition with foreign [industry], to perform high-value work. This requires constant progress in the education and training of young skilled workers. For this reason, it is one of the most important tasks of industry to ensure good training of a sufficient number of apprentices and to secure its due influence over the shaping of apprentice training. An orderly apprentice training also promotes the education of the worker as national citizen.[100]

As pioneering as DATSCH's efforts to coordinate industry's own training program would later prove to be, however, for the time being they faced serious obstacles. Not only did DATSCH's recommendations lack legal standing, but outside of the machine-building industry, the issue of worker training continued to find little resonance. A survey conducted for the industrial umbrella organization CVDI in 1913 produced:

> very meager results … Industry generally, except for the engineering branch, where the question has already been thoroughly discussed, is still cool to the whole thing and is reluctant to commit itself by expressing a [public] opinion before having come to its own judgment … The majority of respondents are of the view that there are enough apprentices in industry, and that these apprentices are well trained.[101]

DATSCH's program to promote and systematize industrial training had to overcome more than mere apathy, however. A rival view of Germany's industrial future challenged it, a vision of rationalization drawing largely on US technology and principles. During the nineteenth century, US ingenuity and conditions—a vast middle class with unusually homogeneous consumer tastes, seemingly unlimited natural resources, a scarce supply of skilled labor, and the influx of millions of unskilled immigrants—helped to spawn an "American system" of mass production.[102] Quickly trained workers used single-purpose machines to produce interchangeable parts that were then combined into cheap, standardized goods for a mass market. In the other rapidly industrializing power—Germany—manufacturers facing similar challenges of shortages of skilled workers and an abundance of the unskilled began employing US special machines in incipient mass consumer industries such as sewing machines and bicycles.[103] Even more resolutely, however, they embraced the spirit of the US innovations. A comment by the head of Siemens reflected this euphoria as early as the 1870s, even in an industry that had always had a high proportion of skilled workers:

> We have … assiduously been attempting since a year to make everything, as the Americans do, with special machines … It has worked out brilliantly … Now we are all convinced that our future salvation lies in the application of the American work-methods and that we have to change our entire business practices accordingly.[104]

In practice, the vision of introducing "American methods" in all spheres proved to be anything but easy to implement. Some of the reasons included: the relatively low number, and the specialized wishes, of the customers—especially for large electrical motors and machine tools; the high cost of the new machines; the rising cost of human labor, especially after the turn of the century; resistance by skilled craftsmen; and difficulties in establishing industry-wide norms.[105]

These problems of implementation hardly dimmed the tantalizing promise embodied in the American methods, especially after further technical innovations and intellectual-programmatic systematizing after 1900. US engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor's invention of methods for more precisely cutting steel significantly expanded the possibilities for using interchangeable parts in even complex products. US companies also introduced "norming offices" to coordinate centrally the division of labor. The intellectual synthesis and apotheosis of the drive for efficiency appeared in the decade before World War I with Taylor's advocacy of "scientific management." His books *Shop Management* (1900) and *The Principles of Scientific Management*[106] (1911) presented an enticing vision of a comprehensively rationalized system of production.[107] A central bureau, after having determined the "one best way" to carry out work processes, should distribute raw materials, tools, and workers in the most efficient manner.

Enterprising German engineers, such as Georg Schlesinger of the Ludwig Löwe machine-tool company, became the prophets of Taylor's gospel of efficiency through centralized, systematic control. Schlesinger's journal *Workshop Technology (Werkstattstechnik),* launched in 1907—a year before the founding of DATSCH—became a crucial medium for spreading new ideas about technology, norming, and factory organization.[108] In the years before World War I, Schlesinger and like-minded engineers enthusiastically promoted Taylor's ideas about "scientific management," even if little as yet was implemented.[109]

German industrialists' and engineers' growing enthusiasm for "scientific management" could lead easily to a denigration of the "human factor" in production. Their appreciation of the material and organizational components of company success—"on the cutting edge of steel," Schlesinger had aphorized in 1911, "sit the dividends"[110]—could induce the engineers to view the worker as a secondary or even tertiary element, one which had to be fitted to the physical capital as best as possible—and even himself somehow needed to be selected or shaped to fit a norm.[111]

Yet the two aspects—scientific management and investment in the workers—were not necessarily mutually exclusive. In a seeming paradox, Schlesinger's company, Ludwig Löwe, was also one of the pioneers of industrial vocational training, having been one of the founding members of DATSCH. Schlesinger's journal, *Workshop Technology,* sheds light on this apparent contradiction. In his introduction to the new journal, Schlesinger paid tribute to the intermeshing of all of the elements, including workers, which could contribute to "the best, fastest, and cheapest" work:

> The highest degree of work capacity is reached when people who are capable, enjoying their labor, and satisfied work in purposefully designed rooms at the best machines with superior tools and equipment; in rooms that correspond to the kind of work and the work process of a particular object, that have the appropriate cranes inside and sufficient connections between them and that guarantee company officials easy supervision.[112]

In the general terms of Schlesinger's introduction, then, there was no apparent conflict between the claims of efficient central management and a skilled workforce. Yet the content of *Workshop Technology* revealed a far different picture. Despite Schlesinger's promise to provide "a complete picture of the workshops in their essential parts, as we described them above," the engineers who wrote the vast bulk of the contributions focused almost exclusively on technical and organizational—that is, on Taylorist—questions.[113] In this emphasis, despite the initial promise of balance, was reflected the strong temptation to bring all matters under centralized control. Schlesinger and the Ludwig Löwe Company, pioneers of both worker training and "scientific management," personified German industry's ambivalence in the early twentieth century about its future production methods and workforce needs. As Gary Herrigel puts it, in the decades before the war, "there was tremendous ambiguity concerning the kind of production strategy producers seemed to be pursuing, even within individual firms."[114]

The incipient program to create a high-skilled German workforce did not achieve the clear resolution that the efforts to organize the labor market did with the 1910 Job Placement law. Before the war, the pressures to reach a solution in regard to worker training were weaker than they were in the realm of public order, where the stakes were so high. The threat of foreign economic competition still seemed less salient, especially during economic boom times, than that coming from strikes, lockouts, and agricultural interest groups' protests.[115] A skilled workforce's contribution to domestic stability, as well as to economic vitality, would manifest itself only over years, if not decades. On the other hand, the restriction of private and partisan job placement to the benefit of public offices could produce immediate effects, as we saw in the previous chapter.

Additionally, within the Prussian administration there was not yet a consensus about the purpose of youth education. The mistrust between industry and handicrafts permitted only a partial, if promising, resolution of worker training questions in the form of the 1897 *Handwerk* law. The Prussian Trade Ministry encouraged training in various ways, but these efforts did not yet amount to national policy. Internally, too, industry was divided between those firms, especially in the machine-building and metal-working industries, which had the greatest interest in fostering a large group of skilled workers, and other manufacturers, who were indifferent or opposed. For many in the latter category, the alluring vision of US-style rationalization kept firms from committing to worker training.

Notes

1. Steve Hochstadt, *Mobility and Modernity: Migration in Germany, 1820–1989* (Ann Arbor, 1999), 55–116; Uhlig, *Arbeit–amtlich,* 24–27.
2. Zentralstelle für Volkswohlfahrt, *Das Lehrlingswesen und die Berufserziehung des gewerblichen Nachwuchses: Vorbericht und Verhandlungen der 5. Konferenz der Zentralstelle für Volkswohlfahrt am 19. und 20 Juni 1911 in Elberfeld* (Berlin, 1912), 311.
3. Meskill, *"Improving Our Civic Conditions";* Palmowski, *Urban Liberalism;* Roth, *Stadt und Bürgertum;* Hans Kilian Weitensteiner, *Karl Flesch—Kommunale Sozialpolitik in Frankfurt am Main* (Frankfurt, 1976).
4. Roth, *Stadt und Bürgertum,* 381–83.
5. Ibid., 565, 570, for the nature and relatively small scale of the city's industrial enterprises.
6. Ibid., 561–566. As Roth points out, the importance of electrification for preserving *Handwerk* was hardly limited to Frankfurt. By 1913, 200,000 electrical motors had been sold to craftsmen throughout Germany.
7. Ibid., 637, 611.
8. Zentralstelle, *Das Lehrlingswesen,* 496.
9. Stadtarchiv Frankfurt, Bericht des Magistrats für das Jahr 1891/2, 265.
10. *Die Kleine Presse,* 17 April 1907, 3.
11. Karl Flesch, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Armenwesens in Frankfurt am Main* (Frankfurt, 1890), 77.
12. See the documents in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Adhib 42, Bd 1.
13. Hettling, *Politische Bürgerlichkeit.*
14. Ibid., 221.
15. Ibid., 222–23. See also pp. 144–45, where Hettling discusses the tendency of Left Liberals across Germany, not just in Breslau, to orient their policy vis-à-vis the working class toward the goal of creating economically independent citizens.
16. Such laws were passed in Saxony, Hessen, and Baden—states in which small-scale enterprises had always been the predominant form of industry and in which similar schools had existed since the early nineteenth century. Linton, *"Who Has the Youth,"* 74.
17. Hans Heinrich Borchardt, ed., *50 Jahre Preussisches Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe 1879–1929* (Berlin, 1929), 55.
18. Zentralstelle, *Das Lehrlingswesen,* 311.
19. Ibid., 308.
20. Ibid., 313.
21. Ibid., 310.
22. Sylvia Rahn, *Die Karrierisierung des weiblichen Lebenslaufs: Eine historische Rekonstruktion der Entstehung der Berufswahl im weiblichen Lebenslauf Ende des 19. und zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt, 2001), 123–24.
23. Uhlig, *Arbeit–amtlich,* 199.
24. In Mainz, for example, in 1908. Brüchert-Schunk, *Städtische Sozialpolitik,* 122.
25. Zentralstelle, *Das Lehrlingswesen,* 333–34.
26. Ibid., 477–78.
27. See the discussion in ibid., 494–95.
28. Ibid., 505.
29. Uhlig, *Arbeit–amtlich,* 197–98.
30. Ibid., 198.
31. Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus;* Hettling, *Politische Bürgerlichkeit.*
32. Stegmann and Langhorst, "Geschichte der sozialen Ideen," 650.
33. Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts* (Princeton, 1978), ch. 1.

34. See chapter 1.
35. Recent scholarship has even challenged the notion that Germany's tariff policies were particularly or unusually protectionist. See Blackbourn, *History of Germany,* 239–41. Earlier doubts were raised in Hentschel, *Wirtschaft und Wirtschaftspolitik.*
36. Geoff Eley, "Sammlungspolitik, Social Imperialism and the Navy Law of 1898," in Eley, *From Unification to Nazism: Reinterpreting the German Past* (Boston, 1986), 110–53.
37. Gary Bonham, *Ideology and Interests in the German State* (New York, 1991). On the Prussian Trade Ministry, in particular, see Helga Berndt, "Die höheren Beamten des Ministeriums für Handel und Gewerbe in Preussen 1871 bis 1932," in *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte,* 1981/II.
38. Blackbourn, *History of Germany,* 261, 263.
39. Hal E. Hansen, *Caps and Gowns: Historical Reflections on the Institutions that Shaped Learning for and at Work in Germany and the United States, 1800–1945* (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1997); Thelen, *How Institutions*; Körzel, *Berufsbildung;* Edward Ross Dickinson, "Citizenship, Vocational Training, and Reaction: Continuation Schooling and the Prussian 'Youth Cultivation' Decree of 1911," in *European History Quarterly,* vol. 29 (1), 1999: 109–47; Herrigel, *Industrial Constructions,* 114.
40. For an introduction to the theme of the "varieties of capitalism," see Peter A. Hall and David Soskice, eds., *Varieties of Capitalism: the Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage* (New York, 2001).
41. See Körzel, *Berufsbildung,* for a welcome corrective to earlier, tendentious accounts, which explained Prussian (and other states') policies toward vocational matters exclusively or at least overwhelmingly in terms of the Kaiserreich's political battles or in terms of "social control."
42. See Berlepsch, *"Neuer Kurs."*
43. Körzel, *Berufsbildung;* See Borchardt, *50 Jahre Preussisches Ministerium,* 35.
44. Though Derek Linton, *"Who Has the Youth,"* 75, acknowledges the transfer, he continues to characterize these schools as largely instruments of social control.
45. See the figures in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep 151 (Finanz), I C, Nr. 9368, 59-60. Funding increased in the following increments: 307,000 marks (1880), 925,000 (1885), 2.3 million (1890), 2.7 million (1895), 5.4 million (1900), 7.4 million (1905).
46. Linton, *"Who Has the Youth,"* 77.
47. Ibid., 82–83, 85; Borchardt, *50 Jahre Preussisches,* 71.
48. Berlepsch, *"Neuer Kurs,"* 249.
49. Trade Minister von Berlepsch had expressed concern that Germany did not have enough skilled workers, hence endangering the country's exports. Under his successors, Brefeld and especially Moeller (1896–1905), the Trade Ministry sponsored numerous fact-finding missions to European countries and the United States. Berlepsch, *"Neuer Kurs,"* 249; Borchardt, *50 Jahre Preussisches,* 55. See Repp, *Reformers,* 53–57, on the simultaneous turn among Protestant figures, such as Max Weber and Friedrich Naumann, from religious to national inspiration for their social concerns.
50. See, for example, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871–1918* (Dover, 1985); Blackbourn, *A History of Germany,* 348.
51. Hansen, *Caps and Gowns.*
52. For this reassessment of the purpose and the impact of the 1897 law, see Hansen, *Caps and Gowns,* 313–94.
53. Gerhard Adelmann, "Die berufliche Ausbildung und Weiterbildung in der deutschen Wirtschaft 1871–1918," in *Berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung in der deutschen Wirtschaft seit dem 19. Jahrhundert,* ed. Hans Pohl (Wiesbaden, 1979), 9–52, 19.
54. Hansen, *Caps and Gowns,* 363–64.
55. *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Preuss. Hauses der Abgeordneten, 19. Legislaturperiode, IV. Session, 1902,* vol. 1, column 1270 (5 February 1902).
56. Ibid., column 1281.
57. Landesgewerbeamt, *Verwaltungsbericht 1905* (Berlin, 1906), forward (unpaginated).

58. In regard to vocational training and counseling, the most important figures were Alfred Kühne and, after 1918, Ernst Schindler. Only in his mid 30s by the end of the war, Schindler quickly became the most influential civil servant negotiating the regulation of both vocational training and counseling. He expressed such command of the issues and personal integrity that he earned the respect of both handicrafts and the socialist unions, certainly a rare feat. His origins in the city of Breslau, whose dominant Left Liberal *Bürger* continued to place economic independence at the core of their political outlook, may have played a role in his views.
59. Campbell, *The German Werkbund.*
60. See the article in the booklet *Dresdner Hausgerät,* in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I gen, Nr 27, Bh. 1, vol. 1 (Beamte des LGA), 171ff.
61. See the complaint by the *Fachverband für die wirtschaftlichen Interessen des Kunstgewerbes* to the Trade Ministry, on 28 April 1907, in ibid., 61. The "Muthesius case" even drew the attention of the Prussian House of Representatives.
62. See the exchanges in ibid.
63. On the continuity of policy in Weimar provided by long-serving ministers and high bureaucrats, see Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (New York, 2004), 85.
64. Berndt, "Die höheren Beamten," 110.
65. See the further Ministry directive from 14 July 1905 (referred to in BAB, 8099/18, 3 July 1913); also, see Ebert, *Zur Entstehung,* 199–200.
66. See the Ministry's directive from 15 March 1906 to select governors to conduct these surveys, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 3, Nr. 1a, 74.
67. In the intervening twelve years, the number of women working in industrial jobs had increased by 40 percent, from one and a half to more than two million. See the article "Die Berufswahl im Handel und Gewerbe," by Alfred Kühne of the Trade Ministry in the journal *Die Fortbildungsschule* from 26 May 1910, which reflects the great impression that this survey made.
68. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte,* vol. I: 296.
69. Dickinson, "Citizenship," 118.
70. Quoted in ibid., 119.
71. Ibid., 128.
72. Ibid., 130.
73. Ibid., 132.
74. For example, by subsidies to communities setting up such schools and by changes to the industrial code allowing authorities to compel local government to establish schools. Ibid., 120, 139–40.
75. Alfred Kühne, "Die Berufswahl im Handel und Gewerbe," in *Die Fortbildungsschule* (26 May 1910).
76. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I gen, Nr. 20, Adhib 1, 126.
77. Körzel, *Berufsbildung,* 173–74.
78. In 1918, the unions admitted they had paid previously too little attention to vocational training. Ebert, *Zur Entstehung,* 262; for similar comments at the 1919 Nürnberg union conference, FES, ADGB NB 532, 30 June 1919.
79. Cited by Herrigel, *Industrial Constructions,* 25, who applies it to Germany at the turn of the century.
80. Adelmann, "Die berufliche Ausbildung," in Pohl, *Berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung,* 19.
81. See Homburg, *Rationalisierung.* See also Heilwig Schomerus, *Die Arbeiter der Maschinenfabrik Esslingen: Forschungen zur Lage der Arbeiterschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1977), 76ff.
82. Adelmann, "Die berufliche Ausbildung," in Pohl, *Berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung,* 11; Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 18.
83. See the contributions to the conference on this matter held in 1875 by the Verein für Sozialpolitik, Verein für Sozialpolitik, *Die Reform des Lehrlingswesens: Sechszehn Gutachten und Berichte* (Leipzig, 1875).

84. See Herwig Blankertz, *Bildung im Zeitalter der grossen Industrie: Pädagogik, Schule und Berufsbildung im 19. Jahrhundert* (Hanover, 1969), 103–104, on the impact of the impressions gained by the Germans at the World Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. The Berlin engineering professor Franz Reuleaux's pronouncement, that German products were "cheap and shoddy," became an oft-cited catchphrase.
85. Adelmann, "Die berufliche Ausbildung," in Pohl, *Berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung,* 19.
86. Calculated according to the figures in Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 710.
87. Heilwig Schomerus, *Die Arbeiter,* 163.
88. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 24.
89. Ibid.; Schomerus, *Die Arbeiter,* 76; Crew, *Town in the Ruhr.*
90. Schomerus, *Die Arbeiter,* 77.
91. Quoted in Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 19.
92. On the competition in the electrical industry, see Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 360–61; on the machine-tools industry, see Thomas von Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung in der Weimarer Republik, untersucht an Beispielen aus dem Maschinenbau und der Elektroindustrie* (Frankfurt, 1989), 35–54; on the chemical industry, see Peter Hayes, *Industry and Ideology: I.G. Farben in the Nazi Era* (Cambridge, 2001), 7, 9; for German industry generally, see Alfred D. Chandler, *Scale and Scope. The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism* (Cambridge, 1996), 393–502.
93. Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 360. In 1913, Germany produced 35 percent of the world's total electrical goods, the US, 29 percent.
94. BAB, 8099/18 (VDMA), 10 March 1914, 51.
95. Linton, "Who Has the Youth," 35. In 1912, for example, five of 18 major machine-tool firms with large numbers of apprentices had their own training workshops.
96. Adelmann, "Die berufliche Ausbildung," in Pohl, *Berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung,* 19.
97. For the Trade Ministry's role in the founding of DATSCH, see the LGA's letter to the Ministry on the shortcomings of the VDI from 3 April 1908; the letter from the Trade Ministry to the VDI on 6 May 1908 along the same lines, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I gen, Nr. 20, Adhib 1, 3–9. Also, the VDI's letter from 17 November 1908 to the Trade Ministry, saying that it had decided "in accord with the suggestions of the Trade Ministry" to invite representatives of the various groups to a meeting on 3 December 1909 to consider industry's role in vocational training, in ibid., 10. On the Trade Ministry's ongoing interest in DATSCH as well as the institutional and financial support it lent, see the multiple updates from DATSCH to the Trade Ministry and requests for assistance, in ibid.
98. See the transcript of DATSCH's very first meeting, on 3 December 1908, at which Rieppel repeatedly pressed industry to do more vocational training, a call that found the enthusiastic support of the Trade Ministry representative. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I gen, Nr. 20, Adhib 1, 32-35. At a meeting in February 1909, Frölich advocated expanding DATSCH's purview to vocational training. Ibid., 39–40. On Frölich's dynamic leadership, see Gerald D. Feldman, *Iron and Steel in the German Inflation, 1916–1923* (Princeton, 1977), 47.
99. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I gen, Nr. 20, Adhib 1, 97.
100. Adelmann, "Die berufliche Ausbildung," in Pohl, *Berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung,* 30.
101. See the pamphlet put out by the CVDI in 1914, containing the text of a talk by Otto Brandt, *Fabrik und Handwerk,* in which he discusses this survey, in BAB, 8099/18 (VDMA).
102. David A. Hounshell, *From the American System to Mass Production, 1800–1932: the development of manufacturing technology in the United States* (Baltimore, 1985).
103. Ebert, *Zur Entstehung,* 153.
104. Conrad Matchoss, *Werner Siemens,* 354, cited in Jürgen Kocka, *Unternehmensverwaltung und Angestelltenschaft am Beispiel Siemens, 1847–1914: Zum Verhältnis von Kapitalismus und Bürokratie in der deutschen Industrialisierung* (Stuttgart, 1969), 126.

105. See Homburg, *Rationalisierung;* von Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationaliserung.* Ebert, *Zur Entstehung,* 137–59, acknowledges these difficulties without explaining them.
106. Frederick Winslow Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (New York, 1911). The book was translated into German in 1913.
107. Hugh G.J. Aitken, *Scientific Management in Action: Taylorism at Watertown Arsenal, 1908–1915* (Princeton, 1985).
108. Günter Spur, *Produktionstechnik im Wandel* (München, 1979), 11–23.
109. Ibid., 184–90; Heidrun Homburg, "Anfänge," in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft;* Gabriele Wohlauf, "Moderne Zeiten—Normierung von Mensch und Machine," in *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Psychologie und der Psychotechnik,* ed. Horst Gundlach (München, 1996), 147–65.
110. Spur, *Produktionstechnik,* 17.
111. Wohlauf, "Moderne Zeiten," 153. Later, in the second half of the 1920s, numerous industrialists would criticize their own, earlier views of the worker for precisely these reasons. See chapter 4.
112. "Zur Einführung," *Werkstattstechnik,* vol. 1, nr. 1, January 1907: 2.
113. Over time, the emphasis shifted ever more in the direction of engineering and technical questions. By 1914, nearly every issue of *Werkstattstechnik* had an article on Taylor, but almost never had any on worker training.
114. Herrigel, *Industrial Constructions,* 88.
115. On German industry's confidence after the end of the economic turbulence and beginning of boom years in the 1890s, see Feldman, *Army,* 14–15.

Chapter 3

Toward *Totalerfassung*

Creating the National Labor Administration

Before 1914, Reich authorities had given no thought to mobilizing the country's resources, including its workforce, for an extended war. Even during the conflict's first two years, their steps remained extremely hesitant. From 1916 on, however, with the commitment to "total war," Berlin began to intervene in the labor market in radical ways. These measures, their practical design and motivating spirit, did not spring ex nihilo, but rather were built on prewar trends. Nonetheless, war socialism altered those trajectories in significant ways, casting the German labor force projects of the next four decades in distinctly military form.

In this chapter, we show how the Great War imprinted itself on these projects, above all through the creation of a rudimentary national labor administration in 1916 under the conditions of total war and its elaboration after 1918, when the Social Democratic ascendancy and the necessity of surviving a victor's peace created propitious conditions for centralized control.

Desultory Adjustments and Political Maneuverings

The first two years of the war witnessed only minor changes in the still variegated landscape of labor offices that had emerged since the 1890s. Swept up in the era's enthusiasm for planning, the German General Staff had designed a detailed blueprint for victory against France in exactly 42 days, to be followed by an equally decisive campaign against lumbering Czarist Russia.[1] The "friction" of real battle (about which Clausewitz had warned) quickly made moot the prewar planning,

Notes for this section begin on page 102.

however. By November, the Germans found themselves bogged down in a static war of trenches in the west, while simultaneously engaging seemingly limitless, though poorly equipped and motivated, Russian forces in the east. Instead of quick, relatively painless victory, they now had to contend with a longer war of attrition.

German military and civilian authorities had given no thought to reorganizing the country's economy for such a war. The conflict's immediate impact on the labor market was a sudden spike in unemployment for manual workers, as consumer production was curtailed in the summer of 1914, to more than 20 percent.[2] In the first month of fighting, the Interior Ministry and Statistical Office established coordination and informational clearing houses, respectively, both initiatives that quickly petered out.[3] By the spring of 1915, once war production had begun to absorb ever-greater numbers of workers, unemployment among manual workers had returned to its prewar level.[4] For the first two years of the war, the Imperial government, still anticipating a quick conclusion of the conflict and reluctant to intervene in the still politically delicate question of the labor exchanges, continued to take only cautious, haphazard steps to influence the labor market.

The Prussian authorities also were reluctant to introduce major reforms among the labor exchanges and limited themselves to encouraging greater cooperation between municipal and other non-commercial exchanges. Saxony took its cue from Prussia, while the southern states had already introduced greater centralization among public exchanges (Baden and Wurttemberg) or now went further by compelling exchanges to report on their activities to the central state network (Bavaria).[5]

Military authorities, whose intervention in the labor market after 1916 would play the decisive role in preparing the ground for a national labor administration, also proceeded cautiously during the first two years. By the fall of 1914, after the short period of adjustment-induced unemployment had ended, the shortage of manpower and its distribution between the army and industry had become increasingly central and contentious issues of the German war effort. Exemptions from military service for essential skilled workers and employees' freedom to seek better working conditions were key issues. But for the first two years of war, the War Ministry's interventions remained hesitant: the Ministry only encouraged employers to desist from competing for workers and to employ more youths and women to replace skilled males inducted to fight; it advocated, but did not mandate, "war boards" modeled after the pioneer version in the Berlin metal-working industry, on which workers and employers jointly supervised workers' petitions to change jobs and adjudicated complaints about working conditions.

More than any other kind of organized job placement, the municipal labor offices benefited from the war economy. Numerous cities and towns, for the first time, erected labor exchanges, thus continuing and accelerating a trend of the last two prewar decades. In part, they responded to state encouragement, but more generally cities took the initiative in response to the chaotic conditions of their local labor markets. The number of municipal labor offices jumped from 361 in

1912 to 702 in the first year of the war and to 731 in 1916.[6] Extant offices combined in regional networks, which multiplied from 22 in 1912 to 188 in 1916.[7] These increases, however, did not translate necessarily into irreversible gains in terms of the number or overall share of job placements. In Prussia, the number of placements by public offices actually dropped, from 1.31 million in 1914 to 1.16 million and to one million in the following two years.[8] Nationally, the prewar trend of concentration within the realm of not-for-profit exchanges continued, with public exchanges' share of this category of placements rising between 1913 and 1915 from 53 percent to 65 percent and 72 percent. In 1916, though, it fell again to 62 percent.[9]

Most other kinds of labor exchange, whether for profit or not, fared even worse. As war production ramped up and companies scrambled to find increasingly scarce workers, the vast majority of people easily could find work on their own. Because of the conscription of their own personnel, commercial job agencies suffered a severe blow.[10] For the municipal offices' other main competitor, the employer-run agencies, the war likewise meant a serious setback. This resulted both from state action and, more importantly, from the breakdown of collective action under intense competition for labor. As early as 8 August 1914, the leading industrial organizations formed a joint War Committee of German Industry, one of whose functions was to be the distribution of workers among the sectors and firms.[11] Within months, however, companies' frantic search for workers, especially skilled ones, had undermined earlier professions of solidarity and even reduced the effectiveness of employer labor exchanges compared to other nonprofit agencies. Additionally, sporadic bans by military authorities crippled some employer-run agencies.[12] Though their share of all non-commercial placements eventually stabilized at 15 to 20 percent, this represented a significant drop from prewar levels of more than 30 percent.[13] Thus, both of the principal rivals of the municipal offices lost ground during the war, as the latter grew rapidly in number and increased their share, if not their number, of placements.

From an early stage, advocates of public job placement—above all, the socialist unions and the public labor office movement—saw an opportunity to press their case. Despite the authorities' only tentative measures to intervene in the labor market between 1914 and 1916, these advocates maneuvered to gain political advantage from the wartime circumstances. The unpreparedness of the government at the beginning of the war and the resulting chaos of the "adjustment crisis" became one of their main arguments for greater public involvement in the transition to peace—and beyond. The public labor offices (and their associations) welcomed the chance to work more closely with Prussian and Reich authorities. Indeed, they were even more eager to gain the government's backing than the latter was to give it. At the first meeting of the Prussian Association of Labor Exchanges since the outbreak of the war, the leadership unsuccessfully pressed the Prussian authorities to compel non-commercial exchanges to report their activities to the public offices in order to provide the latter "a comprehensive view of the labor market."[14] The public labor exchange advocates eagerly embraced

the Prussian authorities' call in October 1914 for the "substantial internal and external" development of public labor offices into "an irreplaceable factor in the labor market."[15]

The war, the boosters believed, had created especially propitious conditions for promoting the public offices. The accelerated movement of workers into locations, firms, and vocations necessary for the war industry strengthened support for municipal labor offices. While the iron was hot, the still numerous small, part-time placement offices needed to be converted into full-fledged, municipally run and funded, bureaus. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, the boosters sought to convince the Trade Ministry that seed money was crucial to overcome the cities' initial reluctance to invest.[16] By the following fall, in fact, the Prussian Finance Ministry had approved 80,000 marks for the "expedited extension of the network of local labor offices."[17]

The war also provided the public labor office boosters a welcome opportunity to expand the scope of their work. Since the turn of the century, some advocates had been pushing the labor exchanges to look beyond their focus on placing the unskilled worker in the first job available, in particular by catering to skilled workers. The thousands of war-wounded, who streamed steadily from the front-lines back to Germany beginning in the fall of 1914, now provided the labor offices another opportunity to showcase their value. Roughly 5 percent of the injured soldiers could not be made fit to return to military service, but could still work again in some capacity.[18] The leaders of the Prussian Labor Exchange Association urged their members to claim a role in the burgeoning field of "war cripple welfare." At their January 1915 meeting, which was devoted primarily to this topic, the chairman assessed the new tasks:

> For the labor exchange, a broad, new, difficult, but promising, field can open up, if it is well prepared by the best healing-treatment and by counseling and psychological influencing of the wounded, as well as by vocational adaptation. [The labor office] must secure for itself influence over these preconditions, but above all improve its own capabilities, and [the various offices] need to appear on the scene in time and as simultaneously as possible.[19]

In addition to these efforts behind the scenes to expand the scale and scope of public labor office work, the advocates also joined a more public campaign to reorganize the labor market led by the social-democratic unions. The "domestic truce" between all parties, the indispensability of industrial workers for the war effort, and the general ethos of a great national endeavor together had emboldened socialist leaders to press their advantage. The unions' problems in wartime also reinforced their demands for a national labor organization. Union-run labor agencies, which already had been losing ground to the employer exchanges well before 1914, were hit hard by the outbreak of war. It will be recalled that ever since the turn of the century, the unions gradually had abandoned hopes for their own predominance in this field and increasingly favored publicly run offices with both union and employer participation as the next best alternative. During the war, the unions foreswore strikes, and in any case inductions and mass fluctua-

tions led to a severe weakening of local union power. As a result, union exchanges suffered the greatest reduction in placements per exchange.[20] These setbacks fueled the unionists' determination to promote public organization of the labor exchanges.

On the initiative of the socialist unions, in March 1915, all of the major union groups, the influential Society for Social Reform, and the Association of German Labor Exchanges presented their proposals for a national organization of the labor market. They demanded a national network of local and county labor exchanges to be run jointly by union and employer representatives and to be supervised by an Imperial Labor Office. In each district, the public labor office would supervise all of the others. These steps were to culminate in the creation of "an encompassing organization in which job placement can develop in a unified direction and which leads to an orderly cooperation of all labor exchanges."[21] In 1910, all the parties of the *Reichstag* had supported the long-term goal of bringing the labor market under the control of local public offices, and the Social Democrats furthermore had emphasized the importance of centralization. Five years later, under the impact of the war, support for a centrally organized national labor organization, run jointly by the main economic interests and public authorities, extended beyond the union and Social Democratic camps. With the votes of the Social Democrats, Center, and Left Liberals—which was dubbed the "social policy bloc" and in 1919 would constitute the first government of the new German Republic—the Reichstag recommended the proposal to the Imperial government. In the midst of the great national war effort, even some National Liberals and Conservatives, who reassured themselves that a public network of exchanges would in no way impinge on the other forms of labor office, overcame doubts to support the measure.[22]

At a major conference of all parties at the end of April, the government characterized a new system of labor exchanges as "premature," which dampened the prospects of immediate change, but left open the possibility of its accession to major reform over the long-term. The dissatisfaction of the unions and social reformers with what they perceived to be insufficient measures led to a further appeal to the Reichstag a year later. Since a labor exchange law seemed to them to be nowhere in sight and the local approaches threatened to diverge ever more, they demanded a "temporary regulation," including mandating labor exchanges in towns with more than 10,000 inhabitants, regional information centers, and state offices for job placement. Again the Reichstag recommended the measure to the Imperial government. Finally, in June 1916, the Bundesrat empowered the states to oblige communities to establish "neutral" labor exchanges. Only Bavaria, before the war already one of the more vigorous states in promoting labor exchanges, availed itself of the new option; Baden and Wurttemberg had gone further already on their own; Prussia gave discretion to its Regional Governors; and Saxony chose to do nothing.[23]

The first two years of the war, then, saw the public labor exchanges gain at the expense of their main rivals, with persistent political maneuvering by their

backers, but only modest and tentative responses from the Prussian and Reich authorities. All of this changed in 1916.

Mobilizing for Total War

The ongoing military stalemate, exacerbated by unprecedentedly costly battles at Verdun and the Somme, brought about major changes in Germany's war effort in the third year of conflict. The new military leadership of Paul Hindenburg and Erik Ludendorff wanted to ramp up materiel production and fully mobilize the country's resources for what Ludendorff now called "total war." A new era of human conflict was dawning: industrialized societies would steer all possible resources toward victory. A lynchpin of the Hindenburg Program was the introduction of compulsory labor service through the Auxiliary Service Law, which the Reichstag passed in December 1916. This military innovation gave the German labor force projects a military cast for the next four decades.

The Auxiliary Service Law marked a turning point in the country's social policies. In exchange for the unions' acquiescence to universal labor duty for all men between the ages of 15 and 60, the employers had to permit the presence of labor boards, with extensive rights of consultation, in companies with more than 50 employees. This step did not just prepare the ground for the epochal agreement between labor and employers at the end of the war—the Central Working Association (*Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft,* ZAG) of 15 November 1918—and for the Weimar Constitution's guarantee of workers' boards in industrial companies. More crucially for our purposes, the Auxiliary Service Law and corollary decrees for the first time created a national network of labor offices, if only in rudimentary form. Though the Service Law proved a disappointment in many ways and the labor offices never worked as efficiently as planned, this precedent played a formative role in the construction of the postwar labor administration.

The Service Law for the first time created a single national hierarchy of labor offices, which it put at the service of the war effort. The War Ministry explained the need for an encompassing organization:

> The need for consolidation of all non-commercial job placements becomes ever more apparent. The requirement that the agencies report [their activities] no longer suffices; it needs to be complemented by an organization that encompasses *all* offices involved in supplying the labor market and which gives them the opportunity to exploit entirely all their labor material for the labor market.[24]

The War Office's regional bureaus (*Kriegsamtsstellen*) assumed official responsibility for job placement. State and regional information exchanges (*Zentralauskunftstellen*) were set up, to which local offices were obliged to report. Noncommercial exchanges could continue doing their work; however, the law created a new office in each locality, the Auxiliary Service Station (*Hilfsdienstmeldestelle*),

which, thanks to its role in placing those affected by the law, became the core of the new network. Consultative boards, including employers, union representatives, and other interest groups, advised each of the new offices. In towns and districts with several extant non-profit exchanges, they would all have to agree on the "most appropriate" agency to assume the role of Auxiliary Service Station; otherwise the War Office would appoint the public exchange to that role.[25]

Public labor exchanges benefited immensely from these measures. At the expense of their rivals, they achieved unprecedented official sanction and coordination. The backers of the public labor exchange movement, however, responded only ambivalently. On the one hand, they approved of the general trend toward public control of the labor market and called "above all for closer contact directly between the military authorities and the job placement associations." Yet on the other, these largely municipal officials disliked the imposition of "schematic" regulations for the entire country, including the mandatory establishment of advisory boards.[26] Calling upon the power of the central state, it was becoming increasingly clear, was a double-edged sword.

This incipient national labor administration embodied the drive for "organization" and especially comprehensive control, the dawning aspiration of "complete control" (*Totalerfassung*). Before 1914, the promise of "organization" had exerted a powerful appeal for growing circles of bureaucrats and social policy advocates.[27] Now, domestic wartime politics and the imperative of victory—and even more so the specter of national collapse—vastly amplified this kind of thinking. Again, both democratic and technocratic impulses pressed toward organization and complete inclusion. The deep, emotional appeal of national unity, finally achieved after decades of domestic strife, produced a massive wave of support for the idea of a "common economy" (*Gemeinwirtschaft*), as outlined by Wichard von Moellendorf and Walther Rathenau, in which all interest groups would cooperate.[28] In addition to this domestic, quasi-democratic appeal of organization, technocratic imperatives of efficiency vis-à-vis the goal of strategic victory loomed even larger, at least for the government officials actually running the war effort.

The War Raw Materials Office, set up in the fall of 1914 at the suggestion of Moellendorf and Rathenau and led by the latter, aimed first to survey (*erfassen*) all available resources and then decide on their distribution.[29] These early steps pointed the way toward ever broader measures of central planning, what became known as "war" or "state" socialism. As early as January 1915, a year and a half before Ludendorff's preparations for "total war" and three years before Walter Rathenau sketched the outlines of the postwar "new economy," the Reich and Prussian Interior Minister responded to the English blockade by telling his colleagues: "The English starvation strategy must be opposed by the purposeful organization of all of economic life."[30] Similarly revealing of the connection between the war and ideas of *Totalerfassung* was the justification of a law regarding the military preparation of youths. According to this, the voluntary youth welfare programs were insufficient since they "failed to include the entire popula-

tion."[31] The Hindenburg Program and Auxiliary Service Law of 1916, inspired by the goal of conducting a "total mobilization" of resources, aimed to carry these ideas into practice. Government officials and social reformers had become, by the second half of the war, so enamored of bureaucratic "organization" that Max Weber felt compelled to launch a blistering attack.[32] The experience of national unity and the singular focus of a war of national survival, then, significantly reinforced the earlier appeals of organization, especially in the comprehensive form of *Totalerfassung*.

Vocational Counseling's Tasks in the War

While the war increased the number of public labor offices and integrated their networks more tightly, it also allowed or compelled many of them to expand their activities, including forms of vocational counseling. Because of the unusual circumstances of war, however, vocational counseling, which aimed to promote regular apprenticeships, developed more haltingly and became the object of intense interest only in the last year of the conflict.

At the beginning of the war, the sharp spike in unemployment led municipal exchanges to actively search out open positions, to provide workers with necessary accoutrements (transportation and clothing, for example), and to make work. However, the return of invalids from the front and, from the spring of 1915, the worsening labor shortage inspired myriad efforts in other directions. With the growing length and human costs of the war, the future role of the war-wounded became a humanitarian and national economic issue of great import. Estimates of the percentage of war-wounded who would be unable to return to their earlier line of work ranged wildly, from 5 to 75 percent.[33] As we have seen, the leadership of the public labor office movement perceived the reintegration of war-wounded into work as a "broad, new, difficult, but promising, field." Even without encouragement from above, many labor offices had joined spontaneous, broad-based efforts at the local level to address the challenge. As a representative of the Prussian Trade Ministry told a meeting of county officers in July 1915 after a tour of the Rhineland and Westfalia,

> Vocational counseling occurs in small localities through vocational counselors from all circles of the educated classes that have sufficient contact with practical life. In larger towns, special vocational counseling committees have been set up, which usually consist of doctors, directors and teachers from trade schools, representatives of employers and employees from the particular vocation of the wounded person, representatives of professional associations, and of the labor exchanges.[34]

War-welfare offices also established vocational counseling services. At the opening ceremony for one such office in Upper Silesia in May 1916, for example, the region's industrial inspector Friedrich Syrup, who after the war would become the first head of the national labor administration, insisted that expert

vocational counseling be the foundation for the reintegration of the wounded into the working world and the *Volksgemeinschaft.*[35]

Amidst these myriad initiatives, the Trade Ministry sought to strengthen the role of the public labor offices. When vocational counseling worked hand-in-hand with the labor offices, the Trade Ministry official impressed on the county representatives in July 1915, it was especially effective at placing war-wounded back in their old lines of work.[36] Partly for this purpose, the Trade Ministry pushed (successfully) to increase funding substantially for the public offices.[37]

Public labor offices also began to evaluate healthy job seekers. In order to make up for the loss of skilled workers inducted to fight, industry was increasingly drawing women and youths into the factories. Due to the importance of maintaining war production, the drastic reduction or even abolition of the apprenticeship period, and the desire to reduce fluctuation to a minimum, labor exchanges sought to evaluate the workers before placing them with a firm. Vocational counseling offices sprang up, on local initiative, in numerous cities, for example, in Magdeburg, Elberfeld, Halle, Nuremberg, Leipzig, and Breslau.[38] Under the circumstances—it was generally thought that the new workers would only be employed for the duration of the war and the work that they did was usually un- or semi-skilled—these offices wanted to direct workers, on the basis of self-evaluations and evident physical characteristics, to positions where they could be productive, or at least to prevent egregious mismatches.

Such vocational offices, inspired by the long-term goal of maintaining Germany's skilled workforce, also sought to steer young people into regular-length apprenticeships. For this, however, as the association responsible for Berlin and Brandenburg reported in early 1918, times were not propitious. The high salaries paid for low-skilled factory work in the armaments industries and the high cost of living convinced a growing number of young people to forego training.[39] The war was exacerbating the very tendency the Prussian Trade Ministry sought to combat before 1914—youths opting for immediate financial gratification in unskilled work at the expense of a lifelong *Beruf*. Nonetheless, the public labor offices made sufficient inroads in placing apprentices to turn this into a bone of contention (among several) in their struggle with employers' exchanges, which flared up again after 1916.[40]

Direct military intervention played a more decisive role. Just as the Auxiliary Service Law was instrumental in creating a national infrastructure of public labor offices, an important precedent in the establishment of a national network of vocational counseling offices was the War Office's order, on 29 February 1917, to all Auxiliary Service Stations to open vocational counseling offices.[41]

The war's exigencies, then, inspired numerous local efforts to steer invalids and the unskilled into appropriate positions. For the standard vocational counseling of candidates for regular apprenticeships in skilled work, however, wartime conditions were far from ideal. It remained to be seen whether the military's establishment of vocational counseling offices in the Auxiliary Service Stations would be carried over into the postwar.

New Production Strategies, New Workers?

The direction and success of Germany's labor force projects, we argued in the previous chapter, also would depend crucially on private interests, especially on industry and its production strategies, need for particular kinds of workers, and training programs. The war clearly shaped industry's short-term behavior, but it also, more subtly and ambiguously, altered perceptions about the longer-term.

Over the course of the war, the composition of Germany's industrial workforce changed substantially. The army's demand for male recruits, many of whom were skilled workers, compelled industry, especially after the turn in 1916 to total mobilization, to employ growing numbers of low-skilled women and youths. Between 1913 and 1918, the number of women and youths (of both sexes) younger than sixteen working in mid- and large-scale enterprises[42] rose 52 percent and 6 percent respectively, while that of adult males fell 25 percent.[43] The thorough training of apprenticed skilled-workers, which in the years before 1914 had become more widespread in industry, generally fell victim to the exigencies of war production.[44]

The curtailing of production for civilian consumption and export and the increases of war-related output meant reorganizing production within companies and consolidating whole industries. Firms responded with various measures to what they considered to be only temporary disruptions of their normal production patterns. Many companies tried to obtain exemptions from military duty for their skilled workers.[45] When such efforts proved to have only limited success—as, in the long run, was almost always the case—companies had to adjust to an influx of low-skilled female and youth workers. Numerous firms developed programs of rapid on-the-job training. Whenever possible, these programs were flanked by efforts to simplify production processes by dividing skilled work into simpler, separate tasks and to introduce automated machinery.[46] The nature of war materiel, especially of ammunition—identical pieces required in enormous quantities—lent itself to such low- or semi-skilled, automated work.

The enormous production increases mandated by the Hindenburg plan accelerated the shifts in manpower. Between the spring of 1916 and 1917, the skilled and semi-skilled share of the workforce at the machinery firm Borsig, for example, dropped from 61 to 50 percent, while that of women, who were generally unskilled, jumped from 20 to 37 percent.[47] Industrial associations, engineering organizations, and the War Office cooperated closely to facilitate the necessary adjustments. Negotiations between the Machine-Builders' Association (VDMA) and the War Office led, in March 1917, to "guidelines for the training of assistants for skilled work," whose very first injunction was "the greatest possible use of [mass production] so that skilled workers are mainly needed in preparatory and machine building work."[48] The VDMA, whose ranks were being swelled by mid-sized and small firms seeking shelter during turbulent times, spelled out the new priorities: due to the Hindenburg Program, war needs now had the highest

priority, and peacetime production simply would have to be postponed.[49] Under the auspices of the Berlin branch of the Association of German Engineers, representatives from leading firms subsequently held a series of well-attended meetings to disseminate best practices regarding "the use of unskilled workers by means of simplifying production … means for quickly training workers … and experiences with female labor."[50] They energetically pursued questions of rationalizing production more generally. Topics included fixed-cost and unit-wage calculations, bookkeeping, the organization of supplies, precision work in workshops, and reducing waste in mass and series-production. Likewise on the initiative of the War Office, the Engineers' Association (VDI) established a Norming Committee of German Industry in December 1917.[51]

There is little evidence that companies viewed many of these often hastily improvised measures as directly relevant for the resumption of their normal production in the postwar period. In addition to the extraordinary nature of production for the army, whose needs often had little relation to civilian goods, the conscription into the army of numerous company engineers, technicians, and managers, whose expertise would be indispensable for a more permanent transition, meant that companies viewed many of the wartime improvisations as only temporary.[52]

Yet even as German industrialists adjusted to the immediate demands of the war economy, their thoughts turned to scenarios for the postwar world. Like their countrymen, few businessmen initially expected the war to last long. However, as early as the first year, speculation that the war would cost Germany many skilled workers and hurt its industry's standing sparked a heated debate among industrialists, exposing some early anxieties about the postwar.[53] Anton Rieppel and Fritz Froelich, two of the prewar leaders of efforts to organize industry's vocational training efforts, disputed the pessimistic assessment about damage to German industry. However, they too recognized that there likely would be shortages of skilled workers, shortages which would have to be compensated for by improvements in the "inner organization" of production and by the mechanization of transport and support services.[54]

By the third year of the stalemated war, industry's angst about the postwar remained, but it also remained within bounds. On top of concerns about a reduced supply of skilled workers, the war's interruption of trade relations also brought fears about lost markets and new competitors, such as Japan.[55] VDMA members, the chairman Kurt Sorge reported, expected the postwar economy to be "different."[56] Much attention focused on the likelihood that in the increasingly competitive international environment, German industries like machine-building, which had maintained an exceptionally broad palette, increasingly would have to specialize.[57] In regards to the makeup of the workforce, machine-building firms foresaw a more variegated composition than before. They reported having had "the most unfavorable experiences" with unskilled youths. And while they had some doubts about the precision and endurance of female laborers, as well as

about their broader political impact, they agreed that "working women will not disappear all that quickly. The rows of welding women created by the war will remain a phenomenon of peacetime for some time to come."[58] The prospect was not especially worrisome: the chairman of the VDMA reported that the majority of firms, at least in the spring of 1917, still expected a "favorable" economic climate after the war.[59]

Indeed, the wartime pressure for mass production coincided with a genuine eagerness for rationalization on the part of many German industrialists and engineers that built on prewar interest in the same. The veritable explosion of cooperative efforts in the last year of the war is otherwise hard to explain. If the War Office launched these initiatives with war production in mind, civilian authorities and industrialists embraced them with an eye to peacetime production. In the spring of 1918, the newly created Reich Economics Office of its own accord encouraged the Engineers' Association to investigate the rationalization of production. The participating Berlin firms expressly viewed the work not primarily as part of the war effort, but as necessary in light of the anticipated problems of the postwar economy, especially the heightened international competition.[60]

Unlike the often-improvised efforts to incorporate new workers and methods at the company level, these cooperative endeavors, launched by the War Office and enthusiastically pursued by (Berlin) industrialists, had a more lasting impact on the evolution of the labor force projects. The enthusiasm for reducing work to its simplest possible components, but especially for cooperating in establishing industrial norms and rationalizing various aspects of the organization of production, focused German industrialists' interests on the possibilities of technical and organizational improvements. War production, then, gave an enormous intellectual and organizational boost to efforts by firms to cooperate on "rationalization" measures and on implementing national industrial norms, steps that had been pursued increasingly by individual firms since at least the turn of the century.

Industrialists' commitment to mass production was neither universal nor unambiguous, however. Even for the sake of war production itself, some employers allowed for little possibility or desirability of replacing skilled workers. The meetings organized from March 1917 by the VDI in Berlin to consider rationalization measures revealed a split among participants. While one grouping wanted to reduce the number of skilled *Facharbeiter* as much as possible and utilize unskilled workers for mass production, another one "emphasized the difficulties and pointed to the impossibilities [of doing this] in some parts of the machine-building industry."[61] These disagreements over production for the war echoed the longer-term ambivalence about the future direction of Germany's production and workforce that we saw earlier. During the national emergency, the advocates of skilled work organized in DATSCH had suspended, for all practical purposes, their activities.[62] If many individual companies made efforts to preserve as much of their core skilled workforces as possible, it was only in the last year of the war that collective efforts to promote vocational training began again—largely on the initiative of the Prussian Trade Ministry, as we will see below.

Battling over the Postwar

Nobody knew, of course, when or how the war would end. But especially after the crises over war aims and domestic reform in mid 1917, preparations accelerated for the return of some kind of peace. More pressing than the question of the nature of the postwar society was that of the transition, and in particular of the demobilization and reintegration of millions of soldiers. Looming over the deliberations was the widespread expectation that organized labor would play a much larger role after the war.

Even assuming a German victory and hence greater control over the conditions of transition, which were common starting points for all of the planners, the demobilization of six million soldiers and the conversion from war to civilian production would be a daunting task.[63] It would also be tremendously important: the hordes of returning soldiers might pose a severe threat to public order, and failure to reintegrate them could threaten the country's economic well-being. The chaos of the adjustment crisis in 1914/5 served as a powerful stimulus to prepare more thoroughly for the reverse transition. Staff in the Reich Economics Office, which had been hived off from the Interior Ministry in October 1917 and favored the continuation of some kind of state socialism, and the War Office drew up assessments of how quickly civilian industries would recover and be able to absorb their former workers. Imbalances would be unavoidable, including unemployment due to a postwar depression alongside scarcity of workers in some sectors. The key, the planners thought, was to manage in as orderly a manner as possible a return to something like the status quo ante distribution of workers. As one War Office Board expressed this extension of the wartime mobilization mentality into demobilization, "the entire reconstruction of the German economy depends mainly on the proper allocation of the labour at our disposal."[64]

Even as the Economics and War Offices and others drew up plans for an orderly demobilization, other ministries, politicians, and interest groups debated what would come after that transition. In regard to the labor market, at least, a measure of consensus existed about some general contours of the postwar situation: the working class, whose cooperation had been decisive in the war effort, likely would enjoy more influence, and public authorities would be even more prominent than earlier. However, even among those parties and interests supporting these general positions, telling differences remained about what they would mean in practice. This applied both to job exchanges, which were now discussed in relation to comprehensive chambers of labor (as they had been in 1909–10) and to vocational counseling.

Support for some kind of public labor exchange system, or at least the toleration of it, had spread beyond the "social policy bloc" of Socialists, Catholics, and Left Liberals. Since late 1917, industrialists, who regarded cooperation with organized labor as less objectionable than greater state interference in the economy, had been negotiating with the unions, among other things, over the future system of labor exchanges. In 1917, the industry-friendly National Liberals had

joined nearly every other party in the Reichstag in support of a resolution calling for parity-based labor exchanges. Even Conservatives in the Prussian Parliament, taking their cue from *Handwerk's* volte-face (see below), had shown themselves open to negotiation on public labor offices.[65] If, in the 1910 legislation restricting commercial job agencies, all of the major parties only indirectly had expressed support for public labor offices, four years of war had produced a consensus of a more explicit kind.

Yet, a general agreement that public labor offices would be more important after the war than they were before it hardly resolved numerous divisive questions about particulars. Would the local offices be independent or subordinate to a national hierarchy?[66] What role would public authorities play as opposed to employers and unions? Would the public offices have a monopoly, or would others—in particular, the employers' exchanges—continue to function?[67] More generally, to what extent would the letter or spirit of the Auxiliary Service Law shape the peacetime labor administration?

Negotiations taking place outside of parliament provided at least some preliminary answers by the fall of 1918. As the German army's position on the western front deteriorated with increasing rapidity, power within Germany shifted away from the government and toward major interest groups, above all the labor unions. The bargain reached in November between the socialist unions and industry—the Central Working Association (ZAG)—would form part of the "real framework of the Weimar Republic"[68] and its corporatist compromise. In return for the unions' acceptance of a basically capitalist economy, the employers granted their counterparts official recognition, the promise of an eight-hour workday, and arbitration committees to hammer out industrial social policy.

Since April 1918, representatives of the employers and unions also had met with the Imperial Economic Office to discuss the future system of labor exchange.[69] In early October, the Economic (or now Labor) Office wrote the Prussian Ministry of Trade to request the latter's views on a draft of a law on labor exchanges agreed on by labor and employers at a meeting on September 28. The brief draft foresaw exchanges run on a parity basis by labor and employers, without addressing other questions.[70]

By this date, however, at the request of the employers and unions, a new office with far-reaching powers had been created to supervise the potentially chaotic transition from a war- to a peace-footing: the Imperial Office for the Economic Demobilization.[71] Its impact on the long-term nature of the labor exchange system remained to be seen.

In the meantime, significant progress had been made in regard to vocational counseling, at least in Germany's dominant state. As we have seen, the war economy's disruption of regular apprenticeships had left little room for the Trade Ministry's program of promoting skilled work. However, in late 1917, a political initiative of crafts representatives provided the Prussian Ministry for Trade with the welcome opportunity to plan more consciously the postwar system of vocational counseling.

The occasion for the Trade Ministry's efforts came from *Handwerk.* The war economy, by steering demand away from smaller producers of civilian goods and toward the large-scale suppliers of military hardware, had caused the crafts sector particular hardship and exacerbated its sense of vulnerability to industry.[72] At their convention in 1917, the Crafts and Business Chambers had abandoned their long-standing opposition to outside interference and called on the state to create a system of vocational counseling that would steer a sufficient number of youths to apprenticeship positions in the crafts. As the unions and even some in industry had done before the war in regard to labor offices, a particular group's weakness now led it to seek redress through the ostensibly neutral authority of the state. In mid November 1917, the Conservative Party in the Prussian House of Representatives proposed a bill based on the Crafts Chambers' demands, which would establish public offices at the local, regional, and state levels for the purpose of providing vocational counseling. Craft representatives would be guaranteed "an outstanding influence."

However, if the motivation for the bill was sectarian, its spirit was hardly a narrow one. Contrary to the still prevalent view of Prussian Conservative economic policy as invariably defensive-minded and backward looking, the legislation's sponsor, Representative Hammer, justified it in terms of a broadminded national strategy. After the war, he said, Germany would have to rely on selling "high quality goods on the world market."[73] This was precisely the strategy of modernizing Germany's handicrafts sector in the interest of exporting high-quality goods, which the Center Party, led by Karl Trimborn and the Prussian Trade Ministry, had been promoting for two decades.

After the Conservative Party conceded an equal voice in the local committees to other industrial interests, the Prussian House of Representatives voted unanimously for the bill calling on the Prussian authorities to create a system of universal vocational counseling.[74] Coming at a time of growing concern about the war's effects on the fabric of German society, these parliamentary discussions about integrating youths into the economy resonated widely.

The Conservative initiative on vocational counseling was most welcome, of course, to the Trade Ministry. Before parliamentary negotiations had taken place, the Ministry took the opportunity of the Conservatives' motion to pursue a "fundamental" discussion of vocational counseling.[75] The Ministry's position, as first laid out by the head of the State Industrial Office (LGA), began by arguing in broad terms for the imperative of a new "ordering of the labor market." These arguments made the case for the failure of a system of purely free trade and, instead, proposed a significantly expanded role for the state in ensuring the quality of Germany's workforce. This position paper represents the first exposition of the rationale and scope of at least part of Germany's future labor force project. In particular, it showed how the war had brought the individualistic and "organizational" strands of thought much closer together.

The paper opened with a consideration of the necessary limits to economic freedom:

> The present order of labor is based since the Stein-Hardenberg legislation on the fundament of commercial freedom. The hope of an earlier time that economic life would regulate itself for the best through the free play of forces has not been fully fulfilled. Substantial reductions of freedom, therefore, became necessary for the protection of the common good and the weak. What remains are the foundations of legal equality, free movement, and the freedom to choose a vocation. The individual can search out the position in economic life that seems to him to be the best and to be achievable.… The individual must himself support the success of his economic work. With vocational counseling it cannot be a matter of relieving the individual and his family of this responsibility; quite the opposite, one must try to enable the counseling to stand, much more than at present, with professional advice at the side of the individual, who has no idea how to take advantage of the almost unlimited possibilities.

It then distinguished the modern developments relevant for vocational choice:

> [W]hile in rural and small-town conditions the young person knows his future vocational work through his own activity or at least through his own observations, in the big city this is no longer the case. Workplace and home are usually separated and the factory walls almost totally close off the most important work places from youths. Especially the rural workers who look for work in the city do not know [their] future living and working conditions. Above all, people who are entering a vocation and their parents lack an overview of the labor market, working conditions, and economic prospects of the individual vocations. Individual fashionable vocations (such as machinist, electro-technician, and during the war also food trades) are preferred. The crush into untrained work, which promises rapid earnings but correspondingly poor future chances, is overly large. Desk jobs are sought since they are seen as refined. For other promising branches, including especially crafts, the next generation is missing. In choice of vocation the particular requirements placed on the physical and mental suitability are often disregarded.

The ramifications could be severe, both for the individual and for the society as a whole.

> The consequence of such an ill-considered vocational choice is that economic damages for the apprentice and the master occur, that the health of the young people is endangered above and beyond the unavoidable, and that much good will is wasted and the hoped-for success of the apprenticeship does not materialize. The damages thus inflicted on economic life and on the *Volk* cannot be quantified, but they are undoubtedly extraordinarily great.

The war now made it all the more imperative to address these problems, in particular by distributing workers efficiently.

> [T]he construction of our economy after the war demands the most purposeful distribution of labor possible and a vocational selection which brings the most suited into the right vocation. This means, first of all, obtaining the necessary number of workers for agriculture, who can replace the work of the fallen and the badly-wounded and who make the work of the prisoners-of-war unnecessary. Furthermore, the crafts branches urgently need more young people, as due to wartime conditions the number of apprentices has dwindled

> and the quality of training has suffered gravely. Equally, industry must insure that a sufficiently numerous stock of trained workers is created, which can adapt quickly and produce high-quality work. Furthermore, it will be necessary to give good advice to those women who may need to change vocations in case their work becomes available thanks to the return of the men from the field, and to make sure that they can be used in the right place in agriculture, household-work, trade or business. For all of these tasks, a planned vocational counseling is absolutely necessary.[76]

The Trade Ministry's paper articulated the program it had pursued for at least the past twenty years. It wanted to prevent as many young people as possible from taking the "easier" route into unskilled work and into sectors that distorted the balance of the economy. Instead, it aimed to lead them into skilled work, where they could contribute to high-quality production.

However, in addition to these obvious continuities, some new emphases had emerged under the impact of the war. The Trade Ministry now acknowledged more frankly than before the necessary limits to economic freedom. It also adopted an "organizational" and "distributionist" way of thinking: as with raw materials or soldiers for the war, workers needed to be put in the proper place. These latter tendencies would only be amplified when the defeat in the war made the economic recovery considerably more difficult.

The position paper went on to delineate the "tasks of vocational counseling":

> Seen from the standpoint of the economy as a whole, vocational counseling is a matter of purposefully fitting people into the vocational world. For a start the basic principle of supply and demand is decisive; above and beyond that a distribution should be sought that, according to the principle of vocational selection, directs the most suitable workers to the individual vocations.

Again, the Ministry acknowledged the potential conflict between the needs of the individual and of the collectivity.

> Seen from the point of view of the individual, vocational counseling has the task of supplying to each person as much as possible the position in economic life that best corresponds to his inclinations, his abilities, and his economic situation and that offers advantageous possibilities of development. Both purposes can undoubtedly come into conflict.

It assumed, however, that economic circumstances—in short, the economy's need for particular kinds of workers and the individual's need for security—would overcome any discrepancies: within the limits set by their abilities, workers would choose—or could be guided to—the most materially rewarding work, regardless of their "inclinations."

> In reality, the opposition will only rarely become sharply apparent for vocational counseling, since for the individual as well as for the totality normally the economic situation will be of decisive importance. This [situation], therefore, must be observed above all by vocational counseling.

Finally, the memo expressed the Ministry's views on the necessarily comprehensive scope of the program: it needed to be established on the basis of "complete inclusion" (*Totalerfassung*).

> [All people entering the vocational world must undergo vocational counseling.] Only thus will it be possible to work to keep the number of untrained workers as low as at all possible given the economic situation, to prevent ill-considered changes of vocation, and to assure a purposeful choice of new work.

And the memo justified achieving *Totalerfassung* by law. Without legal compulsion, the Ministry argued, the development of a system of vocational counseling "would take years and years." As early as its 1910 position paper advocating expansion of vocational counseling, the Prussian Trade Ministry had argued for a "comprehensive" approach. Still, before the war there was no overt call for "complete inclusion." By 1918, however, the wartime example of the mobilization of the country's resources for total war and the much more tangible sense of the threat to the nation had converted the advocates of individual improvement into fervent supporters of a legally mandated *Totalerfassung*.

The paper laid out plans for the organization of comprehensive vocational counseling. A nationwide system of uniform vocational counseling stations should be created. These needed to exist not only in large cities, but most crucially in the countryside as well, which still needed to maintain a farm population, but which would in the coming years transfer laborers to industry.

Important questions, however, remained unsettled even in the Ministry's eyes. The question of financing would be decisive, the paper noted tersely. The memo argued for a three-tiered structure: field and provincial bureaus, as well as an Imperial Office. However, the memo only suggested that the national office might be associated with the Imperial Office for Labor Statistics. As for the field stations, the paper limited itself to noting several possibilities: they could be part of the youth offices now in planning (though the task of the latter seemed quite different); or part of the labor exchanges; or they could exist as independent institutions. On this matter, the other departments of the Ministry expressed their only significant disagreement with the State Industrial Office's analysis: vocational counseling, they argued, should be associated with the labor exchanges. Their reasoning was, above all, pragmatic: the labor offices already existed in the countryside.[77]

The Trade Ministry acted quickly to capitalize on the new consensus in support of vocational counseling. Within days of the Prussian Lower House's approval of the bill authorizing the establishment of universal vocational counseling on 10 March 1918, the Trade Minister informed the regional governors that "in order to counteract the threatening spread of unskilled labor among the young and to promote the supply of apprentices to the crafts, industry, and trade, I intend to promote the planned expansion of vocational counseling stations."[78]

Key Prussian ministries met on September 11 to hammer out a proposal for a Federal Council Order—or at least for a Prussian solution. Representatives

from the Ministries of Trade, Finance, Education, and Agriculture all agreed on key elements: a Federal Council Order, which after the war was to be replaced by a Reich law in conjunction with one on a national system of labor exchanges, would mandate vocational counseling centers that were to be attached to labor exchanges. Their purpose would be to encourage the young to begin skilled apprenticeships and, conversely, to limit land-flight and entry into unskilled work.

In addition to these ministerial maneuverings over labor administration and vocational counseling, the last year of the war also witnessed efforts, however modest, to revive the prewar project of coordinating industry's vocational training. The Prussian Trade Ministry took the initiative. In October 1917, its Industrial Office (LGA) invited the managing director of DATSCH and VDMA, Friedrich Froelich, to discuss its worries that, after the war, young industrial workers would not receive sufficient training because industry would be facing stiffer international competition and hence not have the resources to support training. Among other things, it broached the possibility that, under the auspices of the Trade Ministry, larger firms might contribute to a fund allowing medium and small-sized firms to train young workers.[79] The Trade Ministry furthermore secured the agreement of the Prussian and Reich financial ministries that endowments established for such a purpose would be tax deductible,[80] and applied renewed pressure on *Handwerk* to cooperate with industry in the perennially tricky issue of testing and certifying apprentices.[81]

In the last year of this transformative war, then, it became increasingly clear that some kind of national (or at least Prussian) systems of public labor exchanges and vocational counseling would dominate the postwar. Yet many particular features, above all regarding the degree of central control and the balance between interest groups and government, remained undecided. How strongly would the Auxiliary Service Law, the embodiment of military subordination, also influence peacetime? Even less clear was whether German industry would develop a coherent policy in regard to its workforce. All of these plans and measures assumed a German victory in the war and a more or less controlled demobilization. It remained to be seen how the labor force projects would develop when events turned out otherwise.

Defeat, Demobilization, and National Survival

Germany's military and then political collapse in the fall of 1918 came unexpectedly for most Germans, including the authorities. The rapid dissolution of the army and then armistice on November 11 confronted the authorities with enormous practical problems. Above all, they had to demobilize six million soldiers and help place them back in work, while facilitating the economy's shift from war- to civilian production. As the authorities had only drawn up demobilization plans for the aftermath of a German victory, all of these measures had to be improvised under the most difficult of circumstances.[82] For all that, the transition

occurred remarkably smoothly: unemployment did jump quickly, but at its peak, in January 1919, it still amounted to only 6 or 7 percent of the workforce. Five months later, it had fallen to 2.5 percent.[83] The Reich Office (later Ministry) for the Economic Demobilization, created in November 1918, and endowed with far-reaching powers, resorted to many of the measures the government had used in August 1914 to combat that surge of unemployment: it sought to "stretch" the available work by limiting working hours, creating make-work programs, and eventually compelling employers to rehire their former workers who had returned from the war. Though the central Demobilization Ministry was dissolved in April 1919, the measures described above, as well as others regulating company behavior, remained in effect longer, some until as late as 1924.[84] The demobilization regulations, which in effect extended aspects of the wartime control of the economy several years into peacetime, conditioned the establishment, between 1919 and 1922, of the centralized labor office system. Many of the practices of the Auxiliary Service Law, in other words, survived the end of the war.

If the demobilization procedures applied wartime controls, often in ad hoc ways, to the practical problems of transition, Germany's political and economic travails in the postwar also promoted grander visions of national salvation, reinforcing the tendency to perpetuate wartime institutions and mentalities. Even for many of the Germans who welcomed the prospects of constitutional and social reform, the shock of defeat engendered a persistent, terrifying sense of the vulnerability of the nation. The moderate German Democratic Party captured the bleak mood in its December 1918 election rally: "The old governmental system in Germany has collapsed. Three million dead and invalids, the sacrifice of the greater part of our national wealth, the losses of our merchant fleet and foreign trade, hunger and misery—all this characterizes the field of rubble that a failed foreign and domestic politics has left us with."[85] Such despair offered fertile ground for promises of comprehensive recovery.

The political upheavals of postwar Germany that began in the fall—from parliamentarization of government in October to the fundamental agreements between the Social Democrats and the Army, and between the unions and the employers in the Central Working Association (ZAG), and the soldiers' and workers' revolts across the country and subsequent proclamation of a republic in November—facilitated the establishment of a vocation-centered reform program in several ways. For the business community, as for the entire *bürgerlich* camp, the prospect of a political lurch into socialism seemed deeply troubling, if no longer avoidable. While the agreements of November suggested that the Social Democrats and socialist unions were intent on compromise and not revolution, the specter of socialism continued to haunt the bourgeoisie. The Spartacists and the new German Communist Party (KPD), radicalized by the war, revolution in Russia, and the cautious and conciliatory policies of the mainstream Social Democrats, rallied revolutionary forces throughout Germany. In the winter of 1918/19, radicals took power in numerous cities, asserted control of factories, and fought on the streets. Opposition to these radicals united moderate Social

Democrats and Free Trade Union, represented by men such as Friedrich Ebert and Carl Legien, with the bourgeois parties. Furthermore, both the moderate Social Democrats and the middle-class parties traced much of the support for radicalism to the untrained youths whose numbers had proliferated during the war. They agreed that allegiance to a vocation—the prescription that had been at the heart of municipal and academic reformers' and the Prussian Trade Ministry's vision since the Kaiserreich and which the skilled workers who dominated the Free Trade Union supported—could stem the tide toward revolution. Comprehensive vocational counseling, they thought, could be an essential element in restoring the order that so many Germans longed for after 1918.[86] In such calculations, central control of such a program often appeared—even to bourgeois elements otherwise opposed to planning—as a necessary component.

In fact, centralization and planning per se attracted adherents from well beyond the socialist left, as they already had before 1914. The war had evoked a schizophrenia in this regard among the German public and its moderate political parties. At war's end, most individuals yearned to be free of the particular compulsory measures (food rationing, job restrictions) they had lived with since 1914 or 1916.[87] Yet when it came to debates over the future economic order, there was considerable public pressure in the form of press commentary and street demonstrations for *Vergesellschaftung*—socialization—of some kind.[88] The *bürgerliche* parties in the Weimar coalition—the center and the left liberal DDP—were themselves riven over the future organization of the economy, with a considerable fraction especially of the Center supportive of a new direction.[89] The strongest single party, the Social Democrats, of course, advocated moving toward socialism in principle, but in practice the party had given little thought to concrete economic questions, and its leadership vacillated—leaving plenty of room for bureaucratic inertia and initiative.[90]

Plans to nationalize heavy industry were buried in a commission, but until mid 1919, the Economics Ministry propagated Wichard von Moellendorf's ideas for an immediate transition to a corporatist "common economy."[91] While the SPD itself ultimately rejected Moellendorf's ambitious plans, in July 1919 it nonetheless called for the socialization of those industries ready for it and for monopolization of others.[92] The Weimar Constitution of August 1919, which had to strike a balance among the divergent views of the three coalition partners, promised a considerable growth of centralized power and the welfare state, as well as a diminution of owners' prerogatives, and it held the door open for economic coordination on a national scale (through a Reich Economic Council). Both the possibility of far-reaching socialization and the actual, in their eyes exorbitant, expansions of the welfare state and encroachments on managerial sway contributed to a bourgeois sense of vulnerability. However, the possibility of *state* interference in the economy could make corporatist cooperation with the unions appear to be the lesser of two evils in employers' eyes.[93] As we shall see when we consider the creation of the Labor Administration, this calculation made restrictions on the free market for labor more palatable to the industrialists.

Even more than the political threats to order, however, it was Germany's dire economic situation after the war that dramatically intensified visions of cultivating the nation's human resources. This was especially the case after the imminent threat of revolution had been banished by the spring of 1919. Even before the Versailles Treaty, many costs of the war were apparent, and they reinforced the widely held sense that Germany, and in particular its postwar economy, would bear a heavy burden. Between 1914 and 1918, Germany had spent or squandered its wealth in various ways: most obviously, in terms of its physical capital, its people, its trade connections, and the value of its money. The conversion from civilian to war production and the imperative of immediate output had distorted and run-down Germany's machine-park.[94] Besides the war dead, the most visible reminder and instance of the costs of war, however, were the roughly 2.7 million war-wounded with a permanent disability,[95] who would require either a pension or help in reentering the workforce. The war had also severed Germany's ties to its export markets, which had fueled the economic expansion of the Kaiserreich and whose restoration remained uncertain. Finally, the government's financial policies during the war had reduced the value of the German mark by nearly three-quarters.[96] This inflation, which continued after 1918 and would reach far more dramatic proportions in 1923, undercut the financial maneuvering-room of the state and the ability of industry to make capital investments.[97] Each of these losses, to its physical capital, people, trade, and currency, significantly reinforced the old German, and especially Prussian, conviction that the country would have to utilize most economically its remaining resources.

The Treaty of Versailles, which the Germans reluctantly agreed to in July 1919, dramatically strengthened this grim conviction. With the exception of the radical left, Germans united in excoriating the terms of the "diktat." In addition to the war-guilt clause and the drastic reduction in the size of its army, the immediate and longer-term economic costs seemed to many Germans to threaten the very survival of their country. Germany lost significant portions of its territory, including the Polish Corridor and part of industrial Silesia in the east and the ore-rich Alsace-Lorraine and coal-endowed Saarland in the west; the Rhineland would be occupied for fifteen years.[98] From this lessened material base, Germany would have to pay war reparations over seventy years that were initially pegged at 269 billion marks, or nearly thirty times the annual GDP.[99] Even before these figures had been determined, the joint condemnation of the treaty by the employers and unions of the ZAG suggested both the depth of bitterness to the terms of the peace and how that opposition could draw different German camps to a common position:

> The industrious Volk stands deeply shaken under the impression of the enemy's peace conditions … Before us … we see the death sentence of German economic and collective life. The theft of our colonies and all of our foreign possessions as well as a hundred other stipulations of the peace conditions deprive us of our rights internationally. The taking of the most indispensable German raw materials areas and of our trading fleet, along with the

> other aspects of the paralyzing of our economic life, deprives us of work. The tearing away of great and fertile territories, the imposition of monstrous burdens, and the cutting-off from the world market deprives us of bread.[100]

This dire situation produced and sustained that rarest of things in polarized postwar Germany: a broad consensus. Almost without exception, political parties from across the spectrum, interest groups, the press, and public acclaimed the optimal use of Germany's most significant remaining resource—its people and their labor—to be of vital national interest. When all of the parties in the Prussian parliament agreed in 1920 to increase the funding for vocational counseling, for example, a representative of the SPD put the measure in the context of Walther Rathenau's ideas on the "new economy": under current circumstances, the head of the electrical giant AEG and leading planner of Germany's wartime centralized economy had argued, "no machine may pause, no material resource may go unused, no hand may rest."[101] The widespread conviction of the vital national importance of the conscious husbanding of Germany's human wealth found expression through the suddenly ubiquitous—and apparently immediately comprehensible—terms "human economies" (*Menschenökonomie*) and "economizing with people" (*mit Menschen wirtschaften*). The former term was, in fact, not new. In 1908, Rudolf Goldscheid had coined the phrase in the title of his book *Development Value Theory, Development Economics, Human Economies: A Program,* in which the reform-minded sociologist had argued against the utilization of human labor for maximal short-term gains, and instead pleaded for a broader and longer-term conception of productivity and human well being. As we argued in earlier chapters, the idea of utilizing Germany's resources more—or most—efficiently had gained ground in numerous spheres, especially since the 1890s. After World War I, however, these and similar phrases became a universal leitmotiv of German thinking. They appeared frequently and with wholly positive connotation in the literature of the employers' associations, of the free unions, of leading social reformers, in the popular press, and in government circles.[102]

The ideas these terms expressed and the elements of the human economies were expressly linked to the most serious questions of Germany's future: while before the war, vocational counseling had been seen primarily in terms of youth welfare, the head of the Labor Office explained in September 1920, now "serious macroeconomic considerations" had to be considered.[103] That his comment in fact misrepresented the motives of earlier reformers, especially in the Prussian Trade Ministry, suggests the perceived direness of the current situation: it was inconceivable that they previously had faced such a crisis. Somewhat later, the Labor Office's position paper on a draft of the Labor Exchange Law started from the "recognition that the distribution of work according to the principles of economic purposefulness and social justice is a question of vital importance for our *Volk*."[104]

Compared to earlier, the war boosted the confidence among German government authorities, especially in the Prussian Trade Ministry and the Reich Labor

Ministry, as well as union and employer representatives within the Labor Administration, that optimizing the labor force—*Menschenökonomie*—was a key to national salvation. In the leadership and policies of these ministries, the revolution and transition to democracy brought surprisingly little change. The first Labor Minister was the moderate Social Democrat August Müller. His successor, the Catholic union leader Heinrich Brauns, in office from 1920 to 1928—the key years for the Labor Administration—was a staunch advocate of working-class interests, yet unlike the Social Democrats, he favored consensus over confrontation. In the area of labor administration, at least, he would find ample grounds for agreement. The Prussian Trade Ministry was led, except for the period 1921 to 1925, by ministers from the left liberal German Democratic Party, which enjoyed support among moderate business interests. Between the stabilization of Germany's economy in 1924 and the onset of Depression in 1929—the period when the Labor Administration and industry made significant strides in vocational counseling and training, as we will see in chapter 4—the foreign minister and single most important parliamentary leader, Gustav Stresemann, and the president of the Reich Bank, Hjalmar Schacht, helped to sustain a favorable climate for these workforce projects. They believed that the key to Germany's rehabilitation lay not in renewed military confrontation, but in a return to economic strength and reintegration into the world economy.[105]

Just as important as the ministers on top, long-serving deputy ministers and directors—men such as Friedrich Syrup, who had served as a factory inspector for the Trade Ministry and became the first, long-serving head of the Labor Administration (1920/1922–1945), Alfred Kühne, and Ernst Schindler, both of whom served in the Trade Ministry—ensured substantial continuity from the Kaiserreich into the Weimar Republic.

However, turning the general idea of "human economies" into laws, institutions, and real policies could sometimes be a more fractious process. Power over the incipient labor force projects was at stake, as were different visions of how to apply or develop Germany's human capital. Creating the program would require compromises between unions, employers, the state, and political parties. The rest of this chapter analyzes in detail the emergence of the institutions of national systems of job placement and vocational counseling.

Demobilization and the Labor Exchanges

The development of the labor exchange system, which backers of vocational counseling regarded as the most promising institutional support, naturally had a profound effect on the fortunes and prospects of vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement. That system began to emerge under the pressures of demobilizing and reintegrating soldiers into a peacetime economy. In its final form, it represented a compromise between two potentially contradictory principles—labor-industry coordination, a form of economic democracy, on the one hand,

and bureaucratic control, on the other. Both of these, however, represented the major models of "organization," which shared much in common, as we have seen.

In the immediate postwar period, the main factors shaping the labor exchange system were the agreement between labor and employers sanctified in the ZAG and state intervention in the labor market in the context of conversion to a peacetime economy. Industrialists, anticipating greater union participation in economic decision making in the future and regarding it as less objectionable than further encroachments by the state, had begun negotiating with labor representatives at the end of 1917. The collapse of the old regime in November 1918 and the threat of radicalization of the revolution then drove the industrialists into the arms of moderate labor leaders. In the Stinnes-Legien pact of 15 November 1918, which set the parameters for economic cooperation in the coming order, the unions and employers had agreed on "the common settlement and parity-based administration of the labor exchange."[106] With this, the decades-old struggle over the labor exchange as political weapon in the labor market came to an abrupt end. Employer-run offices, for years the main rival to the public exchanges, shut down operations or switched to a parity basis, as did the less successful union-led offices. But, in fact, few of the jointly run exchanges flourished, largely for financial reasons and due to the chaotic conditions, thus leaving an ever-greater share of total placements to the exchanges run by municipal officials.[107]

Just as the state had favored the public exchanges during the war (particularly in the Auxiliary Service Law), so too did it throw its weight behind them in the demobilization. The Demobilization Ministry and its regional and local subsidiaries cooperated closely with public exchanges to carry out their dirigiste and distributive measures: for example, dictating whom employers had to let go and whom they had to rehire.[108] After the Labor Ministry in May 1919 had assumed the responsibilities of the now disbanded Ministry for Economic Demobilization, it took the initiative in creating a more effective national network. In contrast to its predecessor, which had disavowed any "grand and visionary ideas" about the economy's future and instead hoped only to restore the status quo ante 1914,[109] the Labor Ministry was, along with the Economics Ministry, much more sympathetic to ideas about "state socialism." Perhaps more important in this regard than its moderate Social Democratic Minister, August Müller, were the officials inherited from the Reich Interior Ministry, who had been devoted to maintaining domestic order, and the ideas and experiences of war socialism. Drawing largely on models and organizations from the wartime control of labor, the Ministry established Provincial Offices for Labor Exchange (Prussia) and State Offices for Job Placement (outside of Prussia) by absorbing the infrastructure of the Labor Exchange Associations and the wartime Central Information Offices.[110] In 1919, preparations also began for a national office; a Reich Office for Job Placement was established within the Labor Ministry in January 1920, which on May 5 became an independent Office. The new German republic was taking a decisive step in extending the centralized wartime control of the labor offices to peacetime.

Thanks to the official support under the peculiar conditions of demobilization, public exchanges dramatically increased the number of job placements from 1.64 million in 1913 and 1.98 in 1918 to 4.75 in 1919, thus capturing 84 percent of all placements by labor exchanges.[111] But the success of such high numbers came at a price. In many cases, the Labor Ministry later acknowledged, the labor exchanges' implementation of demobilization policy seemed like a "command economy"[112]—which did not please the many Germans, workers and employers alike, who had grown weary of outright state control.[113] As a result, the public labor exchanges never gained the trust of many employers and workers. Thus, as Labor Ministry officials discussed the consolidation of a national network of labor exchanges, they returned to the idea of a far-reaching and equal participation of the unions and employers. From this early point on, the German Labor Administration embodied a dual basis, and potential tension, characteristic of much of Weimar social policy: corporatist cooperation and state power. In the eyes of the proponents of vocational counseling, this potential concession may have eased some doubts about an alliance with the labor offices, which seemed necessary in any case. Yet those offices' complicity in the "compulsion economy," along with their longstanding reputation for serving the unskilled worker and for working bureaucratically, made cooperation with them still appear fraught with danger.

The 1922 Labor Exchange Law

In the absence of clear or consistent guidance from the cabinets of the Weimar coalition or its first *bürgerliche* successors as to the economic order, it was often left to individual ministries to begin to hammer out the contours of the postwar and post-transition world.[114] This was the case with the 1922 Labor Exchange Law (*Arbeitsnachweisgesetz,* ANG), which established the permanent structure of the Labor Administration, one that the 1927 Law on Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance preserved even as it gave it a new financial basis. The ministerial in-fighting and the interest group and parliamentary debates over the 1922 law, its terms, and its impact therefore deserve careful study. The dilemma in which (the largely Prussian) advocates of vocational counseling found themselves—on the one hand, favoring an institutional home in the already extant network of labor offices, but on the other, keen on insulating vocational counseling from the poor reputation of those offices as bureaucratic people-shufflers—emerged full blown during the negotiations over a Labor Exchange Law from 1919 to 1922.

The language of the Reich Labor Office's first draft of the law (November 1919) revealed the vast scope of the proposed system as well as its roots in the war- and postwar command economy: "The labor exchanges are responsible for job placement, vocational counseling, labor distribution, and labor creation in accordance with this law."[115] The most fundamental question was whether the compulsory measures that had been adopted frequently in the transition to peacetime would become a permanent feature of the labor exchanges: these included, most im-

portantly, a monopoly for the public labor exchanges, mandatory use by all job seekers, and mandatory reporting of open positions by companies. The socialist unions and the Association of Labor Exchanges, since the first decade of the century allies in demanding public control of the labor market, were the most enthusiastic backers of these proposals.[116] Only on this basis, the representative of the socialist umbrella union (ADGB) argued at a meeting in the Labor Ministry in September 1920, could Germany achieve a "strict planned economy of people."[117] Employers' organizations objected strongly to what they perceived to be the socialists' attempt to gain control of the economy by means of the labor exchange, as well as to the "schematism" and "bureaucracy" that would stifle the economy's dynamism.[118] Importantly for the outcome of negotiations, the Christian unions, who favored cooperation over compulsion, and the powerful white-collar union DHV, whose own labor exchange functioned increasingly well, joined the employers in opposing compulsion.[119]

The Labor Ministry shared the socialist unions' long-term goal of achieving a comprehensive economy of people. Remarkably little changed after the June 1920 election, which dealt the original Weimar coalition a resounding defeat and introduced a series of weak bourgeois governments. The new Labor Minister, the Center politician Heinrich Brauns, would encourage cooperation between social groups rather than state compulsion.[120] As much as possible, such reforms had to be accepted by all sides: thus, the Labor Ministry, echoing an argument made by the Prussian Trade Ministry's Ernst Schindler in another context,[121] insisted that rather than relying on legal compulsion, the labor exchange should "gain the trust" of those involved.[122] Yet it was on Brauns' eight-year watch as Minister that the Labor Administration would be created. Long-serving, knowledgeable bureaucrats from the Kaiserreich's Interior Ministry, who had implemented the policies of war socialism, helped to sustain continuity in the Weimar Ministry of Labor.

The expository paper the Ministry's bureaucrats sent in December 1920 to the Reichstag explaining the proposed law presented a sweeping vision for the future. It argued for the vital importance of a centralized, encompassing system: the distribution of labor according to the principles of economic purposefulness and social justice were matters of life or death for the German *Volk.* The proposed central *Reichsamt* would bind together the whole network, ensuring the smooth working of central planning of the labor market.

> Through this unity, through the encompassing overview of the situation of the labor market that the central agency possesses and constantly updates, emerge the possibilities of equilibrating from vocation to vocation, from place to place, from region to region, possibilities for a generous and planned vocational transition, for a sufficient foresight and care in the transfer of laborers.

The paper repeatedly emphasized the importance of an "encompassing" system and explicitly supported the goal of universal coverage.[123] The difference from the comparatively tentative steps in regard to public "organization" of the labor

market in the 1910 law and the echoes of the wartime Auxiliary Service Law are unmistakable.

The bill proposed to ensure the public labor office a monopoly by integrating into it all other nonprofit exchanges and by eliminating—after a ten-year grace period intended to forestall indemnity claims—commercial agencies and newspaper classifieds. Furthermore, on the question of the labor offices' relations to employers—a matter of crucial importance to any form of labor administration—the proposed law did not directly compel employers to report all of their job openings. It would, however, have given state governments the power to do so. Finally, contrary to the wishes of the socialist unions and in acknowledgement of the changed political landscape since the election, the proposal did not make use of the exchanges mandatory for all job seekers. However, it left little doubt about the Labor Ministry's long-term goals, as it characterized the goal of mandatory use as "desirable."[124]

The proposed law's reserve on the matters of compelling employers and job seekers reflected a number of factors in addition to the vociferous objections of the employers and the socialists' losses in the election. Along with Heinrich Brauns' preference for consensus, the parlous condition of many labor exchanges suggested restraint. In response to wartime legislation, numerous exchanges had been created on paper but still lacked adequate infrastructure or personnel.[125] In the vast majority of offices, job placement still occurred by the "calling out" of openings, rather than by individual matching. The responsibility of administering jobless benefits, which after the war had been assigned to the public labor exchanges, increased the pressure on offices to give highest priority to those who had been unemployed longest, not to those most suited for a particular job. In the years 1920 and 1921 and thereafter, not only the industrialists complained about "intolerable conditions" in the exchanges, even a senior counselor in the Labor Ministry could despair:

> The increased difficulty of individual placement, the destructive effect on the psyche of the unemployed of simply monitoring [their availability for work] without the simultaneous possibility of placement, the long distances, the expensive commutes and the hours of waiting in the labor exchange, the danger of a collection of great masses of unemployed—lead one really to ask where the advantages of public labor offices lie.[126]

Such political and practical considerations shaped the Labor Ministry's more cautious tactics, even as the long-term goal remained complete control of the labor market. In a similar fashion, the Prussian Ministry of Trade, whose officials consulted closely with the Labor Ministry during the negotiations on the Labor Exchange Law, balanced their long-term goal—the central control of vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement—with the immediate possibilities.

We must briefly describe the Labor Exchange Law as it was passed on 22 July 1922 and the system it established, as well as the modifications effected by the 1927 creation of the Reich Agency for Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance. In mid 1922, economic and political conditions might not have appeared

to be ideal for legislation extending central control and planning. Thanks largely to the government's inflationary policies, unemployment was practically nonexistent.[127] The elections two years earlier, while not leading to stable cabinets, had produced a center-right, *bürgerlich* Reichstag. The recent rapprochement between the SPD and moderate Independent Socialists, after the left wing of the Independents had gone over to the Communists earlier in the year, alarmed the middle-class parties, and seemingly made compromise on economic and social matters all that much harder.[128] And in fact, the Reichstag took an equivocal view of the elements of a command economy contained in the draft of the ANG. On the one hand, the *bürgerlich* parties rejected the public exchanges' monopoly position, insisting that this would lead, in the words of the Center Party, to the "uniformization and schematization" of the labor exchange system.[129] Thus, in the law passed, existing nonprofit exchanges were explicitly safeguarded. Under particular circumstances, new ones might even be created. On the other hand, the weak position of the nonprofits deprived this protection of any real significance. Also, all exchanges were to operate according to guidelines written by the Labor Office (in consultation with the groups) and supervised by it. As the Labor Ministry proposal had suggested, the law phased out commercial job agencies and newspaper ads—the most serious competition for the public exchanges—by 1931. The power to compel companies to report their openings was preserved (though only for the Reich Labor Minister, not the state governments). Though the Ministry never invoked this prerogative, its threat to do so in 1923 pressured the employers into a more conciliatory stance vis-à-vis the public exchanges.[130]

The Reichstag thus accepted much, though not all, of what the Labor Ministry had proposed, demonstrating the degree to which belief in "organization" and planning had over the previous four decades permeated nearly the entire political spectrum. While the 1922 Labor Exchange Law expressly protected philanthropic and other non-commercial exchanges, it promised to eliminate the public offices' most serious remaining competition—the commercial agencies and newspaper ads. By keeping open the possibility of compelling employers to report all openings, the law implicitly endorsed the Labor Administration's ultimate goal of a centralized, universal control of the labor market. Even within the Labor Administration and related circles, there were a variety of views on how this goal was to be achieved, but consensus on that ultimate purpose. With the 1922 law, the Reichstag created a German Labor Administration with more limited powers of compulsion than some desired—but with ample opportunities to pursue its vision of centralized and comprehensive control of the labor market. By the middle of the decade, the public labor offices dominated placement activity. They accounted for 81 percent of all placements, while the other, still-tolerated non-commercial offices claimed 10 percent, and the commercial agencies, whose licenses would expire in six years, captured 9 percent.[131] A de facto, if not de jure, monopoly for the public offices had been achieved.[132]

The 1922 law established the contours of the German Labor Administration, as it has existed to the present day. The Administration was to consist of a

three-tiered hierarchy. Each local administrative district (town or rural county) was to have a labor office; above them, state offices (*Landesämter,* within Prussia *Provinzialämter*) would coordinate and supervise; finally, the Reich Office for Job Placement (*Reichsamt für Arbeitsvermittlung*) would unify the entire structure. The resolution of the competing claims of the unions and business, on the one hand, and public authorities, on the other, came in the form of a compromise: at each level an administrative board, composed of representatives of employers, labor, and the public authority, would oversee the "operational direction" of the offices. In practice, the communal authorities, who appointed the director and officials of the labor exchange, always had the upper hand, while the administrative boards remained feckless.[133] Effective local control meant that local conditions—traditions of labor offices, economic structures, and municipal finances—played a decisive role in the establishment of the labor administration until 1927.

The 1927 Law on Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance marked a watershed in regard to Germany's social insurance system.[134] Job placement and vocational counseling, however, remained clearly within the paradigm established by the 1922 ANG. Resolving a decades-long struggle over unemployment insurance, the 1927 law maintained the essential components of the earlier law: the Labor Administration's tripartite hierarchy and the role of unions, employers, and public authorities in the governing bodies at all levels. Compared to the Reich Office for Job Placement, the *Reichsanstalt* created in 1927 did gain greater independence vis-à-vis the Reich Labor Ministry; however, the latter still maintained important "supervisory rights" over the *Reichsanstalt,* which would remain a bone of contention over the coming decades. Shortly after its founding in 1927, the *Reichsanstalt* would sacrifice a good deal of its independence when the Great Depression undercut its financial solvency and the National Socialists imposed further restrictions.[135]

By tying the job placement wing (and within it vocational counseling) to unemployment insurance—and hence to insurance contributions—the 1927 law for the first time put the labor offices on a more secure financial footing.[136] The new financial basis weakened the influence in the labor offices of municipal authorities, who between 1922 and 1927 had used their budgetary powers to restrict expenditures. However, as we shall see, for a number of reasons, central control of the local labor offices remained tenuous even after 1927, and the local offices continued to pursue policies suited to their districts—especially to the demands of local employers.[137]

The Prussian Development of a System of Comprehensive Vocational Counseling

We now return to the immediate postwar and to the second labor force project, the development of a system of comprehensive vocational counseling. In the last

year of the war, the Prussian government had taken the first steps to establish a system of vocational counseling, which the Trade Ministry envisaged as a crucial element of Prussia's—and Germany's—postwar economy. These efforts did not originate in the war, which only had heightened the apparent importance of a longer-term goal of the Prussian Trade Ministry, and, in the form of handicrafts' change of heart, provided a crucial political opening. Nor did the change in political system or the general divisiveness after the war disturb the continuity of thinking and effort within the Prussian Trade Ministry. As we have noted, the leadership of the ministry lay until late 1921, that is during much of the negotiations over the ANG, in the hands of the German Democratic Party, which pursued a generally business-friendly line, and for several years thereafter the leadership lay with a moderate SPD minister, himself a former skilled metalworker. More importantly, the same group of energetic sub-ministerial bureaucrats as before 1918, especially Alfred Kühne and Ernst Schindler, continued to exert decisive influence. The preparations for implementing a system of vocational counseling, begun in early 1918, continued apace.

Negotiations over the precise nature of Prussia's vocational counseling unfolded under the most trying of circumstances. In its order of 9 December 1918 on labor exchanges, the Imperial Office for Economic Demobilization had included a provision that permitted the states to issue laws compelling the public labor exchanges to perform vocational counseling, partly at the insistence of the Prussian Ministry.[138] On 18 March 1919, the Trade Ministry as primary ministry issued a historic directive that would form the basis for vocational counseling in Prussia and, ultimately, throughout Germany. The directive instructed all Prussian counties (*Kreise*) to establish vocational counseling offices; in industrial areas, the direction was to be granted to the parity-based labor exchange, but "care is to be taken that the vocational office is developed as an independent agency." In largely rural areas, where no labor exchanges existed, the directive recommended that the vocational office be joined to the youth welfare organization (*Jugendamt*)—a reminder that the Trade Ministry saw the labor offices as mere instruments serving its priority of vocational counseling.

The Prussian system of vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement was to serve ambitious purposes. As the Trade Ministry position paper from early 1918 had suggested, it was to be comprehensive and to assume an important distributive function. Not only was the vocational counseling network to span all of Prussia; it was to evaluate and counsel all job seekers, those entering both skilled and unskilled work. Its purpose was to "strive for a distribution of the labor power in a way that corresponds to the macro-economic situation and for a purposeful utilization of the existing apprenticeship opportunities and to promote in vocational choice the appropriate regard for the physical and psychic fitness, the inclination, and the economic situation of the one choosing." Thus, despite the disruptions of the revolution and postwar and the failure to achieve a nationwide regulation, Prussia quickly had realized its designs for a comprehensive vocational counseling system—at least on paper.

In a period of bitter dispute, indeed even armed conflict, about the country's future political and economic direction, the Prussian creation of a system of vocational counseling enjoyed rare, almost universal, support. *Handwerk*'s reversal had, of course, provided the occasion for the Trade Ministry's "fundamental consideration." The socialist unions, acknowledging that previously they had given all questions of vocational training short shrift,[139] had become fervent supporters of comprehensive vocational counseling. At its 10th Congress, held in June 1919, the Free Trade Union (ADGB) recommended:

> In cooperation with other appropriate bodies (teachers, physicians, psychologists), appropriate measures for vocational counseling should be taken in such a way that every child is advised before it leaves school about which vocation is appropriate for it on the basis of its physical and psychic fitness as well as being especially suitable for economic reasons.[140]

Around the same time, a debate in the Prussian Constitutional Convention on greater state support for vocational counseling, particularly in the face of the overcrowded professions and the reintegration of millions of soldiers, revealed astonishing accord. Despite minor differences, the SPD and the more radical USPD found themselves concurring with the conservative DNVP in support of the Catholic Center Party's motion to "organize vocational counseling on a wider basis with help of the state and including the establishment of a central institute for the entire vocational counseling system."[141]

Thus, the Prussian Trade Ministry seemed to face an exceptionally favorable political climate, despite the general political uncertainty and strife. Numerous issues remained unresolved, however. The Ministry intended universal vocational counseling to be but one part of a larger reform including vocational training. It remained unclear how the political contention surrounding these further-reaching proposals, which eventually ended in stalemate (see chapter 4), would affect vocational counseling. Further questions pertained to how, in fact, the Prussian directive would be implemented, i.e., which offices would conduct the counseling? In which form? Would the Prussian system be extended throughout Germany? The establishment of the Labor Administration in the 1922 ANG played a critical role in answering these questions.

During the ministerial deliberations over the ANG, significant rifts had emerged between the Reich Labor Ministry and the Office for Labor Placement, on the one hand, and the Prussian Trade Ministry, on the other, over the guidelines for vocational counseling. In the Trade Ministry's eyes, the Labor Ministry's priorities remained too closely tied to those of the Interior Ministry from which it had emerged: above all, Labor seemed to care most about control and order, rather than development and improvement. For the *Arbeitsministerium* disappointingly rejected the Trade Ministry's demand to make vocational counseling offices mandatory.[142] Its draft law furthermore subordinated vocational counseling offices administratively and financially to the labor exchanges.[143] Finally, the Labor Ministry proposed to issue detailed regulations without consulting key constituencies such as crafts, industry, and labor.[144] More broadly, the Trade

Ministry accused the Labor Ministry of lacking the necessary ambition in regard to developing a productive workforce.[145] These disagreements precluded a uniform national system of vocational counseling for another five years and hampered Prussia's pioneering efforts.

By contrast, as these criticisms implied, the Trade Ministry's own vision focused on these latter goals: a system of vocational counseling that encompassed all youths and matched individual and jobs in the interests both of a macro-economically optimal distribution and of individual contentment and development. As we shall see in chapter 4, these comprehensive vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement programs were to be complemented by other elements, including a vocational training law being prepared at this time. Crucially, however, all aspects of the efforts to create a skilled workforce were to be achieved, not by force, but with the willing support of the economic interests. In order to gain and maintain this support, the vocational system's development, the Trade Ministry reiterated, was to be "gradual."[146] This emphasis on constituents' free cooperation and the necessarily slow realization of the program contrasted, of course, with the Trade Ministry's earlier position, as expressed in the "fundamental considerations" of January 1918, in which the ministry had argued for immediate and legally compulsory *Totalerfassung.* While a final explanation of the Trade Ministry's equivocations between 1918 and 1922 eludes us, it seems plausible that the Labor Ministry's and nascent Labor Administration's own designs for centralized control may have induced the Prussian ministry to return to its original, more liberal position.

The bitter disagreements in the fall of 1922 over the institutions and rules of the system of public vocational counseling revealed lingering mistrust between the authorities supervising the national labor exchange network, within which vocational counseling would operate, and those Prussian officials most committed to the idea of vocational counseling. Apparently, it did not matter that many in the new Labor Administration, such as its head, Friedrich Syrup, had themselves originally come from the Prussian Ministry of Trade. The Prussians' doubts reached such levels that the Ministry "expressly" confronted the *Reichsamt* with the question whether the latter intended to "eliminate vocational counseling."[147] Even as they became administratively intertwined, the different visions of *Menschenökonomie* – of optimizing the workforce - could still clash.

The 1923 Prussian Guidelines

The 1922 Labor Exchange Law permitted the states to issue more extensive guidelines on vocational counseling. With the Reich Labor Office rejecting nearly all appeals for modification, the Prussian ministry determined to act on its own in order to promote as skilled a workforce as possible, at least in the largest German state. It thus began to prepare directives for the Prussian territories that would implement the Labor Exchange Law and Labor Office guidelines in the most

expansive way and, in some cases, even bypass them.[148] Prussia would make vocational counseling stations obligatory for all labor exchanges; within the exchange, the vocational counseling office would have its own budget and distinct designation; advisory councils would be mandatory.

The Prussian proposal elicited mixed reviews from important economic and political interests. All sides agreed on the necessity and importance of vocational counseling; they disagreed on the best organization. While the Prussian Conference of Municipalities approved the draft without reservation, the Association of Rural Communities insisted that the costs must be borne by the Reich and Prussia. With a couple of important exceptions, interest groups criticized the Prussian proposal, though for different reasons. The Chambers of Trade expressed support for the proposal, as did, most crucially, handicrafts. Yet both the Social Democratic General Free Association of White Collar Employees and the independent Associated Union of White Collar Employees, as well as the socialist Free Trade Union and the Christian German Trade Union Association, objected to the plan, in particular to the obligation of all labor exchanges to open vocational counseling offices. Echoing the Reich Labor Office, they noted the dire straits of many labor exchanges and predicted their almost certain inability to carry out vocational counseling and, in consequence, the discrediting of the whole idea of vocational counseling. The German Employers' Association, increasingly emboldened in its opposition to the ZAG with the unions, now returned to its earlier position and strenuously opposed the proposal, but for a different reason: vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement, the employers argued, must be kept separate from job placement, as the former demand "individual" treatment and knowledge of the different vocations, coupled with statistical overviews of the vocations and an "appropriate vocational policy in the interest of the entire Volk"—prerequisites which were simply not given in the "mass treatment" of the labor exchanges. Even if vocational counseling could not be transferred to an entirely different institution, but instead remained within the labor exchange, it should enjoy there maximal independence.[149] The fact that the Prussian Trade Ministry pressed ahead with its proposal reflected not just the tactical importance of the approval of handicrafts, which still trained two-thirds of all skilled workers. By 1923, hyperinflation and the resulting breakdown of economic order was undermining both unions' and employers' bargaining positions. The Prussian Trade Ministry's action underlined its strategic determination to promote its vision—even over particular objections of various interests—of an economy of skilled workers placed in the "right" vocations.

Thus, when the Labor Office promulgated its own guidelines on vocational counseling in May 1923, the Prussian Trade Ministry was prepared to establish a more ambitious framework. On May 15, three days after the national policy was announced, the Prussian ministry asserted its right to craft more specific rules. As in previous cases, this Prussian ordinance tried to balance the goals of a unified system and willing cooperation of all parties; it sought to ally vocational counseling with the network of labor offices, and also to preserve the former's autonomy.

All labor offices in Prussia were obliged to perform vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement, though the Prussian ordinance acknowledged that, especially in the countryside, conditions might warrant a temporary suspension of this principle. On the one hand, all other vocational counseling offices (for example, those attached to youth offices) were to be absorbed into the labor offices; on the other, this should be done "to as great an extent as possible" with the cooperation of these offices, and the absorption should preserve elements of the previously independent offices. Within the labor office, vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement would require the greatest possible freedom. Though officially the new guidelines made older ones moot, the Prussian Ministry noted, the "tried and tested" principles of the March 1919 regulation still contained "the essential elements for the establishment, activity, and range of tasks of the vocational offices."[150]

The swift action by the Prussian government demonstrated its resolve to press ahead with universal vocational counseling, a resolve rooted in the Trade Ministry's decades-old program. Until 1927, when the law on the Reich Agency adopted the Prussian model for the entire Reich (at least on paper), Prussia remained the pioneer in vocational counseling. Still, the struggles over the Labor Exchange Law and its codicils revealed that, despite broad consensus on the need for public administration of the labor market, the Prussian Trade and Reich Labor Ministries disagreed on the tactics to pursue.

Much of the substance of the labor force projects, including their institutions, purposes, and formative ideas, we argued in chapters 1 and 2, had been developing in pre-1914 Germany, if still somewhat inchoately. The war imposed its own rigid form on this substance, especially in regard to labor administration. The great challenges to Germany, in waging a new kind of war, now connected the optimization of the workforce to national purposes more directly and exclusively than had been the case even in the period since the 1890s. The projects were subordinated more decisively to a single, overriding purpose: marshalling the nation's workers for victory in war. "Organization" became the universal solution to all problems and the mobilization for "total war" entailed a *Totalerfassung* of all resources, including people.

During the conflict, the networks of neutral labor offices that had been expanding and connecting from the bottom up were turned, from above, into a national Labor Administration. The wartime Labor Administration persisted even after the end of the war. The conflict's central impact on the balance of power in German society—strengthening labor at the expense of business—tilted political conditions in favor of a monopolistic Labor Administration. The sometimes conflicting principles embedded in the Weimar constitution—interest group coordination or state socialism—both pointed toward "organization" of the labor market. But even after the balance of power shifted again back toward industry, a remarkably broad intellectual constellation sustained organization as the best, indeed, the only, solution to the country's problems. Since the war, the nature of those problems and of the Labor Administration's purpose had shifted somewhat:

from victory in conflict to efficiency and orderly survival in defeat. Regardless, the national infrastructure of the Labor Administration and its vision of *Totalerfassung* lived on.

With some misgivings, the advocates of vocational counseling and training allied themselves with the network of labor offices. The Prussian Trade Ministry became, at least for a time, one of the strongest advocates of *Totalerfassung.* The harsh economic conditions of the postwar seemed to demand more authoritarian measures. How the ministry would achieve complete inclusion in practice—and, more importantly, how it would encourage training in skilled work—remained to be seen. The Trade Ministry's hopes for creating a nation of skilled workers would depend to a great extent on the policies of German industry. During the war, with its emphasis on mass production of armaments, many employers had become more enamored of the potential for rationalization at different levels (industry, company, individual). Like the elaboration of universal vocational counseling, the further development of industry's labor policies during a difficult peacetime was another important question in regard to the optimization of the German workforce. It is with them that the next chapter is concerned.

Notes

1. See Martin L. van Creveld, *Command in War* (Cambridge, 1985), ch. 5: "The Timetable War," on the sources—and the folly—of this kind of thinking.
2. For these figures see Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 194; Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 119–120.
3. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 210–11; Uhlig, *Arbeit–amtlich,* 233.
4. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 195–96.
5. Ibid., 210–11.
6. See the chart in ibid., 290.
7. Ibid., 290.
8. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 54, 28–29, 65.
9. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 291.
10. Ibid., 50n13.
11. Ibid., 201.
12. Ibid., 211.
13. Uhlig, *Arbeit–amtlich,* 219. Between 1909 and 1912, employer agencies had raised their share of not-for-profit placements from 22 to 33 percent, while that of the public exchanges had fallen from 40 to 36 percent.
14. See the record of the meeting on 14 November 1914, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 43, 95.
15. See the letter from the Association to the Trade Ministry on 22 December 1914, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 43, 102.
16. Ibid., 102.
17. See the letter from the Trade Ministry to the Prussian Association on 9 September 1915, in ibid., 128.

18. Estimated from figures in Richard Bessel, *Germany after the First World War* (New York, 1993), 6, 275.
19. Record of the meeting on 22 January 1915, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 43, 109.
20. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 291. From 1913 to 1918, placements per exchange fell by a total of 71 percent. This was, however, not much worse than the employer-exchange figure of 68 percent.
21. Ibid., 212.
22. Ibid., 226–27.
23. Ibid., 213–14.
24. Correspondence from the War Ministry to the Prussian Labor Exchange Association in August 1916, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 43, 159.
25. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 214–15.
26. See the subtle expressions of concern at meeting on 18 August 1916 of the Prussian Association of Labor Exchanges, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 43, 167–70.
27. See chapter 1.
28. See Friedrich Zunkel, *Industrie und Staatssozialismus: der Kampf um die Wirtschaftsordnung in Deutschland 1914–1918* (Düsseldorf, 1974), 53, 57, 86, on the role of the domestic truce and the desire for national integration in the growing enthusiasm for a "common economy."
29. Hans Gotthardt Ehlert, *Die wirtschaftliche Zentralbehörde des Deutschen Reiches 1914–1919: das Problem der "Gemeinwirtschaft" in Krieg und Frieden* (Wiesbaden, 1982), 42.
30. Jürgen Kocka and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds., *Die Protokolle des Preussischen Staatsministeriums, 1817–1934/38,* vol. 10, record of Prussian cabinet meeting on 18 January 1915, 127.
31. Ibid., record of meeting on 8 May 1915, 135.
32. Ringer, *Max Weber,* 63–72.
33. Otto Lipmann, *Psychologische Berufsberatung: Ziele, Grundlagen, Methoden* (1917), 3.
34. See the report from 1 July 1915 in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, LGA, Nr. 10, 57.
35. BAB, R3901 (Alt R41)/ 450 Microfiche 4, 16 May 1916. By the fall of the same year, Syrup was the director of the welfare station.
36. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, LGA, Nr. 10, 58.
37. Ibid., 8.
38. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 221.
39. See the report of the Brandenburg Association of Labor Exchanges (*Verband märkischer Arbeitsnachweise*) to the Prussian Trade Ministry on 15 January 1918, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib 6a, Bd. 2, 214. Below, we will come back to the effect of wartime production on the composition of the workforce.
40. See the discussion of these tensions in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 43.
41. Faust, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 221n.
42. I.e., in firms with 10 or more employees.
43. Jürgen Kocka, *Facing Total War* (Cambridge, 1984), 17. The shift within individual sectors and plants could be far more dramatic: in Siemens' Elmo factory, the proportion of female workers rose between August 1914 and August 1917 from 31 to 71 percent. Homburg, *Rationalisierung*, 529–30.
44. Adelmann, "Die berufliche Ausbildung," in Pohl, *Berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung*, 28; Reichsarbeitsministerium, *Deutsche Sozialpolitik 1918–1928: Errinerungsschrift des Reichsarbeitsministeriums. Mit fünf Bildnessen und zwei Ansichten* (Berlin, 1929), 152.
45. Feldman, *Army,* 63–72, 163.
46. Kocka, *Facing Total War,* 19, 33.

47. See the letter from Borsig to the VDMA on 15 May 1917, in BAB, R 8099/122 (VDMA), 153.
48. See the documents in BAB, R 8099/122 (VDMA), 313ff.
49. See the circular from the VDMA to its firms on 29 January 1917, in BAB R 8099/22, 195–197.
50. BAB, R 8099/122 (VDMA), 243.
51. Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 256–63.
52. Ibid., 277.
53. See the responses to the February 1915 article, "Eine Folge des Krieges für die deutsche Wirtschaft," in the journal of the German Engineering Association, in BAB, 8099/111 (VDMA), 61.
54. See Rieppel's response to the ZVDI article, in BAB, 8099/111 (VDMA), 61.
55. BAB, R8099/22, 203.
56. See the report on the VDMA general meeting on 11 May 1917, in BAB, R8099/22, 131.
57. See, for example, the suggestion to this effect by the director of the Frankfurt Machinenbau-Aktiengesellschaft, which the VDMA appears to have endorsed. BAB, R 8099/122 (VDMA), 178.
58. BAB, 8099/123 (VDMA), 11-12.
59. BAB, R8099/22, 131.
60. Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 256–63.
61. See Froelich's talk at the opening meeting on 13 March 1917, in BAB, R 8099/122 (VDMA), 224.
62. G. Lippart, "Einleitender Bericht über zukünftige Lehrlingsausbildung in der mechanischen Industrie," in DATSCH, *Abhandlungen und Berichte über technisches Schulwesen,* vol. VI (1919), 2.
63. For the following see Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 49–68.
64. Ibid., 57.
65. See the debates in January 1918 in the Prussian Lower House, in *Wörtliche Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Preuss. Hauses der Abgeordneten. 22. Legislaturperiode, III. Tagung 1916/18,* vol. 7, 7604ff.
66. See ibid., which showed that the "social policy bloc" parties favored centralization.
67. Not only were the employers themselves understandably concerned about this (see, for example, the article "Woher und Wohin?," in the *Deutsche Arbeitgeberzeitung* from 17 December 1917, in BAB, R3101/2017, 82–83). The Prussian Trade Ministry itself had consistently expressed its belief in the importance of the employers' exchanges. See, for example, the discussion in the Prussian Association of Labor Exchanges on 11 March 1918, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 1, Nr. 17, Adhib. 43, 213–215.
68. Maier, *Recasting,* 57.
69. Talks between labor and employers on demobilization had begun even earlier, in October 1917, and without the participation of the government. See Feldman, *Army,* 437–38.
70. GStA PK, I. HA Rep 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, Bd. 1, 5 October 1918.
71. Created on 7 November 1918. For an analysis of the Office's short- and long-term impact on the German economy, see Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 91–124; Günther Mai, "Arbeitsmarktregulierung oder Sozialpolitik?," in *Die Anpassung an die Inflation,* eds. Gerald D. Feldman et al. (Berlin, 1986), 202–36.
72. Kocka, *Facing Total War,* 102–103.
73. Discussion in the Prussian Abgeordnetenhaus on 17 November 1917, in *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Preuss. Hauses der Abgeordneten. 22. Legislaturperiode, III Tagung 1916/18,* vol. 6, 6250.
74. GStA PK, I. HA Rep 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, Bd. 1, 23 April 1918.

75. Ibid., 21 January 1918.
76. Ibid., 21 January 1918.
77. See handwritten response by Meyeren from Section III in ibid., 8 March 1918.
78. GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, Bd. 1, 18 March 1918.
79. See Froelich's account of the meeting in his letter to Kurt Sorge from 1 November 1917, in BAB, R8099/122, 15–19.
80. Letter from the Trade Ministry to the VDMA on 9 July 1918, in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, BB VII, 3, Nr. 1a, 137.
81. See the letter from the Trade Ministry to the German Handicrafts and Commerce Association on 23 May 1918, in ibid., 136.
82. Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 49–68.
83. Ibid., 129.
84. Ibid., 109–110; also Mai, "Arbeitsmarktregulierung," in Feldman, *Die Anpassung,* 202–36.
85. Herbert Michaelis et al., eds., *Ursachen und Folgen: Vom deutschen Zusammenbruch 1918 und 1945 bis zur staatlichen Neuordnung Deutschlands in der Gegenwart: eine Urkunden- und Dokumentensammlung zur Zeitgeschichte, vol. 3: Der Weg in die Weimarer Republik* (Berlin, [no date]), 175.
86. On the yearning for order after four years of war and in the midst of the postwar chaos, see Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 56–57, passim. For the implications of this desire on a Europe-wide scale, see Maier, *Recasting.*
87. Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity* (New York, 1993), 47; Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 101.
88. Ehlert, *Die wirtschaftliche Zentralbehörde,* 139.
89. Ibid., 229, 345–46.
90. Zunkel, *Industrie,* 69; Ehlert, *Die wirtschaftliche Zentralbehörde,* 364.
91. Zunkel, *Industrie;* Ehlert, *Die wirtschaftliche Zentralbehörde.*
92. Ehlert, *Die wirtschaftliche Zentralbehörde,* 363.
93. Gerald D. Feldman and Irmgard Steinisch, *Industrie und Gewerkschaften, 1918–1924: die überforderte Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft* (Stuttgart, 1988).
94. Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 91–92.
95. Ibid., 275.
96. Ibid., 31.
97. Dieter Lindenlaub, *Maschinenbauunternehmen in der deutschen Inflation 1919–1923* (Berlin, 1985).
98. Germany lost, for example, nearly 15 percent of its arable land, three-quarters of its iron-ore deposits, and a quarter of its coal. Gustav Stolper et al., *The German Economy, 1870 to the Present* (New York, 1967), 74.
99. Peukert, *The Weimar Republic,* 53.
100. Fritz Tänzler, *Die Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände, 1904–1929: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeitgeberbewegung* ([s.l.], 1929), 168.
101. Walther Rathenau, *Die Neue Wirtschaft,* 50–54th. ed. (Berlin, 1921), 61.
102. In addition to the discussion in Prussian Parliament cited earlier, see, for example, the Prussian Trade Ministry's "fundamental consideration" on vocational counseling from January 1918; the Labor Office's widely disseminated position paper in support of an early draft of the *Arbeitsnachweisgesetz,* in BAB, R 3901/689, December 1920; and Young-Sun Hong, *Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State, 1919–1933* (Princeton, 1998), 34, on the leading welfare advocate Wilhelm Polligkeit.
103. Friedrich Syrup, "Zum Entwurf eines Arbeitsnachweisgesetzes," in *Zeitschrift für Soziale Praxis und Archiv für Volkswohlfahrt,* nr. 48, 1 September 1920.
104. BAB, R3901/689, December 1920. See Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 125–65, on the centrality of work and the labor force in the deliberations about the return to peacetime.

105. Manfred Berg, *Gustav Stresemann und die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika: Wirtschaftliche Verflechtung und Revisionspolitik, 1907–1929* (Baden-Baden, 1990); Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (Oxford, 2006), 3–11.
106. Gerald D. Feldman and Irmgard Steinisch, eds., *The Origins of the Stinnes-Legien Agreement: A Documentation* (1973), 85.
107. Tänzler, *Die Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände,* 155–56; see also Reichsarbeitsministerium, *Deutsche Sozialpolitik,* 144. To avoid possible confusion, it should be noted that the public offices might also include union and employer representatives, but this was not necessarily the case. In any case, since the 1916 Auxiliary Service Law, these public offices had come under the ultimate jurisdiction of authorities in Berlin.
108. Mai, "Arbeitsmarktregulierung," in Feldman, *Die Anpassung,* 207; Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 133–34.
109. Quoted in Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 105.
110. Reichsarbeitsministerium, *Deutsche Sozialpolitik,* 143.
111. Ibid., 144.
112. Ibid., 143–44.
113. Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 107.
114. On the Weimar coalition cabinet's lack of initiative in economic matters, see Ehlert, *Die wirtschaftliche Zentralbehörde,* 147, 196, 231, 364; Zunkel, *Industrie,* 68–69; on the vague nature of the Weimar constitution's economic and welfare promises, see Peukert, *The Weimar Republic,* 37, 40–41.
115. BAB, R 3901/687, November 1919 "Entwurf eines Arbeitsnachweisgesetz." The terms are *Arbeitsvermittlung*, *Berufsberatung*, *Arbeitsverteilung,* and *Arbeitsbeschaffung.*
116. Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 238–39; BAB, R 3901/688, 7 September 1920.
117. Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 239.
118. Ibid., 239.
119. Ibid., 240–41.
120. Hubert Mockenhaupt, ed., *Katholische Sozialpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert: Ausgewählte Aufsätze und Reden von Heinrich Brauns* (Mainz, 1976).
121. BAB, R 3901/688, 9 February 1920.
122. Ibid., 7 September 1920.
123. BAB, R 3901/ 689, December 1920.
124. Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 241–42.
125. Uhlig, *Arbeit–Amtlich,* 244–45.
126. Margaret Ehlert on 16 February 1920, quoted in Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 237–38.
127. Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 130.
128. Maier, *Recasting,* 294–95.
129. Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 242.
130. Ibid., 242–43. Given this threat and response, Führer's summary—"This determination [the Labor Minister's right to compel reporting] had no political significance, as the Minister subsequently made no use of it"—seems sustainable only on a very narrow reading of political significance and use-making.
131. Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 117.
132. Führer's claim, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 243, that the ANG's failure to make use of the public offices mandatory represented a "return to pre-revolutionary conditions" is unsustainable, since it ignores the de facto monopoly—if not *Totalerfassung*—achieved after the public offices' two main rivals, employers' placement agencies and commercial agencies, had been banned and given a death sentence, respectively.
133. Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 244–45.
134. Ibid.
135. Friedrich Syrup, *Hundert Jahre staatliche Sozialpolitik 1839–1939,* ed. Otto Neuloh (Stuttgart, 1957), 341–46.

136. This independence would last only briefly, however, as the steep rise in unemployment during the Depression soon would force the *Reichsanstalt* to rely on the national government to cover its costs.
137. See Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* for a thorough treatment of the debates and negotiations leading up to the adoption of a system of unemployment insurance and its institutional connection to the labor offices.
138. *Reichsgesetzesblatt,* 1918, 1421–1422.
139. Ebert, *Zur Entstehung,* 262; for similar comments at the 1919 Nürnberg union conference, FES, ADGB NB 532, 30 June 1919.
140. FES, ADGB NB 532, 30 June 1919.
141. GStA PK, I. HA Rep 169 D Preussischer Landtag, Xe, Nr 12, vol. 1, 25 March 1919; 3 June 1919; 10 July 1919.
142. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr 61, vol. 3, 20 September 1922.
143. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr 61, vol. 4, 11 November 1922.
144. BAB, R 3101/10277, 11 November 1922.
145. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez, Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 4, 11 November 1922.
146. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 3, 21 February 1922.
147. Ibid., 20 September 1922. The Reich Labor Office denied any such intention.
148. See the contentious meeting on 2 November 1922, in which Prussian authorities, by making clear their intentions to promulgate far-reaching directives for Prussia, gained the acquiescence of Reich Labor Office officials to the purely Prussian measures as well as to several general proposals. Still, the basic differences remained. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez, Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 4, 6 November 1922.
149. For these responses, see ibid., 12 December 1922; 7 December 1922; 14 December 1922; 7 December 1922; 11 December 1922; 7 December 1922; 11 December 1922; 8 December 1922; 9 December 1922.
150. Ibid., 15 May 1923.

Chapter 4

Toward the German Skills Machine

Establishing Vocational Counseling and Training

In December 1921, at just the second meeting of representatives from all of the state and provincial vocational offices, Paul Knoff, the influential head of the Brandenburg office, spared no words in his critique of the state of vocational counseling: "The numbers of extant vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement centers leave the impression that vocational counseling has already accomplished much. If one looks more closely, however, one notices that in many cases one can hardly speak of real vocational counseling."[1] Observers of vocational training saw things almost as dimly: disagreements between labor and industry were blocking progress on a national law on training; DATSCH, the manufacturers' organization that before the war had pioneered coordination of training, was moribund; and only isolated companies showed much interest in training.[2]

In the early postwar years, as we saw in the previous chapter, much energy had gone into the legal, institutional, and financial establishment of the Labor Administration. As the officials of the Prussian Trade Ministry had learned in the bitter struggles over the Labor Exchange Law, these efforts did not lead necessarily even to the merely formal creation of vocational counseling offices on a national scale. Furthermore, if the movement to steer young people into skilled work was to succeed, the Labor Administration's local offices had to create the personnel and infrastructure of a whole new bureaucracy practically de novo. They additionally had to establish themselves vis-à-vis the various constituencies shaping the working world. In the absence of a legal mandate, they needed to win the trust of the public, the schools, current and future workers, and, most importantly, the local employers. Once the general legal framework had been established in the early

Notes for this section begin on page 134.

1920s, much of the work of establishing a national system of vocational counseling would involve gaining ground vis-à-vis these local interests. But interests were not all that was required to gain ground. Industrialists' *thinking* about production and the role of their workers in it remained, in the early 1920s, the major impediment to creating a high skills workforce. Once their ideas changed in the middle of the decade, the German skills machine began to take off.

A New Bureaucracy and Its Constituencies

Particularly between 1919 and 1921, and again after 1924, vocational counseling briskly expanded. The *Reichsarbeitsblatt* reported with satisfaction that in 1924/25, the number of vocational counseling offices and of advice-seekers had "increased considerably." While in the first two years after implementation of the Labor Exchange Law, 1922/23 and 1923/24, the number of offices had remained constant at roughly 380, in the third year it jumped more than 30 percent to a total of 518, though the Agency acknowledged that some of the increase could be due simply to more complete reporting. The number of school-leavers who came to vocational counseling rose from 140,000 in 1923/24 to 194,000 a year later, a jump of nearly 40 percent.[3] Yet the quantitative growth fell far short of the "total inclusion" for which the national authorities aimed. Despite the absolute rise in cases, because the number of school graduates rose even faster, the percentage of school graduates "covered" by the offices actually fell slightly, from 33.3 to 32.2 percent.[4]

From their inception, the vocational counseling offices suffered from the devaluation of money. By 1922, when inflation accelerated dramatically, provincial offices in Prussia warned the central authorities that they faced "collapse." The "continually increasing internal frictions" in the labor offices arose principally from the "unresolved financial questions."[5] In its appeal to the Reich Labor Minister, the Prussian Ministry of Trade explained that the financial "means of the cost-bearers, that is the provinces and the municipalities, are exhausted; and the legal situation is so dubious that real pressure cannot be exerted on the provinces and municipalities."[6] The end of the inflation in late 1923 finally created a clear and stable monetary environment, but, in the eyes of the central Labor Administration, provincial governments continued to practice "excessive cut-backs" of vocational counseling personnel even a year after the end of the inflation.[7]

Nor had the 1922 Labor Exchange Law, which many had hoped would create a clear and binding "legal situation," satisfactorily resolved the financial question. The fact that local authorities bore one-third of the costs of the local labor offices and sat on the local administrative boards meant that local priorities—and often these favored saving money over funding a new, and as yet unproven, service—gave little support to vocational counseling.[8] Provincial authorities granted numerous requests from local authorities, particularly those in more rural areas, to exempt them from Prussia's requirement that vocational counseling be estab-

lished universally.[9] Given the organizational and financial structures of the Labor Administration and its offices, even after the 1922 Labor Exchange Law, interest in vocational counseling still depended to a great degree on the particularities of the local and regional offices, political forces, and economies.

The directors of the local offices, who were usually at the same time in charge of job placement, often devoted the most attention to the immediately obvious tasks of administering unemployment aid[10] and job placement for older workers who had lost their jobs. As the Ministry of Trade had feared, when vocational counseling was paired with job placement, the former got short shrift. Maintaining public order had priority. Even in Prussia, in which vocational counseling had preserved greater autonomy within the labor offices, such complaints were common. At a meeting of the state vocational offices in March 1924, the first of its kind in three years and hence also since the implementation of the Labor Exchange Law, all representatives emphasized "with great force" that vocational counseling could only flourish if it were placed on an equal footing with job placement.[11]

By the end of 1924, vocational counseling presented a mixed countenance. On the one hand, in the last year other states had followed Prussia in making vocational counseling offices mandatory, or were about to do so: Wurttemberg (January 1924), Thuringia (June 1924), Bavaria (in preparation).[12] The number of vocational counseling offices and the proportion of school graduates visiting them had grown considerably over the previous years; the system of public vocational counseling had assumed, in the words of its most important bureaucratic proponent, the Prussian Trade Ministry's Schindler, "very considerable proportions."[13] On the other hand, the Labor Administration's first national survey of the vocational counseling system painted a generally gloomier picture. "The development of the local vocational counseling offices varies greatly from state office to state office. It depends in part on the total structure of the district (population density, size of the city, degree of industrialization) and in part on the energy with which the state office … takes on the matter."[14] This vigor, the report continued, was sorely lacking:

> The activity of the state offices in the area of vocational counseling has suffered quite considerably due to the loss of personnel ... Open positions were often not filled again. Even where the vocational counselors themselves remained, they were so occupied by other work for the state office that their actual responsibilities had to take a back seat. This applies especially in the Rhine Province, Westphalia-Lippe, Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt. Especially the reduction in number of female vocational counselors or their being heavily burdened with other tasks makes itself felt (Saxony, Brandenburg, Lower Saxony, Münster, the Rhine Province, Schleswig-Holstein). No vocational counselors whatsoever exist in: the Free State Saxony, Hessen, Hessen-Nassau and Waldeck, Baden, Mecklenburg-Lübeck, Oldenburg, the Border Region.[15]

If vocational counseling's financing and organizational security remained precarious and varied from district to district in the first years of the Labor Administration, its relations to key actors in the labor world were at least as important

for its success—and at least as fragile. Vocational counseling's most important relationships were with the parents of school graduates and the general public, with the schools, and with employers.

Even if the abstract idea of vocational counseling for the sake of optimizing the workforce, of *Menschenökonomie,* enjoyed support from nearly all political parties and much of the population, the vocational counseling offices that sprang up in the years 1918 to 1924 were themselves, in the eyes of many, unfamiliar and unproven institutions. Without a legal means to compel all graduating students and job seekers to use the offices, vocational counselors had to earn the public's and, especially, parents' confidence.

It was not accidental that, in the early years, a considerable portion of the vocational offices' efforts went into "propaganda."[16] In a situation in which the vocational offices were still coming into being and defining their roles, the particularly active counselor in Offenbach recommended, "it is first necessary to propose to the public, and in particular the interested circles, as clear a picture as possible of our tasks."[17] Even when the public knew what vocational counseling offices did, parents were often indifferent or skeptical. In the Rhine district, for example, school authorities reported on the slow progress in convincing parents and students of the importance of vocational counseling: along with a certain reticence about seeking advice and the parents' knowledge of good apprenticeship positions, the need to earn money quickly (and hence to enter unskilled work) militated against getting advice.[18] Such short-term calculations were, of course, precisely what the advocates of vocational counseling were trying to forestall.

A persistent, and for the Labor Administration particularly serious, source of the public's caution vis-à-vis the vocational counseling offices was their reputation for "bureaucratism." This was the criticism most frequently leveled against their offices in the press. Occasionally, the charge could implicate the ostensible (and indeed quite real) attempt of the Labor Administration to gain a monopoly on job placements.[19] Far more frequently, however, the ultimate *goal* of "complete inclusion" of the labor market met with widespread, and often impassioned, support.[20] A far more prevalent complaint objected to the "bureaucratic" *methods* of the vocational counseling offices. As the Prussian Trade Ministry had feared, vocational counseling suffered from its close association with the labor offices, whose "bureaucratic schematism" one paper characterized as "to some extent the unavoidable fate of a public entity committed to mass operations."[21] A vocational counselor visiting a school, another paper lamented in an article entitled "False and correct vocational counseling," lectured to the school children for an hour and a half and left almost no time for questions at the end.[22] What these parents and the critics of the bureaucratic aspects of vocational counseling explicitly or implicitly demanded was that the vocational counseling offices become able to judge "the individual distinctiveness of the young people."[23]

Both the central ministries concerned with vocational counseling as well as the local offices responded to these criticisms in a number of ways. Each time a critique of vocational counseling appeared in the press, the central authorities

were quick to offer a rebuttal in kind. From 1925, favorable "propaganda for the ideas of vocational counseling" was also made by the new medium of radio.[24] At least the most engaged vocational offices—and here, as in many other areas, local variety was the norm—utilized regular "parent evenings" to gain the support of this important group.[25] In addition to these forms of "advertisement," vocational counselors, initially at the local and state levels, and later nationally, sought to address the most serious critiques of the current practices. In particular, in order to gain the support of the public and especially of parents, they wanted to combat the impression that vocational counseling offices were bureaucratic institutions that treated school graduates as faceless numbers and were incapable of recognizing their "individual distinctiveness."

At least as significant as the support of the general public and of parents was the cooperation of the schools. Thus, the vocational counselor in Offenbach began his review of the office's highest priority, "propaganda," by noting: "First, we had to win the teachers for active participation."[26] The school's importance to vocational counseling derived from three factors: the former's proclivity to do counseling itself had to be eliminated; in the absence of a legal requirement that students visit vocational counseling, the schools would play a key role in "delivering" graduates to the labor offices; finally, the teachers' observations of their students—which, as was often emphasized, were based on a much longer acquaintance than the vocational counseling offices ever could achieve—ought to be an important element in the vocational office's matching of "the right man and the right job."

Even when the central ministries made promises to the contrary, the schools remained real, or at least potential, rivals to the vocational counseling offices. The existence of a comprehensive network of schools, teachers' often intimate understanding of their students' personalities, and parents' generally high regard for teachers—all of which had made the schools the basis for vocational counseling in most other western countries—meant that schools enjoyed significant advantages over the nascent Labor Administration. While the Labor Administration could boast that even before the Labor Exchange Law (1922) gave the labor offices (primary) responsibility for vocational counseling, only 2.4 percent of vocational offices had been affiliated with schools (and, by contrast, 67 percent with labor offices),[27] numerous school teachers practiced an "unofficial" counseling of their pupils. As the provincial office of the Prussian Education Ministry in the Rhineland reported in 1921, "[s]ince the vocational offices for the most part are still failing or because the parents and students stay away from them and prefer to turn to the teachers, the schools undertake, in fairly large number, the vocational instruction of their charges."[28] For their part, many teachers objected to what they perceived as the labor office's attempt "to deprive them of the right and the duty to concern themselves with the future of their departing students."[29] Even after passage of the Labor Exchange Law, and despite considerable efforts on the part of the labor offices to gain the unstinting support of the schools, teachers and school directors continued to counsel students and to place them with employers.[30]

Beyond tamping down the brushfires of teacher counseling, the labor offices also sought more positive contributions from the schools, especially pivotal assistance in achieving "complete inclusion." An early dispute in Kassel between the school authorities and vocational counseling office raised the issue of how the schools should report on their children to the latter office. When the Kassel schools decided not to automatically send evaluations for all children, but only when their parents requested it, only eight children came to vocational counseling "of their own accord."[31] In response, the Trade Ministry insisted that providing school reports "for, if possible, all graduating students" remained necessary, for experience had shown that "if one made the filling-out of the questionnaires purely voluntary, vocational counseling would remain ineffective."[32] By February 1920, the Trade Ministry's insistence on this point had resulted in the Education Ministry instructing school authorities, "[g]raduating students should be urged at every suitable occasion to visit these vocational counseling offices. If the school is sent questionnaires from the vocational office, the school director is to supervise the thorough response and to provide, for example, in accordance with his best knowledge and conscience, requested information on the probable vocational suitability of students."[33] Of course, a directive from the central authorities often was insufficient to guarantee compliance by the local authorities. In the absence of a legal mandate for *Totalerfassung,* the schools' role in "delivering" their students to the labor offices would become the labor offices' prime instrument for achieving "total inclusion" for much of the next four decades.

A third sphere of interaction between vocational office and school, in addition to efforts to end teacher counseling and to enlist schools in the "delivery" of students to vocational offices, was the design of the aforementioned vocational questionnaires. I will restrict myself here to noting a significant constraint on the school form. The cooperation from teachers and school directors in answering the vocational office's questions remained often halfhearted and (to the latter) unsatisfactory. Teachers—often nonplussed since they were now expected to aid the very institution that had usurped their role—complained repeatedly about the time- and energy-consuming "burden" of filling out the forms[34] and about being "flooded" with demands for "bureaucratic writing and listing tasks."[35] Their refractoriness moved the Labor Administration to warn that the questionnaires "should not be too long or go beyond the most necessary aspects."[36] While the cooperation with schools would become smoother over time, the tensions over the school questionnaire contributed to new attitudes within vocational counseling about the school's role and its own in evaluating job seekers.

More vital still to the practical success of vocational counseling than its relations with parents or schools was its standing with employers, who crucially retained ultimate control over the hiring of workers and were not obliged to use the labor office's services. As the office in Offenbach succinctly explained the necessity of good relations with the employers, "If we control the apprenticeship positions, the youths and their parents will follow."[37] While the responses of employers to the current state of vocational counseling, like so many aspects of

the Labor Administration, varied according to local circumstances, the general tenor in the years 1918 to 1924 was one of mistrust. Most employers did not condemn vocational counseling per se, but rather condemned its close link to the bureaucratic, SPD-tinged labor offices. In December 1922, the employers' organization, by now feeling less and less bound by its prior pact with the unions, had condemned the ANG's subordination of vocational counseling to the labor offices in the harshest of terms: a "suitable vocational policy," which required among other things "precise knowledge of the individual vocational qualities and necessities," never could be achieved by the labor offices with their "extreme mass operations."[38] At the local level, many employers' mistrust of the "bureaucratic" labor offices persisted. The vocational counselor in Offenbach reported:

> The dislike of public job placement has been transferred in many places from the labor exchanges to the vocational offices as well, particularly where the vocational counseling is handled in a section of the labor office [precisely the prescription of the 1922 ANG]. One can say—without wanting to diminish the valuable work of the labor offices—that many employers only turn to the labor office if contracts with unions compel them to or if they can find workers nowhere else.… As we know from experience, the vocational office is often regarded and treated like a "labor office for youths."[39]

While the vocational office in Lübeck expressed a certain self-satisfaction a year later over the proportion of apprenticeships it helped bring about, it indirectly admitted to frustrations similar to those in Offenbach: its "task" would be "more and more to gain the trust of the employers."[40] Handicrafts, in particular, which during the war was the inspiration for Prussia's pioneering vocational counseling edict, but now had a surfeit of applicants and felt antipathy toward what it perceived to be Weimar's socialist ethos, regarded public vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement with "great mistrust" and expanded its own placement systems "by all available means."[41]

As with the parents and public, the work of gaining the employers' trust consisted, in part, of active "propaganda": letters to companies and visits to owners and even shop foremen, who often made the ultimate decision on engaging apprentices. "We consider especially the personal contact with the companies," the office in Offenbach emphasized, "to be very important."[42] These appeals, however, would have been ineffective, had the vocational offices not simultaneously addressed the criticisms made by its most important constituencies. Parents and, even more importantly, employers regarded the vocational offices with indifference or even suspicion and hostility for similar reasons: both criticized the offices for being "bureaucratic," that is, for caring more about the number of visitors they advised than about the quality of the counsel, in particular in matching the individual qualities of each job seeker to the requirements of particular vocations. The program to promote skilled work was still caught between two goals that were difficult to reconcile: being comprehensive and being effective.

A further serious impediment to the program arose from the still unsettled legal status of vocational training. After the war, the Central Working Associa-

tion (ZAG) and then later the Reich Economics Ministry had drafted a bill that would have established uniform regulations on training for all branches of the economy, thus eliminating *Handwerk's* special status and possibly mandating some form of universal training. However, political struggles between employers and unions over the control of training delayed passage of the law, especially as socialist power waned in the early 1920s.[43] For the time being, at least, the demand for training depended solely on the needs of *Handwerk* and industry.

Building the Personnel and Substance of Vocational Counseling

In his sobering assessment of the state of vocational counseling in December 1921, Counselor Knoff had emphasized problems with the quality and training of personnel, knowledge of the different vocations, and the school questionnaire, which was the most important source of information on the youth. We now look at vocational counseling's efforts to improve in these areas, as well as another subject that Knoff might have mentioned but did not: applied psychology.

Well before Knoff's critiques, local authorities in fact had begun to train their vocational counselors. The latter, whose very position was, of course, a new creation, had until recently been teachers, trade instructors, and civil servants. Of the roughly 600 vocational counselors in 1925,[44] a survey revealed, 5 percent had had a profession requiring university training; nearly a quarter had been teachers of one sort or another; 55 percent had worked previously in other welfare offices; and 7 and 8 percent, respectively, had been civil servants and business- or tradesmen.[45] Their knowledge of particular vocations was thus often circumstantial, unsystematic, and limited in scope.

The earliest local and state-level courses for vocational counselors were of quite modest scale. In December 1919, the state labor office in Westphalia-Lippe offered one of the first.[46] Over four days, labor exchange officials and vocational counselors from the north-Rhine area, as well as interested others, heard lectures about a variety of topics, including "the development and tasks of vocational counseling, with special regard to the conditions created by the war" (by the Trade Ministry's Schindler), "vocational counseling for women," and "the collection of vocational information." In the next years, numerous towns and state offices put on conferences of similar length and subject matter.[47]

On a more permanent basis, the Prussian Trade and the Reich Labor Ministries contributed funds to the Seminar for Job Placement and Vocational Counseling at the University of Münster, which began instruction in May 1920, but remained too theoretical to be of practical use.[48] At the Reich Labor Office's first major meeting on vocational counseling, held in November 1920, participants emphasized the importance of the training of the counselors and the "decisive significance" of attracting "suitable personages to this office of high responsibility." Currently, it was generally agreed, their training was "deficient."[49] By late 1921, concerns about the state of vocational counseling[50] had mounted to such

an extent that "numerous and various sides" urged the Brandenburg office, which had taken a lead in reform efforts, to call a meeting of *Land* labor and vocational offices,[51] at which Knoff would make the pessimistic assessment cited earlier. In his "theses" for the meeting, Knoff was even more damning: "Dilettantish occupation with vocational counseling, interest in the relevant questions, and good will alone cannot be regarded as sufficient prerequisites for vocational counseling." In their place, he proposed the creation of a "well-ordered course of instruction" that would last—"for the time-being"—a year-and-a-half and conclude with a final exam. But the proposal failed to gain broader backing as current circumstances made it financially untenable. The municipal jurisdiction over vocational counseling meant that the Reich could not even promulgate unified standards for counselor training. It was precisely such circumstances that would make the advocates of a comprehensive system of vocational counseling anticipate the salutary effects of the Labor Exchange Law—and experience disappointment over its equivocations in this regard. In the end, the Trade Ministry's Schindler only could promise to publish an essay on the matter in the journal *Work and Vocation,* and "hope that through the public discussion the matter would be further clarified."[52] The Trade Ministry had founded *Work and Vocation* in 1921, and the journal immediately became the flagship of the vocational counseling movement, providing a forum for discussion, disseminating ideas and best practices, and boosting the esprit de corps of the tyro counselors.

By the late summer of 1923, a survey revealed that "despite the best of intentions, which many vocational counselors demonstrate, success remains elusive due to insufficient training." Numerous state and municipal offices offered some form of training, but "the cost-issue" had so far prevented extensive courses, and quality varied greatly, from Wurttemberg, where the part-time counselors received books to read and later discussed them in Stuttgart, to the four-week course in Dusseldorf.

The complement to the training of vocational counselors and the second, often closely linked, area of reform was the systematic development of knowledge about the vocations. Efforts to improve vocational knowledge followed a path somewhat similar to that of training reform, though in the former case the impediments lay less in the pragmatic realm of financing and jurisdiction, and more in the task itself. What was most important to know about a line of work? How should one find it out? Even among backers of vocational counseling, there was disagreement about how precisely one could and should try to match a young person and a vocation.

As with the counselors' training, the initiative to gain a better understanding of the various vocations came not from Berlin, but from those closer to the actual practice, from the provincial and state offices. Two approaches vied for support. Brandenburg's plan would encompass gathering information widely: on vocational training, and its regulation by public offices, organizations, etc.; on the development of the vocations; on wages and contracts; on vocational statistics; on the practice of vocational counseling; and on the relevant literature.[53] Saxony-

Anhalt's model, which would become the standard for the Labor Administration's "vocational profiles" for the next four decades, focused more narrowly on personal characteristics relevant for each vocation: those "necessary," "excluding," "particularly useful," and "not excluding."

When a compromise between the two was reached, the central authorities, increasingly anxious not only about the financial straits, but also about the poor quality and reputation of the vocational offices, sought to develop national standards. At a meeting attended not only by representatives of the central and state offices, but also by labor and business leaders, the Prussian Trade Ministry's Schindler underlined the urgency of the matter:

> [Along with the lack of suitable personnel for vocational counseling] there is a lack of content to be poured into a definite form. To that end, what is above all necessary is the creation of vocation-informational material and the completion of vocational research.[54]

The work, launched in late 1922, stalled for reasons both practical and theoretical. Hyperinflation of printing costs had just begun to soar. The desire to produce "scientific" vocational profiles conflicted with practical considerations of timeliness and general accessibility. The question of how specific vocational profiles—and recommendations—should be also reflected the underlying debate over visions for optimizing the German workforce: what role would centralized distribution play? Since the war, the Trade Ministry had certainly incorporated this style of thought more fully into its own proposals. Yet compared to the most eager advocates of comprehensive knowledge and control, the Prussian ministry remained skeptical. Schindler, in commenting on demands to apply psychotechnics to vocational choice, dampened hopes for a precise distribution of workers:

> The significance of "vocational suitability" is exaggerated to a considerable degree among … psychotechnicians; one often overlooks the fact that most people are suited to several vocations and that the "suitability" will never allow itself to be measured as one measures height. I believe that the focus of vocational counseling lies largely in the areas of knowledgeable information on the vocations, their prospects, essence, and demands; such information is for the most part lacking. That at the same time a serious test of the vocational aspirant himself must occur—this seems to me self-evident; but the test will never have the result that with mathematical certainty "the" vocation can be determined.[55]

A third area of reform in the early years of vocational counseling—the school questionnaire—remained, despite its widely acknowledged importance, less tractable. More than in the other two realms, in matters of the school questionnaire, local and state level initiatives set the agenda; the central authorities remained exceptionally cautious.

Undoubtedly, the main reasons for the central authorities' reserve were the simultaneous dependence of vocational counseling on the schools and the rivalry between schools and vocational counseling: unlike in the cases of counselors' training and vocational profiles, if authorities wanted to improve the vocational

questionnaires, they would need the cooperation of another, at times ill-willed, institution. And yet, at least in this first period, the Labor Administration perceived the teacher's evaluation as potentially the most valuable source of insight into the applicant. In a memo to the Labor Ministry, the Labor Office justified the school questionnaires:

> If vocational counseling is to take not only the economic aspect into account, then the counselor must try to gain insight into the personality of the advice-seeker. Opportunity for thorough personal observation will only present itself to the counselor in the rarest of cases; he therefore needs to rely on the observations of a third party [i.e., the school].[56]

If the central authorities' concern to foster good relations with the schools made them wary of precipitous reforms, local and state vocational offices were less cautious. In the first years of the vocational offices, nearly all of the state offices had developed questionnaires that they expected the teachers to fill out,[57] as had the larger cities such a Berlin, Breslau, Hamburg, Leipzig, and Munich.[58] Though some offices reported a fruitful cooperation between the schools and counseling offices in this regard,[59] in most the results were inconclusive or disappointing.[60]

The most determined and ambitious effort to implement a uniform questionnaire, that of Saxony-Anhalt, and the Labor Office's ambivalent reaction illustrate the thorny substantive and tactical questions involved. The early experience in Saxony-Anhalt pointed to two fundamental constraints on the school questionnaire: on the one hand, the first questionnaire that had been introduced, which required the teacher to make a single evaluation at the end of the students' school career, soon had proven to be inadequate and to require replacement by an evaluation of the pupils "through time." On the other hand, all previous attempts at such "continual questionnaires" seemed to be "too extensive." A year later, after further consideration, Saxony-Anhalt proposed to implement its revised school questionnaire throughout the entire state. In addition to asking about the student's grades and physical health, the questionnaire solicited reports on the child's "character and work habits" for each of his years in school. It provided a framework for the teachers' comments, but encouraged them to expatiate: the first subsection, entitled "general abilities," asked about the student's "general behavior," "interests," "particular achievements," and "other." The second subsection, "work abilities," required the teacher's comments on the pupil's "intellectual vigor," "memory," "independence," "resilience," "attentiveness," "speediness," "steadiness," "adaptability," "resistance to fatigue," and "other." By the end of his schooling, each student's teachers—assuming they had dutifully fulfilled their obligations—would have amassed comments on these qualities for each of eight or ten years.[61]

In its commentary to the Labor Ministry, the Reich Labor Office, while expressing gratitude for the general interest of the state offices in school questionnaires, emphasized caution and criticized Saxony-Anhalt's proposal, about which it "must raise objections." The first attempt to introduce a questionnaire on a large scale "ought not to involve such an extensive form." If the public vocational counseling offices did not proceed "quite gradually" on these matters, the teach-

ers would not cooperate; before one could proceed with a wide-scale introduction, one would have to ascertain in smaller trials that the procedure was feasible and worthwhile, and also that the vocational counseling offices could make use of them.

While Saxony-Anhalt's effort was perhaps the most ambitious, it was not the only one. In the same period, other states attempted, or at least considered, the introduction of similar uniform questionnaires.[62] The central authorities continued to be cautious: in light of the resistance of many teachers, evaluations of students should be kept "as brief as possible and only retain that which is absolutely necessary for the purpose of vocational counseling." Specifically, experience had shown that such questionnaires had been introduced most successfully, "the more they restricted themselves to the capture of externally clearly identifiable things and, in addition, the more they encouraged the teacher to express himself freely."[63] Each of these two qualifications, however, might conflict with important goals of vocational counseling: the first, because vocational counseling was particularly interested, not in external, but in inner qualities such as motivation and conscientiousness; the second, because "free expression" made systematization all but impossible. Thus, in the first years of vocational counseling, the incorporation of the schools remained a particularly vexing and largely unresolved problem.

The advocates of universal vocational counseling had for some time expressed interest, however cautiously, in another way to improve their service: by turning to the emerging field of applied psychology. The wartime successes of applied psychology, especially in selecting people who needed special, usually sensory motor, skills (airplane pilots, truck drivers, battlefield spotters, etc.), had helped to fuel a postwar wave of enthusiasm for "psychotechnics."[64] Universities devoted chairs and institutes to applied psychology; numerous new journals covered the field; along with public authorities such as the railroad and armed forces, industrial giants like AEG, MAN, Vereinigte Stahlwerke, and Zeiss all had their own testing stations to select workers.[65]

Soon, however, controversy and conflict began to cast shadows on psychotechnics' rapid growth. In both theoretical and applied psychology, methodological and substantive debates—among other things, about the role of quantitative testing, the relationship between "elementary" attributes and human "wholes," and the relative importance of abilities on the one hand and motivation or personality on the other—pitted schools against each other. In the rapid proliferation of psychotechnics stations, the influx of non-psychologists threatened more serious damage. The overwhelming enthusiasm for psychological testing, the Labor Administration and government ministries noted with alarm, had inspired "dilettantes and quacks" to try their hand at testing, whose extravagant claims and meager results would greatly harm legitimate psychotechnics.[66]

The Prussian Trade Ministry and the Reich Labor Administration, in particular, remained torn over applied vocational psychology. Especially for the Prussian Trade Ministry, applied psychology appeared to be a double-edged sword as a practical-political instrument of vocational counseling: useful in providing in-

dividualized services and combating the offices' reputation for "bureaucratism," but potentially harmful if the unproven techniques and practitioners tainted vocational counseling itself. Such concerns framed the central authorities' cautious policies toward applied psychology.

Reports from state and local labor offices revealed an array of attitudes toward applied psychology, depending on personal conviction, but even more so on the local economic conditions. In the early 1920s, the great majority of labor offices abstained from using psychological tests or evaluations, whether because they were still engaged in establishing more basic services, because austerity did not permit, or because they viewed psychotechnics with skepticism. Of those that did, many seem to have been motivated by genuine enthusiasm for the possibilities. In January 1923, the labor and vocation office of the Rhine Province informed the central authorities that, despite the fact that "in many places the endeavors of psychotechnics encounter resistance and that doubt is cast on its successes," it would proceed to establish psychotechnical facilities. They could draw on "good preparations and rich experiences," and their program would be limited to narrow bounds.[67] At nearly the same time, the Silesian vocational office expressed even more forcefully its determination. Since organizational matters could be regarded as nearly completed, the office wrote, it believed it was now "urgently necessary" to devote "special attention" to psychotechnical vocational counseling.[68]

Further reports, in particular from local labor offices, shed light on the reasons for vocational counseling's interest in applied psychology, in particular the close correlation between industry and psychological testing. In August 1923, the Offenbach office explained that it "performed the great majority of examinations spontaneously, but in part also in commission of companies or wavering parents." It highlighted the role of psychological testing in the office's relations with local firms:

> The preceding remarks have already revealed the importance we accord psychology, but also especially which *successes* the vocational office has achieved with industry thanks to psychology. Without exaggerating, it can be said that we have won large industry primarily through our institute.[69]

After describing companies' initial mistrust of the new bureaucracy, the Offenbach report explained their change of heart:

> Some skeptical employers were only won over, when we explained our methods—through personal exchanges, numerous slide shows, and tours of our institute. From this moment on, we are more capable than he, we are acknowledged experts. As "a man of practice" he can choose apprentices on the basis of school reports and external appearances better "than any bureaucrat"—now, however, he recognizes that the scientific method is better than his own, which is based on feelings, and he acknowledges the scientific method all the more when he, despite everything, retains freedom of choice in the final selection.[70]

The Breslau vocational office reported a similar process of appeal to the local business community and an even more positive response. In the summer of

1922, the director of the office had given a lecture "with slides" at a conference of Silesian employers, whereupon "funds were given to the vocational office for the purchase of a simple apparatus." In the year since then, "personal appeals" by the director had moved numerous employers to donate further sums and equipment; with the help of the Silesian Central Employers' Association, the Breslau office had set up a psychotechnical institute for testing.[71]

In these and other cases, the role of the vocational office's psychological testing had evolved in a similar direction: in the absence of a legal mandate, psychological testing proved to be a useful tool for binding the local employers to the labor offices. A meeting of vocational counseling leaders in 1924 confirmed the strategic utility of testing: "Almost without exception [the directors of vocational counseling] expressed the conviction that vocational counseling must support vocational psychology in a determined way, if only for the reason that industry and crafts are placing more and more weight on it."[72]

Even as the legal and institutional framework for a national labor administration and for statewide systems of vocational counseling was being set up, then, advocates of a comprehensive vocational counseling were at work on the substance of vocational counseling. In addition to their no doubt sincere desire to make vocational counseling a more effective tool for matching youths and jobs, the vocational counselors were responding to two challenges. While the 1922 Labor Exchange Law gave a de facto monopoly on public vocational counseling to the network of labor offices, other institutional rivals remained—in particular, the schools, but also other offices of Weimar's burgeoning welfare state. The efforts to improve vocational counseling's procedures were, in part, efforts to outperform such rivals. At the same time, the Labor Exchange Law failed to make mandatory the use of the vocational offices either for job seekers or for employers (as many had demanded). Thus, the vocational offices had not only to overcome institutional rivals, but also, crucially, to *convince* their potential constituents of their worth. These considerable pressures to improve vocational counseling encountered limits due to the strapped financial situation of Germany at the time and to the challenges inherent to the tasks. In each area of reform—counselor training, vocational knowledge, the school questionnaire, and psychological evaluations—a common theme was also the tension between the desire, on the one hand, to apply scientific and exhaustive knowledge and, on the other, to achieve immediate, practical success.

Reframing the Skilled Worker: the Institutional and Psychological Origins of the German Vocational Training System

As these efforts to improve vocational counseling made clear, employers' attitudes toward the Labor Administration and, even more crucially, their policies toward their workforces remained decisively important in the attempt to steer young people into skilled work. Employers did not view just the labor offices'

"bureaucratism" in selecting workers with skepticism. In the early 1920s, many doubted that selecting workers, or at least skilled workers, was of importance at all. To understand why this was the case—and why in the middle of the decade it suddenly changed—we first must assess the state of German industry and the kind of "rationalization" it pursued in the years after the war.

Despite the extensive literature on Weimar Germany and its economy, only fairly recently has a convincing picture of German firms' production strategies in the 1920s begun to emerge. When previous works addressed German industry's "rationalization" movement, they started from the universally held premise that rationalization was a homogeneous process resting on mechanization and deskilling.[73]

In the harsh economic environment of post–World War I Germany, *interest* in rationalization, a rubric potentially including attempts to make virtually all aspects of life more productive, was exceptionally strong. The topic of rationalization was the subject of a broad public discussion throughout the 1920s,[74] and various organizations, both public and private, promoted it in its various manifestations. In part with the support of such national organizations, and in part on their own, German companies were the primary movers of rationalization. Approaches to improving productivity varied from industry to industry and even from firm to firm. In the heavy industries such as coal, iron, and steel, many of the productivity gains came about through so-called "negative rationalization"—shutting down unproductive operations and merging others. Mechanization also played an important role, for example, in the introduction of the pneumatic jackhammer in coal mining.[75] Improvements in transportation within the factory, whether by adding motorized vehicles or reorganizing workflows, became a major focus in nearly all branches.[76] In manufacturing, the most dynamic sector of the German economy since the late nineteenth century, considerable attention focused on developing new materials, such as high-speed steel for machine tools that were more productive[77] and better motors and control systems.[78] Undoubtedly, a major aspiration of many in the rationalization movement,[79] inspired by the ideas of Frederick Winslow Taylor and Henry Ford and the breathtaking production results of the latter's automobile works,[80] was to maximize the division of labor and to move to mechanized assembly line, or at least "flow," production.

Yet despite the widespread enthusiasm in Weimar for "Fordism,"[81] the actual pace of mechanization and introduction of assembly line work was, in fact, far slower than the contentious public debates at the time about "*Rationalisierung*" or the later de-skilling literature suggested.[82] Particularly in the manufacturing sector, a number of factors set limits to the introduction of Fordist methods. In some of the most important production spheres, the nature of the product itself—whether machine tool or electrical motor—precluded substantial division of labor or mechanization. Due to trade restrictions imposed after World War I, in effect until 1925, and to the US success in increasing its share of world exports in manufactured goods, German companies, at least initially, had to focus on their own, much smaller, domestic market. This meant, compared to the US

competitors, much less opportunity to secure the stable consumption pattern necessary for economies of scale.[83] In other ways, as well, German economic and social conditions did not make mechanized assembly line production seem suitable. As one commentator at the time expressed the difference between the US industrial pacesetter and Germany: "there, plentiful and cheap capital, scarcity of human labor and high wages, here, scarce and expensive capital, excess of labor and wages that are only about 1/4 the American level."[84] Indeed, one of the conclusions that many of the numerous industry and union leaders who made pilgrimages to the US reached was that Germany, while it should adopt *some* of the New World's innovations, must develop its own forms of rationalization.[85]

In almost all cases, companies chose, or learned from experience, to adopt mixed strategies that integrated improvements to physical *and* human capital. Even as more machinery was introduced, the skilled worker generally became *more,* not less, important. This was the case even in the so-called heavy industries.[86]

The trend was especially pronounced in manufacturing. Electro-technical products and non-electrical machines had been Germany's leading exports during its rapid industrial expansion in the three decades prior to World War I, and afterwards as well these industries were the most dynamic parts of the German economy. As the leading role of such men as Carl Friedrich von Siemens and Carl Köttgen in the National Productivity Board suggested, these industries were at the forefront of efforts to rationalize German industry. In both industries, rationalization entailed substantial "learning processes."[87] In the early postwar years at Siemens, as at many other firms, the guiding principle of rationalization was the central collection of information, development of best procedures, and implementation. The "work bureaus," established in the company's major factories between 1919 and 1921 to coordinate production,[88] and the "production-technical conferences" held since early 1921 to coordinate across the factories exemplified the drive for centralized control.

The impediments to rationalization in Germany along US lines, however, were significant. In Siemens' production of electric motors they included:

> [T]he particular nature of the motor construction, which resulted from the production of a multitude of types of motors in changing series; the technical-constructive evolution of the motors which in the 1920s and 1930s was "completely fluid" due to the switch in machine-making to the electric single- or multiple engine drive; the highly differentiated demand for electrical motors, which hindered a reduction in the variety of types and in special models; the strong competition for market advantages among the various motor-producers, which prevented quick progress in the norming and standardizing work; the significant proportion of work-by-hand requiring the highest precision; the technical-constructive backwardness in machinery and ancillary equipment, when compared to the achievements of the new hard-metal machine tool blades; and finally the shifting sales situation and the health of the economy.[89]

German machine-building companies often opted for a middle strategy of flexible rationalization, which aimed to take advantage of mechanization and reorga-

nization to the extent that these did not reduce the firms' abilities to respond to frequently changing market conditions.[90]

Contrary to contemporary fears about (and some later assessments of) the impact of Fordism, German manufacturing's strategy of flexible rationalization did not lead to a net replacement of skilled workers by unskilled ones. Purely quantitatively, the proportion of skilled workers remained the same or, if anything, rose during the 1920s. The second and third national surveys of workforce composition, conducted in 1907 and 1925, described an increasingly skilled workforce. While the prewar census showed unskilled workers to be 41 percent of the total, by 1925 this figure had fallen to 34 percent.[91] Of the young men born in 1901, who thus entered the workforce in the final, wartime, years of the Empire, nearly equal proportions had only an elementary school education (37.6 percent) and a supplemental crafts or industrial apprenticeship (38.4 percent). By comparison, in the mid 1920s, the percentage of those joining the workforce who had completed an apprenticeship had risen to 52 percent.[92] The 1920s witnessed an unprecedented wave of foundings of company training centers for apprentices.[93] The more detailed studies of particular firms and industries confirm these impressions of an increasingly well-trained, or at least not deskilled, workforce. At Siemens in the late 1920s, slightly more than two-thirds of all workers had completed a three or four year apprenticeship or its equivalent in on-the-job training, and in total, 40 percent were "highly qualified."[94] In the following decade, when the electro-technical industry more generally began to survey its member firms, the latter reported that more than 70 percent of their workers were skilled or semi-skilled.[95] At Bosch, too, in the 1920s, the proportion of unskilled workers declined generally. As one index of this development, the number of unskilled male workers as a percentage of the entire workforce at Bosch declined steeply in the years after 1925: from 17.5 percent in 1926, to 12.5 percent a year later, and 11.4 percent in 1928.[96] The composition of the workforce at the machine-producer MAN's Augsburg factory followed a similar pattern. The percentage of skilled workers climbed slightly between 1920 and 1930, rising from 47.5 percent in 1920 to as much as 55 percent in 1927 and falling back to 50 percent in 1930, during the Depression. That of unskilled workers dropped steeply, from 34 percent of the workforce in the first year to 15 percent in 1927 and 14 percent in the final year. These untrained workers were replaced by the fast-rising proportion of semi-skilled workers, whose share of the workforce rose from 18.5 percent to 30 percent to 36 percent.[97]

The importance of skilled and semi-skilled workers to the German firm and economy is not captured adequately in the figures alone. Of great importance were the employers' subjective evaluations of the *gelernt* or *angelernt* worker's role in the production process and their assessment of the trained worker's potential contribution to the firm. The way industrialists conceived of their workers mattered.

The case studies of rationalization cited above suggest that employers' thinking on this subject evolved over the course of the 1920s. A debate took place within German machine-manufacturing about whether its future lay with "special" or

"universal" machines, that is, with machines that could perform only single, uniform tasks and hence required only unskilled or, at most, semi-skilled laborers or conversely with machines that could be reconfigured to perform multiple tasks, thus requiring skilled workers.[98] In fact, the debate was not new. As we saw, around 1900, German industry was ambivalent about its future production strategies.[99] The emphasis on mass production during the war and progress in norming had appeared to boost one side. As German industry by the mid 1920s increasingly realized that it must opt for a "flexible rationalization," its machine-tool sector obliged by producing machines in the middle range between special and universal. Initially, German machine-manufacturers "regretfully identified" this inability to move fully to mechanized "flow" production as "a further negative consequence" of Germany's particular market conditions. Then, however, manufacturers began to recognize the "innovative potential of human labor … the specifically elastic potential of human labor, the productive ability to adapt to changing demands, its multifaceted applications and uses." It was only because the German machine-tool industry (and by extension, other manufacturers as well) proved unable to implement full-scale flow production that it had the opportunity to identify the potentialities of human labor.[100] Likewise, Bosch, when confronted with the US automobile industry's mass production methods, "turned a liability into an advantage" by consciously specializing in individual and special fabrications,[101] which required skilled workers. At Siemens, company management had not always recognized the skilled worker's importance, but there occurred in the firm "a central insight of the managers, dawning at the end of the 1920s, into the unchangingly high significance of the male skilled worker."[102]

The rationalization of German firms in the 1920s did not produce, then, a net "deskilling" of the German workforce, but to the contrary made the *Facharbeiter* appear all the more vital to the German variety of capitalist production. German employers did not immediately recognize the potential value of the skilled worker, but rather did so only after their thinking had evolved, though on this matter the scholars provide few concrete details and differ as to the timing of the transition.

As welcome as these recent revisions of our picture of German industry in the Weimar period have been, they fail to adequately convey the abruptness with which German industry's thinking about the "human factor" of production changed in the mid 1920s, which did not reflect simply a gradual reassessment on the basis of accumulating evidence, but in many cases occurred as a "*Gestalt*-switch" in employers' perceptions.

In the years after 1924, German employers increasingly began to see their workers differently. The change in perception of the worker, especially the skilled worker, the abruptness of the switch, and the continuing resistance to it were all subjects of frequent comment by industrialists and others. In June 1924, the National Productivity Board (RKW) devoted a session to the "training of young workers in the broadest sense," one of the earliest (semi) public discussions of the issue. The first speaker, the head of the Association of German Engineers,

Conrad Matschoss, distinguished between the new US "Fordist" style of production and the German. The former trained its workers as quickly as possible for a particular, constantly repeated activity; the latter aimed to develop "quality workers."[103] Another participant, Dr. E. Toussaint, a professor of engineering at the Berlin Technical University and industrial consultant, assailed the view that the development in the mechanical industry would eventually make the trained worker "superfluous." Anybody familiar with the issue, he insisted, would "long since" have recognized that the opposite would more likely be the case and that it would be only a matter of shifting trained and capable workers to new positions. "In many cases," Toussaint concluded, "the most thorough exploitation of the machine could only be guaranteed if a thinking *Facharbeiter* used it."[104]

The following year, the head of the Berlin vocational counseling office deemed it "an encouraging sign that so soon after the [military] collapse [the economy] has heeded the call to awake: 'Above all, highest achievements in work and in the products of work must help to free us from the pressure of conditions brought about by the outcome of the war.'" As a result, "in all vocational branches today the call for 'quality young-workers' goes out."[105] Somewhat later, one of the leaders of the psychotechnical movement, Hans Rupp, concurred: "The conviction that the greatest care must be devoted to the training of the workers has gained broad ground since the war. One recognizes more and more that for us in Germany strength and growth lies in superior work and therefore in the most careful training of the workers."[106] In an article entitled "Man and Technology," Matschoss burdened his own profession with some responsibility for the previous disregard for the worker: "We engineers, in particular, in the indefatigable work for economic-technical progress, for too long failed to make the fact clear to ourselves that we in our industry, which is based on this technology, can never dispense with man. Man and technology, man and machine belong insolubly together."[107]

As these comments have suggested, many perceived the interest in the *Facharbeiter* to be a new, or at least newly urgent, phenomenon. The director of the Working Committee for Vocational Training put the matter in historical perspective:

> The fact that the vocational training of the workers is closely related to the productivity of the economy has been recognized for decades, if only at first by small circles, and practically useful work has been derived from this knowledge. New is the sudden dissemination of these insights and the systematic way and energy with which these tasks are tackled, which have appeared so forcefully on the level of economic and social-political issues.[108]

The new view of the value of the skilled worker spread rapidly after the mid 1920s, but it did so only by overcoming persistent contrary beliefs. In describing the "young industrial worker in the modern factory," an official of the Prussian Trade Ministry still felt obliged to brand as "false" the thesis "that in the future we can make do almost exclusively with untrained workers."[109] Schürholz believed it necessary to "oppose the opinion that the skilled vocation in industry has largely become extinct due to increasing mass production and the influx of

perfected machines."[110] By 1930, the conviction that Germany's economic future, though it undoubtedly would include more and better machines, lay in the hands of its skilled workers had displaced such doubts. A reviewer of the National Productivity Board's volume on "Suitability and Quality Work" could confidently assert: "Value-work of the greatest perfection is the goal of German industry. A detailed justification of this position is today no longer necessary."[111] Likewise, a leading functionary of the Association of German Employers' Organizations referred assuredly to the "growing attention and estimation paid to the 'human factor' in the economy."[112]

Why, though, did the turn to the *Facharbeiter* take place when it did, in the mid 1920s, and why did it take the form it did, that is, as a relatively sudden paradigm shift and conversion? The scholarly inattention to these issues means that our answers can be only fairly speculative.

By the mid 1920s, the unskilled worker had come to seem increasingly burdensome to German employers in several ways. Throughout the postwar period, but especially after the end of inflation, he had exhibited turnover rates higher even than before 1914, in some regions and industries reaching annually well over 100 percent.[113] Thanks to the massive influx of unskilled workers into unions and to the greater bargaining power of the latter, significant wage compression occurred between unskilled and skilled workers after the war. The relative rise in unskilled workers' wages made investment in worker training all the more attractive.[114] Based on their experiences in the war, employers had concluded that the unskilled worker was also far more likely than the skilled one to be politically radical and hence a potential source of disruption to the factory's smooth operation. Finally—and this concerned employers less directly and only in so far as they had to bear collective financial burdens—the unskilled worker constituted a disproportionate share of Weimar's pool of unemployed people, which grew steadily after 1924 with only brief respites. The alternative to a high-skilled workforce, then, seemed increasingly unattractive.

For the first few years after the armistice, however, a variety of alternatives still seemed possible. The extension of wartime policies, the postwar inflation, and, from late 1922, hyperinflation temporarily permitted a remarkably smooth transition to peacetime production, but only by cloaking German industry's true conditions in the haze of a depreciating currency, which gave their exporters a (constantly growing) advantage.[115] In addition, the German demobilization policy, which prevented companies from releasing workers and perpetuated binding wage-mediation procedures, had significant effects on wage development, productivity, technical innovation, and investment strategies, further clouding employers' perceptions about future conditions.[116] As we saw above, German employers often seemed rather uncertain about what qualities made a good worker. The necessarily painful adjustment, which in the other belligerent nations had occurred soon after the end of the war, took place in Germany only from 1924 on, after a new currency and agreement on reparations restored monetary stability to the country and after the demobilization restrictions were removed. With German

companies having to sell their goods in a hard currency for the first time in years, competition in export markets stiffened considerably.[117] German employers had to take stock of their position in new domestic and international environments.

Almost certainly, the most salient feature of the new international economic situation, the one to which both the German educated public and its employers paid the most attention in the middle years of the 1920s, was the spectacular growth of the US economy and its new forms of mass production.[118] As has been mentioned in connection with Carl Köttgen's influential book on *Economic America,* the stream of German industrialists who visited the stations of US success after 1924 returned to their own country with two basic lessons. German industry would have to adopt some important innovations from the US; however, for a number of reasons, Germany also would have to pursue its own kind of rationalization. Numerous references in the burgeoning discussion at this time about German "quality work" suggest that the US system of production served as spur for the German industrialists to reconsider where their relative advantage lay.[119] German industry would prosper or at least survive, not by competing with the US in the mass production of cheap goods, but in the more skilled manufacturing of higher-quality products.

German industry's turn to the skilled worker, as sudden and fraught with urgency as it was, bears the marks, not of a gradual accumulation of evidence and shifting of views, but rather of a reframing of thinking.[120] Certainly, as we have seen in earlier chapters as well as in this one, even before the mid 1920s German industry, or at least parts of it, had already begun to devote more thought and resources to worker training. Important stages in this development were the discussions of the 1870s about apprenticeships in handicrafts and industry and DATSCH's work after 1908. Yet as numerous commentators suggested after the mid 1920s, until then "the vision in economic and firm life focused on the whole too much on drawing the material (physical goods and machine power) into the circle of business considerations," while the "element that shapes the material, namely the working human, … has been excessively overlooked."[121]

The focus on the "material" was, given developments since the turn of the century, in many respects understandable. Tremendously impressive or at least promising improvements, nearly all of them emanating from the US, had occurred in technology and organization. Frederick Winslow Taylor's development of fast steel in the 1890s had begun a cascading revolution of improvements in machine-tool design and use. Perspicacious German engineers not only adopted the new materials and methods for their own companies, but also, after 1907, promoted them more broadly through the trendsetting journal *Workshop Technology.* In chapters 2 and 3, we described the great enthusiasm among German engineers and industrialists for the new technologies, methods of organizing production, and, especially from 1917 on, for agreeing on industry wide norms.

The dominant themes of the early rationalization movement—machine-productivity, calculation, and control—could not but influence German industrialists' views of the worker.[122] Of course, it is true that concurrent with these

efforts, some German employers (even the same ones, such as Ludwig Löwe) were engaged in improving the training of skilled workers: DATSCH (1908) was founded only a year after *Workshop Technology*. Yet as the managing director of the Working Committee for Vocational Training noted in 1926, until the recent wave of attention, the importance of the skilled worker's training only had been recognized by "small circles."[123] If the early rationalizers thought of the "human factor" in production at all, they quite naturally transferred the patterns of thought from materials, technology, and organization to this other sphere. That is, they thought in terms of calculation, control, and standardization. The human worker could be seen at best simply as an accessory to the machine, at worst as a potential source of disruption, as "sand in the gears."[124] Even when an advocate of rationalization became more interested in the worker, the conception of the worker remained mechanical. Thus, in 1913, the leading engineer of the German rationalization movement, Schlesinger, suggested that German industrialists, having spent sufficient time addressing technological and organizational matters, should concentrate now more on the human side of production.[125] As late as 1920, however, Schlesinger—like many other psychotechnicians—still saw the human factor largely as a potential disturbance, as something to be diminished as much as possible:

> The most favorable separation of fundamentally different jobs means that the workshop of mass production makes do in far and away the majority of cases with semi-skilled workers, whose work-abilities depend little on experience and specialized knowledge and even less from high intellectual abilities. Rather, the sensory abilities of eye, ear and joints combined with a certain degree of attentiveness will suffice. The influence of attentiveness and of tiredness declines the more it becomes possible to remove the strain on humans in these regards by making the machines self-operating.[126]

The (re)discovery of the potential contribution of the skilled worker in the mid 1920s did not occur, then, only as the result of gradual shifts in thinking. The "sudden spread"[127] of these ideas depended at least in part on a reframing of industrialists' views of the skilled worker, whose character qualities they now saw as potentially making a positive contribution to the company's success, who became, indeed, the source and guarantor of German "quality work."

The new view of the skilled worker not only stirred discussion of Germany's comparative advantage in the world economy, it also spurred German industry to cooperate to put training on a firmer, standardized basis. Its initiatives took place against the backdrop of first delays in, and then ultimately the postponement of, national legislation on vocational training. By the middle of the decade, observers had serious doubts whether the laws ever would be enacted, although efforts continued. Leading manufacturers, inspired by the new convictions regarding the importance of the skilled worker, decided to act regardless of the legislative outcome. One initiative, DINTA, has been extensively studied, but the more important projects of DATSCH and its Working Committee on Vocational Training (*Arbeitsauschuss für Berufsausbildung*) have received hardly any attention.

The founding of the German Institute for Technical Labor Training (DINTA[128]) in 1925 has received more attention than the other two organizations in the scholarly literature.[129] In May 1925, in a speech at a gathering of the Association of German Iron and Steel Industrialists, its chairman Albert Vögler diagnosed that German employers had been ignoring the most important element in the production process: the worker.[130] The speakers Vögler then introduced outlined the tasks of a new organization, which German heavy industry (coal and iron producers) would launch several months later.

DINTA developed and propagated an array of programs and measures concerned with the role of the worker in the company and beyond. In addition to worker training, which would shape the incoming workers, DINTA promoted a range of steps to appeal to current, older workers, by strengthening the "factory community"[131] and gaining the workers' allegiance for the company. These included, most importantly, company newspapers, which DINTA set up or provided; suggestion-schemes to encourage the workers' input into factory operations; and a variety of recreational and welfare policies pertaining to the laborer's after-work and home life. DINTA's efforts quickly met with an enthusiastic response, thus revealing many German employers' growing interest in the "human factor" of production. Within a year of its founding, DINTA was training nearly forty engineers and foremen from Ruhr heavy-metal firms at its headquarters in Düsseldorf and had established twenty-four apprenticeship training workshops in other mining and metallurgical companies. DINTA published nearly twenty company newspapers. By the end of the decade, between 150 and 300 firms relied, at least in part, on DINTA for their apprentice training and more than fifty produced company newspapers with its help.[132]

The most comprehensive treatments to date of DINTA have had trouble explaining the organization's rapid success. Their accounts refer to its eclectic appeal, the tireless propagandizing of its leader Karl Arnhold, and, most centrally, its political resonance with anti-Marxist conservatism.[133]

Such claims for the central role of politics in DINTA's appeal can account for only part of the organization's success and have overshadowed other aspects of its work. The motives of the DINTA men, after all, were not necessarily the same as the motives of the DINTA clients. In fact, considerable evidence suggests that firms were more interested in practical matters than in politics. Why, in the absence of direct benefits, should *individual* firms be interested enough in *national* political developments to invest considerable resources in the latter? Would firms not have been far more concerned with their own well being? Joan Campbell's and Mary Nolan's own evidence suggests that they were, or at least that DINTA leadership itself believed they were. Thus, Campbell suggests that Arnhold made "great efforts to obscure" DINTA's political program and instead emphasized "rational considerations" and "the economic benefits to be derived from his educational innovations," precisely in order to appeal to the employers and even to labor.[134] Indeed, before DINTA's founding, German entrepreneurs "had proven insufficiently responsive" to the appeals of a future Arnhold aide that

they should concern themselves with the workers' well being for *philosophical-political* reasons. It was only later, when he appealed to the employers' self-interest, that he "got a hearing in industrial circles."[135] Given the firms' interest in DINTA's comprehensive, multi-year programs for training skilled workers, it seems doubtful that employers were not interested seriously in "what and how" the workers were taught, as Campbell implies. Apprentice training and education, according to Wolfgang Muth, was "the area on which the DINTA concentrated its main efforts" during the Weimar period.[136] Given German industry's new emphases in their production strategies, apprentice training and education were the most likely reasons for DINTA's success—even if not the sole raison d'etre of its founding.

The overestimation of DINTA's political appeal has obscured not just its role in training skilled workers; more significantly for present purposes, it has kept scholarly attention focused on DINTA to the exclusion of two other organizations. DATSCH and, closely tied to the same, the Working Committee for Vocational Training, did not promote themselves as vigorously as Arnhold did DINTA. Yet in the long run, DATSCH and the Working Committee proved to be of far greater significance for the German variety of capitalism than DINTA.[137] The creation of the Working Committee, in particular, which only recently has begun to receive appropriate scholarly attention,[138] can be regarded as one of the decisive institutional steps in the creation of the modern German vocational training system. After the establishment of the Labor Administration and comprehensive vocational counseling earlier in the decade, this standardized system of vocational training formed the third basic strand in the German project to optimize the workforce.

When DATSCH was founded in 1908 under the auspices of the Association of German Engineers and the Association of German Machine-Building Organizations, it initially aspired to coordinate centrally the technical training at machine-building schools.[139] By 1911, however, it had already expanded its efforts to the training of skilled workers in the machine and iron industries. With the assistance of industrial giants such as Siemens, AEG, and MAN, DATSCH promulgated guidelines for the organization of apprenticeship training, the legal status of the apprentice, and the practical and theoretical training in the "mechanical industry."[140] Still, before the war, the emphasis remained on the theoretical side of training.[141] The numerous affiliated industrial associations helped to disseminate widely these recommendations. After the war-induced interruption of its activities, DATSCH turned its attention increasingly to the content of practical training of skilled workers. Borrowing materials from leading companies, the DATSCH staff developed course plans for such central vocations as machinist, constructive machinist, prototype-carpenter, and former. Through its own publishing division, DATSCH distributed posters, slides, and looseleaf pages displaying the technical specifications and, in clear diagrams, the "what and how" of basic industrial procedures, such as soldering, milling, and drilling.[142] After a lull in the early 1920s, DATSCH's sales to firms of these vocational teach-

ing materials nearly quadrupled between 1924 and 1931, jumping from 40,000 to 150,000 *Reichsmark.*[143]

DATSCH's activities, especially after the war, in establishing standard training and work procedures for the most important industrial vocations prepared the ground for the founding in the summer of 1926 of the Working Committee for Vocational Training, which nonetheless represented a true watershed in the creation of the German vocational system. The establishment of the Working Committee not only by DATSCH, but with the backing of the National Association of German Industry and the Association of German Employers' Organizations, meant that the two most important industrial employer groups had committed themselves to improving and standardizing worker training and that they now had a forum dedicated exclusively to this task. When, in 1927, the leading handicrafts organizations joined the Working Committee, thus burying decades-old differences with industry over control of vocational training, all of the major employer groups were now engaged.[144]

In addition to the participation of the most important economic interest groups, the sense of mission and the comprehensive mandate of the Working Committee distinguished it even from the earlier efforts of DATSCH. In the inaugural issue of the Working Committee's journal, *Technical Education,* which became the flagship of the movement, the chairmen of the new body, the major industrialists Ernst von Borsig and Gottlieb Lippart, argued for the central role of the worker in the production process:

> In the widest circles it has gradually come to be recognized that the competitiveness of our industry depends not only on the technical and organizational perfecting of the production apparatus, but to no lesser degree on the best-possible use of the available human forces. Everywhere one recognizes that the most valuable good which Germany, robbed of so many natural resources, possesses is human labor power.

However, even more important was investing in the *development* of human capital:

> It is not enough, though, that one uses most economically the people who are integrated into the production process; rather, it is above all necessary that the abilities of those who are to participate in the production process are raised to the maximum and developed in the most versatile way already before they enter the economic system.[145]

The chairmen's distinction—between, on the one hand, distributing existing human resources and, on the other, cultivating new talents—succinctly captures the two approaches to optimizing the German workforce analyzed in earlier chapters.

The chairmen underscored the sweeping and systematic mandate of the Working Committee, "which will comprehensively treat all the great questions of the vocational training of an industrial worker which are suited for a centralized regulation." In an article entitled "Our Tasks," the director of the Working Committee, F. Schürholz, delineated more concretely the work ahead. The very first

task, the prerequisite for all further systematizing, was to "define" all vocations. Only on the basis of such a clarification could the substantive coordination of training be undertaken and vocational "profiles" created, which would describe (and prescribe) the relevant activities of each job and the apprenticeship training necessary in each of these according to the DATSCH courses. Perhaps most crucially, the qualifying exams, "which influence the quality of the training and determine the extent of the demands made of the testee," needed to be made largely uniform throughout the country.[146]

Though Schürholz proposed the standardization of training and testing in the context of a commentary on the draft of a law on vocational training, it soon became clear that German industry's goals in this regard did not depend ultimately on legal measures. When the proposed law finally foundered in 1928, the Working Committee and DATSCH continued, and even accelerated, their work.[147] Over the following years, they turned out dozens of vocational profiles, training plans, and exams for the most important industrial vocations. The efforts from the mid 1920s by German industry, with the support of key government ministries, to systematize training procedures mark a decisive turning point in the formation of the overall German vocational system as it exists to this day.[148]

For the other strand of the German vocational system—the vocational counseling movement, whose promoters in the Prussian Trade Ministry were determined not only to establish universal vocational counseling, but to encourage as many young men as possible to become skilled workers—German industry's renewed commitment to the skilled worker had a significant impact. Most importantly, it facilitated vocational counseling's dealings with industry. For in the second plenary meeting of the Working Committee, on 29 January 1926, it agreed "actively to support the work of the vocational counseling stations" and recommended that these offices and the industrial representatives cooperate locally.[149] As noted above, the endorsement by industry's highest representatives greatly facilitated the work of the vocational offices, which now appreciatively acknowledged local employers' enhanced interest in their services.[150] Thanks to industry's rediscovery of the skilled worker, its earlier mistrust of the "bureaucratic" vocational counseling offices was mitigated and, from 1926 on, these offices operated in a significantly more hospitable environment. Their success in attracting young school-leavers reflected the new cooperation. Between 1924/25 and 1927/28, the number of visitors to vocational counseling rose from 307,000 to 438,000, an increase of more than 40 percent.[151] As a savvy vocational counselor had noted, if the *Berufsberatung* offices controlled the apprenticeship positions—which they increasingly did—"the youths and their parents will follow."

After the war, the government advocates of a program of skilled work faced daunting tasks, despite—indeed often because of—the establishment of a national Labor Administration. A whole new bureaucracy had to be created. Vocational counseling lacked trained personnel and relevant materials. In the absence of legal authority compelling job seekers and companies to use vocational counseling, the latter had to find other ways to achieve *Totalerfassung.* Above all, be-

cause it had become attached to the labor offices, vocational counseling suffered from a reputation for bureaucracy, mass operations, and indifference, and hence it lacked trust among important constituents, most importantly employers. In response, vocational counseling endeavored to improve its services and earn the trust of its constituents—by training counselors and developing knowledge of vocations; cultivating relations with schools; and employing applied psychology.

These steps, however, would not have been sufficient to boost significantly the number of skilled workers—especially given the failure of legislation on a national system of vocational training—if German industry itself had not clarified its own views of its workforce. Beginning in the middle of the decade, many German industrialists became less enamored of visions of centralized, rationalized control. Instead, when the fog of the postwar restrictions and inflation had lifted, they became more convinced that the skilled worker would be an irreplaceable part of a policy of flexible rationalization. The resulting cooperation to standardize vocational training and greater willingness to work with the vocational counseling offices set the stage—barring any unforeseen disruptions—for a significant expansion of Germany's skilled workforce.

Notes

1. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 3, protocol of meeting on 7 and 8 December 1921.
2. Thelen, *How Institutions,* 63–75; Wolf-Dietrich Greinert, *Das "Deutsche System" der Berufsausbildung: Geschichte, Organisation, Perspektiven* (Baden-Baden, 1995), 90–96.
3. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* Nr. 21, 1926, 367–69. The total number of visitors, including older people, was higher: 251,000 and 307,000, respectively.
4. Ibid., 369. Roughly, 60 percent of the visitors were male and 40 percent female. Reichsarbeitsverwaltung, *Berufsberatung, Berufsauslese, Berufsausbildung* (Berlin, 1926), 25. The figures are from 1922/1923.
5. BAB, R 3901/861, 1 February 1922.
6. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez, Fach 1, Nr 61, vol. 3, 16 February 1922.
7. BAB, R3901/935, 29 January 1925.
8. See Uhlig, *Arbeit–amtlich,* 244–45, on Wurttemberg, which was typical of the whole country.
9. See numerous such reports in GStA PK, I HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez, Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 5.
10. See Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 119–251.
11. BAB, R 3901/935, 3 and 4 March 1924.
12. GStA PK, I. HA. Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez, Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 5, 8 January 1925.
13. GStA PK, I. HA. Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, Adhib 1, vol. 1, 22 January 1925.
14. GStA PK, I. HA. Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 5, 8 January 1925.
15. Ibid., 8 January 1925.

16. The first activity report of the office in Offenbach, for example, begins with a category under this heading. See BAB, R3901/935, August 1923.
17. Ibid., August 1923.
18. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib 3, vol. 1, 22 June 1921; see also, for example, the annual report of the labor office in Lübeck, in BAB, R 3901/870, 11 October 1924.
19. See, for example, the article on 15 November 1922 in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier,* "Berufsamt und Berufszwang," excerpted by the Imperial Ministry of Economics, in BAB, R 3101/10277; also the article in *Der Rote Tag* from 3 June 1922, "Berufsvermittlung und Schülersteckbriefe des Berufsamtes der Stadt Berlin," in BAB, R3901/934.
20. See, for example, the comment of the *Königsberg Hartungssche Zeitung* on 7 September 1922, that successful vocational counseling "[probably] will become a matter of life and death in a country in which the correct utilization of all economic possibilities, itself partly determined by a purposive distribution of workers, decides over being and not being." The article "Berufsberatung und Wiederaufbau" is excerpted in BAB, R3901/934.
21. BAB, R3901/690, *Vossische Zeitung,* 3 January 1922.
22. BAB, R 3901/935, *Der Tag,* 23 May 1924.
23. This is how the provincial Vocational Office in Pomerania characterized the dissatisfactions and the desires of the parents; see GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib 3, vol. 3, 2 August 1922.
24. BAB, R3901/936, "Bericht über die Entwicklung der Berufsberatung in der Zeit vom 1. April bis 1. Oktober 1925."
25. See, for example, the report by the vocational counselor in Offenbach, who reported turnouts of between 80 and 90 percent of the parents, in BAB, R3901/935, August 1923. Also, see the urgent appeals by the Frankfurt office to local parents to consult with the former on their children's future, in BAB, R3901/934, 1 August 1921.
26. BAB, R3901/935, August 1923.
27. See the article "Wer soll Berufsberatung treiben?" by Käthe Gäbel, in *Der Tag,* on 16 July 1924. In BAB, R3901/935.
28. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib 3, vol. 1, 22 June 1921.
29. The report of the Pomeranian Provincial Vocational Office to the Prussian Ministry of Trade, in ibid., 2 August 1922.
30. See the complaints to this effect, in 1925, from the Imperial Labor Office to the Prussian Minister of Education, in BAB, R3901/936, 1925.
31. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez, Fach 1, Nr 61, adhib 3, vol. 1, 17 October 1919.
32. Ibid., 17 October 1919, letter from the State Commercial Office to its superiors in the Ministry of Trade, 14 February 1920, and on 22 March 1920 from Trade to the Prussian Ministry of Education.
33. Ibid., 26 February 1920.
34. Such complaints are legion. See, for example, BAB, R3901/934, 5 November 1920; ibid., 31 January 1921; ibid., 29 June 1922.
35. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib 3, vol. 1, 2 August 1922. In this report, the juxtaposition of increased demands on teachers in a supporting role and the lost ability to help students directly emerges as particularly galling to the teachers.
36. BAB, R3901/934, 29 June 1922.
37. BAB, R3901/934, annual report of the vocational office in Offenbach, August 1923.
38. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 4, 9 December 1922.
39. BAB, R3901/934, report of the vocational office in Offenbach, August 1923.

40. BAB, R3901/870, 11 October 1924.
41. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez, Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 3, protocol of meeting of Land Vocational Offices, 7/8 December 1921.
42. BAB, R3901/934, report of the vocational office in Offenbach, August 1923.
43. Thelen, *How Institutions,* 63–75; Greinert, *Das "Deutsche System,"* 90–96.
44. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* Nr. 8, 1926, 133ff.
45. Reichsarbeitsverwaltung, *Berufsberatung,* 51.
46. BAB, R3901/687, brochure of the *Land* Office, 1 November 1919.
47. See, for example, the description of the course in Chemnitz, in BAB, R3901/934, November 1920, or that in the course in Frankfurt in June/July 1921, in ibid., report on the Labor Administration's visit to Frankfurt, 15 August 1922.
48. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61p, Ministry of Trade to the Labor Exchange Union in Magdeburg, 4 April 1920; see the numerous documents pertaining to the financial support of the Imperial Labor Office for the Seminar, in BAB, R3901/891. BAB, R3901/934, protocol of meeting of representatives of the Prussian Provincial Vocational Offices, 11 March 1921.
49. BAB, R3101/10277, letter of Imperial Labor Minister to Imperial Economics Minister containing the protocol of the November meeting, 30 December 1920.
50. The concerns pertained to more than just the training of the counselors, but also to vocational profiles (to be treated below) and other topics.
51. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez, Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 3, letter of Provincial Vocational Office in Brandenburg to Land Labor Offices and Vocational Offices, 22 November 1921.
52. Ibid., 22 November 1921.
53. BAB, R3101/10277, protocol of meeting in the Labor Office on vocational counseling on 3/4 November 1920, 30 December 1920.
54. See the protocol of the 26 April 1922 meeting in the Imperial Labor Office, in BAB, R3901/934, 26 April 1922.
55. See the article "Berufsberatung" in *Der Deutsche* from 30 June 1922, and the handwritten commentaries in the margin, in BAB, R3101/10277.
56. BAB, R3901/934, letter of the Labor Office to the Labor Ministry, 29 June 1922.
57. BAB, R3901/934, Letter from Reich Labor Office to the Imperial Labor Ministry, 29 June 1922.
58. Ibid., 29 June 1922. According to the Land Vocational Office, Saxony-Anhalt, in its letter to the Imperial Labor Ministry, 31 January 1921.
59. See, for example the reports from Offenbach (BAB, R3901/935, August 1923); Harburg (BAB, R3901/935, 6 August 1923).
60. BAB, R3901/934, Letter from the Imperial Labor Office to the Reich Labor Ministry, 29 July 1922; also ibid., Letter from the Vocational Office in Saxony-Anhalt to the Reich Labor Ministry, 31 January 1921.
61. Ibid., protocol of Committee meeting on 9 December 1921, sent by Reich Labor Ministry to the Reich Labor Office on 10 December 1921 for evaluation.
62. Ibid., for the case of Berlin, see the letter of the Labor Ministry to the Labor Office, 29 June 1922; for Silesia, see the letter of the Labor Office to the Prussian Trade Ministry, in GStA PK, I. HA., Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib. 4, 24 February 1923.
63. GStA PK, I. HA., Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib. 4, 24 February 1923.
64. On this and generally for a more detailed account of the role of applied psychology in workforce optimization projects, and for further references, see David Meskill, *Human Economies: Labor Administration, Vocational Training and Psychological Testing in Germany, 1914–1964* (Cambridge, 2003).

65. Friedrich Dorsch, *Geschichte und Probleme der angewandten Psychologie* (Bern, 1963), 85.
66. See, for example the comments by a representative of the Prussian Education Ministry at a meeting on 8 July 1920, in GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib 4; also, the letter of the Prussian Ministry for Popular Welfare to the President of the Prussian Parliament on 24 May 1922 in ibid.; also the letter of the President of the Labor Office to the State Labor Offices, on 4 July 1923, in BAB, R3901/893.
67. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, EI Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, adhib 4, letter from the Office in the Rhine Province to the Trade Ministry, 12 January 1923.
68. Ibid., letter from the Silesian Office to the Trade Ministry, 7 December 1922.
69. BAB, R 3901/935, report from Berufsamt Offenbach, August 1923.
70. BAB, R 3901/ 935, report of the vocational office in Offenbach, August 1923.
71. Ibid., report of the vocational office in Breslau, 20 August 1923.
72. BAB, R 3901/935, 3 and 4 March 1924.
73. For several works in this vein, see Robert A. Brady, *The Rationalization Movement in German Industry: A Study in the Evolution of Economic Planning* (Berkeley, 1933); Georges Friedmann, *Industrial Society* (New York, 1955); Harry Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital: the Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1974). In several cases, the authors' Marxian sympathies likely led them to view machinery as a substitute for—rather than as a complement to—labor power.
74. See Nolan, *Visions,* 3–57. See, also, Charles S. Maier's article, "Between Taylorism and Technocracy: European Ideologies and the vision of industrial productivity in the 1920s," in *The Journal of Contemporary History,* vol. 5, nr. 2 (1970): 27–61, which examines the ideological and political role of the vision of technical expertise replacing political dispute.
75. Nolan, *Visions,* 139–40. The number of jackhammers in use in the Ruhr coal region rose from 264 in 1913 to 44,993 by 1925 and to 70,145 by 1927.
76. Nolan, *Visions,* 140, on coal, and 144, on iron and steel, where she contradicts her earlier claim that suggestions to the same effect "fell on deaf ears" (*Visions,* 75); Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 496–506, on the electrical giant Siemens; Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 139–44, on the machine tool industry.
77. See Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 451–71, for a detailed survey of Siemens' work on this technology.
78. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 83–96.
79. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 145, characterizes "the broad introduction of flow-work in the manufacturing industry" as "the central theme of the rationalization movement in Germany after 1925."
80. See Nolan, *Visions,* 30–57.
81. Ibid.
82. Harold James, *The German Slump: Politics and Economics 1924–1936* (Oxford, 1986), 148ff.; Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung;* Jürgen Bönig, *Die Einführung von Fliessbandarbeit in Deutschland bis 1933: Zur Geschichte einer Sozialinnovation,* part 1 (Hamburg, 1993), who concludes that by 1930, perhaps 80,000—or less than half a percent of all industrial workers—were engaged in flow- or assembly line work (Bönig, 699).
83. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 50.
84. Schulz-Merin, director of the business section of the Association of German Machine Making Organizations in 1926, quoted in ibid., 147.
85. This is a major theme in the most influential book on the US challenge, *Das Wirtschaftliche Amerika* (Berlin, 1925), by Carl Köttgen, general-director of Siemens and vice-president of the National Productivity Board.
86. For the coal industry, see Nolan, *Visions*, 138. For iron and steel, see Thomas Welskopp, *Arbeit und Macht im Hüttenwerk: Arbeits- und industrielle Beziehungen in der deutschen und amerikanischen Eisen- und Stahlindustrie von den 1860er bis zu den 1930er Jahren* (Bonn, 1994), 121, 305, 478–519, who postulates a reskilling of the workforce beginning around 1900.

87. See Homburg's judgment that the "starkest characteristic of the rationalization measures [at Siemens] in the 1920s was their experimental character" (*Rationalisierung,* 526). Freyberg talks of a "learning process" at Siemens (*Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 16).
88. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 187–88.
89. Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 526–27; Freyberg's and Stolle's studies (*Arbeiterpolitik im Betrieb: Frauen und Männer, Reformisten und Radikale, Fach- und Massenarbeiter bei Bayer, BASF, Bosch und in Solingen (1900–1933)* (Frankfurt, 1980)) of the mechanical industry and Bosch, respectively, come to very similar conclusions.
90. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung.* Also, see Stolle, *Arbeiterpolitik,* 195.
91. Josef Mooser, *Arbeiterleben in Deutschland, 1900–1970: Klassenlagen, Kultur und Politik* (Frankfurt, 1984), 59.
92. Ibid., 52–53.
93. The number of such workshops, which could be afforded only by the largest concerns, climbed from just 11 in 1912 to 39 in 1919, 67 in 1926 (plus 108 connected to the Imperial Railroad), and significantly more by the end of the decade. Wolfgang Muth, *Berufsausbildung in der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart, 1985), 336–37.
94. Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 556.
95. Ibid., 557.
96. Stolle, *Arbeiterpolitik,* 198–99.
97. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 231.
98. Ibid., 99–105.
99. See chapter 2.
100. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 167–68.
101. Stolle, *Arbeiterpolitik,* 195.
102. Ibid., 679.
103. *Arbeit und Beruf,* nr. 17, 10 September 1924, 329. Matschoss went on to warn against "exaggerations" in either direction.
104. Ibid., 330.
105. *Arbeit und Beruf,* nr. 12, 25 June 1925, 279.
106. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 1, January 1928, 1.
107. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 6, June 1928, 55.
108. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 1, August 1926, 1.
109. *Arbeit und Beruf,* nr. 9, 10 May 1926, 251.
110. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 11, November 1927, 127.
111. *Arbeit und Beruf,* nr. 6, 25 March 1934, 1.
112. Herbert Studders, in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 10, October 1932, 76.
113. See Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 335–43, on the extent of the problem and on companies' concerns about the related costs. She reports on a study of the Berlin metal industry, which showed that while turnover had reached 50 percent annually in 1913, after the war, it increased, and in particular, after 1923, it rose "continually," reaching 150 percent annually by the summer of 1925. Also, see Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 242.
114. Thelen, *How Institutions,* 68–70.
115. Chandler puts it succinctly: "For almost a decade after 1914 German industrialists simply could not plan ahead." Chandler, *Scale and Scope,* 503.
116. Günther Mai, "Arbeitsmarktregulierung oder Sozialpolitik? Die personelle Demobilmachung in Deutschland 1918 bis 1920/1924," in Feldman et al., *Die Anpassung,* 202–36, esp. 232.
117. Maier, *Recasting,* 482.
118. For a good assessment of the impact of US economic growth on German thinking in the 1920s, see Nolan, *Visions,* 58–82. As perhaps the most striking indicator of the scale of US growth, it can be noted that in 1925, the United States produced nearly 100 times as many automobiles as did German firms (3.5 million vs. fewer than 40,000) (Nolan, *Visions,* 37–38). In one of Germany's most dynamic industries, the electrical, its share of global production had

fallen between 1913 and 1925 from 35 to 23 percent, while the US share had soared from 29 to 49 percent. (Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 50).

119. See, for example, the opening comments at the National Productivity Board meeting on 21 June 1924 by the head of the German Association of Engineers, Conrad Matschoss, who explicitly contrasted US "Fordist" with German methods (as reported in *Arbeit und Beruf,* nr. 17, 10 September 1924: 329); or those of psychology professor Hans Rupp writing in the cover story of the January 1928 issue of *Technische Erziehung* (already partly cited above): "In rationalization of work, of the firm, of sales organization, other countries, especially America, are equal or, thanks to the far greater company capitalization, partly superior to us. In terms of the quality of the work and the workers, in contrast, we need fear no competition. However, other countries are already striving to catch up, and we must devote the greatest attention to the thorough and economic training [of young workers]."
120. By framing I allude to the role of conceptually organized contexts in decision-making, as analyzed by Kahneman and Tversky. See their seminal article, Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases," in *Science,* 185 (1974): 1124–31. One might also speak of a *Gestalt*-switch or paradigm shift.
121. The director of the Working Committee on Vocational Training, Schürholz, in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 1, January 1929: 4.
122. For a similar case, in which tremendous technological and organizational advances strengthened the tendency to view all problems as amenable to planning and calculation, see Martin van Creveld's chapter on military thinking in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century "machine age," in *Command in War,* 148–88.
123. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 1, August 1926: 1.
124. Homburg, *Rationalisierung,* 627.
125. Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 225.
126. Georg Schlesinger, *Psychotechnik und Betriebswissenschaft* (Leipzig, 1920), 92–93.
127. Schürholz, in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 1, August 1926: 1.
128. *Deutsches Institut für technische Arbeitsschulung.*
129. See, for example, Ronald M. Smelser, *Robert Ley, Hitler's Labor Front Leader* (New York, 1988), 189–92; Rabinbach, *The Human Motor,* 284–88; Nolan, *Visions,* 179–205.
130. Albin Gladin, "Berufliche Bildung in der deutschen Wirtschaft, 1918–1945," in Pohl, *Berufsausbildung,* 62.
131. In German, *Werksgemeinschaft.*
132. Nolan, *Visions,* 187.
133. Ibid., 187–91; Joan Campbell, *Joy in Work, German Work: The National Debate, 1800–1945* (Princeton, 1989), 243–59.
134. Campbell, *Joy in Work,* 251.
135. Ibid., 248, 250.
136. Muth, *Berufsausbildung,* 357. My criticisms of previous interpretations of DINTA are not meant to discount the importance of its efforts to reach beyond worker training—to *Werkspolitik,* leadership in the factory, and the worker's life outside the factory walls. However, my argument does suggest not only that worker-training was a significant aspect of the DINTA-program, but also that even the other approaches were geared primarily to developing motivated workers and not necessarily to broader, more political aims. In light of the tendentiousness of previous accounts, I would argue that the work of DINTA deserves a thorough reassessment, which we cannot provide here.
137. Given this importance, it is striking how little has been written about these organizations.
138. Thelen, *How Institutions,* 88–89; Hansen, *Caps and Gowns,* 596–97. In his capable survey of Weimar vocational training, Wolfgang Muth does devote five pages to the Working Committee. See Muth, *Berufsausbildung,* 375–79.
139. See chapter 2.
140. Muth, *Berufsausbildung,* 348–52.

141. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 1, August 1926: 7.
142. For nice examples of these "teaching posters," see ibid.
143. Muth, *Berufsausbildung,* 352.
144. The *Handwerk* organizations were the German Chamber of Handicrafts and Business (*Deutscher Handwerks-und Gewerbekammertag*) and the National Union of German Handicrafts (*Reichsverband des Deutschen Handwerks*). The reason for handicrafts' newfound willingness to cooperate with industry, according to Muth (*Berufsausbildung,* 377), was the national government's draft of a vocational training law that handicrafts, like industry, deemed unsatisfactory. Additionally, the industrial employers' obvious determination to cooperate on vocational training may have suggested to handicrafts that compromise was now their best option.
145. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 1, August 1926: 1.
146. Ibid., 2–3.
147. See, for example, the report in the May 1928 edition of *Technische Erziehung* (45) summarizing the deliberations in the *Arbeitsausschuss*: "In the further committee meetings, especially of the steering committee, the wish was expressed to make the attempt for the time being, *irrespective of the conclusion of a vocational training law and of its final form* [emphasis added, DM], to reach agreement between industry and handicrafts on a regulation of the qualifying exams for apprentices."
148. Mary Nolan's lack of interest in the Working Committee and all that it meant for the future of German vocational training is a significant omission. Because of it, her characterization of the motives of German employers hardly can do justice to their concerns: "This plea to value men over machines was for some industrialists an excuse to avoid rationalization; for others it was a cover for intensified exploitation, or a key element in a program to create a new, more productive and politically conservative working class" (*Visions,* 74).
149. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 6, protocol of the meeting on 29 January 1926.
150. BAB, R 3901/ 936, "Bericht über den Stand und die Entwicklung der Berufsberatung in der Zeit vom 1. November 1926 bis 30. April 1927," 7: "These decisions by the leading organizations [of business], the reports suggest, have undoubtedly made work easier for the local offices."
151. Figures from *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* nr. 21, 1926: 367–69, and Reichsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenunterstützung, *Zehn Jahre Reichsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenunterstützung* (Berlin, 1937), 39. These figures include older advice seekers; separate numbers on school-leavers visiting vocational counseling are not available.

Chapter 5

The Nazi Consolidation of the Human Economies

*W*ithin just a couple of years of German industry's rediscovery of the skilled worker and the permanent legal establishment of the Labor Administration, economic and political tidal waves threatened to sweep them away. The Depression beginning in 1929 meant that neither companies nor individuals, for whom immediate survival was at stake, were willing to invest much in training for the long-term future. Likewise, the Labor Administration had to redirect the bulk of its resources earmarked for vocational counseling toward the simple sustenance of the growing legions of unemployed. The rise to power of the National Socialists overturned more than simply the corporatist structures of the Labor Administration. The new regime's radical methods and goals—especially its focus on expansionary war—raised doubts about the future of all of the previous policies, including the vocational programs launched just a few years earlier.

The Great Depression

Only a few years after DATSCH had begun its work on standardizing vocational training and after the *Reichsanstalt* had been founded, the prolonged economic slump and unprecedentedly high unemployment that began in 1929/30 threatened the viability of all aspects of the German human economies. Even for an economy inured to unemployment, the scale of the downturn was dizzying. By the winter of 1931/32, six million Germans, fully one-third of the workforce,

Notes for this section begin on page 174.

were unemployed.[1] Only the US slump could compare; never before had an industrial nation experienced such an economic crisis.

The Depression cast the future of the Labor Administration, whose legal framework had been set up only a couple of years before and which had only begun to unify the divergent practices of its constituents, in doubt. The sheer scale of the unemployment renewed questions whether an insurance system could work at all:[2] designed to be in fiscal balance when an average of 700,000 were unemployed,[3] the *Reichsanstalt* found itself paying claims to several times that number. Some politicians even called for the replacement of the *Reichsanstalt* by a state office funded by tax revenues.

The surge of unemployment upended the balance between the several branches of the Labor Administration. More generally, in terms of the underlying thrust of the workforce projects, the crisis significantly strengthened the tendency to emphasize order and centralized control at the expense of individual development. The unemployment wing absorbed an increasing share of all of the resources, to the detriment of job placement and, especially, vocational counseling. Vocational counseling also lost resources when the overburdened unemployment and job placement wings laid claim to its personnel. Wherever one looked, vocational counselors were occupied with "writing lists, filing documents and dispensing certifying stamps" to the unemployed, in short, "with all possible things, just not vocational counseling."[4] But the most demoralizing development for vocational counselors and the movement's supporters were the outright attacks made upon that branch of the Labor Administration by critics within the *Reichsanstalt*. Many charged that a decade of vocational education and counseling had not been able to prevent the worst economic crisis in modern German history.[5]

Within the labor offices, vocational counselors saw themselves engaged in daily struggles for "full recognition."[6] Potentially of more consequence, in the public discussion about cutbacks in the *Reichsanstalt,* a former head of a labor office published a call for the "radical reduction of job placement and vocational counseling."[7] Several representatives of the labor unions to the *Reichsanstalt*'s governing administrative board even proposed the elimination of vocational counseling altogether.[8] As the headquarters' chief of vocational counseling said at a meeting on 23 January 1932, "everywhere vocational counseling is in a difficult position."[9]

The vocational counseling statistics confirmed this generally gloomy picture, though not across the board. On the positive side, the number of visitors to vocational counseling offices dropped only marginally and, due to the declining number of school-leavers, vocational counseling actually managed to attract a growing proportion of youths.[10] Much more ominous, however, was the fact that the number of apprenticeship placements had fallen from 176,000 in the *Reichsanstalt*'s first year to 98,000 by 1931/32; the proportion of visitors to vocational counseling who entered a training position thus fell from two-fifths to one-quarter.[11] Responsible for this alarming trend was German employers' reluctance to take on apprentices during the economic crisis.

If the economic crisis curtailed the ability and willingness of individual employers to train workers, it inflicted even more harm on German employers' collective efforts to promote a vocational system. In the face of immediate threats to its members' economic survival, the Working Committee on Vocational Training, which had been the coordinating body of these efforts, suspended its activities indefinitely. The affiliated German Committee for Technical Schooling (DATSCH), which depended for most of its funds on contributions from its members, reported in September 1931 that the "difficult conditions of the time" had forced its instructional materials service, which distributed training plans, tests, etc., to companies, to accept a "very great restriction" of its activities to only the most urgent tasks.[12] The next months, the darkest of the Depression, raised doubts about the organization's survival. DATSCH's chairman began his New Year's greetings for 1932 with foreboding:

> Words for the new year cannot pass over the problems and the problematic of our days. The fateful question about the existence of German essence, of German culture, stands threateningly over the work of the "German Committee" as well. Will it be possible to continue to work organically on the multi-wing building of the technical education system?[13]

By the fall of the same year, DATSCH was contemplating a suspension of its activities, at least for the time being.[14]

National Socialism and Increasing Coercion in the Human Economies

The economic crisis that threatened to disrupt the German labor force projects also helped to bring Hitler and the National Socialists to power. Scholars in recent decades have reached consensus about some aspects of the economy under National Socialism.[15] The Nazi leadership cared most deeply about a few political goals, in particular preparing the country for, and leading it in, war. In order to stay in power and pursue that main end, the regime needed to succeed in overcoming the economic slump and mass unemployment. Above and beyond these aims, visions of a new domestic order assumed only a secondary importance and may have even been mutually contradictory. Though by no means in total control of the state, the Nazis moved the country and the economy in the direction of their main political objectives. Nonetheless, the chaotic nature of the regime, along with undercutting the effectiveness of policies and opening the door for radical experiments, could provide opportunities for independent behavior by other actors. Depending on the importance of an issue to the Nazi leadership and the balance of forces at a given time, public ministries and other agencies might pursue their own policies. Industry lived under the constraints of an increasingly managed economy, weighing short-term opportunities and risks against long-term strategies of success.

How did the German human economies—the Labor Administration, especially its vocational counseling wing and the efforts to systematize vocational training—fare under the Third Reich? The most immediate effect of the new regime was to alter the internal and external political environments of the institutions of the vocational system. In the interest of overcoming an obvious impediment to their longer-term goals, namely, high unemployment, the Nazis also began to turn the Labor Administration into a more openly coercive instrument.

The National Socialists' assumption of power in 1933 meant both change and continuity for the organizations behind the German labor optimization projects. At the *Reichsanstalt,* the Nazis effected a "coordination," dissolving the supervisory bodies composed largely of union and employer representatives and, in the spirit of the *Führer*-principle, making the administrative head at each of the three levels sole arbiter.[16] The personnel of the Labor Administration, who came disproportionately from the unions, SPD, Catholic Center, and liberal parties, suffered significant purges. If overall 2 percent of all bureaucrats lost their positions due to the 1933 Law on Civil Service, in the Labor Administration, the figure was 19 percent.[17] Some of the more important figures from the pioneering generation of vocational counselors and psychologists were forced out or left because they were politically or religiously unpalatable to the new regime.[18]

Despite this purge, a surprising degree of continuity was maintained in the *Reichsanstalt* across the political gulf of 1933. Crucially, the head of the Labor Administration since 1922 and of the *Reichsanstalt* since 1927, Friedrich Syrup, continued in office. Many others, including Walter Stets, who in 1923 had drafted the original national guidelines on vocational counseling, and at the time was head of vocational counseling in the important *Landesarbeitsamt* Rhineland, remained in their positions from the pre–1933 period as well.[19]

Nazi Party membership by itself did not necessarily mean a change in substance, as was illustrated by the case of the new national chief of vocational counseling, Johannes Handrick. Handrick was a party member,[20] yet during his four-year tenure, he did not reveal himself to be a partisan figure. At lower levels, some fervent individuals might reshape personnel profiles in their districts. In the Berlin *Land* office, for example, the new head of vocational counseling reported in 1935 that, due to the previous paucity of vocational counselors in his district and the overall expansion of the service beginning in 1934, he had hired 90 percent new staff "since the assumption of power." In the last business year, in a change from 1933/34, he had hired as vocational counselors "only such personalities whose National Socialistic reliability was a given, if this could at all be humanly determined."[21] However, none of the reports from the other *Land* offices nor the tenth-anniversary report on the *Reichsanstalt* even alluded to such wholesale turnover or to political criteria for hiring, suggesting that Berlin may have been an exception.[22]

Inevitably, the regime's new ethos and the *lingua tertii imperii* permeated the Labor Administration to some extent, as they did nearly every German institution. The Nazis sought to endow the long-standing German reverence for work

with even greater pathos.[23] The highest Party authorities expressed their resolve to conquer Germany's economic woes in military terms: the effort to end unemployment became the "battle for labor," job placement became "labor deployment," and "vocational counseling" became "vocational steering." At the *Reichsanstalt*'s new administrative school or "schooling camp" near Berlin, which began hosting six-week training courses for labor office presidents and others in June 1935, "comradely" activities such as common sleeping quarters and early morning exercises, along with explicit political lectures, were intended to foster a collective, National Socialistic spirit.[24]

Yet in the day-to-day affairs of the Labor Administration or vocational counseling, the new vocabulary did not become the norm. Nor does the correspondence among vocational counselors reveal a particularly vibrant Nazi spirit. Of course, as argued earlier, a concern for overall efficiency, dirigiste measures, and even military models always had coexisted with—at times, dominated—attention to individual welfare and choice in the German Labor Administration. The Nazi military ethos—when it did filter down to the labor offices—represented a shift of emphasis and appearance, but not something fundamentally new.[25]

The other major pillar of the vocational system, the employers organized in DATSCH, also preserved much of its earlier substance. Soon after their accession to power, the Nazis, as part of their efforts to "coordinate" and ultimately better control all areas of society, had consolidated the employers' groups into a new organization with a quasi-public status. They merged the various employers' organizations—the Reich Association of German Industry (*Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie*) and its affiliates—into what, after several reorganizations and name changes, became the Reich Group Industry (*Reichsgruppe Industrie*). The latter was then loosely combined with the successor to the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Reich Economics Chamber (*Reichswirtschaftskammer*), to become the Organization of the Producing Economy (*Organisation der gewerblichen Wirtschaft*), which the Economics Ministry recognized as the official representation of industry's interests.[26] As contradictory as the judgments in the scholarly literature are about the overall effects of this merger and affiliation with the Ministry of Economics,[27] in the realm of vocational training, as we shall see, industry acted with even greater unity than before.

DATSCH did make apparent concessions to the new regime. It accepted Gottfried Feder, one of the National Socialists' chief economic ideologues and a senior minister in the Economics Ministry, as "honorary chairman."[28] Referring to the new regime, DATSCH claimed that it had "immediately acknowledged the new events" and invited several party members, including a representative of the German Labor Front, a Party organization with ambitious plans to remodel German work relations and the working class, to join its supervisory board. As articles in the August and September 1933 issues of *Technical Education* subtly suggested, however, these concessions to the party did not alter DATSCH's basic commitment to its program of *economic,* and not political, measures.[29]

As long as the regime was still consolidating power, labor policies largely were concerned with the challenge of conquering mass unemployment. To this end, the new power holders utilized a variety of strategies, including increasing coercion in the labor market. During the first two years of Nazi rule, unemployment fell by more than half, from 35 percent in January 1933 to 17 percent two winters later, and 13 percent in the summer and fall of 1935.[30] Still, the recovery remained fragile and uneven: even as the overall level of joblessness fell, alarming pockets of high unemployment remained in the large cities.[31] To improve the balance in the recovery, but also—so it was claimed—to serve the regime's longer-term goal of restoring a balance between the nation's industrial and agricultural sectors,[32] measures in 1934 and 1935 gave the *Reichsanstalt* new powers to control the allocation of labor. Two laws allowed the Labor Administration to prevent companies from hiring workers in high-unemployment areas if the workers recently had moved there or if they recently had been employed in agriculture, as well as from hiring young workers (under twenty-five) at the expense of older ones. In 1935, a monopoly law finally brought the remaining independent job placement offices, which had been tolerated by the 1922 Labor Exchange Law and 1927 *Reichsanstalt* legislation, under the control of the Labor Administration.[33] While these measures were limited in important ways—applying only to selected cities, exerting largely indirect pressure on employers, or sanctioning a de facto monopoly that had long existed—the extension of the *Reichsanstalt's* explicit powers still gave a preview of the more sweeping changes that would occur after 1935, in particular, in 1938.

The manpower distribution measures also revealed the mounting tensions among offices competing for influence over labor policy, as well as the continuing alliance between the Labor Administration and the Ministries of Labor and the Economy, on the one hand, and industry, on the other. In the second decree, which was partly a response to proliferating efforts by Nazi Party cells to pressure employers into hiring party loyalists, the Economics and Labor Ministries as well as the *Führer*'s deputy declared that the *Reichsanstalt* alone was responsible for labor allocation.[34] The following year, as interference by Party offices, and in particular by Robert Ley's Labor Front, in job placement and vocational counseling continued, a law was promulgated, making the *Reichsanstalt* the sole authority in these matters.[35] This directive, which gave wide latitude to employers' needs, followed, as Syrup put it, "the thought-processes" of a joint communiqué issued by the *Reichsanstalt* and the head of the united industrial groups in June 1934 on the necessity of close cooperation between the two sides.[36] This constellation of forces—the Labor Administration and the Ministries of Economics and Labor allied with industry, more or less openly, against Party offices—would continue to shape the development of the Labor Administration and vocational system throughout the Nazi period.

The Nazis' gradual extension of coercive measures continued even after the situation on the labor market fundamentally had changed. Thus, the next, more serious, step in controlling the labor market occurred in 1935, not in response

to the sinking though still high unemployment, but to the first signs of a worrying *lack* of skilled workers. The law of February 1935 introducing workbooks for all laborers and salaried employees primarily was intended to give employers and the labor offices greater control of workplace turnover, which had begun to rise again in some sectors. In order to take on a new job, the worker was required to present his workbook, which his previous employer controlled. The Labor Administration's frequent admonitions to adhere to this policy, however, suggested its limited effectiveness in lowering turnover. Furthermore, contrary to plan, which had foreseen a year to implement the scheme, it was only by 1939 that all 20 million workbooks had been distributed. In the future, the workbooks might also serve another purpose, by giving the regime a complete statistical overview of the workforce.[37] Each employee's workbook listed such information as his age, health, marital status, training, skills, and previous employment; the local labor office kept a registry of all workbooks and copied their data on card files. The workbooks alone would prove to be an inadequate tool to restrict workplace turnover, and in the following years, as the job shortage gave way to a worker shortage, new measures proved necessary—both on the part of the Labor Administration and other authorities and of employers.[38]

Despite their limitations, the workbooks represented a new degree of state control of labor movement, or at least the aspiration to achieve the same. Later in the decade, as we shall see, the statistical overview allowed by the workbooks would be put to use in an attempt, of unparalleled ambition but only modest success, at macroeconomic allocation of the workforce. The fact that workbooks were first introduced in the armaments and construction industries reflected the emergence in these sectors, as early as 1934, of shortages of skilled workers in some regions.[39] By the following year, when continued growth and especially the reintroduction of conscription sharply slashed the number of available young men, the shortages had spread throughout the country and to an increasing number of industries. We now examine the effects of the tightening labor market on the vocational training system—which occurred, contrary to the increasingly coercive measures just discussed, without Nazi Party involvement.

"The Great Cooperative Endeavor"[40]

While the Labor Administration, at the Nazis' bidding, turned to dirigiste measures to combat unemployment and then labor bottlenecks, employers' associations led the way in reviving and extending the project of the previous decade to create a standardized vocational training system. As in the 1920s, long-term economic and demographic assessments provided the motivation; the new political circumstances facilitated the collective action, if largely indirectly. In this effort, the employers would again find willing partners among important government agencies. Compelled by the new regime to act with greater coordination and recognizing the movement toward more compulsion and centralization in the labor

market, employers apparently sought to make the best of the situation by turning these trends in their own favor.

In the spring of 1934, as the first signs of an economic turnaround manifested themselves, the president of the Reich Estate of Industry had made known his organization's conviction that "today more than ever quality-work"—and hence the training of apprentices—was of signal importance for the long-term recovery of German industry.[41] The Estate's subcommittee on industrial training identified the issue as "ever more urgent" in most branches and, in the words of Dr. Herbert Studders, a board member of the Estate, considered both quantitative and qualitative sides of the matter.[42] It was the quantitative aspect that first led to industry's initiative, but these demands soon turned into a general effort to systematize vocational training.

Industry's initiative, in the summer of 1934, combined a call for statistical data on vocational trends with a critique of the *Reichsanstalt.* Pointing to the volatility in recent years of economic trends and the resultant difficulty of projecting the numbers of workers required, the leaders of DATSCH asserted that a more effective vocational counseling program needed a thorough statistical analysis of the current labor situation and prediction of the future dynamic.[43] Such statistics would serve as the basis for organizing a new "cooperation of all public offices interested in vocational counseling." Unthinkable a dozen years earlier, it was now industry that was advocating centralized public control. Where the new central office would be based, the industrial leaders suggested in a provocative swipe at the *Reichsanstalt,* remained to be decided.

The *Reichsanstalt* was not slow to respond. In the next edition of *Technical Education,* the head of vocational counseling, Johannes Handrick, while acknowledging the general validity of DATSCH's complaints and the difficulty of reliable predictions in recent years, reminded his interlocutors that such a central office already existed: the *Reichsanstalt* had been working determinedly on these questions for years and had been designated as the "strategic headquarters for the labor battles of the new state." Handrick ended his response, though, on a conciliatory note by encouraging a cooperative venture between DATSCH and the *Reichsanstalt* to enable a centrally steered vocational counseling program.[44]

Out of this exchange would grow the endeavor, jointly borne by German industry through DATSCH and the German Labor Administration over the subsequent decade, to standardize and coordinate the elements of the German vocational training system. The project drew substantially on each side's efforts of the 1920s to systematize vocational training and counseling, respectively. Yet in this second phase of work on the human economies, industry and the Labor Administration cooperated more closely than before in developing standards that united both vocational counseling and training into a single system and that would become an enduring part of the German economy.

Cooperation began almost immediately, as a DATSCH committee on vocational counseling gathered in November 1934 for its inaugural meeting.[45] In a sign of the increasingly close links between industry and the *Reichsanstalt,* Han-

drick, the national head of vocational counseling, chaired the committee. Already at this first meeting, however, the focus shifted from statistics to "clearly distinguished vocational profiles," which all agreed were a prerequisite for any quantitative analyses. Resuming the work of the Working Committee and DATSCH from nearly a decade earlier, the committee decided, was now "an urgent task." As the difficulty of statistical projections of future economic needs became clearer,[46] work on vocational profiles as the pivot of a coordinated system of vocational training and counseling took center stage. A lead article in the February 1935 *Technical Education* on "The Vocational Profile" posited that "[t]he significance which the most complete possible inclusion of all vocational activities in the form of vocational profiles has for the planned training of apprentices and hence for the entire economic praxis—this cannot be overstated." The profiles would provide the most basic guidance for the apprenticeship training. Of far greater importance, however, than the significance of this work in directly improving the quality of individual training, according to the article, which echoed the arguments made in the mid 1920s, was its role in overcoming the informational and coordination problems undermining collective action; namely, the standardization of the profiles and, based on them, also of the training and the exams would permit the smooth flow of labor around the country. Only with such guarantees of standard quality could every apprentice be certain that he might be hired by other employers, in other regions; and only then could employers be confident in hiring someone trained elsewhere.[47]

Not only did it solve the information problem, but the cooperation itself also strengthened the employers' organizations, such as the Chambers of Trade and Commerce, and the mutual expectations that made firms' compliance more likely. Even as several Nazi laws restricted the freedom of workers to move from job to job and region to region, industry and the Labor Administration were cooperating to create a system of mobile skilled labor.

In its work on vocational profiles, DATSCH began where the Working Committee had begun in the mid 1920s, with the centrally important skilled metalworking positions, and it drew on the latter's work. It concentrated initially on skilled vocations, all of which required a three to four year apprenticeship; only later in the decade would it take on the trickier task of standardizing the "several thousand" semi-skilled positions, which spanned a much greater range of training schedules. By the spring of 1935, DATSCH could publish its first ten profiles.[48] These limited themselves to describing the "task area" and both the necessary and the desired "capabilities" of the workers.

In the course of the same year, DATSCH committees began to engage in a flurry of activity, extending the work on standardization to the other aspects of vocational training: the practical training in the firm and the courses in the vocational school, as well as the completion exams.[49] Important issues—such as the exact relation of the "basic vocations" of training to the more specific positions in the economy and the proliferation and nature of training for semi-skilled vocations—remained subject to lively debate, but the participants regarded their work

as an "evolving enterprise" and carried on. By early 1936, DATSCH had published two dozen profiles of the most important "basic vocations."[50] Although the question had not been overlooked completely in the first two years of DATSCH's renewed efforts to systematize vocational training,[51] it was only in the subsequent years, in particular 1936 to 1939, that attention would turn to an additional element of the vocational profile—to the "demands" and "suitability demands" upon candidates for a vocation.

An historic agreement within industry lent all of this standardizing work immediate practical relevance. In July 1935, the Reich Group Industry and the Association of Chambers of Industry and Trade agreed to establish for the first time industry's own formal vocational certification system, independent of that of handicrafts, which since the 1897 revision of the Commercial Code had had a monopoly on certifications.[52] The vocational profiles, training plans, and completion exams being developed at the time were to be incorporated formally into the "apprenticeship contract" between the firm and the trainee. This step by industry, taken with the approval of the Economics and Labor Ministries and in expectation of a future legal regulation of the matter, began to draw to a close the long-running dispute between industry and crafts over the latter's monopoly over accreditation, a dispute which, as we have seen, already had been partly resolved in the late 1920s by the cooperation of the two sides in the Working Committee on Vocational Training. A 1938 decree of the Reich Education Minister would finally put the industrial completion exams on the same legal footing as *Handwerk's.*[53] Within several years in the mid 1930s, the industrial training system had acquired not only standardized content, but also fully fledged formal accreditation. Close monitoring by local Chambers of Industry and Trade prevented serious free-riding and ensured that firms in fact took on their fair share of apprentices. A decade after German industry had become fully conscious of the potential value of the skilled worker and had initiated a project to standardize training, a second round of these efforts in the mid 1930s effectively had launched the "German skills machine."

In all of this, industry and key ministries, in particular, the Labor Administration and the Reich Economics Ministry—the same groups that had promoted the first round of vocational consolidation in the mid and late 1920s—were the main motors of reform. But while the Nazi regime intervened directly in the vocational system only minimally, it played an important indirect role. Not only did the new authoritarian atmosphere dampen at least open disputes and, along with the enforced organizational consolidation, encourage more concerted action; also of importance in bringing employers together and in forging the alliance between them and the key governmental ministries was the threatening behavior of a particular Nazi organization: Robert Ley's Labor Front.

Even in a regime characterized by the active political entrepreneurship of its subordinate agencies, Robert Ley and his Labor Front stood out for their relentless quest for power.[54] In its efforts to play a central role in Nazi labor and social policy, the DAF pursued numerous avenues to reshape labor relations at the com-

pany level, including, prominently, worker training and selection. In substance, important DAF goals—such as promoting skilled work and inculcating worker loyalty to the firm—were congruent with company policy and even drew on corporate social policy.[55] In 1933, the DAF absorbed DINTA, which from 1925 had served heavy industry in its "fight for the souls" of its workers. However, the DAF's broader political ideology and, in particular, its claims for "total control" from the outside frightened even many of DINTA's former backers, who insisted on company prerogative.[56]

The struggle between the DAF, on the one hand, and much of industry and its allies in the state ministries, on the other, over control of vocational training began early in the Nazi regime and continued, despite repeated efforts to exclude the DAF, into the early 1940s. Ley's organization employed an array of strategies to shape company training: the DINTA-successor within the DAF continued to offer its services to companies and also to gain a foothold in the local chambers of industry, which oversaw accreditation; DAF's vast publishing empire produced a stream of materials on the topic; its questionnaires about training policy put pressure on companies to fall into line with the DAF; the Reich Vocational Competitions—in which companies could vie, through their apprentices' work, for the DAF's commendation—and other competitions encouraged firms to adopt DAF standards.

In response to the DAF's continuing encroachments upon the field of vocational training, Economics Minister Schacht in September 1935 cemented the already close relationship between industry and the Economics (and Labor) Ministry. Citing "the significance of technical-economic training for the economy," Schacht, in conjunction with the Minister of Education, gave DATSCH official status as his advisory body.[57] In 1938, DATSCH was given an even more secure position when it was re-baptized as the Reich Institute for Vocational Training. This protection would prove highly useful to DATSCH in the coming years, for after 1935, the Labor Front's efforts to influence vocational training would become only more strident. Between 1935 and the outbreak of war in 1939, a central field of competition between DATSCH and DAF was in the provision of vocational materials—profiles, course material, exams—to companies and chambers of industry.[58] It was only the outbreak of war and the decision of Hermann Göring, the head of the Four-Year Plan, in December 1939, which finally secured the Economics Ministry's—and private industry's—ultimate control of vocational training.[59] In the intervening years, however, the Labor Front's relentless activity decisively spurred the standardization work by industry and the ministries through DATSCH and deepened the alliance between the two.

The Flourishing of Vocational Training and—as a Result—of Vocational Counseling

In the years 1934/35, industry not only made crucial advances in reviving and extending its project of standardizing vocational training system, but it also began

offering an increasing number of apprenticeships, not least thanks to the concurrent organizational work. The rise in the number of open positions employers registered with the labor offices from its nadir in the years 1931/32 and 1932/33 no doubt reflected a number of factors. In addition to the appeals by the Reich Estate of Industry and the Labor Front to devote more resources to training, the general improvement in economic conditions from 1933 onward made employers more willing to offer apprenticeships. Yet the rapid increase from fewer than 130,000 positions in 1932/33 to 219,000 the next year and nearly 300,000 in 1934/35, when unemployment still hovered well above 10 percent, surpassed the number of apprenticeships offered in the best years of the Weimar recovery (255,000 in 1927/28) and cannot be attributed to the general economic climate alone.[60]

The growing cooperation between industry and the Labor Administration, which was spurred not only by their shared goal of creating a high-skilled workforce, but also by their common opposition to the German Labor Front, extended to practical matters of vocational placement. Thanks to agreements assuring employers more influence in the labor offices, firms became more willing to report open positions.[61]

Even more important than the improved atmosphere between the two sides, however, was the underlying shift in companies' willingness to train workers as a result of the creation of common standards of vocational training. In an essay in *Technical Education* in July 1936, a leading representative of the Reich Group Industry emphasized the decisive role of the organizational work: "[F]or industry until now clear legal bases for an impeccable training and education of the industrial youth have been lacking. A responsible attitude on the part of many industrial firms has always existed.… But today for the first time the conditions have been created which allow German industry to solve these tasks on its own."[62] The response of German industry would be so strong, in fact, that by 1938, it would offer more apprenticeships than there were job seekers. Before we turn to this development and its effects on vocational training and selection, we must first explore the state of vocational counseling in the first years after the Depression.

The archival materials documenting vocational counseling in these early years have, unfortunately, almost all been lost. Still, a collection of reports by the state offices from 1935 provides us with a snapshot of the state of affairs two years into Nazi rule and economic recovery. The reports unanimously described a general efflorescence of vocational counseling during the course of the previous two years. In the previous year, in response to "the significance which vocational counseling has gained in the new state"—that is, to the combined effect of the Nazis' rhetorical embrace of the ennobling value of work, their promises to restore a healthy balance to the country's economic order, and the longer-term prospect of national mobilization for war—as well as simply to the increased number of visitors, the *Reichsanstalt* headquarters had approved a significant increase in the number of vocational counselors.[63] Over several years, the number of counselors would double from 600 to nearly 1200.[64] Several of the *Land* reports suggested

that an important part of this increase helped vocational counseling expand into rural areas, where it until then had been largely absent.[65] Most importantly, as already mentioned, the number of school-leavers consulting with the vocational counseling offices was rising rapidly. The total number of visitors had more than doubled in just two years, from 394,000 in 1932/33 to 601,000 a year later, and 848,000 in 1934/35. Roughly 70 percent of young Germans now visited the vocational counseling offices before they left school, while a hundred thousand older people also availed themselves of the service.[66] How had vocational counseling been so successful in approaching its long-held goal of a "total inclusion" of all job seekers?

No single reason, the reports from 1935 suggest, was alone decisive. However, a small number of factors appear to have been important in nearly all states. To a far greater extent than earlier, parents had become convinced of the importance of sending their children—or, more accurately, accompanying them—to vocational counseling. Several offices attributed this welcome change to their own assiduous efforts to woo the adults through "parent evenings," and press and even radio coverage.[67] No doubt, other, more diffuse, factors also made parents increasingly eager to have their children visit vocational counseling. The general economic revival of these years had inspired a cautious optimism, which, along with the needs of industry for specific kinds of workers, influenced youths' and their families' decisions about what to do after completing school. "A clear effect of the currently observable economic climate and of the scarcity of skilled workers," the South-West state office reported, "is also that the desire to undergo an apprenticeship dominates by far the majority of male youths."[68] The Bavarian office wrote "with satisfaction" that parents "more than previously desire for their youths a skilled, or at least a semi-skilled, vocation," and concurred with the South-West Germans that unskilled work was becoming ever less attractive or significant.[69] Indeed, the new enthusiasm among youths for particular "fashionable" vocations—especially those in the metalworking sector, which was expanding rapidly due to the incipient Nazi rearmament, but also perhaps as a result of the regime's martial values—had grown so powerful that several state offices perceived new dangers. Pointing to the fact that among male youths "access to the metal vocations dominates over everything else," the South-West office warned of a "uniformization of the vocational ideal among youth, which is not unalarming."[70] Thanks to the more favorable economic climate, in the new state, the Bavarian office reported, a new "vocational ethos" had taken hold of the young.[71]

More tangible factors, such as who controlled access to jobs, played an even more important role in boosting vocational counseling nearly to the level of "total inclusion." As the vocational offices had forged closer ties with employers, they had gained control of increasing numbers of apprenticeship positions, creating a powerful incentive for parents and youths to visit. The wish for closer cooperation, beginning usually with vocational counseling, but also at times with employers,[72] was mutual; the initiative to collaborate, though paralleling the improving ties at the national level, came also from the local level. In many states,

the vocational offices and employers' organizations, especially in handicrafts,[73] but also in industry, had formalized their relations in agreements about apprentices. The employers promised to obtain their trainees only through the labor office's vocational counseling service; the latter, in turn, agreed to attend to firms' needs. By the mid 1930s, then, the relationship between two of the main pillars of the human economies, the Labor Administration and employers, significantly had been deepened.

This collaboration between the labor offices' vocational counseling and local employers' groups, like the cooperation on the national scale that had influenced it, emerged from several sources. It built on the ties established from the mid 1920s on, when employers' groups recognized the utility of a centralized, coordinated distribution of trainees for the purpose of a standardized apprenticeship system. After the disruption caused by the Depression, these efforts seemed in the mid 1930s even more imperative: the economic boom and demographic shortfall combined to make the shortage of skilled workers even more threatening. As at the national level, local conditions shaped by the new regime helped to realize this cooperation, even if unintentionally. Nazi measures to take greater control of economic life, including restrictions on the free movement of labor, gave employers an incentive to try to influence the terms of state (or outside) influence by taking the initiative. Moreover, as several of the state reports indicated, the creation by the Nazis of strengthened employer organizations, even at the local level, significantly aided efforts to reach agreement with the vocational offices.[74] Such organizations were usually more committed than the individual employers to creating the collective good of universally recognized vocational skills. In addition to such centripetal forces of the new regime, its centrifugal tendencies also indirectly spurred such cooperation between employers' organizations and the vocational counseling offices. Just as at the national level, the threat of interference by the German Labor Front moved the Reich Estate of Industry and the Economics and Labor Ministries to form a defensive alliance, so too at the state and local level DAF activity inspired a reaction. Almost all of the state reports commented on friction between vocational counseling and the Labor Front over apprentice selection, which, given industry's own troubles with Ley's organization, created further bases for cooperation between vocational offices and firms.

As a result of the local agreements on trainee selection, the number of positions crafts and industry registered with the labor offices increased proportionately even faster than did the number of school-leavers using vocational counseling. While between 1932/33 and 1934/35 the number of visitors to vocational counseling increased by 115 percent, that of apprenticeships rose by 131 percent. If one wanted an apprenticeship—which ever more young people did—it was increasingly clear where one needed to turn.

Other factors, both of older and more recent origins, augmented the increased trust of parents, the desire of the young for skilled positions, and the cooperation between employers and vocational counseling offices. Most importantly, as the reports concurred, the schools were now cooperating fully with vocational

counseling. The turning point in the often contentious relationship had come with the 1930 agreement between the Reich Ministries of Labor and the Interior on the cooperation of the schools and vocational counseling offices, the effect of which was stymied in the short-term by the distortions of the Depression. By the mid 1930s, all of the state vocational offices reported that schools had ceased to "regard vocational counseling as a competitor, or at least as an annoying organization," as the Berlin office had put it. Instead of performing their own apprenticeship placements, as many had previously done, schools now assisted vocational counseling, above all by delivering "entire classes" to the labor office.[75]

Another, newer, organization also aided vocational counseling. The Hitler Youth and its female counterpart, the League of German Girls (*Bund Deutscher Mädel*), according to all of the state reports, were proving to be a valuable resource in a manner similar to that of the schools. The *Hitlerjugend* offices were eager to "deliver" youths to vocational counseling, as Saxony reported; they also supplied their own evaluations of the boys and girls. In some regards, the Hitler Youth proved more useful to vocational counseling than even the schools. With the former, vocational counseling often established direct and personal ties, as counselors frequently assumed responsibility for vocational matters within the new organization. Also, at least one state vocational office appreciated the particular value of the *Hitlerjugend's* reports on the children, since "especially the vocational wishes [can be] discussed in quite some depth in the rather free atmosphere of the HJ."[76]

The Four-Year Plan and the Deepening of the "Great Cooperative Endeavor"

Hitler's decisions in the summer and autumn of 1936 to promote Germany's autarky and mobilize its economic resources for a war in several years' time would ramify throughout all parts of its economy.[77] The Labor Administration, vocational counseling, and vocational training were no exceptions. Indeed, before the total war effort (1942–1945) made finding workers and soldiers per se the paramount challenge, the vocational system was deemed to play a vital role in Germany's war preparations. More directly than in the period of 1934/35, the regime now exerted influence over vocational matters, in particular by mandating *Totalerfassung* of all school-leavers and apprenticeship positions. Within the Labor Administration and within industry, however, satisfaction with developments most likely mingled with nervousness over the regime's dirigisme and long-term goals.[78] But the changes often only accelerated trends already underway, or implemented aspects of the Labor Administration program that were present earlier, if only in potential form.[79] As we saw, the project of creating a high-skilled workforce proved largely compatible with the Nazi regime's political aims, whether overcoming mass unemployment, promoting autarky, or leading the country into war.

Reflecting Hitler's decision in the summer of 1936 to accelerate the country's preparations for war, the Four-Year Plan redirected resources to create domestic capacities in supplies critical to war, in particular synthetic oil and rubber and metals. The head of the Four-Year Plan organization, Hermann Göring, rapidly became the dominant power in the economic realm. Typically for the regime's improvisational nature, which was nowhere so apparent as in economic policy, Göring appointed the president of the *Reichsanstalt,* Friedrich Syrup, and an influential state minister in the Labor Ministry, Werner Mansfeld, to lead the Four-Year Plan agency's "Labor Direction" office. The *Reichsanstalt* and Labor Ministry thus came to serve the Four-Year Plan, while also continuing to function outside it.[80]

If the rearmament since 1934 already had contributed to shortages among some skilled workers,[81] the much vaster military and autarky programs of the Four-Year Plan, at a time when the number of school-leavers was still declining, ensured that the scarcity of labor became a major and persistent problem for the regime and the economy. Throughout the period of war preparation (and during the war as well), the regime's primary response to this challenge was to impose ever-greater controls on the movement of labor, including on the entry of young people into vocations. It is telling that the first directives Göring's office issued for the implementation of the plan pertained to Germany's supply of skilled labor, obliging metal and construction firms with more than 10 employees to train a proportionate number of apprentices.[82] In the short run, this directive, as well as others issued at the same time,[83] may have, in fact, restricted the freedoms of employers little, as they were "purposefully elastically" formulated, frequently not enforced by the overburdened labor offices, and, in any case, intended more as an "urgent appeal" to the employer's sense of duty than as real limitations.[84] Still, it is clear that the employers (and the *Reichsanstalt* and ministries) correctly interpreted the writing on the wall as indicating that in future, the regime would intervene more directly in firms' and individuals' decisions about vocation and work.

Recognizing the new state of affairs and anticipating the future, the Labor Administration and the employers' umbrella group, the Organization of the Producing Economy, almost immediately took steps to deepen their cooperation. As President Syrup explained to his state and local offices, the requirements of the Four-Year Plan now compelled the two organizations "to cooperate even more closely" than they had in the past on the *Arbeitseinsatz,* and especially on securing a sufficient supply of skilled workers.[85] All levels of the Labor Administration, Syrup instructed, should extend and deepen the already existing ties to the corresponding employers' groups.

Barely more than a month later, the highest representatives of the *Reichsanstalt* and industry gathered for two days to reach a more detailed understanding on their cooperation "regarding the selection and application of youths in industrial firms."[86] Almost certainly, a central purpose of the meeting was symbolic: by reviewing the organization and methods of vocational counseling, the composition of the German workforce, and the efforts of DATSCH to systematize vocational profiles and materials—all of which was assuredly known already to those pres-

ent—the participants reaffirmed the groups' prior work and alliance. Now, more publicly than before, the leaders of the Labor Administration and employers' groups sanctioned and promoted the cooperative endeavors undertaken, with less fanfare, in the previous three years. Of a piece with this demonstrative purpose were the repeated subtle repudiations of interference by the German Labor Front.

While the exigencies of adapting to the Four-Year Plan prompted the meeting, longer-term concerns imbued the discussions. This was evident not only in the reviewing of work done by the Labor Administration and DATSCH in the previous three years, or even since the mid 1920s, but also particularly in the presentation on the "Development of the Structure of the Labor Force in Industry" by Dr. Studders, a director of the Reich Group Industry. Beginning his analysis with handicrafts, Studders proceeded to explain why, contrary to expectations regarding the effects of the division of labor and mechanization, the "quality worker" had continued to play a central role in German industry. After his review of historical developments, Studders concluded by looking to the future: the creation of the means for securing a supply of skilled workers—the joint project of the Labor Administration's vocational counseling and industry—was "only possible through careful work extending over long periods of time."

This commitment in early 1937 by a representative of the Reich Group Industry to the long-term project of developing a high-skilled workforce, it should be noted, comports with analyses of employers' reactions to the Four-Year Plan. Ever cautious about making long-term investments based on what appeared to be highly unpredictable political decisions, German industry did not make any significant reassessments of its production strategies in response to the *Vierjahresplan.*[87] In a published commentary on the January 1937 meeting, the director of vocational counseling at *Reichsanstalt* headquarters, Johannes Handrick, emphasized the long-term nature of the endeavor even more forcefully than had Studders. He placed the Four-Year Plan's requirements in the context of the cooperation between the *Reichsanstalt* and employers that had been going on "for a long time." In addition to the plans for promoting autarky, Germany's limited number of young people entering the labor market meant that "the distribution of the youths must be undertaken with careful thought in the future." A "further reason" for the cooperation of the two sides was the rebuilding, by industry, crafts, and trade, of the "entire vocational training system." Handrick summarized the balance between short- and long-term considerations:

> If for the moment it is largely a question of satisfying the demands of the Four-Year Plan, beyond the Four-Year Plan employers and the *Reichsanstalt,* perfectly in accord with the Commissioner of the Four-Year Plan, must strive to create a working population with which the new tasks, whatever they may be, can be mastered at any time without difficulty.[88]

The January 1937 meeting, then, served the important function, during politically turbulent times, of signaling the mutual commitment of all parties to the long-term project of developing Germany's skilled workforce.

As part of this reaffirmation, each side demonstrated its willingness to compromise in the interest of an even closer relationship. Building on the previous state and local agreements between employers' organizations and labor offices about the recruitment of apprentices and acknowledging the current trend toward more outright state control, the national industrial organization now "approved a total vocational counseling,"[89] i.e., making use of the service obligatory for all school-leavers. The employers insisted, however, that the firm must retain the ultimate decision about hiring. More generally, the employers repeatedly invoked the crucial importance of the businessman's trust in the vocational counselor's judgment. The lack, or weakness, of this confidence, they said, was largely responsible for whatever reservations still remained.

For its part, the *Reichsanstalt,* whose vocational counselors always had preferred gaining employers' confidence to resorting to compulsion, acknowledged the significance of this factor. Handrick concluded his remarks by expressing the hope "that the work of vocational counseling in all parts of the Reich may earn the unqualified trust of the German economy." As we shall see later, even after the regime did in fact apply to vocational counseling the "compulsion" that the employers had hoped to preempt, the *Reichsanstalt* continued to seek the employers' trust.

Over the course of the next year, the cooperation between the *Reichsanstalt* and the employers (and the Economics Ministry) did become "ever closer." Between 1 July 1936 and 30 June 1937, as the labor offices' already substantial access to school-leavers inched ever closer to "total inclusion,"[90] the number of apprenticeships registered at the offices soared by more than 25 percent, from 395,000 to 507,000.[91]

The parties to the vocational counseling/training compact sought to realize the terms of their cooperation. Instructions by the *Reichsanstalt* headquarters to its state and local offices and by the Economics Ministry to the Organization of the Economy defined the new framework: all firms were to obtain their apprentices through vocational counseling; the industrial examination boards were to include a member of vocational counseling; when the vocational counseling office had doubts or questions about the quality of training at particular firms, it should turn for advice to the local chamber of industry and trade.[92] The arrangements necessary for this "deepened cooperation," however, could still vary considerably, as the reports by the various state and local organizations showed.[93] By the late summer, the *Reichsanstalt* and the employers' organization both were pushing for a uniform, binding regulation for the entire Reich.[94] For the employers, one of the most important concerns, as had already become clear in the January 1937 meeting, was the reliability of vocational counseling's selection of trainees. Thus, in a communication from the Reich Economic Chamber to the Economics Ministry on 28 May, the former wrote: "[We are] currently occupied with the task of making the cooperation between the Organization of the Economy and the *Reichsanstalt* as close as possible. Thereby we are especially paying attention to the question of the pre-selection [of apprentices] for entering a vocation. In connection with this, the suitability-tests of the vocational offices of the *Reich-*

sanstalt will … also be gone into."[95] When the Organization of the Economy and the *Reichsanstalt* planned their meeting on a binding national agreement, vocational counseling's suitability tests were the sole specific item on the agenda. In addition to a general presentation by the *Reichsanstalt* on "principles of the labor allocation policy and its application to the steering of the vocational choice of the school-leaving youth," the Labor Administration's only other topic was to be: "Ways of determining the suitability-structure of the youths and matching them to the vocations." The plan for the meeting spelled out in some detail what industry was interested in hearing from the Labor Administration: "From which source does the vocational counselor gain his knowledge for determining the vocational suitability in each individual case. The role of the suitability-examination. The gathering of such information demonstrated in practical examples. Consequences for the assignment to the vocations."[96]

The Nazi regime's increasingly obvious willingness to employ coercive measures to prepare the labor force for war and the tightening supply of workers inspired some of the main forces behind the projects to optimize the German workforce, including the Labor Administration and employers' organizations, to deepen their already substantial cooperation. Even with the prospect of an increased legal mandate, the Labor Administration showed itself solicitous of industry's demands for securing suitable workers.

The Laws of *Totalerfassung*

The ever more critical bottleneck in the supply of entrants to the labor market in 1937/38 inspired a number of responses, including laws granting vocational counseling truly "total inclusion" for the first time and statistical plans for the national distribution across vocations, but they also included a recognition of the need to shift the emphasis away from "quantitative" to "qualitative" vocational policies.

Ever since 1934/35, when the number of unemployed had begun rapidly to drop and the first cases of regional shortages of skilled workers appeared, concern had mounted over Germany's dearth of workers. The sense of urgency became suddenly sharper in the winter of 1937/38—like the *Gestalt*-switch of the mid 1920s, another case in which *perceptions* about the workforce underwent rapid change. For the first time, the number of apprenticeship positions reported by firms to the labor offices may have equaled, or even exceeded, the number of suitable candidates, leaving no reserves.[97] By mid 1938, according to an estimate in the *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* Germany already was missing half a million workers.[98] Compounding the problem, numerous "fashionable vocations"—particularly in the metal industries—drew excessive numbers of applicants, while less glamorous, but vital, occupations suffered recruitment shortfalls.[99] The signs of a growing scarcity of young skilled workers in the winter of 1937/38 propelled the Labor Administration to attempt to gain more direct control of the labor force, according to Walter Stets' later account.[100]

Two important decrees of 1 March 1938 recast the *Reichsanstalt*'s role in matching young workers and apprentices with employers, though not as radically as it first might appear. The "Order Regarding the Registering of School-leavers" made it mandatory for all youths leaving school to register with their local labor office. The second decree obliged employers to obtain approval for all apprenticeships.[101] With these decrees, vocational counseling achieved what it had sought since its beginnings though by other, non-compulsory, means: the "total inclusion" of both young workers and apprenticeship-offering employers. Compared to 1937/38, when 70 percent of all school-leavers immediately had visited vocational counseling, in the first year after the decrees came into effect, 86 percent did.[102] The number of trainee positions for males that firms registered with the labor offices jumped in the same period by nearly one-third.[103] Beyond these quantitative indices, the ethos and self-perception within the *Reichsanstalt* changed as well. "The task of the previous vocational counseling," Walter Stets explained later, "was transformed into steering young workers." Previously, when many more apprenticeship positions than youths existed, vocational counseling mainly had "advised and helped" individuals; now the emphasis would be on "securing young workers for the individual vocations" as part of a "total steering of young workers."[104] The latter phrase—*Nachwuchslenkung*—tended to replace the term vocational counseling, if never exclusively or officially.

Yet we must not exaggerate the rupture caused by the March 1938 decrees. A *Totalerfassung* of all youths and all apprenticeships always had been the goal of the vocational counseling movement. It is true that for the faction of vocational counseling that had insisted that the service *earn* the trust of its users, the creation of a legal compulsion must have seemed regrettable. However, well before 1938 or even 1933, the same advocates of vocational counseling's triumph by virtue of its superior quality had banned competition by commercial agencies and used other, softer forms of coercion, most notably the agreements with the schools on "delivering" students to vocational counseling, to approach *Totalerfassung.* Others in vocational counseling always had favored legal mandates.[105]

Nor was the shift in the declared mission of vocational counseling—from advising and helping to steering—unprecedented or particularly radical. From the beginning, proponents of vocational counseling had insisted on a harmony between the two aspects: helping the individual find the place for which he was best-suited, and consequently where he would be happiest and most productive, was to promote the advantage of the economy. Conversely, by seeking macroeconomic balance, and hence by steering less suitable applicants away from crowded vocations and toward other fields, vocational counseling also would be protecting the individual from a lifetime of disappointment. Stets noted that the change was more gradual than fundamental: "Both tasks were always present; the emphasis shifts, however, from the one side to the other."[106]

The achievement, as a matter of fact, of a (near) *Totalerfassung* also was not due solely to the decrees of 1938. In the previous five years, several factors boosted the proportions both of the school-leavers and the employers using vocational

Table 5.1 The Growth of Vocational Counseling in the 1920s and 1930s

Year	# of School-Leavers	# of SL visiting VC	Total # visiting VC	# of Skilled/ Semi-Skilled Positions Reported to VC	# Placed by VC
1922/23			235,000	138,000 (89,000 for males)	94,000
1923/24	421,000	140,000	251,000	134,000 (89,000 for males)	96,000
1924/25	602,000	194,000	307,000	179,000 (127,000 for males)	130,000
1925/26			375,000	172,000 (123,000 for males)	132,000
1926/27			426,000	207,000 (144,000 for males)	156,000
1927/28			438,000	254,000 (179,000 for males)	176,000
1928/29			390,000	213,000 (144,000 for males)	147,000
1929/30		315,000	399,000	197,000 (137,000 for males)	134,000
1930/31		298,000	406,000	163,000 (111,000 for males)	119,000
1931/32	606,000	283,000	387,000	124,000 (83,000 for males)	98,000
1932/33	677,000	303,000	394,000	128,000 (86,000 for males)	102,000
1933/34	1,109,000 (620,000 males)	508,000	601,000	219,000 (156,000 for males)	184,000
1934/35	1,128,000 (620,000 males)	739,000	848,000	296,000 (212,000 for males)	260,000
1935/36	1,133,000 (580,000 males)	942,000	1,078,000	395,000 (282,000 for males)	356,000
1936/37	1,095,000 (565,000 males)	650,000	1,184,000	507,000 (366,000 for males)	440,000
1937/38	1,063,000 (550,000 males)	744,000	1,263,000	599,000 (441,000 for males)	489,000
1938/39	1,011,000 (555,000 males)	871,000	1,425,000	803,000 (583,000 for males)	430,000 (males)
1939/40	1,194,000 (550,000 males)	1,035,000	1,744,000	861,000 (558,000 for males)	
1940/41	1,244,000 (530,000 males)	1,112,000	1,993,000	1,043,000 (627,000 for males)	429,000 (males)
1941/42	525,000 (males)			653,000 (males)	426,000 (males)

Sources: Reichsarbeitsblatt, 1926, nr. 21, 367-9; Reichsanstalt, Zehn Jahre, 39-40; Reichsarbeitsblatt, II, 1937, nr. 36, 401; Reichsarbeitsblatt, Nichtamt. Beilage: Achter Bericht der Reichsanstalt fur die Zeit vom 1 April 1935 bis zum 31 Marz 1936, 36f.; Reichsarbeitsblatt, V, 1940, nr. 28, 482-3; Reichsarbeitsblatt, V, 1942, nr. 29, 542; Reichsarbeitsblatt, II, 1939, nr. 34, 442f.; Reichsarbeitsblatt, 1939, nr. 8

counseling—especially the employers' establishment of uniform standards of training, which dramatically increased their willingness to train apprentices, and the ever-closer cooperation of employers and vocational counseling. In the three years before the new rules came into effect, the percentage of students consulting with vocational counseling immediately upon leaving school had already risen from 48 to 70 percent.[107] Even without the help of legal obligations, in the next few years vocational counseling might well have approached "total inclusion" of all youths, even if more slowly.

The proportion of employers who registered their apprenticeships with vocational counseling also had risen steeply before 1938, as reflected, at least partly, in the total number of trainee-positions listed.[108] Indeed, relations between the Labor Administration and the employers demonstrated more clearly than anything else that the decrees of March 1938 did not represent a fundamental rupture. The role of the employers in promulgating the legislation remains unclear. On the one hand, given their dislike of unilateral state intervention, they might have disapproved of the nature of the orders, preferring an agreement between the two sides. On the substantive issue, however, the employers would have found little to criticize. The newly forged vocational system presupposed such coordination, something the employers trusted the Labor Administration to provide. Political threats to employers' control of their workforces, whether emanating from the German Labor Front or the Four-Year Plan, and the economic disadvantages of having to compete for labor in an increasingly tight market made cooperation with a friendly public agency increasingly appealing.

For years, the employers' organization had encouraged agreements between its local and state branches with the labor offices on trainee placements. In the fall of 1937, they had sought a binding national agreement guaranteeing the comprehensive reporting now mandated. In an internal memorandum on the "Basic Principles of the Cooperation between the [Employers' Organization] and the *Reichsanstalt,*" which circulated within their organization just a month before the March decrees, the employers called for a "planned, complete steering of all the vocations of the producing economy." For the purpose of a "reasonable selection among the youths and a corresponding regulation of the vocational deployment," the memo called for "the registering by firms with the vocational counseling offices of the entire demand for youths for apprenticeships."[109] It is not unreasonable to think that this memo, and any negotiations with the Labor Administration that grew out of it, may have played a role in preparing the decrees promulgated three weeks later.

While the orders obliged all youths to visit the local vocational counseling office, they did not create "compulsory vocations," by compelling the youths to accept the office's suggestion of a vocation and offer of a trainee position. As Stets went to some length to emphasize, in contrast to the labor conscription of adults, the training of youths would have such long-term consequences for their lives that the ultimate decision had to be left to "the responsibility of the youths and their parents."[110] The relations between vocational offices and youths remained,

then, much as they had been before March 1938: while the Labor Administration abjured "direct compulsion," as Stets revealingly put it, its recommendations carried great weight. Vocational counseling, intent on gaining its clients' willing cooperation, had worked over the years to earn their trust. More importantly, its control—more comprehensive now than ever before—over access to the coveted apprenticeships could give vocational counseling a kind of "indirect compulsion," if it chose to apply it.

Again, however, it was the relation between the employers and the *Reichsanstalt* that demonstrated the greatest continuity. "Recent discussions," the employers' organization wrote to the *Reichsanstalt* shortly after publication of the decrees, had produced "agreement that in the practical carrying-out of the [order on firms' demands for apprentices] the existing agreements on cooperation between the [two sides] shall for now not be changed or replaced by new ones."[111] Firms, like the youths interested in apprenticeships, though compelled to report all openings for apprentices to the labor offices, retained ultimate authority to accept or reject the labor office's candidates. For the employers, more than for the youths, this freedom existed not only on paper, but also, to some extent at least, in practice. The most telling evidence of continuity in the relation between the *Reichsanstalt* and the employers after March 1938, however, was the fact that the Labor Administration—at least partly for the sake of earning the trust of the employers—continued and even expanded its efforts to improve and standardize its methods of selecting workers.

Two kinds of vocational strategy, one quantitative and one qualitative, followed from the "total inclusion" achieved after March 1938. First, total registration permitted the *Reichsanstalt* for the first time to attempt the quantitative planning of distribution across the vocations. In a confidential memo to the state offices on 31 October 1938, President Syrup announced the implementation of the first national vocational plan. Because in 1938 the "distribution of apprentices and young workers had not matched national-political requirements," access to vocations with less significance in this regard would have to be reduced and youths would have to be steered into the most important vocations. For a number of "vocational groups," the memo provided national guidelines in the form of precise figures expressing the percentage of current workers to be hired as apprentices. When the test run of 1938/39 suggested to the *Reichsanstalt* that such measures were "feasible,"[112] the Administration prepared a full-scale plan for 1940.

The onset of war in September 1939, though, forced the postponement of its implementation, and the state and local offices continued to rely "in a practical manner" on the preliminary plan of 1938 and its results. In 1941, when the *Reichsanstalt* finally implemented, and made public, a full-scale national plan, the Labor Administration itself claimed only moderate success: it had basically succeeded in "coming closer to the goal" of the plan, with only one "complete failure," in mining. However, the director of vocational counseling tried to dampen expectations (or concerns), emphasizing the "limits of such a plan:"

> Fundamentally, it must be remembered … that such a quantitative plan of distribution for apprentices and young workers can only provide guidelines.… The purpose of the plan can thus not be to determine the need for apprentices and young workers with mathematical precision, but rather it must place the need in relation to the available number and thereby pay attention to what is achievable.

The main purpose of the plan could be achieved not in a single year, but only over "longer periods of time"; it applied not to single vocations but to vocational groups; monitoring the "line of development," not inevitable shorter-term variations, was the point.[113] Publication of the plan even had sparked "various critiques and fears," inspiring the Minister of Labor himself to emphasize the merely general, long-term, and non-compulsory nature of the quantitative targets.[114] The hope of implementing a planned distribution of apprentices to the different industries and vocations met, then, with only limited success.

Along with *quantitative* planning, the other vocational strategy consciously promoted once "total registration" was achieved with the March 1938 decrees aimed to improve the *quality* of vocational measures. Allocation and quality, of course, had been seen as the central—and complementary—elements of vocational reform ever since the seminal Prussian edict of 1919. Now augmented by its new legal mandates in the midst of ever-tighter labor markets, the Labor Administration pursued both goals with a new boldness. Its official goals became the "securing of a quantitatively appropriate supply of apprentices and young workers for the individual vocations," and "securing the quality of the training in the individual skilled and semi-skilled vocations" as well as "securing the preconditions in the person of the young person who is to be trained."[115] Even before the various limits to precise quantitative planning had become evident, however, the qualitative aspects were becoming increasingly important.

As early as 1937, when the possible dimensions of Germany's future shortfall in manpower became clearer, it was already a commonplace notion that the nation would have to compensate for the missing workers by qualitative measures. At the meeting of industry and the *Reichsanstalt* in January 1937, the head of vocational counseling characterized the belief that Germany had unlimited reserves of youth as a "fateful error." The already quite limited numbers would "sink steadily in the next few years." As a result, but also because the talents were not at all evenly distributed, the "allocation of youths must in future be carefully undertaken."[116] In his preview of the first year of full-scale implementation of the national vocational plan—thus, even before the *Reichsanstalt* dampened expectations of the quantitative side—Walter Stets underscored the mounting significance of one of the qualitative aspects: "Especially in light of the decline in numbers of youths, determination of the vocational suitability gains a greater significance than ever before. Only by taking suitability into account can the necessary productivity increase be achieved."[117]

The efforts to improve the quality of the vocational system, we have noted, were intended to include two facets: along with the monitoring of the suitability of apprentices there was the goal of securing thorough, high-quality training in

the firms. As for the latter, the role of the Labor Administration, which had no relevant expertise, remained quite limited—the labor offices relied on the recommendation of the local chambers of industry and trade, when deciding on firms' requests for apprentices.[118] Vocational counseling's efforts concentrated on the other aspect: assuring the suitability of the apprenticeship candidates. Two strong currents moved the Labor Administration to expand its efforts in this regard: its aim to gain or secure the complete cooperation of private industry, which remained a predominant motive for the *Reichsanstalt* even after it had obtained the legal mandates of "total inclusion," and the needs of the regime for optimal use of Germany's quantitatively limited manpower resources for its own strategic purposes. These currents led to a joint effort by the Labor Administration and industry, which, by 1939, produced Germany's first system of psychological profiles of vocations and first uniform series of psychological tests.[119] The "great cooperative endeavor" continued to flourish even during the years of mandated *Totalerfassung.*

Continuity in the Vocational System During the Phase of Blitzkrieg, 1939–1941

When one is considering the German economy and homefront, even to distinguish the first years of the war from the rest and to characterize them as part of the Blitzkrieg-phase may seem to be taking sides in the historiographic debate about Germany's mobilization.[120] In the sphere of vocational counseling and training, at least, the original thesis of a Blitzkrieg-economy seems to apply: remarkably little changed after the outbreak of war in September 1939. Of course, as we noted earlier, the Labor Administration did play a central role in recruiting and distributing foreign civilian workers, slave laborers, and POW-workers. Indirectly, the importation of something on the order of 10 million foreign workers,[121] who performed almost exclusively unskilled work, allowed German workers to concentrate on skilled work and hence was crucial to maintaining the program of creating a skilled workforce even under the exceptional circumstances of the war. However, the advocates and administrators of vocational counseling and training had no direct involvement with these programs.

Within several weeks of the invasion of Poland, the *Reichsanstalt* and the employers' Reich Economic Chamber, together with the Ministry of Economics, issued decrees ordering that vocational training also continue even during wartime. On September 25, the Labor Administration/Ministry[122] instructed its offices that while wartime demanded some concessions, "vocational training will be maintained during the present situation as well. The development of highly qualified young workers remains necessary, should be promoted even more for the great state-political economic realms. Correspondingly, steering the school-leaving youth into the vocations is of great significance under current conditions as well."[123]

Only a few days later, the Reich Chamber of the Economy issued similar guidelines, which were expressly approved by a decree of the Economics Ministry. "Fundamentally," they said, "the war economy must not lead to a reduced hiring of apprentices for skilled or semi-skilled positions."

In these decisions, the lessons of the previous war—lessons about the long-term effects of short-term calculations—loomed large. The explanations by officials were full of references to the dire postwar results of the failure to train workers properly during that earlier conflict.[124] Industrial interests echoed the appeals of the ministries:

> Such a fundamental orientation of our vocational youth-training [i.e., one oriented to "state-political goals" above and beyond the interests of individual firms] means that its development must be kept apart from all changes of narrow economic, but also of war-economic, considerations.… Vocational training is planning for the long-term.[125]

Published in the now semi-official flagship journal of the vocational training movement, such a reminder was a rallying call for industrial firms to stay the course.

The long-term orientation did not just mean that vocational counseling and training would continue more or less as before. As the *Reichsinstitut* explained, the great project of organizing and standardizing vocational materials, such as vocational profiles, training plans, completion exams, and suitability requirement profiles, would continue as well.[126] The committee on suitability requirements continued to meet regularly; by February 1940, the requirements for a further thirteen vocations had been determined, bringing the total to 78.[127] In April, the committee agreed on eight more profiles,[128] and in June on another five.[129]

A Nazi Economic *Neuordnung*?

If anything might have permanently redirected the thrust of work on the German vocational system, it was not the limited war-economy of 1939/40, but the prospect of a "New Order" of the European economy opened up by Germany's dramatic triumphs in the spring of 1940. After the territorial gains of 1938 and 1939 in Central Europe, the swift conquest of the Benelux countries, Denmark, Norway, and—most importantly—the "arch enemy" France made the Nazis masters of an imperium stretching from the Pyrenees to the Arctic Circle and the edge of the Baltic region. In the flush of victory, Göring commissioned Economics Minister Funk to draw up an overall blueprint for the *Neuordnung;* even as circumstances delayed the development of this single plan, numerous Party and state offices, leaders of the economic organizations, and individual firms prepared formal plans for the new German-dominated Europe, or at least reassessed their options.[130] For many, no doubt, as Peter Hayes suggested about I.G. Farben, Nazi economic policies now assumed for the first time "an air of permanence."[131]

What impact did the prospect of a Nazi *Neuordnung* of Europe have on the ministries' and employers' thinking about the vocational system—which de-

pended, given the necessary investments of time and resources, on assessments of *longer-term* conditions? Since the mid 1920s, a consensus on the value of Germany's human capital had held sway, despite apparent variations in the economic outlook. Now, at the apparent dawn of a Europe dominated by Greater Germany, how did the prospects of a *Neuordnung*—in particular, of a potentially vast, unified market suitable for mass production and hence unskilled work—affect the vocational project?

Contrary to the wishes of Party advocates of a continental, race, and war-centered autarky, Hitler had granted supporters of at least some form of reintegration of the "Greater German Economic Sphere" with world trade the leading roles in planning.[132] The Economics Minister had entrusted the task to the former head of export-promotion, who enjoyed close ties to industry.[133] Without commenting on the likely future state of the *Grossraumwirtschaft* or its relations to the rest of the world, the Minister of Labor and the Labor Administration's head of vocational counseling reiterated the argument that, in light of Germany's long-term shortage of workers, vocational training remained of paramount importance.[134] In this, they were supported by a frequent rival, the German Labor Front, which regarded Germany's small (and shrinking) labor force as the economy's main problem, concluding that "the development of human labor power" was "one of the most urgent investment tasks."[135] Nor did the Labor Front's, nor even Adolf Hitler's, occasional advocacy of mass consumption as a means of spurring greater productivity or as a vehicle for social integration prompt any significant measures to introduce mass production throughout the economy,[136] which might have led to a reevaluation of the German vocational system.

Among some leaders of the economic self-administration, however, the possibilities of the Greater German Economic Sphere appeared to encourage speculation, if only temporarily, about new forms of production. At a speech to industrialists in Dusseldorf in early December 1941 (i.e., when it still appeared that Germany would shortly control a vast region extending to Moscow and even the Urals), Herr Frenz, one of the Organization of the Producing Economy's experts on vocational training, drew a direct link between the potential market's size, new production methods, and workers' qualifications:

> The greater European area provides the German economy with relief in obtaining raw materials, and in the conditions of production and distribution. It allows many firms the possibility of a greater specialization, of mass production and sales and thereby of a previously unknown increase of their productivity and competitiveness.… Vocational training should not be understood to mean *simply the training of skilled or semi-skilled workers*. Especially in the past few years, this area has expanded considerably. The question of the *simplest, shortest and most purposeful training* for the other categories of young workers as well, the training and rapid schooling of low-skilled workers, will have to be considered precisely in regard to the changes in production methods that result from the Greater Economic Sphere. These [changes] will bring about shifts in many firms from one-piece and skilled work, as has been the case until now, to mass, semi-skilled, and unskilled production. As a result, a *corresponding shift* in the need for workers will occur.[137]

We cannot know whether Frenz' views would have become commonplace among businessmen (not to mention the ministerial advocates of vocational training), if the Red Army had not stopped the *Wehrmacht* before Moscow in those very days, thereby ending the Blitzkrieg and enveloping the outcome of the war—and hence the future of the Greater Economic Sphere—in uncertainty. We do know, however, that even at the apogee of Nazi military success, most businessmen still took a far more cautious view of future changes than Frenz' comments implied.

As recent studies of company behavior during the Third Reich have shown, industrial leaders by and large maintained their earlier reserve, born of their uncertainty over the Nazis' long-term intentions, even into 1940/41. Neil Gregor's description of Daimler-Benz' unwillingness to make major decisions based on the prospect of a vast new domestic market can stand in for numerous other studies:

> [D]espite the adoption of an expansionist policy [into production of military equipment]—which in the context of the war economy was the result of unavoidable political pressure as much as long-term strategic planning—the company's successive responses to the changing military and economic situation were still characterized by a high degree of caution and uncertainty, and by a reluctance to commit itself to long-term decisions in a war in which short-term events could very rapidly change the position of the Reich and with it the company.[138]

The most compelling evidence, however, for German firms' ongoing commitment to vocational training was their persistently high, even rising, demand for apprentices. In 1940, the demand for male skilled and semi-skilled trainees had, admittedly, declined slightly, compared to the previous year, from 582,600 to 558,000. Given the fighting and concomitant disruptions in April and May 1940, when the new class of apprentices entered service, the fall-off was not surprising. In 1940, as in 1939, the number of apprentices requested by firms still outnumbered the available school-leavers by 150,000. The next year, though, German employers asked for 627,100 male trainees for skilled and semi-skilled positions, more than a 10 percent increase over the previous year. Two hundred thousand positions—virtually one-third of the requests—could not be filled. As German armies appeared to conquer a vast new empire in the east, the Labor Administration could comment with evident satisfaction on the employers' "great willingness to train."[139]

The Vocational System in the Period of Total War: Disrupted, not Disabled

After the end of the Blitzkrieg outside Moscow in late 1941, the Nazi regime had to fight a different war. Its attempts to remold its military, but in particular its economy, for a war of attrition as well as the growing specter of defeat exacerbated fissiparous tendencies within the regime and cost it support among important social groups.

A vastly increased production of war materiel was the key to the new strategy. To achieve this, the regime had to mobilize untapped reserves of labor—which the military also needed for its new units—or make current workers more productive. The corresponding measures and the encroachment of the war on German territory, especially in 1944 and 1945, could not but affect the German vocational system. Conscription into the army and into other tasks in production drew down the vocational system's own personnel; especially in the final year of the war, Allied bombing and the dispersal of production (and hence training) facilities made the normal routines of vocational placement and training more onerous. Beyond these debilitating effects, the "rationalization" of production encouraged by Fritz Todt and then Albert Speer, the powerful ministers in charge of armaments production,[140] aimed, in part, to introduce mass production methods, which would require far fewer skilled workers.

The first sort of effect, whether due to the withdrawal of personnel or the immediate consequences of Allied actions, was, of course, a serious disruption, but its impact would not necessarily last long past the war's end. The rationalization of production, involving significant investment in machinery for mass production, on the other hand, might have meant a more permanent shift in German production methods—and hence in the vocational system. In fact, several countervailing pressures mitigated the degree of conversion by German industry. These pressures came from within the Nazi Party and within the state ministries. Resistance to change came also from German industry. In the period of total war, the German vocational system was disrupted, but not transformed.

The military crisis of the winter of 1941/42 convinced Hitler to agree, with a decisiveness and consistency he demonstrated increasingly rarely, to a major reorganization of the German war economy. In February 1942, he approved an unprecedented centralization of control in the hands first of Fritz Todt and then of Albert Speer.[141] The reforms introduced by Todt and Speer included, most importantly for our purposes, efforts to simplify and standardize weapons systems; awarding contracts to the most efficient producers; and measures to improve productivity at the factory level, including the increased use of mass production methods.[142]

There can be little doubt that Speer's reforms contributed to the significant increases in the German economy's arms output from 1942 to 1944.[143] However, a number of factors continued to limit the impact of Speer's efforts to reform the economy, especially the expansion of mass production. Though Todt and Speer had achieved an unparalleled centralization of control of the war economy, that command was never complete, nor unequivocally supported by the *Führer*. "A defining quality of German labor policy in the war," Walter Naasner argues, was the leadership's reluctance to demand maximal sacrifices of the workers. Concerns for domestic peace may explain why "only halfhearted attempts" in this direction were made.[144] The decisions in February and March 1942, precisely when Speer was launching his program of rationalization, to utilize Soviet civilian labor extensively beguiled the Nazi leaders with the possibility of resolving their labor

and production problems without imposing significant burdens on the German people. By comparison, other forms of labor policy, including transforming German production methods, now seemed less urgent.[145]

Further impediments to Speer's program of rationalization came from the *Wehrmacht,* from within the Party, and from still potent state ministries. A key precondition for the mass production of weapons was to reduce both the number of variations of each type of weapon or support system and their quality. Considerable progress was made in this regard, yet even Richard Overy admits that many of these changes were implemented only very slowly. Not only did the armed forces resist the reduction and simplification of their weapons and in fact continue to interrupt production runs with frequent design changes,[146] many armaments firms did as well, as Lutz Budrass has shown for the airplane industry.[147]

The Nazis' regional satraps, the *Gauleiter,* blocked or at least slowed some aspects of the rationalization. As part of the effort to mobilize all remaining resources, the Nazi leadership in March 1942 had established yet another labor-related office, the General Plenipotentiary for Labor Deployment (*Arbeitseinsatz*), which was occupied by Fritz Sauckel. In July 1943, Sauckel combined the functions of the regional Reich Labor Guardians and those of the *Land* labor offices in new *Gau* labor offices.[148] The new position strengthened the hand of the *Gauleiter,* whose power bases were at least partly local, in resisting any closings of smaller, less efficient firms ordered by Speer's organization.[149]

Finally, as a growing number of studies of companies' perspectives and behavior during these years suggests, to a considerable extent firms continued to resist significant interference in their production methods. Even under conditions of total war, businesses had to weigh and balance short-term opportunities and dangers against their assessments of the likely future conditions in which they would be operating. Especially in regard to investments in capital, including human capital, firms oriented themselves particularly according to their assessments of mid- to long-range conditions, which by 1942 or 1943 included the growing likelihood of a future without the Nazis.[150] Detailed studies of the machine tools and airplane industries confirm that, even when faced with pressures to turn to mass production, firms largely continued their long-term strategies of combining skilled work and automation for the sake of flexibility in future markets.[151] Especially toward the end of the war, companies "hoarded supplies and skilled workers without any inhibitions."[152]

Firms' interest in preserving their core resources, despite the short-term allure of unskilled mass production for the total war effort, manifested itself in their persistently high willingness to engage in apprenticeship training. The number of positions offered in 1941 had risen by more than 10 percent compared with the previous year; even in 1942, the first year of serious efforts to increase output of materiel, employers offered more positions than ever before.[153] It was only in 1943 that the overall number of apprenticeships on offer declined for the first time, and then only marginally. The number of apprenticeships for semi-skilled positions, in fact, still climbed. In terms of occupied positions, the year 1943 saw

just a 1.8 percent decline in skilled apprenticeships, but a 6.9 percent increase in semi-skilled positions.[154] Reports solicited by the Reich Economic Chamber in the fall of 1944 about the state of vocational counseling throughout the country revealed the debilitating effects of the war, but also the continuation of training virtually until the very end. "The number of male apprentices has been reduced due to the early call-ups, as has that of examiners due to induction into the *Wehrmacht* and the *Volkssturm,*" the summary concluded matter-of-factly. Allied bombings reduced work intensity; in regions near the front, the loss of territory had reduced the area to be tended to and the necessary work of bringing equipment to safety made regular training and exams "seldom possible." Still, "the chambers and firms in these areas are trying everything in order to carry on with vocational training." In areas less affected by the fighting, "basic apprenticeship training is being performed according to plan."[155]

All along, official policy had been to uphold vocational training no matter what the fortunes of war or the state of the war economy. In March 1943, the head of the *Arbeitseinsatz,* Fritz Sauckel, had reiterated the regime's support for the apprenticeship system. The order exempted trainees from the January edict mobilizing further labor reserves for the total war. Its language and stipulations suggest that it belonged to the measures meant to reassure the German middle classes made uneasy by the January edict and the ensuing closings of firms. "Vocational training is necessary for securing the needed supply of *Facharbeiter,* who will be urgently required both today and in the future." The labor offices were to find new positions for those apprentices affected by firm closings.[156] Throughout 1943 and 1944, the Reich Economics Ministry urged firms to maintain apprenticeship training.[157]

Not only did companies try to maintain their training, to the extent that was possible; the work on standardizing the vocational materials also continued into the period of total war. In February 1942, the *Reichsinstitut* (DATSCH) had agreed, upon the suggestion of Reich Group Industry, to restrict its work to materials "important for the war," and primarily to training plans.[158] In May of that year, however, a report showed that between 1 June 1941 and 30 April 1942, the *Reichsinstitut* had completed twenty-seven suitability profiles and still had four "in progress."[159] By early 1943, just as Sauckel was issuing the edict on general mobilization, the Economics Ministry reinvigorated the *Reichsinstitut,* commissioning it to revise all vocational training plans for all sectors with the exception of *Handwerk.*[160] At the end of the year, an air raid on Leipzig destroyed all of the publisher's stock of vocational materials, which thereafter effectively limited the work of the *Reichsinstitut.*[161] Still, in April 1944, there were reported to be "311 recognized *Lehrberufe* and 249 recognized *Anlernberufe,*" with eight and fifteen more vocational profiles, respectively, "in progress."[162] It was only in October 1944—when US and British forces already were driving far into France and the Russians were breaching Germany's eastern borders—that the Economics Ministry finally ordered the "basic halt" of all work by the *Reichsinstitut,* in light of the "total war effort."[163]

Between May and July 1944, Kurt Bernhard of the *Reichsgruppe Industrie* widely circulated a paper, which obviously dealt with the postwar situation: "Suggestions for the Alteration of the Distribution of Youths to Industrial Vocations as well as of the Training and Examining Procedures used until now." In language that echoed numerous appeals made throughout the entire interwar period, and indeed since the late nineteenth century, Bernhard urged that quality had to compensate for missing quantity. "It must always be recalled that the youths *are our most valuable good,* which we must treat with exceptional *care.*" Even the untrained should be turned into semi-skilled workers. Old-fashioned training methods, deriving from a time in which unlimited numbers of youths were available, must be altered, Bernhard urged, apparently more forcefully struck by the desiderata of the actual training (and perhaps the disarray at the end of the war) than by the previous work ordering and standardizing the vocational system.[164]

In December 1944, in the first of a series of discussions with regional industrialists, Bernhard consulted with Berlin employers about the shape of the postwar vocational system. The questions he posed suggest both the issues that remained unresolved or newly opened, after the dislocations of total war, but also the broad agreement that persisted through it:

1) Do you consider the current numerous division of vocations (at present circa 300 *Lehrberufe* and 250 *Anlernberufe*) to be appropriate, or do you think a reduction in number is possible and appropriate?
2) Do you think the separation of skilled and semi-skilled vocations is at all right, or should there in future only be *Lehrberufe*? ...
3) Do you think that for the majority of skilled vocations a long apprenticeship (3–4 years) is generally appropriate, or does a training period of generally 2 years suffice?
4) How do you picture the future training and education of those youths characterized until now as "untrained?"[165]

Neither the Depression nor the accession to power of the National Socialists ultimately derailed the projects of developing a high-skilled workforce. Their militaristic style of politics and untroubled resort to coercive measures to combat mass unemployment diverged from the spirit of the earlier Labor Administration, but the break was not nearly as sharp as some scholars have suggested.

Developments of ultimately greater importance for the long-term future of the projects to optimize the workforce took place independent of direct action by the Nazis. In the first years after the Depression and the change of power, decisive steps were taken to revive, consolidate, and complete important human economies. Employers, in cooperation with state ministries and the Labor Administration, resumed and expanded their work, begun the previous decade, to create standardized vocational profiles and other materials as the bases of a national system of skilled labor: the "great cooperative endeavor." The success of these efforts led firms to offer ever more apprenticeships. The *Reichsanstalt's* vocational counseling participated in the work to standardize vocational materials, which

became the bases of its own work and served to bind the Labor Administration and private employers more closely to each other. As a result of their control of an increasing share of the apprenticeships offered by private industry, the number of which was climbing rapidly, the vocational counseling offices now attracted a proportion of all school-leavers that was rapidly approaching "total inclusion."

Both new and old elements inspired this work on the optimization projects. The new elements—most importantly, a political climate that encouraged greater discipline and initiatives to preempt outside interference; more unified employers' organizations; threats from other claimants to leadership in vocational matters—certainly contributed to the remarkable *speed* of the organizational work. It was the older elements, however—namely, the employers' organizations' and vocational counseling's jointly held goal of creating a high-skilled workforce on a national scale, and (primarily) the latter's aim of steering every young person into the most suitable vocation—that accounted for the underlying *philosophy and direction* of the work in the mid 1930s.

The "great cooperative endeavor" of officials in the Labor Administration and Economics Ministry and employers' organizations to create a unified vocational system continued—and even accelerated—in the shadow of war after 1936. The legal establishment of *Totalerfassung* in March 1938 did not mean that the Labor Administration cared any less about gaining the confidence of employers. These, in turn, had learned to appreciate the Labor Administration's efforts—and also knew they must accommodate themselves to the coercive politics of the day. In 1934/35, the focus of work in the human economies had been on establishing standards for vocational training, the success of which had led to rapidly increasing numbers of industrial trainees—and visitors to the vocational counseling offices. After 1936, when the tightening labor markets put a premium on qualitative measures for improving the vocational economies, the focus of the cooperative endeavor shifted to vocational counseling.

The work to standardize—and hence permit the completion of—the vocational system in the mid to late 1930s represented a revival and extension of the work begun in the decade after World War I. This time, the employers clearly took the initiative—not only in standardizing vocational training, but also in pushing for an effective, nationwide system of vocational counseling. The Labor Administration and Economics Ministry were happy to cooperate with such an eager partner for a goal they too shared.

Compared to the oftentimes contentious and unsteady progress of the optimization projects made in the 1920s, the consolidation of the vocational system beginning in the mid 1930s came about quite rapidly. Politically, the climate created by the Nazi regime conduced (thanks to both its centripetal and centrifugal forces) to bring the employers, the Economics Ministry, the *Reichsanstalt,* and the Labor Ministry together even more closely than previously. Economically and demographically, the rapid return to full and even over-employment put a premium on the optimal employment of each worker—by placing him according to his talents and by developing the latter. In this, the Nazis, on the one hand,

and the Reich ministries and employers, on the other, could agree—even if their ultimate aims differed in significant ways.

As had the Depression a dozen years before, the period of total war from 1942 to 1945 disrupted, but did not fundamentally transfigure, the German vocational system. If anything, the war, by its very destructiveness, would make that system seem all the more necessary. At the end of this World War, the Germans would face a situation very similar to the one in 1918: it was easy for them to believe that they had little on which to rely but their own talents.

Notes

1. All figures were drawn from Reichsanstalt, *Zehn Jahre,* 19.
2. In fact, ever since Bismarck's social insurance schemes, the argument that the risk of unemployment was not calculable—and hence not insurable—long had been one of the impediments to national insurance. See Führer, *Arbeitslosigkeit,* 37–92.
3. Reichsanstalt, *Zehn Jahre,* 72.
4. *Jugend und Beruf,* vol. 10 (October 1931): 229. *Jugend und Beruf,* edited by Richard Liebenberg, the head of vocational counseling in the state labor office in Berlin, was the most important forum for exchanges among the leading advocates of vocational counseling.
5. Ibid., vol. 7 (July 1930): 158.
6. Ibid., vol. 10 (October 1931): 229.
7. Originally in the *Kölnische Zeitung* from 25 June 1930, summarized in *Jugend und Beruf,* vol. 10 (October 1930): 244.
8. Ibid., vol. 7 (July 1930): 158. The disaffection of these *Verwaltungsrat* members for the *Reichsanstalt's* vocational counseling arose out of a range of short-term conflicts and, perhaps, simple confusion. As a subsequent clarification by the social-democratic Free Trade Union insisted, the unions still stood firmly behind the vocational counseling project. (See the reprint of the clarification in *Jugend und Beruf,* vol. 10 (October 1930): 243–44).
9. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 120 Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe, E I Spez., Fach 1, Nr. 61, vol. 7, 23 January 1932.
10. Reichsanstalt, *Zehn Jahre,* 39.
11. Figures calculated from ibid., 39.
12. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 9 (September 1931): 72.
13. Ibid., nr. 1 (January 1932): 1.
14. BAB, R 4901/ 6703, 14 November 1932.
15. On the following, see Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction;* Avraham Barkai, *Nazi Economics: Ideology, Theory and Policy* (New Haven, 1990); James, *The German Slump;* Hayes, *Industry and Ideology;* Dan P. Silverman, *Hitler's Economy. Nazi Work Creation Programs, 1933–1936* (Cambridge, 1998); Richard Overy, *War and Economy in the Third Reich* (Oxford, 1994); Ludolf Herbst, *Der Totale Krieg und die Ordnung der Wirtschaft: Die Kriegswirtschaft im Spannungsfeld von Politik, Ideologie und Propaganda, 1939–1945* (Stuttgart, 1982); Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (New York, 2000), ch. 4: Hitler: "Master in the Third Reich" or "Weak Dictator"?; Lothar Gall and Manfred Pohl, eds., *Unternehmen im Nationalsozialismus* (München, 1998); and Paul Erker, *Industrieeliten in der NS-Zeit: Anpassungsbereitschaft und Eigeninteresse von Unternehmern in der Rüstungs- und Kriegswirtschaft, 1936–1945* (Passau, 1994).

16. Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 223; Uhlig, *Arbeit–amtlich,* 267.
17. Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 227.
18. These included Hellmuth Bogen, head of vocational psychology in the *Landesarbeitsamt* Berlin (for his socialist background); Richard Liebenberg, chief of vocational counseling in Brandenburg, and Richard Langenberg, the head of vocational counseling in the Rhineland (both for being Jewish).
19. These included Walter Poppelreuter, perhaps the most influential vocational psychologist of all; Fritz Giese, the chief of vocational psychology for Baden and Wurttemberg; Albert Huth, in charge of vocational psychology for Bavaria; Wilhelm Hische, head of vocational counseling in Lower Saxony.
20. *Neue Leipziger Tages-Zeitung,* nr. 221, 9 August 1941, in BAB, R 3903/ Berufskundliches Archiv B1/133/11.
21. BAB, R 3903, B1/133/7, Berlin—Annual Report on Vocational Counseling, 1 November 1935.
22. See Reichsanstalt, *Zehn Jahre.* Also the reports from the Nordmark, Mitteldeutschland, Bavaria, and Hesse, all in BAB, R 3903, B1/ 133.
23. Campbell, *Joy in Work,* 312–75.
24. BAB, R 3903/ 350, directive of President of the *Reichsanstalt* to the Presidents of the *Landesarbeitsämter,* 20 May 1935.
25. Of course, a major exception must be noted. The characterization does not apply to the Labor Administration's role during the war in the recruitment of foreign civilian, forced, and prison laborers. The Labor Administration was centrally involved in these programs. Yet they were part of the *Reichsanstalt*'s job placement wing and affected neither the day-to-day operations of vocational counseling or training nor, more importantly for our purposes, the work to standardize the "vocational system." See Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 295–308; Ulrich Herbert, *Fremdarbeiter: Politik und Praxis des "Ausländer-Einsatzes" in der Kriegswirtschaft des Dritten Reiches* (Berlin, 1985), 77. For the complicated details of these programs and the power struggles over these sources of labor, see Herbert, *Fremdarbeiter,* 173–82 and passim, and Walter Naasner, *Neue Machtzentren in der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft, 1942–1945: Die Wirtschaftsorganisation der SS, das Amt des Generalbevollmächtigten für den Arbeitseinsatz und das Reichsministerium für Bewaffnung und Munition/ Reichsministerium für Rüstung und Kriegsproduktion im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem* (Boppard am Rhein, 1994).
26. See Lotte Zumpe, *Wirtschaft und Staat in Deutschland, 1933 bis 1945* (Vadoz, 1980), 123–34, for the details of these reorganizations.
27. While John Gillingham, *Industry and Politics in the Third Reich: Ruhr Coal, Hitler, and Europe* (Stuttgart, 1985), argues that the *Gleichschaltung* "greatly strengthened" the employers (Gillingham, *Industry and Politics,* 34), Hayes, *Industry and Ideology,* citing David Schoenbaum, suggests the merger actually fragmented and vitiated industry (Hayes, *Industry and Ideology,* 76).
28. See the announcement, with a militaristic photo of Feder, in the August 1933 issue of *Technische Erziehung.*
29. "Gegenwartsaufgaben des Deutschen Ausschusses," in *Technische Erziehung,* August 1933: 58–60; "Berufserziehung," in *Technische Erziehung,* September 1933: 65–66.
30. Figures in Silverman, *Hitler's Economy,* appendix, 251.
31. Friedrich Syrup, "Das Gesetz zur Regelung des Arbeitseinsatzes," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt* (Nichtamtlicher Teil), nr. 15, 25 May 1934: 175.
32. Syrup's explanation of these measures explicitly referred not only to the immediate purpose of improving the situation in the cities, but also to the long-term need to redress the "current distribution of the population induced by an exaggerated industrialization." (*Reichsarbeitsblatt,* (Nichtamtlicher Teil), nr. 25, 5 September 1934: 333).
33. Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 245.
34. See Syrup's comments, *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 25, 5 September 1934: 334, which include a statement from the Economics Ministry to this effect. Also, see Syrup, *Hundert Jahre,* 407.

35. See the text of the law in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* I, nr. 32, 1935.
36. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 25, 5 September 1934: 335.
37. The introduction of workbooks represented a return to a practice common in the Kaiserreich.
38. The state and Party would recur repeatedly to legal restrictions on movement and punitive measures, as well as, particularly during the war, to "sweeps" through the plants to uncover unauthorized workers. In addition to such "sticks," however, the authorities also resorted to "carrots" to keep workers generally loyal to, or at least tolerant of, the regime, as well as, secondarily, to tie them to their places of work. On the prominent role of various forms of "social welfare," especially by the Labor Front, including measures to improve worker health, housing, and pensions, see Marie-Luise Recker, *Nationalsozialistische Sozialpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (München, 1985); Smelser, *Robert Ley,* 201–17. Despite the general wage freeze imposed in 1936, companies used new forms of performance pay to motivate and keep workers. See Recker, *Nationalsozialistische Sozialpolitik,* 223–49; Rüdiger Hachtmann, *"Industriearbeit" im Dritten Reich* (Göttingen, 1989), 161–223.
39. By the spring and summer of 1934, employers were beginning to discuss measures to combat the pending shortages. See, for example, the report on a meeting of the industrialists' organization in April to address this problem, in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 7, July 1934: 81–82; also the Statement of the President of the Reich Estate of German Industry Dr. Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach on the Question of the Shortage of Skilled Workers and Apprenticeship Training, in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 5, May 1934: 56–57.
40. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 7, July 1938: 127.
41. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 5, May 1934: 56–57.
42. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 7, July 1934: 81–82.
43. "Der Bedarf an technischem Nachwuchs und Berufsberatung," in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 7, July 1934: 74–75. In fact, such a demand on the part of industry was not new. According to Theo Wolsing, *Untersuchungen zur Berufsausbildung im Dritten Reich* (Kastellaun, 1977), 186, the employers in 1930 had urged the development of such plans. Clearly, several years later, the conditions were more propitious.
44. "Zentral gesteuerte Berufsberatung," in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 8, August 1934: 85–87.
45. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 12, December 1934: 143.
46. "Der Bedarf der deutschen Wirtschaft an technischem Nachwuchs und die Problematik der statistischen Berufsforschung," in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 2, February 1935: 17–19.
47. "Das Berufsbild," in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 2, February 1935: 13–14.
48. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 4, April 1935: 46–47. These were for machine mechanic, toolmaker, fine mechanic, corer, steel former, iron former, metal former, model carpenter, iron mechanic, and high-voltage electrician.
49. See the frequent reports "From the work of the special groups," in the now expanded *Technische Erziehung.*
50. See the list of the vocations in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 5, May 1936: 53.
51. See the explanation of the first set of vocational profiles in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 4, April 1935: 46–47, which said that the "necessary knowledge and qualities, which are to be seen as preconditions for the apprenticeship training," would be enumerated separately in DATSCH training materials.
52. See the text of the agreement in BAB, R 12 I/ 307, *Reichswirtschaftskammer* to the *Reichsgruppe Industrie,* 17 Juli 1944 [sic]. The latter requested a copy after its own had been destroyed in an air raid. The precise origins of the agreement have not been explored.
53. Dieter Langewiesche and Heinz-Elmar Tenorth, eds., *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte, vol. V, 1918–1945* (München, 1989), 276; as Kathleen Thelen puts it, this measure united industry's standardization with the accreditation system handicrafts had enjoyed since 1897 (Thelen, *How Institutions,* 237–38).
54. Ley and the DAF repeatedly have attracted scholarly attention. See Smelser, *Robert Ley;* Recker, *Nationalsozialistische Sozialpolitik;* Timothy W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich: the*

Working Class and the "National Community" (Providence, 1993); Tilla Siegel, *Leistung und Lohn in der Nationalsozialistischen "Ordnung der Arbeit"* (Opladen, 1989); Matthias Frese, *Betriebspolitik im "Dritten Reich": Deutsche Arbeitsfront, Unternehmer und Staatsbürokratie in der westdeutschen Grossindustrie, 1933–1939* (Paderborn, 1991); Hachtmann, *"Industriearbeit."*

55. Carola Sachse et al., *Angst, Belohnung, Zucht und Ordnung: Herrschaftsmechanismen im Nationalsozialismus* (Opladen, 1982), 59–91.
56. Frese, *Betriebspolitik,* 252–58.
57. See the announcement in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 10, October 1935: 119.
58. See BAB, R 3101/10220, letter of the Reich Institute for Vocational Training to Dr. Eberhard Köhler in the Economics Ministry, 16 November 1939. The Reich Institute included a chart comparing its own work on these materials with that of the DAF in great detail.
59. Frese, *Betriebspolitik,* 263–64. The Reich Institute did accept the DAF as a constituent member, but the latter only played a supporting role.
60. All numbers were taken from Reichsanstalt, *Zehn Jahre,* 39. For a chart showing the growing number of apprenticeships offered by the Labor Administration, see below.
61. As one sign of this cooperation, in April 1935, the Reich Group Industry named representatives in each state to work with the *Land* vocational offices.
62. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 7, July 1936: 78.
63. BAB, R 3903 (Alt R 163)/ 57, letter of the President of the *Reichsanstalt* to the Presidents of the *Land* offices, 4 October 1934.
64. Reichsanstalt, *Zehn Jahre,* 39.
65. See, for example, the reports of the Berlin (Brandenburg) and Mitteldeutschland offices, in BAB, R 3903 (Berufskundliches Archiv)/ B1/133/7 and BAB, R 3903 (Berufskundliches Archiv)/B1/133/11, respectively.
66. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* (Nichtamtlicher Teil), nr. 34, Beilage: Achter Bericht der Reichsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung, 5 December 1936: 36. Of the 848,000 visitors in 1934/35, 109,000—or roughly 12 percent—were "older counsel seekers." Since the statistics do not reveal how many of these older people were repeat visitors, we cannot say for sure what proportion of each school-class eventually went to vocational counseling.
67. See the reports of Saxony (BAB, R 3903/B1/133/11); Hessen (BAB, R 3903/B1/133/10); and Bavaria (BAB, R 3903/B1/133/10).
68. BAB, R 3903/B1/133/12, report of the *Land* office for South-West Germany.
69. BAB, R 3903/B1/133/12; also the Saxony office, in BAB, R 3903/B1/133/11.
70. BAB, R 3903/B1/133/12; the Middle-German office reported that its local counselors were combating the "one-sided" desire among school-leavers to obtain a position in the metal industry, which accounted for as much as 40 percent of the cases (BAB, R 3903/B11/133/11); in Saxony, as many as 20 percent of the visitors to vocational counseling wanted to become auto mechanics (BAB, R 3903/B11/133/11).
71. BAB, R 3903/B1/133/12.
72. The chamber of industry and trade and the industrialists' organization in Saxony, for example, seem to have been particularly active in forging and supporting cooperation.
73. The relation of handicrafts to vocational counseling, as we have seen earlier, had been uneven. It depended fundamentally on crafts' sense of its own fortunes, especially vis-à-vis industry, in attracting apprentices. By the mid 1930s, the craft branch's hopes for support from the new regime were giving way to pessimism again, as the incipient rearmament (and later the Four-Year Plan) favored industry. This explains the somewhat greater support by crafts, than by industry, for binding agreements with vocational counseling.
74. See, for example, the report of the Berlin office (BAB, R 3903 (Berufskundliches Archiv)/ B1/133/7), claiming that "the new organization of the manufacturing economy makes it possible today to a greater extent to work on the closest terms with industry." Numerous other offices reported on the generally greater cooperativeness of the chambers and organizations of crafts and industry compared with that of some individual employers.

75. Reichsanstalt, *Zehn Jahre,* 40. This practice was reported in Hessen, Bavaria, and Saxony.
76. Report of the *Landesarbeitsamt* Nordmark, R 3903/ Berufskundliches Archiv B1/133/8.
77. Dietmar Petzina, *Autarkiepolitik im Dritten Reich: Der Nationalsozialistische Vierjahresplan* (Stuttgart, 1968).
78. Unfortunately, until now the growing literature on employers' behavior and attitudes during the Third Reich has paid almost no attention to these questions of the vocational system. More generally, on employers' unease over growing Nazi interference in the economy after 1936 (which was by no means universal and did not preclude their benefiting from preparations for war), see Henry A. Turner, "Unternehmen unter dem Hakenkreuz," in Pohl, *Unternehmen,* 18; Gillingham, *Industry;* Hayes, *Industry,* 163ff. For attitudes within the leadership of the *Reichsanstalt*, we have to rely on accounts published after the war, though written during it (Syrup), and on the postwar reports of colleagues (on Stets). See, Syrup, *Hundert Jahre,* 403; see the article by Wilhelm Witte on Stets, in Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung, *Berufsberatung—gestern, heute, morgen* (1959). Given what we know of these men's philosophies and life's work before 1933, which was motivated by a vision of Germany's long-term economic success and domestic stability, the claims in these works that they regarded the regime with some suspicion rings true.
79. This overall continuity is invariably missed in the literature on Nazi labor and vocational policies, which insists on a sharp break from the previous policies. See Volker Herrmann, *Vom Arbeitsmarkt zum Arbeitseinsatz: Zur Geschichte der Reichsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung, 1929–1939* (Frankfurt, 1993); Anje Lepold, *Der gelenkte Lehrling: Industrielle Berufsausbildung von 1933–1939* (Frankfurt, 1998); Petzina, *Autarkiepolitik,* 158.
80. See Petzina, *Autarkiepolitik,* for details on the administration of the plan.
81. When the *Vierjahresplan* was first announced in the fall of 1936, the unemployment rate stood at just over 5 percent. In key sectors such as iron and metal and construction, however, unemployment already had sunk below 3.5 percent. See H.M. Flügge, "Arbeitseinsatz im Vierjahresplan," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 33, 25 November 1936: 472.
82. Cited in Petzina, *Autarkiepolitik,* 159.
83. The second directive made the hiring of additional skilled workers in these sectors dependent on the approval of the labor office, while the third compelled firms to return skilled metal and construction workers, who had been redeployed, to those fields.
84. Hachtmann, *Industriearbeit,* 44. The first citation comes from Flügge, "Arbeitseinsatz im Vierjahresplan," and the second from Syrup in "Der Vierjahresplan," 16.
85. BAB, R11/ 1216, letter from Syrup to the *Landesarbeitsämter* and *Arbeitsämter,* 10 December 1936. Syrup noted that the groups have "already until now maintained close relations in carrying out the *Arbeitseinsatz.*"
86. See the report on the meeting, which took place on 28–29 January 1937, in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 2, February 1937: 21–25.
87. Tilla Siegel and Thomas von Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationaliserung unter dem Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt, 1991), 274–77; according to Heidrun Homburg (*Rationalisierung,* 495–96), the *Vierjahresplan* had virtually no effect on Siemens' production strategies, which still assumed Germany's integration into world markets; Hayes, *Industry,* 175–211, comes to a similar conclusion about the firm whose leaders helped to design and implement the Four-Year Plan, the chemicals giant I.G. Farben.
88. Johannes Handrick, "Die Zusammenarbeit der Reichsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung mit den Organisationen der gewerblichen Wirtschaft beim Berufseinsatz der deutschen Jugend," in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 5, May 1937: 49–52.
89. In addition to the report in *Technische Erziehung* on the January 28–29 (nr. 5, May 1937: 49–52) meeting, see the four-page draft of a proposal for the cooperation between industry and the *Reichsanstalt,* sent by the employers' Reich Chamber of the Economy to the Economics Ministry on 21 January 1937, in BAB, R11/1216, letter from Küch to Krause. One of the suggestions was that all "organizations of the economy shall take it upon themselves to seek to

have all apprenticeship-masters use the vocational counseling offices when filling their trainee-positions."

90. In this period, the number of visitors to the vocational counseling offices, including "older counsel seekers," rose from 1.078 to 1.18 million, which for the first time surpassed the number of students leaving school.
91. Erich Schulz, "Berufswünsche und Berufseintritt," *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 36, 25 December 1937: 401.
92. See the texts of the instructions in BAB, R 11/1217.
93. See these in ibid.
94. See the letter from the *Reichswirtschaftskammer* to the *Reichsanstalt,* on 21 August 1937, in ibid.
95. BAB, R 3101/10219, 28 May 1937.
96. BAB, R 11/1217, letter from the *Reichswirtschaftskammer* to the *Reichsanstalt,* 21 August 1937.
97. See the figures in Walter Stets, "Nachwuchspolitik in Krieg und Frieden," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 34, 5 December 1939: 443. In 1938, 441,400 apprenticeships were available for 464,000 male school-leavers (the figures are restricted to these). If one could subtract those who went on to *Gymnasium,* military service or unskilled work, one almost certainly would find a deficit of trainees. By 1939, in any case, there were at most 555,000 male school-leavers for 583,000 male apprenticeships. See *Reichsarbeitsblatt* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 482–83. Brandsch, "Nachwuchs und Wirtschaft," in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 4, April 1938: 53–59, also suggests that 1937/38 was a turning point.
98. Hans Herdegen, "Der Berufswechsel," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 25, 25 July 1938: 221.
99. See Erich Schulz, "Berüfswünsche und Berufseintritt," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 36, 25 December 1937: 401. As the *Reichsanstalt*'s annual internal report for 1937 pointed out, the regime's own directives for fulfilling the Four-Year Plan were in no small measure responsible for these imbalances.
100. Walter Stets, "Zur Nachwuchsplanung 1941," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 483.
101. For the texts of these decrees, see *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger und Preussischer Staatsanzeiger,* nr. 51, 1938.
102. Erich Schulz, "Ergebnisse aus der Berufsnachwuchslenkungstätigkeit der Arbeitsämter im Grossdeutschen Reich im Krieg," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 16, 5 June 1942: 291. The remaining youths would have worked on family farms, entered the *Reichsarbeitsdienst* or *Wehrmacht,* or gone on to *Gymnasium.* If one included the considerable number of "older counsel seekers," the figure for the earlier year already surpassed 100 percent.
103. Walter Stets, "Nachwuchspolitik in Krieg und Frieden," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 34, 5 December 1939: 443. The figure for 1938 was 441,400 and for the following year 582,600.
104. Walter Stets, "Zur Nachwuchsplanung 1941," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 483.
105. See the debates within vocational counseling toward the end of World War I and in the early 1920s in chapter 3.
106. Walter Stets, "Zur Nachwuchsplanung 1941," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 483.
107. Erich Schulz, "Ergebnisse aus der Berufsnachwuchslenkungstätigkeit der Arbeitsämter im Grossdeutschen Reich im Kriege," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 16, 5 June 1942: 291.
108. From a nadir of 83,000 in 1931/32, the number of positions for men had risen to 441,000 in 1937/38.
109. BAB, R 11/1217, "Die Gesichtspunkte zur Zusammenarbeit der Reichswirtschaftskammer bzw. Organisation der gewerblichen Wirtschaft mit der Reichsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung," 10 February 1938.
110. Walter Stets, "Zur Nachwuchsplanung 1941," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 483.

111. BAB, R 11/ 1217, letter from the *Reichswirtschaftskammer* to the *Reichsanstalt,* 22 March 1938.
112. Walter Stets, "Zur Nachwuchsplanung 1941," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 484.
113. Walter Stets, "Die Lenkung des männlichen Berufsnachwuchses 1941 und 1942," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1941: 492–97.
114. Franz Seldte, "Deutsche Nachwuchspolitik," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 30, 25 October 1941: 527–29. Seldte had parents in mind when he insisted that no compulsion would be applied. His insistence that the plan was part of a functioning national economy, and not of a war economy, was meant to reassure those parts of industry and *Handwerk* that had complained about the plan's excessive emphasis on the metal and mining sectors. By and large, the employers' organization expressed its general approval of the need for planning, while individual employers and sectors were dissatisfied with the distribution. See Wolsing, *Untersuchungen,* 195.
115. Walter Stets, "Zur Sicherstellung des beruflichen Nachwuchses," in *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 7, July 1938: 128.
116. *Technische Erziehung,* nr. 5, May 1937: 50.
117. Walter Stets, "Zur Nachwuchsplanung 1941," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 485.
118. Wolsing, *Berufsausbildung,*175–86.
119. For a detailed account of these efforts, see Meskill, *Human Economies,* 352–73.
120. Rolf-Dieter Müller, "Die Mobilisierung der deutschen Wirtschaft für Hitlers Kriegführung," in *Organisation und Mobilisierung des Deutschen Machtbereichs, Erster Halbband: Kriegsverwaltung, Wirtschaft und Personelle Ressourcen 1939–1941,* eds. B. Kroener, R.D. Müller, and H. Umbreit (Stuttgart, 1988), 349–692, is the only author in these debates who has examined not only the policies issued from above, but also the responses and initiatives coming from industrial firms. He offers the most convincing account: the Nazis, indeed, were planning and preparing for a longer war and fuller mobilization; their sensitivity to the resistance among the populace, Party members, and industry to these measures, however, compelled the regime within a month of the outbreak of war to retreat from its original plans; later, the polycentric nature of the regime stymied efforts at greater mobilization and—most crucially—the apparently easy victories over Poland and France and even in the opening weeks of the Russian campaign instilled in the leadership a "victor's hubris" and false sense of strength.
121. Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 297.
122. For the sake of simplicity, I will continue to refer to the Labor Administration and *Reichsanstalt,* even though they were subsumed under the Labor Ministry.
123. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* I, nr. 29, 15 October 1939: 468.
124. See the interview with Labor Minister Seldte, in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 30, 25 October 1939: 377; Walter Stets, "Nachwuchspolitik im Krieg und Frieden," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* II, nr. 34, 5 December 1939: 441–46.
125. "Berufsausbildung im Kriege," in *Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe (Technische Erziehung)*, nr. 10, November 1939: 281. In early 1939, the Reich Economics Ministry had assumed a more direct role in DATSCH, which it had sponsored and protected (from the German Labor Front) since 1935. As part of the reorganization, DATSCH was renamed the Reich Institute for Vocational Training in Commerce and Industry (*Reichsinstitut für Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe*) and *Technische Erziehung* became *Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe.* Again, for the sake of clarity, in the text I will refer to the organization and its journal interchangeably as DATSCH or the Reichsinstitut and *Technische Erziehung* or *Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe.*
126. "Berufsausbildung im Kriege," in *Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe (Technische Erziehung)*, nr. 10, November 1939: 282. For a sense of the scale of work throughout 1940, see the impressive list of vocational materials in the table of contents to the bound volume of *Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe* for 1940, I–VII.

127. BAB, R 11/ 955, report on the "Fundamental Discussion of the Working Committee on Vocational Suitability-Requirements," 28 February 1940.
128. See the brief report on the meeting in *Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe,* June 1940: 267.
129. *Berufsausbildung in Handel und Gewerbe,* July 1940: 319.
130. See Herbst, *Der Totale Krieg,* 150–67; Müller, "Die Mobilisierung," 491–97; Recker, *Nationalsozialistische Sozialpolitik,* 82–154.
131. Hayes, *Industry,* 268.
132. Müller, "Die Mobilisierung," 493.
133. Ibid., 493.
134. "Reichsarbeitsminister Seldte über die Berufswahl," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 30, 25 October 1940: 519; Walter Stets, "Zur Nachwuchsplanung 1941," *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1940: 482–87.
135. Quoted in Herbst, *Der Totale Krieg,* 151.
136. On Hitler's and the DAF's ideas about encouraging mass consumption, see Herbst, *Der Totale Krieg,* 324–27. On the project of a "mass motorization," see Hans Mommsen and Manfred Grieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf, 1996), 177–202.
137. BAB, R 11/ 1085, letter from Frenz to Erdmann containing a copy of the talk he would hold on 5 December, 3 December 1941.
138. Neil Gregor, *Daimler-Benz in the Third Reich* (New Haven, 1998), 78; for similar assessments, see on Siemens, Erker, *Industrieeliten in der NS-Zeit,* 46, 49, and Siegel and Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 349; on I.G. Farben, Hayes, *Industry*, 268; on the machine-tool industry, Siegel and Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* 172–73, 274; generally, Müller, "Die Mobilisierung," 496.
139. Quotation and figures in Walter Stets, "Die Lenkung des männlichen Berufsnachwuchses 1941 und 1942," in *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 28, 5 October 1941: 492–97. The number of female apprenticeships followed a similar pattern, though at lower levels.
140. The official designations of the offices were the *Reichsministerium für Bewaffnung und Munition* and, from September 1943, the *Reichsministerium für Rüstung und Kriegsproduktion.*
141. Müller, "Die Mobilisierung," passim, and, on the transition to Todt/Speer, 630–92.
142. See Overy, *War and Economy,* for a concise summary of the reforms.
143. See ibid., 366–74, for some indices of the higher output and greater productivity.
144. Walter Naasner, *Neue Machtzentren,* 27; Overy, *War and Economy,* 353–54.
145. Naasner, *Neue Machtzentren,* 29.
146. Overy, *War and Economy,* 362–63.
147. Lutz Budrass, *Flugzeugindustrie und Luftrüstung in Deutschland 1918–1945* (Düsseldorf, 1998), 818, 822.
148. Naasner, *Neue Machtzentren,* 36.
149. Overy, *War and Economy,* 372–73; Herbst, *Der Totale Krieg,* 198–275.
150. Hans Mommsen, in "Podiumsdiskussion," in Gall and Pohl, *Unternehmen im Nationalsozialismus,* 126; Erker, *Industrieeliten,* 67.
151. See Siegel/Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung,* and Budrass, *Flugzeugindustrie,* respectively.
152. Erker, *Industrieeliten,* 70, with reference to Daimler-Benz; Herbst, *Der Totale Krieg,* 405, comes to the same conclusion.
153. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 29, 15 October 1942: 542.
154. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* V, nr. 32, 15 November 1943: 510.
155. BAB, R 12 I/ 310, *Reichswirtschaftskammer* to various addressees, 10 January 1945.
156. *Reichsarbeitsblatt,* I, nr. 10, 5 April 1943: 288.
157. See, for example, the report of the Ministry's order to this effect, in a letter from Kurt Bernhard of the *Reichs Gruppe Industrie* to Max Ihn of the Krupp company, in BAB, R 12I/ 308, 10 October 1944.

158. BAB, R 11/ 695, 6 March 1942.
159. BAB, R 11/1253, 8 May 1942.
160. See the report on the Ministry's decision from 11 January 1943, in BAB, R11/ 187, Reich Economics Chamber to the Reich Groups and *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Verkehr,* 6 February 1943.
161. BAB, R 11/ 1253, 22 December 1943.
162. BAB, R 12/ 308, 22 April 1944.
163. BAB, R 12I/ 310, 14 October 1944.
164. BAB, R 12 I/ 301, May 1944.
165. BAB, R 12 I/ 310, 29 December 1944. The second meeting was scheduled for 16 January 1945 in Dresden. It is unknown whether it took place.

Chapter 6

The Labor Administration in the Economic Miracle

In the summer of 1945, after the Allies had defeated and occupied Germany, few Germans could be certain about their own, or their society's, future. The country faced even bleaker prospects than those of 1918: this second world war had come home to Germany, turning cities to rubble and destroying infrastructure and industrial capital, as the first one had not. The human losses—of killed and wounded soldiers and, for the first time, targeted civilians—had been even greater than the carnage of 1914 to 1918. Millions of homeless people, displaced or expelled from central Europe, threatened to overwhelm available resources. Above all, Germany's future status—its borders, its political constitution, and its economic system—lay, at least for the foreseeable future, in others', in the Allies,' hands. At the time, few could imagine what kind of Germany, what kind of economy and vocational system, would emerge in 10 or 20 years time.

The War's Aftermath[1]

Amidst the ruins of postwar Germany, the reconstruction of a national Labor Administration and system of vocational training, like the future of much else in the defeated and occupied country, only could have seemed a distant and uncertain prospect. In the event, the road to the establishment in 1952 of the new Labor Administration, the *Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung,* would be filled with delay, power struggles, and debate. And yet, in

Notes for this section begin on page 215.

retrospect, it is clear that no significant opposition or alternative to a reconstitution ever presented itself.[2] As had been the case since the 1920s, the support for a Labor Administration was broad among the nascent interest groups and the political parties. At the local and state levels, labor offices resumed their activities as soon as they could. The reconstitution of the vocational training system, which also encountered delays and perhaps more serious challenges to employers' power, though not to the system per se, followed a similar path: the local bodies, the individual companies, and chambers of industry, resumed—or, in fact, simply continued—earlier patterns; organizing nationally took longer.

Even as the Allies assumed all political authority in conquered Germany, German administration, particularly at the local level, continued to operate.[3] However, the labor offices now faced even more obstacles to effective service than they had in the waning years of the Third Reich, when conscription into the army of their own personnel, the regime's interventions in the economy, and the breakdown of transportation and bomb attacks had disrupted work. Surprisingly, perhaps, the fact that most industrial production had ground to a halt was not itself directly responsible for the labor offices' problems:[4] despite their production problems, employers continued—as they had throughout the war—to seek a high number of apprentices. Rather, the labor offices had to overcome many of the same obstacles that hampered industrial production (though not industrial training). A report of the vocational counselor in Bielefeld from August 1945 described the constraints under which his office had to work and the necessity of continuing the simplified forms of counseling and psychological testing he had developed in the last three years of the war:

> In the current emergency condition of the local economy, it is hardly possible to consider individual vocational interests, not to mention fine gradations in ability. Examination rooms are not available and cannot at present be set up. Extensive psychological examinations would be premature given the large quantitative question of putting youths to work.… [G]iven the current transportation conditions the reestablishment of a supra-district testing station appears at present completely impossible.[5]

Addressing the human costs of the war, which the Bielefeld report also mentioned, diverted many of the remaining resources from vocational counseling's previously central purposes of advising and placing school-leavers. Adults, especially returning POWs, expellees, the war-wounded, and those compelled to change vocations or in need of further training, flooded the vocational counseling stations. In North Rhine-Westphalia in 1946/47, for example, such "older advice-seekers" made up nearly 60 percent of the offices' total caseload.[6]

Despite their firms' low output and the bleak prospects for improvement at least in the short-run, German employers sought to hire and train large numbers of school-leavers. In North Rhine-Westphalia in 1946/47 and 1947/48, for example, companies' requests of the labor offices for apprentices "exceeded considerably" the number of available trainees. In the first year, 159,000 candidates faced 177,000 openings; in 1947/48, the respective figures were 177,000 and

183,000.[7] In the face of conditions detrimental to producing goods for sale, in particular the lack of a stable currency, firms turned their efforts to restoring and enhancing their capital, in both its material and human forms.[8] As they had under the perhaps equally, if differently, challenging conditions of wartime production, German firms planned for a long-term future in which, they expected, a high-skilled workforce would be one of their greatest assets.

Compared to the concrete requirements and goals of the local and state labor offices and of companies, the Weltanschauung of political parties and the populace played a much smaller role in the reconstitution of the workforce optimization projects, at least in the first years after the war ended. For the great majority of Germans, exhaustion and the practical, daily challenge of making do amidst the ruins and shortages precluded much political engagement or reflection about the distant future.[9] To the extent that the Allies permitted them, the early German political decisions did not rely on a mass-basis, but instead on elites of Weimar and even the late Kaiserreich.[10]

Supporters of the Labor Administration found in the postwar German outlook reasons to be optimistic about their institution's future, as well as looming challenges. For those Germans who could afford to think about more than simply making ends meet, print media, and in particular magazines, early on began a lively public debate about the nature and causes of the recent catastrophe (however defined) and the path to Germany's recovery. Though the answers and prescriptions often varied, a persistently strong theme in these early years was the call for ethical renewal, both of the individual and of society as a whole. Individuals sought new or, more often, old sources of value and orientation. They turned to religion, but also to work and vocation, which in addition to satisfying compelling material needs also "could serve as a new life-philosophy."[11] The yearning for individual orientation to some higher purpose, which might include devotion to work, fitted well with aspects of the Labor Administration's program of vocational counseling—such moral grounding had been at least one of the goals of many of the original proponents of vocational training and counseling in the Kaiserreich and Weimar Republic. However, at least in the discussion in the first years after 1945, the emphasis had shifted away from the economic and toward the spiritual role of skilled work.

As for remaking society, a broad, if vague, consensus united many leftists and Christians who favored some form of socialism.[12] Likewise, Germans from across the political spectrum held that the nation, if it ever were to emerge from its current catastrophic state, must use and mobilize its human resources as effectively as possible. Even the "Ordoliberal" architects of West Germany's "social market economy," while firmly rejecting socialism, embraced the need for a Labor Administration that would steer people into skilled work.[13] Unlike the prior postwar period, however, after 1945 there were few explicit calls for *Menschenökonomie,* and certainly little of the earlier fervor.

Support for some form of socialism was congruent with a Labor Administration run in the public's interest. Of concern to officials in the labor offices,

however, were the criticisms of centralization and bureaucracy in general, which many Germans associated with Nazi rule and blamed for the destruction of humane (or religious) values.[14] More particularly, the Labor Administration itself had become associated in many people's minds with the open dirigisme of the Nazi period, just as the heavy hand of the labor offices in World War I had earned them popular enmity.[15] The pressures resulting from these attitudes on the part of the public, to emphasize the individual, almost ethical aspect of vocations and vocational counseling and to personalize the bureaucracy, would play some role in the coming years in efforts to highlight vocational counseling's connection to the individual. As it had in the past, *Berufsberatung* found itself torn between the means of "complete inclusion" and the desire to win the confidence and cooperation of its actual and potential clients in order to achieve the goal of a highly skilled workforce.

All in all, then, in the first years after World War II, the Labor Administration could build on broad support for its general mission of controlling and improving the workforce, while some aspects of implementation remained more contested. Compared to the situation after 1918, the urgency of the labor force projects had faded somewhat—if only because the collapse now encompassed so many aspects of life and because occupied Germany's fate rested to a much greater extent in others' hands. However, the institutions of the human economies, scattered critiques notwithstanding, were much more firmly in place.

Soon after the end of the war, higher levels of the Labor Administration also were reconstituted. Between 1945 and 1948, Allied restrictions, German political struggles, and simple practical considerations determined a heterogeneous sequence and pattern of reviving the bodies important to the workforce projects. However slowly the supra-local organizations arose, their reestablishment virtually went uncontested, reflecting the broad support among relevant German circles as well as among the Allies. Only the British, whose new Labour government envisioned a more centralized Germany with strong elements of a planned economy, created zone-wide Offices, including one for Labor, in addition to state ministries.[16] As a result of this administrative decision, as well as the Rhineland's traditionally leading role in vocational counseling and its central position in the economy of the incipient West German state, the British Central Office for Labor became the basis for the future West German Labor Administration. The delays in reestablishing a unified national Labor Administration meant that—as so often in the past—state and local offices, as well as the British Central Office, shaped the practices of the human economies and, especially in their dealings with local employers, assured a high degree of continuity.

One of the few existing discontinuities, the lack of corporatist governing boards, spawned tensions within the incipient Labor Administration. In 1946 and 1947, the attempts by some Social Democratic politicians and union leaders to gain decisive influence over the Labor Administration seemed, to key figures within the Central Labor Office of the British Zone, to pose a threat to its mission. Unhampered by any corporatist governing boards, the Social Democratic

Labor Ministers of such important *Länder* as North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, and Schleswig-Holstein applied obviously political criteria in selecting the presidents of the state offices.[17] Indeed, the head of the Zonal Central Office objected that the North Rhine-Westphalia Labor Minister had called several meetings of Social-Democratic directors of local labor offices in order to give them "political instructions." If this were not stopped, the Zonal chief warned, other parties would do the same and the Labor Administration would be split into political camps.[18] A related dispute arose over whether labor office figures could be active members of unions.[19] While the head of the Zonal Office was willing to pay some attention to political affiliation in hirings ("otherwise, strong attacks could be expected from the parties and unions"), it was the British Occupation authority that insisted most forcefully upon the strict neutrality of labor office members.[20] Thus, without permanently alienating any party, the emerging Labor Administration in the British Zone began to reestablish important characteristics that had distinguished the Labor Administration in the Weimar period and that had not been violated fully even under the Nazis: a principle of relative nonpartisanship and support from across the political spectrum.[21] A substantial continuity of personnel from the Weimar and Nazi periods strengthened the incipient Labor Administration's dedication to the national cause of creating a high-skilled workforce.[22]

The Central Office for Labor in the British Zone regarded itself, as we have mentioned, as the precursor to a restored nationwide Labor Administration, in which view it found the full support of the British.[23] It swiftly took the initiative in preparing and systematizing materials for vocational counseling, including psychological testing. These efforts shed light on the thinking and motives within the Labor Administration during these tumultuous years. They demonstrate that, after some initial pathos-inspired, religiously colored idealism, more concrete goals, including—most pragmatically of all—the need to win the cooperation of employers, reasserted themselves. In addition to this form of continuity, the Central Office's efforts to create uniform standards and methods for vocational counseling formed a direct bridge between the *Reichsanstalt* and the future *Bundesanstalt,* as those efforts drew on the systematizing work of the late 1930s and would provide the blueprint for the *Bundesanstalt*'s vocational counseling and psychological service.

Within months of the war's end, the work of coordinating and preparing materials for vocational counseling had begun, first at the state level, and then at the Central Office. In February 1946, Julius Scheuble, who was the head of vocational counseling in the most important state of the British Zone, North Rhine, and would later become the first president of the reconstituted *Bundesanstalt,* called the first of several meetings to revive work at the state level.[24]

In July, the British established the Central Office for Labor in Lemgo, with Scheuble as its director. Citing the "especially difficult task of vocational counseling at present," Scheuble two months later organized the first zone-wide conference on vocational counseling. As Scheuble explained later to his British superiors

(and presumably to those at the conference), the "most important task" of his agency's vocational counseling unit was "the new formation of a skilled labor force calibrated to the needs of a peace-time economy."[25]

Even after the British Zone's Central Office was absorbed into the new Bizonal Administration for Labor that summer and thereby lost jurisdiction over vocational counseling,[26] efforts to systematize vocational counseling and psychological testing continued. The states, above all North Rhine-Westphalia, pursued both the Central Office's project as well as their own work, which they had carried on in parallel to the Central Office's. From early 1947, the North Rhine-Westphalia labor office had organized and encouraged training sessions for its vocational counselors and regional "working groups" to consider the future tasks and methods of vocational counseling.[27] Thanks to the energetic activity of these sessions and working groups, North Rhine-Westphalia, which since Weimar had boasted easily the densest network of vocational counseling and psychological testing stations, further cemented its leading role in the nascent Labor Administration.

Along with much continuity, the discussions in the working groups (and elsewhere) in North Rhine-Westphalia also revealed some shifts in thinking about the purpose and future of vocational counseling. In the first years after the end of hostilities, the leaders of the state labor offices could be as profoundly shaken as anybody by the magnitude of events. The head of vocational counseling for North Rhine-Westphalia, Karl Pardun, opened the first training session with pathos-filled reflections on the moral crisis of the times and the requisite characteristics of the vocational counselor:

> The power of trust and mutual respect, the power of awe and of love for all living things must grow in the soul of the vocational counselor … It is necessary to lead [the advice-seeker] to responsibility, to behavior appropriate to his nature and to the courage to duty; [the counselor must] help the individual to be guided again into the correct, living relation to himself, to other men and to whatever new human order is created.[28]

With the passage of time, however, such high-minded goals gave way increasingly to more pragmatic concerns, such as reestablishing ties to employers and securing vocational counseling's role in the new political landscape of the Federal Republic. In Schleswig-Holstein, the leading vocational counselor convinced his superiors to approve such efforts without reference to any "higher" values. The skewed relation between individual vocational wishes and real economic prospects necessitated a selection of apprentices, he observed matter-of-factly.

In 1947 and 1948, the relevance of employers loomed ever larger in the discussions among vocational counselors. "There are no legal means to prevent companies from doing suitability-tests," Pardun had to inform the vocational counselors of North Rhine-Westphalia. "These efforts of the firms can only be overcome by better performance [of the labor offices]."[29] Beyond achieving a high-skilled workforce, which companies that tested candidates presumably were contributing to in any case, the vocational counselors now embraced *Totalerfassung* per se as a goal. Vocational counselors in the "Cologne Circle" raised the issue at their meet-

ing in April 1948. "In all districts," as the protocol of the meeting put it, "there is an increasing number of requests by economic organizations to have their young workers suitability-tested [by vocational counseling.] Attention must be paid that the monopoly position of the vocational counseling in this regard is preserved and that not every arbitrary institution performs suitability-tests."[30] The leading figures of the state vocational counseling office apparently concurred with the assessment at another counselors' meeting that the percentage of suitability tests "must in future be increased ten-fold [from 2 percent to 20 percent] especially in light of the efforts of the large companies to achieve self-sufficiency in the realm of performing suitability-tests."[31] By 1948, then, even before the rapid revival of the German economy and the establishment of a new political framework in the Federal Republic, vocational counseling was again grappling with the challenges that had long shaped its strategies: accommodating the wishes of employers in the interest of maintaining its own control of the selection and placement process, and deciding whether *Totalerfassung* was a means to achieve a high-skilled workforce or, as it increasingly seemed to be, an end in itself.

The Vocational System within the Social Market Economy and Federal Republic: *Totalerfassung* Challenged and Maintained

In the years 1948 to 1952, the essential institutions of the labor force projects were restored (in West Germany) at the national level, including a central Labor Administration in the form of the *Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung.* They proved compatible—at least for several years—with the newly introduced "social market economy" and the Federal Republic's political constitution. The Labor Administration again also overcame, for the time being, challenges to its goal of total control of the labor market.

The Bizone's Economic Council and administrative offices, established in June 1947 and significantly reformed in early 1948, were regarded, if still not officially acknowledged, by Germans and the participating Allies as a forerunner of a future German government.[32] In its two year existence, the Economic Council laid the groundwork for the economic system of West Germany, often without much fanfare and within the limits set by the Allies and by state prerogatives.[33] The institutions of the human economies also assumed clearer contours, though important decisions were put off until after the founding of the new state.

As had been the case after World War I, support for an organization of the labor market and for systematic vocational counseling (and training) reached across virtually all parties—in sharp contrast with the vitriolic debates about other economic questions. The "basic tendency of the [Economic Council] to reestablish achievements of the Weimar Republic was especially pronounced in the field of Labor Administration."[34] The Germans' wishes, in fact, outstripped the Allies' willingness to establish central bureaucracies: throughout early 1948, the Economic Council pleaded for the establishment of a sixth Bizonal office—for "La-

bor and Social Affairs"—only to be rebuffed by the Allies on the grounds of limitations imposed by the Potsdam agreement. When an Administration for Labor finally was created by Allied fiat in August 1948, it bore responsibility, as had the *Reichsanstalt,* for job placement and unemployment payments. However, against German wishes, the Administration for Labor had no jurisdiction over vocational counseling, which remained in the hands of the states.[35] Also, the final status of the system of unemployment insurance, which had provided the financial underpinnings of *Reichsanstalt,* remained, like the other kinds of social insurance, to be decided by the parliament of a new German state.[36] Finally, the incipient ministries for economics and labor continued their struggle over responsibility for vocational training, a conflict that only would be settled in 1952, when the Economics Ministry reasserted its control. External forces and jurisdictional disputes continued to stymie German wishes for a unified Labor Administration, which would include vocational counseling.

In June 1948, the nearly simultaneous introduction by the Allies of a new currency and the approval by the Economic Council of measures to set free the prices for most goods as well as wages marked a momentous turning point in Germany's postwar economic development. By ending state controls in these areas, which the Nazis had introduced in 1936 and which the Allies had continued since 1945, the liberalization of prices and wages appeared to spell the end to hopes for widespread planning in the economy, which in the first years after the war had been in the ascendance. They represented the triumph of a resurgent, though modified, liberalism—Ordoliberalism.[37] However—and this discrepancy has gone unnoticed in the scholarly literature—the liberalizations of mid 1948 left untouched a core area of the German economy: aside from the lifting of wage controls, the labor market remained subject to "administration." In part, as we shall see, this only partial liberalization derived from the fact that the Allies had insisted that decisions about the future of the German insurance systems, one of which, of course, supported the Labor Administration, be made by a newly constituted German parliament. Yet the Allies' injunction was not sufficient cause to block Erhard's implementation of the liberalization measures even *before* the military authorities had given their approval.[38]

In part, even among the advocates of liberalization, there were many who believed it could be introduced only in stages. They believed that elements of planning still would be necessary for some time to come. Thus, Erhard's predecessor as director of the Bizonal Economic Administration, Johannes Semmler, had acknowledged that, "we will quite certainly need a planned economy for [another] twenty years—even we who reject the basic premise of a state-run planned economy."[39]

The intellectual drafters of blueprints for the social market economy had only marginally and timidly included the labor market in their plans for reform.[40] The Labor Administration's goal of creating a high-skilled workforce fitted perfectly with two fundamental changes the Ordoliberals made to pure laissez-faire policy: the state could intervene in the market if it did so in a "market-conforming" way,

i.e., for the sake of preparing people for the free market, and a successful capitalist system presupposed economically and psychologically independent participants.[41] It is revealing of the special place of the labor market in the emerging economic order that during the very days when the Economic Council passed the measures liberalizing much of the German economy, it also voted to create an Administration for Labor.[42] The breadth of support for this law—it was sponsored jointly by the Christian Democrats and Christian Social Union, the Social Democrats, the Liberals, and the Catholic Center, which together represented 47 of the 52 delegates to the Economic Council—gave an indication of the German consensus in support of the Labor Administration. Even the proponents of a largely liberalized social market economy still drew the line in front of the labor market.

The promulgation a year later of the Basic Law establishing a Federal German Republic changed little in terms of the Labor Administration and the other workforce optimization projects, at least in the short-term. The Basic Law did not prescribe a particular economic system for the *Bundesrepublik,* in effect leaving in place the decisions already taken by the Economic Council and Allies (*Soziale Marktwirtschaft,* currency reform) and allowing future parliaments to make changes (by a two-thirds majority).[43] In accordance with German tradition, it left the determination of the "labor order" to the federal government,[44] paving the way for the future reestablishment of a national Labor Agency. However, several articles of the Basic Law pertaining to basic individual rights—which the Parliamentary Council had placed at the beginning of the document in response to the Nazi regime's trampling of those rights—potentially had a bearing on the Labor Administration. The very first words of the Federal Republic's founding document—"The dignity of man is inviolable"—put down a claim, however abstractly, on the basic orientation of the new state. Unlike in the Nazi period and to some extent even in the Weimar Republic,[45] in the West German Federal Republic, the state was to serve the individual, and not vice versa. However, the implications for specific realms of life of this general commitment remained as yet undetermined. In regard to the Labor Administration, the Federal Republic's commitment to the priority of the individual would have an impact only after several years, especially after Germany's economic conditions had dramatically improved.

The abstract pledge to uphold the dignity of the individual both undergirded and expressed itself in the more specific "basic rights" of the *Grundgesetz.*[46] One of these—the "freedom of choice of a vocation" contained in Article 12—appeared likely, in conjunction with a change of Allied statute, to have an immediate, significant effect on the Labor Administration. We turn, therefore, to the challenge Article 12 and the ending of a legal basis for compelling school-leavers to report to the labor offices posed to the Labor Administration's goal of "total control" of the labor market. By overcoming this challenge, at least for the time being, the Labor Administration was able to maintain its original program of *Totalerfassung* well into the 1950s.

By early 1949, several months after Erhard's liberalizations and as the Parliamentary Council deliberated, the leaders of the Labor Administration recognized

that "the foundations of vocational counseling were buckling." Some kind of "reorientation" was necessary.[47] They were casting an anxious eye on the anticipated end of vocational counseling's legal mandate compelling school-leavers to report to the labor offices. The mandate had been introduced by the Nazis in 1938. After the defeat of Germany, the Allied Control Commission's Order Nr. 3, issued on 17 January 1946,[48] had extended those controls into the postwar period for the simple sake of maintaining order. Faced with the likelihood that the framers of the German constitution would seek to guarantee individual freedoms in the labor sphere as part of the overall commitment of the new Republic to individual rights, the vocational counselor Pardun sketched out vocational counseling's options and prospects. "The question now is whether the external means (requirement to register, etc.) should be defended or not. The core issue is freedom or compulsion." Pardun elucidated the two options: "Liberalism offers the free play of forces. It demands therefore only an informational role for vocational counseling. Others start from the idea of government steering [of labor forces], in order to harmonize the interests of the individual with those of the collectivity. For this, purely mechanical means (for example, [new] legal determinations) would be necessary." In fact, however, Pardun appeared to advocate yet another option: "The third way would be that of individual counseling, personal responsibility [of the counselor], and social welfare. That would be the genuine commitment [of the counselor], that would be trust in one's own work and the trust of the employers. If vocational counseling must take this path, then it is important that it start off down this road even today."[49] With the end of the Labor Administration's legal mandate—the "external means"—for *Totalerfassung* looming, a leading vocational counselor advocated strengthening what he might have dubbed "internal means": appealing to school-leavers through a more personalized service.

Four months later, after the Basic Law had, as expected, established freedom of vocational choice, leading vocational counselors from throughout the Federal Republic convened to consider the implications for the Labor Administration. The position they settled on incorporated elements from all three of Pardun's options. Article 12 of the Basic Law, they acknowledged, "clearly and with direct legal effect" guaranteed the freedom of the worker in his choice of vocation, workplace, and training station. "All administrative limitations of this freedom cease." However, the obligations imposed by the 1946 Allied Order upon employers to register all openings and obtain permission for new hirings were, for the time being, still in force.

The consequences the counselors drew suggested that, in the view of the Labor Administration, the goal remained largely the same as it always had been—steering as many people as possible into skilled work and control of the labor market. The means and emphases, however, might have to be adapted to the new circumstances. The sole responsibility of the Labor Administration for vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement,[50] the assembled noted, continued unaffected by Article 12. Above and beyond its monopoly status, the Labor Administration intended to maintain its access to all first time job seekers, though it now

dropped the word *Total,* which aroused unwelcome associations. "The planned *Erfassung* of the advice seekers, especially the school-leavers, remains an important task of vocational counseling, even if the legal means ([the 1938 law and the Allied Control Commission's Order Nr. 3]) should be abolished." The main instrument of *Erfassung* would be an institution that even before the introduction of legal compulsion in 1938 had been the lynchpin of the Labor Administration's efforts to achieve total inclusion: "this task," the summary of the meeting continued, "will have to be solved above all in closest cooperation with the school."

In its dealings with the advice-seeker, the counselors agreed, the Labor Administration would have to make some, albeit minor, modifications. They insisted that vocational counseling always, in fact, had respected the freedom of vocational choice. Generally, "for the goals and essential methods of vocational counseling, which in principle already have built on the idea [contained in] Article 12, no fundamental changes result." However, the counselors did acknowledge the advantages of Pardun's "third way." They agreed that:

> in carrying out its economic and social tasks, vocational counseling will once again have to place clearly in the foreground the social purpose of care for the vocational fate of the advice and help-seeking people. This effort must be clearly expressed in the methods of vocational counseling as well: they must apply reserve in emphasizing administrative powers and primarily rely on means of pedagogical influencing of the vocation-seekers and of the parents or guardians, as well as on the sincere cooperation with all agencies engaged and interested in the same questions.

The counselors specified what the shift in emphasis from administrative pressure toward "influence" would entail in more practical terms: "Vocational information, individual counseling, suitability-testing, and subsequent vocational care must therefore be constantly deepened and expanded."[51] By expanding and improving such services, the Labor Administration would tend more—or be seen to tend more—to the individual now placed at the center of the new state's political order. At the same time, and in fact by precisely these means, vocational counselors hoped still to be able, now by less obviously authoritarian methods, to continue to fulfill the goal of steering all school-leavers into appropriate skilled jobs.

After the Basic Law annulled the previous compulsory powers of the Labor Administration, good relations with the schools and, to a lesser degree, improvements in vocational counseling's services focusing on the individual became the means of the Labor Administration's *Totalerfassung.* From the 1920s and especially after the 1930 agreement between the Ministries of Labor and the Interior, the schools had played a critical role in "delivering" students to the labor offices: they had supplied the latter with "student cards" containing personal information and evaluations of every single pupil, teachers had accompanied entire classes to the labor office, or vocational counselors had come to the schools. Now, in the absence of a legal mandate, the Labor Administration would rely even more on such forms of cooperation to reach all school-leavers. Thus, state and local labor offices negotiated with the corresponding school authorities in order to reaffirm

or update the agreements made two decades earlier. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the state labor office and Ministry of Education reached agreement in August 1949, with the latter reminding all school authorities of the validity of the 1930 guidelines and invoking "the importance of cooperation between school and vocational counseling."[52] Shortly before this agreement, the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia explained to his counselors the significance of reaffirming the guidelines on cooperation: "The requirement according to the Order of 1 March 1938 for school-leavers to register and to use [vocational counseling] may in future no longer be in effect. Through the guidelines on the cooperation between school and vocational counseling, the *Erfassung* of the school-leavers appears secured."[53]

The new circumstances also had inspired vocational counseling to seek new means of addressing the individual counsel-seeker and "influencing" his choices. Over the next two years, a committee of state office representatives, often in consultation with members of the Federal Ministry of Labor,[54] would prepare the materials of the future psychological service of the *Bundesanstalt.* From early on, it was agreed that the future Federal Labor Agency should have a central psychological unit.[55] The work in the late 1930s on national standards for psychological testing, culminating in a series of standardized tests, already had established the precedent of concerted action on a national level. After the war, first the Central Office in Lemgo and then the North Rhine-Westphalia state office had resumed this work, in both cases with the aspiration to achieve national standards for vocational psychology. In light of the threat to *Totalerfassung* and the resulting imperative of gaining the cooperation of school-leavers with the help of more individualized counseling (while continuing, of course, to serve employers), the leading vocational counselors could agree on the utility of a central psychological service.

Reestablishing a National Labor Administration

All of these negotiations were predicated on the restoration of a national Labor Administration, which, in one form or another, all political parties in the Economic Council, the Parliamentary Council, and then the first German *Bundestag* favored.[56] In early 1950, the Free Trade Union (DGB) and the employers' associations had issued a joint proclamation containing their common vision for the *Bundesanstalt.*[57] Joint control of the labor market, imposed on the employers by the socialist ascendance in the immediate aftermath of World War I, was something industry's leaders, who stood to gain from the corporatist arrangement, had in the meantime learned to like.

After wrangling over re-opened issues, such as the balance of power in the *Bundesanstalt* between the two social partners, on the one hand, and the public authorities on the other, which doomed the government's first bill to create a *Bundesanstalt* in 1951, a compromise was reached the following year.[58] In March 1952, a *Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung* came

into existence, which, in virtually all respects, resembled the original *Reichsanstalt* (that is, in its incarnation until 1934, when the Nazis ended the self-administration by unions and employers). Like its predecessor, the *Bundesanstalt* would consist of a headquarters, state, and local offices; at each level, representatives of unions, employers, and public authorities would have an equal say on the governing boards. Finally, the federal Labor Ministry would have the right to approve the *Bundesanstalt*'s overall budget. *Bundesanstalt* headquarters would be in Nuremberg; its first president would be Julius Scheuble, the former head of the British Zone's Central Labor Office.

In other ways, as well, the *Bundesanstalt* represented continuity. As the 1952 law pertained only to organizational matters, but did not revise the 1927 law on job placement and unemployment insurance, the latter remained, for the time being, in effect. The Ministry of Labor and, later, the *Bundesanstalt* itself began to deliberate over the draft of an update to the 1927 law on job placement and unemployment insurance—at first, in parallel with the negotiations over reestablishing a Labor Agency, and then after the *Bundesanstalt* had come into existence.[59] Until the 1927 law was updated, its guidelines on vocational counseling still would apply. These accorded as much importance to a macro-economically sound distribution of workers as to the interests of the individual. In any case, as we have seen, legal determinations often were not decisive when it came to the practices of vocational counseling.

An innovation of the 1952 law and the *Bundesanstalt* was the creation of a psychological service within vocational counseling. Its origins lay in the deliberations over the role of the Labor Administration under the changing circumstances of the postwar period that we traced above. While its supporters clearly hoped it would be an effective instrument for coordinating and improving vocational counseling's use of psychology on a national scale, their hopes would be disappointed for nearly a decade. Rather, vocational psychology would continue to be applied in a highly decentralized manner and remain intimately tied to the interests of local employers, as had been the case from the start of the Labor Administration. Before we turn to the state of vocational counseling in the years 1953 to 1955, we must characterize briefly the postwar course of the other side of the workforce projects: the system of vocational training, where the story also largely was one of continuity.

The Institutions of Vocational Training

Perhaps even more than in the case of the Labor Administration, the reconstitution of a nationally standardized system of training high-skilled workers enjoyed virtually unanimous support. In the first years after the war, the administrative division of the country into occupation zones, Allied restrictions on forming business associations, and the general problems of communication and organization limited efforts in this direction. Still, as we have seen, individual companies

responded to the lack of an effective market before the currency reform by investing in worker training in preparation for the future. Helping to coordinate company efforts were the Chambers of Industry and Commerce, which long had played the key role at the local and regional levels of the vocational system, displayed considerable continuity across the divide of 1945, and proved exceptionally effective in the first postwar years.[60] As restrictions were lifted, employers' associations formed bizonal, and later national, organizations to work on vocational training. In the summer and fall of 1947, various Chambers of Industry and Commerce formed the Office for Industrial Vocational Training (*Arbeitsstelle für gewerbliche Berufserziehung)* and a corresponding Office for Commercial Vocational Training (*Arbeitsstelle für kaufmännische Berufserziehung*). Both continued the work of DATSCH to standardize vocational materials.

In May 1951, at the prodding of the Federal Economics Ministry, all of these groups, as well as the Association of German Industry (BDI), the German Trade Unions Congress (DGB), and several ministries, agreed that "an urgent need exists to establish a central institute for vocational training."[61] In November, the various institutes merged into the Office for Business Vocational Training (*Arbeitsstelle für betriebliche Berufsausbildung*), which the other major employers' organizations—the *Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie* and the *Bundesvereinigung deutscher Arbeitgeberverbände*—joined in 1953.[62] They thereby established a unified organization concerned with developing standards and materials for vocational training and certification, similar to the Working Committee on Vocational Training (*Arbeitsausschuss für Berufsausbildung*) in the second half of the 1920s and DATSCH and the *Reichsinstitut für Berufsausbildung* in the 1930s and war years.

German employers' associations not only reestablished a central institute dedicated to the standardized vocational system, but they also urged the retention of a system of *Totalerfassung* of all school-leavers. In mid 1949, the Chambers of Industry and Commerce in all three zones "demanded obligatory use of vocational counseling—[even] with a basic freedom of vocational choice."[63] For their part, the employers' associations reached an agreement with the Federal Ministry of Labor in early 1950 to report all open positions to the labor offices, even after the legal compulsion to do so had lapsed.[64] As had been the case since the beginning of the Labor Administration, however, the commitments of the central employers' associations would not in practice fully bind local employers—who still had to be wooed by the local labor offices.

The Practice of Vocational Counseling in the *Bundesanstalt*, 1953–1955

The following snapshot of the *practice* of vocational counseling in the first half of the 1950s captures a scene not very different from that in the mid 1930s or even mid 1920s. It shows that, despite the founding of the *Bundesanstalt* and of a psychological service within its vocational counseling wing and despite the several

changes of political system, important aspects of the human economies remained much the same as they had been at their first institutionalization.

Faced with the end of the legal mandate for *Totalerfassung,* as we have seen, leading vocational counselors pinned their hopes for maintaining a nearly "total inclusion" on two other instruments: above all, on the already well-established connections of the labor offices to the schools, but also on a more individualized vocational counseling system, including improved vocational psychology. In fact, cooperation between labor offices and schools worked very well throughout the first half of the 1950s (and later). As they had since the 1920s, the labor offices utilized the schools in a number of ways, varying from place to place, in order "to secure the *Erfassung*" of nearly all school-leavers. For most labor offices, "school cards" sent directly from the schools to the labor offices provided the latter with basic data on every school-leaver. On the basis of these "seamless documents,"[65] the offices could invite all students for visits. Often, they did not have to rely on such invitations, because schools assured the labor offices a much more systematic kind of access. Classes were sent en masse to vocational counseling, or the counselors came to the schools.[66] As a result, in the early 1950s, nearly 95 percent of all school-leavers still visited vocational counseling.[67]

As had been the case from the very beginning of the Labor Administration and comprehensive vocational counseling and under every political regime and legal framework, the local labor offices cared intensely about earning the trust—and the apprenticeship openings—of local employers. Hence, regardless of headquarters' (often halfhearted) injunctions to the contrary, the practice of vocational counseling and psychology at the local level largely was oriented toward the wishes of local employers. In violation of the central office's policies, local offices often tested directly for an employer, including testing apprenticeship candidates he already had selected. Indicative of the intimate relations between vocational counselors and employers, these exams frequently were conducted on company premises.[68]

The purpose and practices of the Labor Administration in 1955 would have been quite familiar to an observer in 1935: the *Totalerfassung* of nearly all school-leavers, who were to be matched to appropriate skilled jobs, and the local offices' dependence on close ties to employers. Yet, the parallels also would have been deceiving; for, under the surface, the ground upon which the Labor Administration rested was shifting. The unparalleled economic growth of the 1950s and early 1960s was already undermining the economic, social, and cultural bases of *Totalerfassung.*

A Silent Social Revolution

As people and as Germans, the leaders of the Labor Administration, like millions of their countrymen, no doubt rejoiced in the unparalleled economic growth that began in the early 1950s. Between 1950 and 1960, real GDP grew annually by an astonishing 8.2 percent.[69] The rate of unemployment fell steadily, with only a

brief setback in the "downturn" of 1957/58,[70] from 10 percent in 1950 to 1 percent a decade later.[71] After four decades with little economic growth or political calm, the *Bundesrepublik's* combination of democratic stability and incipient prosperity hardly could fail to impress the men of the Labor Administration. In no small measure, it had been the Labor Administration, along with the Prussian and Reich economics ministries and the employers' organizations, which had laid the groundwork for the *Wirtschaftswunder*—by helping to create the "German skills machine," which was based on steering a high proportion of the population into skilled work, in the decades after World War I. The creators and backers of the optimization programs rightly could claim some credit for what they saw unfolding around them in the West Germany of the 1950s.

Yet by the mid 1950s, many in the Labor Administration were worrying that the economic dynamism unleashed in the Economic Miracle could pose a serious challenge to their agency's role in the labor market. They were concerned about both mounting public criticism of the Labor Administration and employers' and job seekers' increasingly independent behavior in the ever-tighter labor market.

By the second half of the 1950s, German attitudes toward authority were beginning to change, if still only slowly.[72] A "skeptical generation" of youths took the lead, looking askance at their elders' acceptance of authority figures and the state apparatus.[73] The press gave voice to this increasingly assertive German public. As early as 1954, with the unemployment rate dropping steadily, leading figures of the Labor Administration uneasily registered journalistic and other critiques of their work.[74] A report from a vocational counselor in Munich, which circulated widely within headquarters, argued that even in a vocational counseling office regarded as among the best, "the voices from public and private circles that negatively criticize it—without being especially ill-willed toward vocational counseling—are numerous." The counselor herself concurred with the critiques, citing the size of the office, its emphasis on quantity over quality, and its bureaucratic sluggishness.[75] Of course, these were precisely the charges that had been leveled at the labor offices since their inception. But now toleration of this kind of authority was dwindling. "In a changed and changing world," another counselor acknowledged, vocational counseling "must present another face than it did during its early days."[76]

There were other signs as well that the Labor Administration cared increasingly about its public "face." An ongoing discussion between the central office and the largest *Landesarbeitsamt*, in North Rhine-Westphalia, over the proper role of parents in the counseling meetings confirmed the growing weight of public opinion. The representatives from North Rhine-Westphalia reproached headquarters for maintaining "an out-of-date steering standpoint [i.e., in which vocational counseling strongly influenced vocational choices]." Their explication of the charge was revealing of the ultimate source of their worries: "If such comments [i.e., those of headquarters in favor of steering] became known to the public, one could expect the sharpest protests."[77] The main concern of the counselors from North Rhine-Westphalia, then, was not about the practice itself, but about the public's reaction. Out of the same concerns, high officials now vigilantly kept an eye out

for any negative reports in the press.[78] At the September 1955 meeting of the administrative board, the President of the *Bundesanstalt,* Julius Scheuble, reported his concern that the public had the "false perception" that due to the declining unemployment rate, the importance of the Labor Administration as a whole also was reduced. Given the undiminished and still central functions of vocational counseling and job placement, Scheuble suggested, the *Bundesanstalt* might have to make its case more effectively to the public.[79]

The Labor Administration's worries in the mid 1950s were not limited to the growing public perceptions of it as a coercive, bureaucratic, and increasingly superfluous agency. The surfeit of work opportunities was changing the behavior of the *Bundesanstalt's* main constituencies—job seekers and, above all, employers—as well. Employers were seeking ever more workers; moreover, because of the decline in the birthrate during the war years, the number of youths entering the job-market would decline between 1953 and 1960 by 30 percent.[80]

Table 6.1 The Number of School-Graduates, 1950–1960

1950:			1956:		
Grade School (*Volksschule*), age 14		638,000	Grade School		620,000
Middle School (*Mittelschule*), age 16		14,000	Middle School		46,000
High School (*Gymnasium*), age 18–19		30,000	High School		29,000
	Total:	**682,000**		**Total:**	**695,000**
1951:			1957:		
Grade School		672,000	Grade School		541,000
Middle School		16,000	Middle School		49,000
High School		28,000	High School		37,000
	Total:	**716,000**		**Total:**	**627,000**
1952:			1958:		
Grade School		635,000	Grade School		507,000
Middle School		20,000	Middle School		51,000
High School		25,000	High School		41,000
	Total:	**680,000**		**Total:**	**599,000**
1953:			1959:		
Grade School		700,000	Grade School		444,000
Middle School		28,000	Middle School		57,000
High School		20,000	High School		48,000
	Total:	**748,000**		**Total:**	**549,000**
1954:			1960:		
Grade School		773,000	Grade School		390,000
Middle School		32,000	Middle School		57,000
High School		25,000	High School		52,000
	Total:	**830,000**		**Total:**	**499,000**
1955:					
Grade School		700,000			
Middle School		32,000			
High School		25,000			
	Total:	**757,000**			

Sources: Statistisches Bundesamt. Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1950–1960 (Stuttgart, 1952–1962).

As a result of the impending *labor* shortages, in 1955, the Federal government concluded an agreement with Italy about importing workers.[81] As the *Landesarbeitsamt* in North Rhine-Westphalia reported in June 1955, there was "no longer any unemployment to speak of … Combing of the unemployed has already mobilized the usable forces."[82]

The combination of a booming economy and declining numbers of school-leavers created a seller's market for labor. The new conditions galvanized the labor market parties to view their prospects in a different light, a shift that occurred rather suddenly, in 1955, when all sides appear to have realized that they were now operating under changed economic circumstances.[83] Workers generally sought new and better positions with increasing frequency. In July, the President of the *Bundesanstalt* reported his concerns that "in recent months turn-over has increased rapidly."[84] "As a result of the favorable development of the labor market," he suggested several months later, "supplying workers [to firms] has become a particular problem of the *Bundesanstalt.*"[85] Firms complained about "poaching." The good news reached school students and their parents as well, inspiring in many a widespread exuberance or, in the Labor Administration's eyes, carelessness. "Among youths and parents," the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia and soon for all of West Germany, Karl Pardun, warned in early 1956,

> there has taken hold a short-circuited acceptance of the offered "position" without deeper, more mature vocational considerations; an unsteady jumping to further job offers; [and, somewhat contradictorily,] a selectively provisional application to several firms. [But one also observes] one-sided vocational wish-formation in the direction of the usual "fashionable vocations;" an even greater striving for the large companies; here and there as well a relaxing of the willingness to study in the final year, due to the generally-known impression that employers need [all of] the school-leavers and will hire them regardless.[86]

The attitudes manifested by the young exemplified the "silent social revolution"[87] in the wake of the economic miracle. Like many adults around them, the school-leavers were increasingly demonstrating "an enormously increased concentration on personal advancement and material improvements in their living standards."[88] Hitherto unknown opportunities for individual choice and self-definition were eroding old habits—of deference to tradition, authority, and family; of acquiescence in one's place in established social milieus; and of concern for security above all. Germans' outlooks in 1950 and in 1960 appeared to lie worlds apart.[89]

Of even greater concern to the leadership of vocational counseling than new ambitions of young job seekers, however, was the behavior of the people whom the labor offices had all along spent the most energy wooing—the employers. "Between firms," the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia reported in early 1956, "a sharp competition for young workers has suddenly arisen, which seems to have abandoned the previously customary forms and considerations … What is remarkable about it are the ever advancing efforts to preempt

each other in gaining new workers."[90] At roughly the same time, the president of the same state office had characterized firms' behavior in striking, clinical terms: "The shrinking number of school-leavers has led in some economic circles to a certain psychosis, which expresses itself in premature offers of apprenticeships and frenzied advertising measures, particularly in newspaper notices."[91] Vocational counseling in the spring of 1956 would be "quite burdened," the president warned, "by the attempts of firms and public employers to gain access to the schools … and to select their apprentices quite early."[92] In addition to newspaper ads, the desperate firms employed all means of personal contacts to school directors and teachers and even held out additional perquisites to appeal to graduating students.[93] In the Labor Administration's eyes, such activities only produced "unease, uncertainty, disturbances, and disruptions of the work in the final [school] year."[94]

Above and beyond the effects on the school-leavers, the ever more desperate search by companies for apprentices threatened vocational counseling more existentially. As the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia reported, due to companies' competition over school-leavers, "the vocational counseling centers are being … impatiently pressured or bypassed."[95] The proportion of each year's graduates entering skilled or semi-skilled apprenticeships continued to climb, from 46 percent in 1950 to 55 percent a decade later, and 64 percent in 1966,[96] while the Labor Administration's numbers moved in the opposite direction. The proportion of school-leavers visiting the vocational counseling offices was dropping, in fact, only slowly: from 95 percent in the early 1950s to 84 percent in 1963.[97] But the Labor Administration saw the writing on the wall: *Totalerfassung*—the lynchpin of administered vocational counseling—was eroding. It was possible to foresee a day when vocational counseling would be irrelevant. Prompted by such trends and by academic studies such as Helmut Schelsky's *Working Youth, Yesterday and Today,*[98] which cast doubt on the effectiveness of the labor offices in influencing vocational choices, a member of the *Bundesanstalt*'s Administrative Board even dared to raise the question of in which form and to what extent the agency in the future would be able to conduct job placements and vocational counseling.[99]

In the face of such challenges to the *Totalerfassung* of all school-leavers—and hence, as many saw it, to the Labor Administration itself, at least in its current incarnation—the *Bundesanstalt* responded defensively at first. Above all, it sought to protect what long had been its prime channel of complete inclusion and, since the end of legal compulsion in 1949/1951, had become absolutely irreplaceable—the labor offices' connections to the schools. In early 1955, the *Bundesanstalt*'s headquarters inquired of its state offices whether they had agreements with the state ministries of education pertaining to firms' "recruiting" in schools. When it turned out that only the LAA of Schleswig-Holstein had reached an understanding with the education ministry banning independent activity by employers in the schools, headquarters disseminated the text of that state's agreement to the other state offices and "recommend[ed]—if it has not occurred already—that a similar agreement be reached" in each state.[100]

The Labor Administration's Reluctant Response to a Changing Society

In the face of employers' seemingly insatiable need for workers, the multiple channels for recruiting, and school authorities' different sets of interests, however, such administrative measures as banning company recruiting proved to be difficult to enforce,[101] if and when they were enacted at the state level. Efforts to stem the tide would continue for years, but the challenge posed to *Totalerfassung* by the dynamic economy and the ambitions it had awakened also produced a fundamental reassessment of the Labor Administration's role, although only after bitter battles lasting several years. That the unprecedented growth of the German economy after 1950 and its social and psychological concomitants were the ultimate (though not sole) causes of the end of *Totalerfassung* and the transformation of the Labor Administration becomes clearer if we compare a political challenge to *Totalerfassung* in the first half of the 1950s with one in the years after 1955.

We saw earlier how the Labor Administration's legal means to compel individuals and companies to report to the agency disappeared after 1949 and 1951, respectively, and how the *Bundesanstalt* still was able to maintain *Totalerfassung* by other means. Yet the new constitutional freedoms and the emerging democratic culture of the Federal Republic did embolden some, even within the Labor Administration's governing boards, to advocate that the *Bundesanstalt* abandon its comprehensive goals and compulsory practices. An effort to update the original 1927 law on job placement and unemployment insurance, both for the concrete purpose of regularizing the treatment of war-wounded and, more generally, for the sake of making the *Bundesanstalt* more "modern," provided the opportunity to reconsider the ethos and aims of the Labor Administration. Truly committed reformers, however, were hardly numerous or vociferous. The Ministry of Labor's drafts of a new law in 1951/1952 deviated little from the Weimar model: it emphasized the macro-economic role of the *Bundesanstalt,* saying "the vocational choice is, above and beyond the individual's fate, for the economy and society of decisive importance … Thanks to the provision of suitable and sufficiently numerous young workers, the economy shall be enabled to perform its tasks."[102] In fact, it was the *Bundesanstalt*'s governing board, composed equally of union, employer, and government representatives, which appeared to cast doubt on the Labor Administration's larger role and compulsory tactics. The board's review criticized the draft law for "putting the economy before people," for containing phrases, such as "according to plan," which "sounded like a centrally administered economy" and might be the basis for a system of labor deployment.[103] These critiques, however, must be understood in light of the role they almost certainly were meant to play in another struggle going on at the time over the Labor Administration.[104] The underlying concern of the unions and employers was not the excessive *scope* of the Labor Administration's powers, but who controlled them. Between 1950 and 1952, it will be recalled, the central government, the states, as well as the unions and employers engaged in fierce negotiations over the organization of the *Bundesanstalt.* One of the most contentious issues was the influ-

ence of the federal government over the *Bundesanstalt,* an influence that both the unions and employers feared might grow. When the unionists and employers on the governing board criticized the "labor market political" spirit of the draft law, they did so out of fear that any legal reinforcement of such public functions would strengthen further the government's role in the Labor Administration to their own detriment. For this reason, the board rejected the draft's language on "labor market politics."[105] The Free Trade Union's Walter Henkelmann drew the connection even more clearly, when he qualified the unions' support for "a far-reaching role of the Labor Administration in the labor market and a monopoly for it in job placement and vocational counseling." In connection with the law reestablishing the *Bundesanstalt,* he warned against language under which "the public authorities could possibly derive from [this responsibility] a right of co-administration over the *Bundesanstalt.*"[106] A further piece of evidence that in the early 1950s neither the unions nor the employers objected to *Totalerfassung* and a de facto—though not de jure—role of the *Bundesanstalt* in coordinating the labor market was that, after the revision of the Labor Administration law was shelved for the time being, all sides appeared to be content to work within the original 1927 law. In the early 1950s, a challenge to *Totalerfassung* and the compulsory sides of the Labor Administration—one mounted mainly for tactical reasons—faded after only a brief existence.

By the mid 1950s, on the other hand, the economic and social environment dramatically had begun to change. In the now booming economy, companies' ever more desperate pursuit of school-leavers was eroding the de facto influence of the labor offices and gradually was altering perceptions about the relationship of the individual to authority. In this new atmosphere, a challenge to the traditional goals and methods of the Labor Administration could have quite different effects.

The challenge came in January 1956, when the so-called Federal Deputy for Economic Efficiency in the Bureaucracy presented his report on the *Bundesanstalt.* The latter's own administrative board had requested the evaluation of the *Anstalt*'s efficiency two years earlier, almost certainly without any idea of what the eventual repercussions would be. The Deputy's report found the Labor Administration wanting in several ways and made corresponding recommendations without drawing any sweeping conclusions: overall, it found that the *Bundesanstalt* had too many employees, especially too many who were not on the "front lines." As a result, he recommended a 25 percent cut in their number. Furthermore, its employees were not well enough educated or trained and they were too specialized; in numerous respects, the *Bundesanstalt* was overly centralized. The Deputy recommended, among other things, that non-profit placement agencies be given more responsibilities.[107]

If one were to judge simply on the basis of these admittedly painful, but by no means fatal, suggestions for reform, the response from within the *Bundesanstalt* might have seemed hard to explain. Among vocational counselors in Schleswig-Holstein, the head of the *Bundesanstalt*'s psychological service reported, rumors

about the still restricted report "cast an atmosphere of depression" over a training session. The counselors "feared for the fate of vocational counseling and hence for the future of their own careers."[108] In a similar vein, the presidents of the state offices reported that the Deputy's analysis had "spread considerable unease among the employees of the *Bundesanstalt*." Many, they feared, might migrate to other bureaucracies.[109] The import of the Deputy's critiques disrupted relations at even higher levels: President Scheuble's reaction at a meeting of the administrative board was so ferocious that it touched off a "crisis of trust," from which Scheuble never fully would recover.[110] None of these responses would seem proportionate to the suggestions in the Deputy's report, if one did not know of the pessimism already gathering within the Labor Administration by the mid 1950s.

The *Bundesanstalt*'s governing boards[111] appeared to recognize that the Deputy's report provided the occasion for a more fundamental reassessment of their agency's mission and practices, and they took the initiative in expanding the reevaluation beyond the report's scope. According to the consensus in the executive board, the Deputy's report "created a whole new situation."[112] In addition to "administrative-technical" reforms—the board regretted that President Scheuble's first response had not proposed even any of these—"more fundamental considerations" would be necessary. The response to the Deputy's report by no means could be limited simply to administrative-technical and administrative-organizational measures; "rather, the *Bundesanstalt* faces significant administrative-political decisions."[113] As the presidents of the *Landesarbeitsämter* correctly perceived, "the main question that is principally being discussed is the total cost of the *Bundesanstalt* today." This they linked, however skeptically, to the new conditions in the economy: "The argument that each can find his own job is partly correct."[114]

The nature of the transformative "administrative-political decisions" the governing boards envisaged became clear as early as the first meeting of a joint reform commission of the two bodies, established to formulate the *Bundesanstalt*'s response to the Deputy's report, which convened on 26 July 1956. The commission members unanimously condemned the aim and methods of *Totalerfassung:*

> The procedure so far of schematically registering all school-leavers through the school-cards was unanimously rejected by the commission members. The filling out of the school cards in school without knowledge of the parents, the teacher evaluation [of the pupil], and the evaluation of the school-doctor as part of this *Erfassung* were judged to be unacceptable, especially as the so-called evaluations for inexplicable reasons are kept secret from the school-leavers and their parents or guardians. The use of the discipline of the school for the *Erfassung* of the school-leavers is not the right way to arrive at a vocational counseling based on trust.

In consequence, at its first meeting, the commission was able to agree on a radical revision of vocational counseling's mission: "The individual counseling of the school-leavers must occur on a voluntary basis with the participation of the parents. The practice until now of the schematic *Erfassung* of all school-leavers through the use of the school-card must be immediately ended." Instead, the *Bun-*

desanstalt's vocational counseling should "in future concentrate more on its core task[:] the best possible counseling of the individual youth and of the firms."[115]

Before we examine the contentious and drawn-out battle that ensued over the reform commission's radical proposal to end *Totalerfassung*—which by no means occurred "immediately"—we briefly turn to the positions and motivations of the four relevant groups with a say in shaping *Bundesanstalt* policy: the employers, the unions, the *Bundesanstalt* leadership itself, and the federal government. Why did these interests now support a radical revision of a policy that they long had supported, or at least tolerated—if, in fact, they now did support the revision?

The unions were the most decisive advocates of a new ethos of vocational counseling. Yet, even among them, the end of *Totalerfassung* was not a universal goal. The unions had supported the Labor Administration's policies into the early 1950s. Even in 1956, in the deliberations of the Free Trade Union (DGB) in preparation for the reform commission meetings, some members had expressed support for maintaining *Totalerfassung.* Yet they represented by now only a minority.[116] It would be wrong to succumb to the temptation to characterize the majority who were in favor of reforming the *Bundesanstalt* as the long-term supporters of the rights of individual job seekers. In the annual reports and at the Congresses of the DGB and such powerful unions as IG Metall from the late 1940s and early 1950s, such concerns were largely absent.[117] Rather, one should view the unions' new commitment to the individual worker in light of the unions' own anxieties and reform efforts. By the mid 1950s, the more affluent lifestyles and the opportunities for individual advancement provided by the *Wirtschaftswunder* seemed likely to undermine former class solidarity and eventually to "deproletarianize" the German working class.[118] Across the decade, the unionized share of the workforce declined significantly.[119] A path-breaking study of the "worker's picture of society" by the sociologists Heinrich Popitz and Hans Paul Bahrdt revealed a working class that felt as distant from its union bosses as from the capitalists.[120] Beginning in the second half of the 1950s, such potential threats to the unions' strength inspired a host of measures designed to gauge workers' attitudes and to win their hearts for the unions.[121] The union support for an end to *Totalerfassung* and for a more individual-centered vocational counseling itself resulted, then, from the societal changes unleashed in Germany's unprecedented economic growth in the 1950s.

The employers' position was even more complicated. Since the mid 1920s, the employers' *organizations* had been staunch backers of the Labor Administration's *Totalerfassung,* which they saw as a necessary complement to the vocational training system they were supporting; if the latter offered a mechanism of providing a collective good (a skilled workforce), *Totalerfassung* promised to be a neutral, non-competitive means of distributing those talents. After World War II, the employers' organizations had insisted on the restoration of comprehensive vocational counseling. As late as December 1955, seemingly with at least some advance knowledge of what the next month would bring, the German Industry and Trade Federation (DIHT) had implored the President of the *Bundesanstalt* to

maintain, and even expand, comprehensive vocational counseling, despite the actions of the DIHT's individual members. "It would be fateful," according to the DIHT, "if, in a time in which the shortage of youths increasingly endangers clear thinking in the companies, the objective instrument of vocational counseling no longer fully came to bear, because the vocational counselors suffered in their effectiveness due to [personnel] cutbacks."[122] Even this comment, however, acknowledged a problem for the employers' organizations in their defense of comprehensive vocational counseling: in the overheating economy of the mid 1950s, individual employers, by their scramble to find workers by whatever means necessary, were undermining the collective agreement.

After January 1956, the employers' organizations had to acknowledge the new circumstances, at least partially. In the face of mounting public critiques of the Labor Administration, which drew attention to the conflict between such methods as *Totalerfassung* and the liberal rights and spirit of the new state, the employers' representatives to the *Bundesanstalt*'s reform commission joined the unanimous call for truly voluntary use of vocational counseling. In May 1956, as the discussion within the *Bundesanstalt* about its future policy was just commencing, the DIHT representative urged vocational counseling to consider a reorientation of its efforts that would allow it still to play a macro-economic role while acknowledging the dynamism of the economy and the new individualist ethos.

> Generally, vocational counseling would have to become more aware of its counseling function—alongside that of placement—not only vis-à-vis the youth but also the firm. In the coming years, the apprenticeship placement will inevitably recede, since the contractual partners [i.e., worker and employer] will to some extent find each other without the help of apprenticeship placement. The job of vocational counseling will then in many cases be restricted to counseling the contractual partners. This counseling function is the primary and main task of vocational counseling—in other countries, usually the only role. The labor offices see their role often too one-sidedly in terms of placement.

The DIHT representative added a veiled threat: one "would have to seek another solution, if the public vocational counseling did not fulfill its function as a counseling institution."[123]

But the DIHT position advocating a simultaneous intensification of counseling and relaxation of the *Bundesanstalt*'s administrative hold over young jobseekers was apparently not the only view among the employers' groups. Though none of the employer representatives to the reform commission explicitly advocated the retention of *Totalerfassung*—a position that by this point was politically untenable—the drawn-out debates over the details of a reformed vocational counseling suggested that at least one camp among the employers believed it could delay change, perhaps indefinitely. After the seemingly smooth and decisive discussion at the first meeting of the reform commission, subsequent negotiations over the details of a new vocational counseling policy bogged down. As the unions saw it, the employers were split over the advisability or necessity of truly far-reaching reforms. Those opposed, the union negotiators feared, hoped to use

delaying tactics in order to save the school-card, and hence *Totalerfassung.*[124] The divisions among the employers were reflected in an impassioned, but also somewhat ambiguous, public appeal issued in September 1956:

> [The employers' Working Committee on Vocational Training] pointed out with great emphasis that attempts that aim to reduce the effectiveness of the German vocational counseling are at present especially disadvantageous for the young workers as well as for the employers. Therefore they must be countered with all strength. The increasing scarcity of youths makes a careful *counseling* of the youths more necessary than ever.[125]

After looking at the unions and the employers, we come to the third interest group. The leadership of the Labor Administration and its vocational counselors, who would be affected most immediately and personally by a transformation of the *Bundesanstalt,* approached the issue initially with a mixture of subtle resistance, innovative speculation, and resignation. The first meeting of the leading vocational counselors called to discuss the Deputy's report reflected these ambivalent reactions, suffused by a general consternation. The head of vocational counseling in the *Bundesanstalt,* Valentin Siebrecht, established a framework for the discussion by acknowledging what no one any longer dared deny: that on the basis of the Deputy's report, a "new orientation was appropriate" and that freedom of vocational choice was a fundamentally guaranteed right.[126] Despite these avowals, Siebrecht's and others' comments suggested the limits to vocational counselors' readiness at this time to abandon the role they had played (or aspired to play) for more than three decades. "Fundamental considerations of the limits of the tasks of vocational counseling," Siebrecht argued, "must start [from the postulate] that the vocational integration of youths is a social-political task. Both the youths and the economy are dependent on vocational counseling; therefore it must be suggested to them that they should use [vocational counseling]."

The means of such "suggestion" was not an explicit topic at this first meeting of leading vocational counselors. For the Governing Boards' reform commission only would make *Erfassung* through the schools *the* central issue a month later. But the counselors did acknowledge that persuasion and appeal through the quality of their own work now would play much greater roles,[127] thus returning to ideas prominent in vocational counseling circles shortly before the founding of the *Bundesanstalt,* when *Totalerfassung* had seemed to be in imminent jeopardy. Still, over the course of the following years, the Labor Administration itself would prove to be a persistent brake on rapid reform, even as it accepted certain realities of the democratic and increasingly affluent state—and developed a new raison d'etre for itself.

The fourth group, the federal ministries whose representatives sat on the *Bundesanstalt's* governing boards, remained largely in the background during the debates of these years. As occasional interventions suggested—such as when the Ministry of Labor in 1959 fought to maintain the confidentiality of the teacher evaluations, which by this point had become the final sticking point of reform[128]—the government tended to favor retaining aspects of the *Bundesanstalt's* macro-economic

steering role. In a time of growing public criticism of the Labor Administration's bureaucratic nature, compulsory methods, and apparent superfluity,[129] however, the government hardly dared to advocate openly for its traditional role.[130]

Indeed, it seems clear that all of the parties, no matter how much some of them may have hoped to preserve *Totalerfassung,* recognized that by the late 1950s, West German society—West Germans—were in the midst of rapid economic and social change, which made a simple perpetuation of the old Labor Administration impossible. Otherwise, it would be hard to explain why the *Bundesanstalt*'s governing boards took the occasion of the Deputy's report in 1956 to initiate their own reform process, which went well beyond the administrative reforms suggested by the Deputy. It would be preferable, they may have thought, to be at the forefront of changes that would come one way or another. It was, then, not the Deputy's report alone, but the combination of its critiques with the changes in German society brought about by the *Wirtschaftswunder* that had "created a whole new situation" for the Labor Administration. This perception also would explain why the resistance to change had to take more subtle forms. Despite the resounding call "immediately" to end *Totalerfassung,* which the first meeting of the commission of the governing boards had sounded, its official dismantling took several years and occurred in stages.

Relinquishing *Totalerfassung*

Negotiations over the details of new binding guidelines for vocational counseling gave the opponents of reform an opportunity to regroup and challenge the initial apparent consensus in favor of immediate, sweeping change. Below the seemingly glacial pace they were able to impose on the reform process, however, the key issue of the Labor Administration's relations to the schools proved amenable to quicker change. It finally resolved itself into separate questions, making piecemeal reform easier. And generally, the drift was away from *Totalerfassung* and toward greater concentration on the individual counsel-seeker.

Despite fierce rear-guard resistance from within vocational counseling and the governing boards, in February 1958, more than two years after the *Bundesanstalt* had begun its reform deliberations, Nuremberg ordered an important innovation in the relations between the labor office, the school, and the school-leaver. All labor offices were now to send the families of school-leavers a "parental letter," which would explain the importance of the choice of vocation, the voluntary nature of vocational counseling, the help that the labor office could offer, and, finally, the procedures for gathering information about the student.[131] Furthermore, the schools were to send the school-card to the parents, who could decide whether to fill it out so that the school could pass it on to the labor office.[132] With these steps, which the *Bundesanstalt* acknowledged were necessary "to win the parents for the use of vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement," the Labor Administration significantly loosened its grip on its means of *Totalerfassung.*

The *Bundesanstalt*'s "positive experiences"[133] after the promulgation of the policy of more fully including parents no doubt eased the transition and relieved some of the *Bundesanstalt*'s worries. Even when a third party—parents—had to be included in the channel from the schools to the labor offices, the latter's access to the students did not suffer and may even have improved thanks to the parents' interest. In the short-run, the apparent success of this transition to a more open style encouraged the *Bundesanstalt* to imagine that the change in policy might be less painful than expected. By early 1959, even some members of the governing boards were coming to think that the Labor Administration could at the same time be more modern, democratic, and responsive to the wishes of its clients and still maintain a de facto comprehensive role in the labor market. They hoped that "*in practice,* to the greatest possible extent, individual counseling should be utilized, the school involved, and the individual expressive value of [the school's] comments upheld [i.e., their confidentiality maintained]." Such practical success, it was thought, would be compatible with the voluntary nature of visits to vocational counseling and the parents' right to decide, which would be "secured in principle."[134]

After the *Bundesanstalt* had compromised on the routing of the school-card, seemingly without detrimental effect on its practical success, the debate focused increasingly on the second aspect of the schools' role in "delivering" their students, the confidentiality of teachers' evaluations. Though state ministries of education blocked new guidelines, the leadership of the *Bundesanstalt,* which originally had been most committed to the old model, by now recognized that the survival of vocational counseling depended on gaining the public's, and especially parents' and school-leavers', trust. To this end, it no longer sought unhindered access to the school-leavers through the schools. By 1960, under the impression of a series of legal rulings establishing the individual's rights vis-à-vis the *Bundesanstalt,* it even had accepted that "ultimately the right of guardians to see [the school evaluations] cannot be denied."[135] Finally, in August 1961, the new guidelines on individual vocational counseling, which emphasized the voluntary nature of the service, the participation of parents, and the non-confidentiality of the teacher evaluations, were promulgated.[136] By its own channels, West Germany's increasingly democratic and litigious culture was making bureaucratic control on the scale of the Labor Administration's *Totalerfassung* ever less viable.

Weaning itself from the program of *Totalerfassung* had not come easily to the *Bundesanstalt.* The dynamic times of 1950s West Germany—both economically and socially/politically—however, made some transition unavoidable, a need that the leaders of the Labor Administration grudgingly recognized. A number of factors eased the transition considerably, including prominently the belief that the *Bundesanstalt* simply might modify its means of interacting with its clients, while still maintaining—"in practice"—a comprehensive, or nearly comprehensive, role in the labor market. Over time, however, this hope would prove evanescent. From the late 1950s, the proportion of school-leavers who visited the labor offices would drop, even if only slowly. While in 1952 the labor offices had

attracted nearly 95 percent of all school-leavers[137]—as high a percentage as in the late 1930s, when such visits were compulsory—by 1963, the figure had sunk to 84 percent.[138]

The slow decline of the degree of *Erfassung* was not the only measure of the *Bundesanstalt*'s loosening hold on the German school-leavers. The widening gap between counseling and apprenticeship placement revealed another aspect of the fading of *Totalerfassung:* the percentage of youths obtaining their apprenticeships through the labor offices dropped even faster than the proportion seeking advice. As we shall see in the next section, youths increasingly consulted with the labor office, but no longer relied on it for a position.[139] Slowly, but inevitably, the Labor Administration was losing its grip on the young job seekers. As we show in the following section, however, the administrative end and then slow fading out of *Totalerfassung* by no means meant that the Labor Administration now lacked a role in the still vibrant economy and democratic polity of the 1960s.

The Labor Administration Transformed: the New Clients

The emergence of a new role and style for the Labor Administration, like the ending of *Totalerfassung,* took time. For more than a decade, the two processes overlapped and conditioned each other. As with the passing of the Labor Administration's traditional methods, the birth of a new purpose and ethos occurred at first not as systematic reform, but almost unnoticed, in response to social shifts; only later did the renewal of the Labor Administration become a conscious program. The underlying condition that eroded *Totalerfassung,* the unprecedented wealth of Germany in the 1950s and 1960s, also greatly smoothed the transition of the Labor Administration to new tasks, for the *Bundesanstalt*'s own overflowing coffers[140] in these years allowed it the freedom to develop new roles and capabilities.

A major trend, from the early 1950s on, was the growing importance for the *Bundesanstalt's* vocational counseling of so-called "difficult cases." These included adults who had lost their jobs in declining industries and needed retraining, war-wounded, other rehabilitation cases, and the physically or psychologically handicapped. As a proxy of the development in vocational counseling as a whole, one may look at the figures of the psychological service, where the proportion of handicapped clients alone rose from a mere 2 percent of all cases in 1950 to nearly 20 percent by the mid 1960s (and would continue to rise thereafter).[141] Several factors, whose significance shifted over time, contributed to the rising number of "difficult cases." The human costs of the last war continued to burden West Germany well into peacetime, as often physically and otherwise crippled POWs returned from the Soviet Union throughout the early 1950s. The 1953 Law on the Severely War Damaged made their reintegration into the workforce, if at all possible, a central goal; the vocational counseling of the *Bundesanstalt,* which had fought other welfare providers for a stake in such reintegration efforts,[142] would play a role in deciding whether, and how, the person could be (re)trained.

Other laws of the now rapidly expanding German welfare state also channeled ever-greater numbers of "difficult cases" to the vocational counseling offices. In 1956, the revised Law on Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance expressly aimed to help handicapped people more generally assume jobs—which the *Bundesanstalt* executive board correctly perceived would "bring the *Bundesanstalt* a considerable additional burden."[143] Subsequently, the 1961 Federal Welfare Law expanded the range of handicaps qualifying for support and established a legal right to support. On top of the workers in need of rehabilitation and a subsequent change of vocations,[144] whose number had "increased rapidly in the previous year," the *Bundesanstalt* expected the new Welfare law to "expand the task area of caring for physically handicapped youths."[145]

The expansion of welfare programs for the handicapped and for rehabilitating workers resulted in part simply from the generous humanitarian impulses of a public and political parties in whose eyes the booming economy and overflowing public treasury made financial restraint seem less compelling.[146] Especially in the second half of the 1950s, however, when the shortage of workers was becoming most acute, the efforts to integrate the handicapped and others also, and perhaps more importantly, followed from economic considerations. Firms desperate for workers now were willing to hire people they might have rejected earlier. As early as December 1954, the *Bundesanstalt* had initiated nationwide "inspection measures" for the purpose of uncovering any usable workers among the small numbers of long-term unemployed. In his instructions, which focused exclusively on the value of these workers to employers and the economy generally, the *Bundesanstalt* President had instructed his offices "actively and generously" to use all available means in the fields of vocational educational and retraining measures.[147] In a sign of the shifting priorities, the pacesetting state of North Rhine-Westphalia, in 1958, instructed its psychological service to give priority to evaluating the handicapped.[148] During the second half of the 1950s,[149] until the more rapid influx of foreign workers began slightly to alleviate the worker shortage around 1960, the *Bundesanstalt's* efforts to place the "difficult cases" in work had macro-economic, as well as welfare humanitarian, roots. In this period of transition in the *Bundesanstalt*, the congruence of traditional economic and new humanitarian purposes—and, in this case, the reliance of both upon individualized counseling[150]—may well have facilitated the broader shift in the Labor Administration's approach, from *Totalerfassung* and steering to selective counseling and helping.

As early as 1956, even as many still defended the traditional encompassing role of the Labor Administration, others had a better sense of where the institution's future might lie. At the first meeting of LAA presidents called to discuss the Deputy's critiques of the *Bundesanstalt,* the main office's comments, though still only about job placement, and not yet about vocational counseling, suggested a possible new role in a dynamic economy: actively helping those who, for whatever reason, could not succeed in the affluent society. The idea that each now could find his own work was "in part correct," the official acknowledged. However, "there are many who are simply not capable of this, as they cannot connect to the

labor market ... The initiating and active task of job placement is not recognized in the [Deputy's] report."[151] In the future, the official's comments suggested, the *Bundesanstalt* increasingly would find its purpose in helping these less-capable individuals, which almost certainly would require long-term contact and care.

The steadily growing importance throughout the 1950s and early 1960s of helping those the Economic Miracle left behind was not the only source of a new role for vocational counseling (and the Labor Administration more generally). The emerging demands of the more successful themselves would provide, especially after about 1960, abundant new tasks as well. As we have seen, the *Bundesanstalt* was pleasantly surprised that rerouting the school-card and including parents more did not reduce participation levels. The prospects for individuals opened up by the booming economy—something that neither this generation's parents or grandparents had known—did in fact increase the desire for personalized advice. As scholars have noted, the nascent optimism of Germans in the mid and late 1950s was mixed with lingering insecurity born of decades of turmoil.[152] School-leavers' attitudes evolved, as they increasingly believed in the permanence of the good economic times. If an early reaction still had been the hasty scramble for the first best position, by the beginning of the second half of the decade, students and their parents were taking the trouble to examine their options more closely. "The tensions between supply and demand for young workers," the *Bundesanstalt* reported in 1956, "strengthened in the youths, who have become more reflective, their parents, and guardians the demand for comprehensive, objective information on the individual vocations, their work conditions, suitability demands, and the developmental possibilities."[153] The following year's report noted that the youths and parents' demand for "objective instruction and thorough personal consultation through the public vocational counseling has risen."[154]

By the late 1950s and especially in the 1960s, after a decade or more of growth largely had erased doubts about its permanence, the burning issue on many people's minds was *Aufstieg*—getting ahead. As early as 1958/59, the *Bundesanstalt* reported that "the incredibly large supply of apprenticeships has aroused … many unrealizable wishes and hopes and has led to an even stronger shifting of vocational-wishes … As a result of the favorable economic development and the efforts surrounding the alternative educational path,[155] interest in information about possibilities of vocational advancement has grown even more."[156] By the early 1960s, the desire for *Aufstieg* had become an omnipresent theme of reports from local, state, and federal vocational counseling.[157] The *Bundesanstalt* no longer regarded the phenomenon as a disturbance of its proper tasks—as it still had in the late 1950s—but as a welcome new field of activity. For this interest in personal advancement, which the dynamic economy of the 1950s and 1960s had engendered, and the accompanying thirst for guidance largely were responsible for the fact that the proportion of school-leavers visiting the labor offices declined only slowly after the end of *Totalerfassung*. Perhaps of still greater importance by now, the Labor Administration perceived a close connection between helping individuals and its own image among a mobilized, increasingly demanding public,

which, by the early 1960s, the *Bundesanstalt* was very eager to please. This new dependence emerged, for example, at a November 1961 meeting of leading vocational counselors, where the leadership described criticisms made by the public and the *Bundesanstalt's* response. Among other steps, "a significant task in this connection is the job- and vocational promotion of both those limited to vocational rehabilitation and those willing to advance.… It belongs to the tasks of a modern job placement to inform the public systematically about such facts and connections—managing *public relations.*"[158]

As with the significant expansion of programs for the disabled, the *Bundesanstalt's* cultivation of its new role in addressing individuals' interest in upward-mobility benefited from the ample resources now at its own and the government's disposal. Individual *Aufstieg* was becoming a public concern. In his 1957 proclamation inaugurating the new government, Chancellor Adenauer for the first time had emphasized the necessity for the economy of promoting the vocational supplementary training of adults, especially for small and mid-sized firms, as well as the social-political significance of the vocational advancement of the individual adult worker.[159] The funding for the government's Program for the Advancement of the Dependent Middle Classes not only grew rapidly, but also mirrored the ever-more prominent role of the individual: at its inception in 1959, the program channeled its funds to training centers; in 1962, the grants and loans began to be given directly to individuals. As the *Bundesanstalt* explained it, "the guiding thought of the advancement program is, from now on, to place every ambitious worker in a position to achieve the vocational supplemental training that matches his abilities."[160] In 1965, the Federal Government enshrined in law the individual's right to counsel and aid in his efforts at vocational advancement, for which the *Bundesanstalt* was to be responsible.

The care of those left behind by the economic miracle and services for the great numbers of individuals made ambitious by the same growth helped to compensate for the loss of the Labor Administration's program of *Totalerfassung* and distribution. Even before the *Bundesanstalt* consciously identified and cultivated the new tasks as the core of its new raison d'etre (from around 1960), they had begun to reshape vocational counseling. In addition to developing such concrete new fields of operation (which could counter the claims that the Labor Administration was authoritarian or superfluous), the *Bundesanstalt* also responded to the public criticisms of it as an ineffective bureaucracy.

The Labor Administration Transformed: Efficiency and Scientificness

Like its services for new clients, the *Bundesanstalt's* efforts to become and to seem more efficient and more "scientific" emerged first somewhat haphazardly and only after around 1960 as a conscious program of reform. It was certainly no accident that in the late 1950s, just as the *Bundesanstalt* was subjected to persistent critiques from the public and press for being too concerned with quantitative

criteria, it launched several ambitious projects designed to improve the quality of its counseling, as the vocational counselors in the late 1940s had recommended.

In 1957, the *Bundesanstalt* commissioned the University of Würzburg's psychological institute to evaluate its psychological tests.[161] Two years later, it began a massive and ultimately unsuccessful project to assess scientifically the psychological requirements of a single, model vocation: the typesetter.[162]

Up to the end of the decade, the projects to improve vocational counseling's methods had been isolated endeavors, and they had lacked the full backing of the governing boards.[163] Between 1959 and 1964, finally, efforts to put vocational counseling's methods on a more scientific basis, to make counseling—and the *Bundesanstalt* generally—more efficient and effective, gradually coalesced into a program of reform meant to adapt the Labor Administration to a newly dynamic society.

By 1959, at the latest, the leadership of the *Bundesanstalt* recognized the seriousness of their predicament, as well as what they perceived to be the only potentially suitable response. At a meeting on the "psychological training of job placement personnel," the vice-president of the *Bundesanstalt* and head of job placement and vocational counseling described the situation in dire terms.

> It is to be feared that the personnel of the *Bundesanstalt* are not fully aware of the situation [i.e., the implications of full-employment]. Job seekers must come to the labor office and leave it with the impression that they are being treated well and correctly. For that, trust is necessary. There is the danger of a "bureaucractic relation" of the unemployed or job seeker to the *Bundesanstalt*.… To the extent that unemployment declines, it will become an existential matter for job placement that we achieve a better relationship of trust with the public.

The psychological training of personnel, which was intended both to give them a greater knowledge of vocations and jobs and to improve their interactions with the clients, should contribute to such trust. In April 1961, vocational counseling implemented "Guidelines for the Selection, Acceptance, and Training of Vocational Counselors," both raising the entry-level requirements and improving and standardizing training.[164] The governing boards also were coming to see the potential importance for the *Bundesanstalt's* relations to the public, and hence for its future, of improved, more scientific methods and organization.[165] In February 1961, the Administrative Board's Committee on Youth Questions had decided to "discuss fundamental questions pertaining to vocational counseling on a continual basis." In October, the Committee endorsed the ongoing research in Tübingen into "psychological vocational knowledge" and even took the unusual step of encouraging the *Bundesanstalt* leadership to increase its request for funding.[166] In November, vocational counseling presented the Committee with a detailed and ambitious plan of current efforts to improve the quality of its work.[167]

In the following years, headquarters and the governing boards approved further measures to improve and even expand vocational counseling. By 1963, the central administration and the governing boards, the head of vocational coun-

seling could report with satisfaction, were "considering a gradual expansion of vocational counseling."[168]

The chief beneficiary of the effort to improve vocational counseling was its psychological service. In 1962, the executive committee began to consider a long-term expansion of the service.[169] Members of vocational counseling and the psychological service cultivated ties to the unions and employers' organizations for the purpose of gaining approval for an effort to put psychological testing on a more "scientific" basis and to expand the service.[170] Already in 1961 and 1962, the psychological service had established two working groups to consider "general and fundamental questions" and diagnostic procedures of the psychological service.[171] In July 1966, the working groups were put on a more permanent footing, when the governing boards approved the establishment of the psychological service's own unit for "developmental and fundamental work."[172] For the first time, its headquarters achieved centralized control of its field offices.[173] And the psychological service grew prodigiously. If the number of psychologists already had grown from 85 in 1957 to 106 in 1963,[174] a decade later the number had almost tripled to nearly 300.[175] The *Bundesanstalt's* psychological service was now, after that of the US armed forces, the second largest in the world.

Germany's strategic security and, especially, its spectacular economic growth in the 1950s and into the 1960s had undermined fundamental preconditions of one half of the German human economies, as they had arisen after World War I. While the vocational training system continued more or less as before, the dynamic conditions of the *Wirtschaftswunder* eroded the Labor Administration's system of complete inclusion, which seemed to an increasingly assertive public and press inappropriate for a free society and superfluous as well. All the same, as the traditional role of the Labor Administration became ever less tenable, new tasks presented themselves. Over time, the *Bundesanstalt* learned to accept its role as a service agency for the less fortunate of the economic miracle, as well as for the many individuals newly interested in personal advancement. An important part of the *Bundesanstalt's* makeover was its effort to improve its effectiveness and to become—or at least to cultivate an image of being—more scientific, which it hoped would enhance its credibility among what was now its most important audience—the German people.

Notes

1. The remainder of the account of the German vocational program traces only what occurred in the western zones, which became the Federal Republic of Germany. In East Germany, the Labor Administration and its offices were not resurrected after 1945/1949, but rather absorbed into the general command economy. See Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 383–99.
2. Since David Schoenbaum's *Hitler's Social Revolution: Class and Status in Nazi Germany* (Garden City, 1966), the historical literature that rejects the thesis of a total break in 1945 and

instead traces continuities either with the Nazi period itself, or with longer-term traditions and institutions, has grown considerably. See, for example, Martin Broszat et al., eds., *Von Stalingrad zur Währungsreform: zur Sozialgeschichte des Umbruchs in Deutschland* (München, 1988); Werner Conze and Rainer M. Lepsius, eds., *Sozialgeschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Beiträge zum Kontinuitätsproblem* (Stuttgart, 1985); Simon Reich, *The Fruits of Fascism: Postwar Prosperity in Historical Perspective* (Ithaca, 1990).

3. See Eberhard Jäckel, "Geschichtliche Grundlagen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland," in *Jahre der Besatzung, 1945–1949,* ed. Theodor Eschenburg (Stuttgart, 1983), 9–280, 228, for the role of local administrations in ensuring considerable continuity.
4. In September 1945, total industrial production in the British and US zones stood at 15 and 13 percent, respectively, of the figures for 1936. In 1946, the corresponding figure for the Bizone was 34; in 1947, it was 40 percent. See Jäckel, "Geschichtliche Grundlagen," 265.
5. Staatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen: Detmold, D 52 Bielefeld 119, Labor Office Bielefeld to the *Landesarbeitsamt* for Westfalen-Lippe, 8 August 1945. The Bielefeld Labor Office is one of just a handful of local offices for which records from the years 1945–1948—however incomplete—exist.
6. The number of prisoners of war, expellees, war-wounded, etc., who visited the North Rhine-Westphalia Labor Offices was 216,000; that for school-leavers, in comparison, was 153,000. See the Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, BR 1134/1416, "Bericht über die bisherige Tätigkeit des Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen," 25 November 1952.
7. Ibid. These aggregate figures, which include the surplus of women over positions for females, actually disguise the shortage of male apprentices.
8. See Christoph Buchheim, "Die Notwendigkeit einer durchgreifenden Wirtschaftsreform zur Ankurbelung des westdeutschen Wirtschaftswachstums in den 1940er Jahren," in Werner Abelshauser et al., *Ordnungspolitische Weichenstellungen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg,* ed. Dietmar Petzina (Berlin, 1991), 55–66, but especially 62.
9. Axel Schildt, *Ankunft im Westen: ein Essay zur Erfolgsgeschichte der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt, 1999), 94.
10. Manfred Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: von der Gründung bis zur Gegenwart* (München, 1999), 30–31.
11. On the lively debates in the magazines and on the importance of a turn to the churches as a source of meaning, see ibid., 225–29 and 203–5. On vocation and work as an alternative, though possibly related, source of meaning, see ibid., 183.
12. See ibid., 231–33; Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 427.
13. For the background of Ordoliberal thought on labor market interventions, see David Meskill, "Conditions of Liberty: The Ordoliberals and the Labor Market in the Third Reich," paper delivered at 2004 German Studies Association conference.
14. Görtemaker, *Geschichte,* 205.
15. See, for example, the concerns of vocational counselors in 1948 that their offices might fall victim to the "public's frenzy" to "eliminate bureaucracies," in Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 113, II, AA Siegburg, 7 October 1948.
16. See Georg Müller, *Die Grundlegung der westdeutschen Wirtschaftsordnung im Frankfurter Wirtschaftsrat, 1947–1949* (Frankfurt, 1982), 27.
17. See, for example: BAK, Z 40/321, 1 April 1947; ibid., 20 May 1947.
18. Ibid., 7 October 1946.
19. Ibid,. 28 March 1947.
20. Ibid., 24 July 1946. But also see ibid., 28 October, 1946, where, in response to a query from London about the representation of union figures, the head of the Central Office for Labor in the British Zone, Julius Scheuble, appeared to be more insistent that only "ability and achievement" shall determine appointments.
21. In the Weimar period, the corporatist governance structures of the labor offices had ensured a remarkably low level of political conflict over the control and personnel of the offices.

22. After having suffered a debilitating stroke in 1941, which had diminished his role in the *Reichsanstalt,* the first (and only) President of the *Reichsanstalt,* Friedrich Syrup, had died in Allied internment in 1945. The head of British Central Office, Julius Scheuble, had been director of *Landesarbeitsamt* Rheinland until 1933, when he had been removed from office by the Nazis. Working closely with him in the Central Office was Herr Stothfang, who had been Syrup's influential personal assistant since the mid 1930s. Other crucial figures of the vocational counseling movement continued to exert their influence, even if they no longer operated in the foreground. The central figure of the efforts to standardize and improve vocational counseling in the 1930s, Walther Stets, held positions in the *Landesarbeitsamt* Rheinland-Pfalz, and later in the Labor Ministry, and was prominent in internal debates about the Labor Administration and vocational counseling. Even Ernst Schindler—one of the most powerful advocates of comprehensive vocational counseling in the Prussian Trade Ministry—intervened occasionally in the discussions.
23. For such perceptions within the Central Office, see for example: BAK, Z 40/321, 29 July 1946; and in particular, ibid., 12 November 1946.
24. The records of these meetings, on February 14 and March 14, could not be found. References to them, however, are made in the file Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 123 I.
25. BAK, Z 40/319, 16 June 1947.
26. In this case, the Bizonal Office reflected the US preference for less centralization.
27. See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 123 I, 20 January 1947, and 113 I, 2 Mai 1947.
28. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, Nr. 123 I, 10–14 February 1947.
29. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 123 II, Transcript of Staff Meeting of Vocational Counselors for North Rhineland, 16 December 1947.
30. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 113 I, Protocol of Meeting of the "Cologne Circle," 20 April 1948.
31. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 113 II, Protocol of Meeting of the "Berg Circle" and "Lower Rhine Circle," 10 December 1948.
32. Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 387.
33. Ibid., 420; Georg Müller, *Die Grundlegung.*
34. Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 414.
35. Ibid., 413–14.
36. Hans Günter Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische Entscheidungen im Nachkriegsdeutschland: Allierte und deutsche Sozialversicherungspolitik 1945 bis 1957* (Stuttgart, 1980), 85–91.
37. Müller, *Die Grundlegung,* 363–64; Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 430–39; Görtemaker, *Die Geschichte,* 146–52.
38. Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 434, who apostrophizes Erhard's action as a "sleight of hand" and "likely the most severe violation of a statute of occupation by a high German official." Several days later, the Allies gave their imprimatur post hoc.
39. Quoted in Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 404.
40. In his 1946 book *Wirtschaftslenkung und Marktwirtschaft* (München, 1990), for example, Alfred Müller-Armack, who coined the phrase *Soziale Marktwirtschaft,* had criticized only certain aspects of the Labor Administration and those only in passing. Thus, he lamented that the labor offices had come to serve the Nazi *Arbeitseinsatz* and even after the war had resorted increasingly to compulsory measures to steer people to jobs (Müller-Armack, 7, 69). Significantly, however, he made no suggestion that either the labor offices or their vocational counseling wings should be abolished.
41. See Meskill, "Conditions," for the background to these ideas, and for the likelihood that leading Ordoliberals, including Erhard, understood the Labor Administration's "market conforming" support for skilled—and hence economically independent—workers by the late 1930s.

42. Christoph Weisz and Hans Woller, eds., *Wörtliche Berichte und Drucksachen des Wirtschaftsrates des Vereinigten Wirtschaftsgebietes 1947–1949* (München, 1977), vol. I: 607. The fact that the US and British military governors vetoed this bill (Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 413), only to establish a more limited Labor Administration by fiat two months later, does not change the fact that the German politicians from all of the major parties voted for it.
43. Eschenburg, *Jahre,* 504.
44. Ibid., 496.
45. The Weimar constitution, for example, had obliged every citizen to use his powers for the ultimate good of the community (Article 163).
46. Eschenburg, "Elemente des Grundgesetzes," in Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Ära Adenauer: Gründerjahre der Republik, 1949–1957* (Stuttgart, 1981), 14ff.
47. Thus argued Dr. Pardun, the leading figure of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia and hence practically for the Bizone, at a meeting on 7 February 1949. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 120 I, 19 February 1949.
48. See Control Commission Order Nr. 3 of 17 January 1946, in R. Hemken, ed., *Sammlung der vom Alliierten Kontrollrat und der amerikanischen Militärregierung erlassenen Proklamationen, Gesetze, Verordnungen, Befehle, Direktiven* (Stuttgart, 1946).
49. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 120 I, 19 February 1949.
50. This was based legally on the exclusion of other organizations (employers' associations, unions, crafts organizations), which had been enacted in 1935. The 1922 *Arbeitsnachweisgesetz* already had ordered the elimination of commercial job placement agencies by 1931.
51. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Transcript of Meeting in Kaub am Rhein on 16 and 17 June 1949.
52. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 180 II, Letter from the *Landesarbeitsamt* Nordrhein-Westfalen to the Landesarbeitsamt Rheinland-Hessen-Nassau,19 January 1954.
53. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 115 I, Transcript of the Meeting of Chairmen of Vocational Counseling on 19 July 1949, 1 August 1949. At their meeting on 16/17 June 1949, leading vocational counselors from all of the West Zones had agreed on the importance of precisely such agreements. (See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Transcript of the Meeting on 16/17 June 1949). For evidence of the negotiations in the early 1950s between the *Landesarbeitsämter* and the state Education Ministries on these agreements, see the numerous files in BAK, B119/3097.
54. See, for example, the meeting on 3/4 October 1950, in Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 115 I.
55. In October 1949, the talk was of a "central station at the Federal Ministry of Labor or at the Bundesanstalt." See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Protocol of Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 4–6 October 1949. By April 1950, the committee—at North Rhine-Westphalia's request—was urging the (informally elected) president of the conference of *Landesarbeitsämter* to promote the idea of a central psychological office for the coming *Bundesanstalt.* See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Notice on a Meeting of Vocational Counselors on 24/25 April 1950.
56. For the following, see Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik,* 412–18.
57. Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische,* 156.
58. Ibid., 155–60.
59. Two of the more influential figures in this discussion, operating largely in the background, were Ernst Schindler and Walther Stets.
60. Harald Winkel, "Industrie- und Handelskammern in der Bewährung 1945–1956," in Abelshauser et al., *Ordnungspolitische Weichenstellungen.*

61. BAK, B 149/1276, Transcript of the meeting on 28 May 1951, 31 May 1951.
62. Greinert, *Berufsausbildung,* 74–75.
63. Quoted in the transcript of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors in North Rhine-Westphalia, on 16/17 June 1949, in Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117.
64. See the reference to these agreements of March and April 1950, in BAK, B119/3086, 5 December 1952.
65. BAK, B119/1526, letter from *Bundesanstalt,* IVb, to I, 20 July 1954. The term appears in a letter, which IVb was forwarding for commentary, from a vocational counselor in Munich who expressed criticism of vocational counseling's focus on quantitative indicators of success, a critique that at the time was still quite rare, but that would grow more common in the following years.
66. See, for example, the report of a vocational counselor from Geldern, North Rhine-Westphalia, who commented, "Officially, the obligation to register has lapsed. In practice, it remains in effect—if only unofficially—wherever the youths are taken in the schools as a class for the first consultation." BAK, B119/1526, 29 May 1954. The interviews conducted by the author with the former labor office psychologists also confirmed the Labor Offices' reliance on the schools for achieving *Totalerfassung*. The tapes of these interviews are in the author's possession.
67. Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung, *Ein Jahrzehnt Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung, 1952–1962* (1959), 43.
68. As examples of vocational counseling and psychology's dependence on local employers, see the following. On 11 May 1954, the *Landesarbeitamt* Baden-Württemberg requested funding for seven more psychologists, explaining that "the allocation of the requested positions is urgent, since the danger exists that due to suitability tests of the firms themselves, of independent psychologists or psychological institutes, the influence of vocational counseling upon apprenticeship placement will be considerably weakened." BAK, B119/1999, 26 October 1954. The *Land* Office in Bremen reported to headquarters that its vocational counseling's "success until now has been due basically to the good cooperation between vocational counseling and suitability testing." If the number of psychologists in Bremen were to be reduced—as headquarters had suggested in the interest of achieving a more equitable distribution across the country—the effects for vocational counseling's relations with local employers would be most deleterious. The author commented: "One cannot, I think, attract the firms by emphasizing the special quality of vocational counseling thanks to suitability tests, only to drop this instrument at a later time," BAK, B119/1999, 18 June 1955. The head of the psychological service himself expressly greeted an example of the closest possible cooperation. In his report on a trip to Munich, Wilhelm Arnold commented on three vocational counselors who worked "in" the facilities of the Wacker company. "Vocational counseling close to the firm is welcomed to a great degree by the company," he noted. BAK, B119/1998, 18 April 1956. The author's interviews with the former Labor Office psychologists also confirm the close relations between the offices and local employers.
69. Herbert Giersch et al., *The Fading Miracle: Four Decades of Market Economy in Germany* (New York, 1993), 2.
70. In 1957/58, GDP growth fell to just under 5 percent p.a. and the unemployment rate—now at about 3.5 percent—briefly ticked upward.
71. Giersch, *Fading,* 10.
72. Schildt, *Moderne Zeiten,* 323. However, Schildt characterizes Ralf Dahrendorf's claim of a "radical shift" in values as exaggerated.
73. Görtemaker, *Die Geschichte,* 183–85. The sociologist Helmut Schelsky coined the phrase "skeptical generation."
74. See the still only mildly skeptical tone in "Jagd auf Lehrlinge," *Der Spiegel,* Nr. 16, 18 April 1956, 22–23; much harsher is that in "Manager vom Arbeitsamt," *Der Spiegel,* Nr. 8, 18 February 1959, 28, and especially in the letters to the editor in the 25 April edition (Nr. 13, 6–9).

75. BAK, B119/1526, report forwarded within headquarters from section IVb to I, 20 July 1954.
76. BAK, B119/1999, Essay by Herbert Becker, unspecified date, 1955.
77. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for General Questions of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt*'s Administrative Board, 5 December 1955.
78. Thus, when *Die Zeit* reported in November 1955 that a worker in a youth center in Rhineland-Palatinate, who allegedly had been recommended by a vocational counseling office, had abused and killed a 16-year old, the head of vocational counseling at headquarters quickly instructed the local office to investigate and, when no record of the killer was found, wrote a letter to the newspaper. In BAK, B119/1998, 17 November 1955.
79. BAK, B119/2574, Protocol of the *Verwaltungsrat* meeting, September 1955.
80. Rolf Hansen, *Quantitative Entwicklungen und strukturelle Veränderung der Schulen in der BRD* (Dortmund, 1993), 15. Between 1952/53 and 1959/1960, the number of seventh graders in West Germany would fall from 914,000 to 680,000.
81. See Ulrich Herbert and Karin Hunn, "Gastarbeiter und Gastarbeiterpolitik in der Bundesrepublik. Vom Beginn der offiziellen Anwerbung bis zum Anwerbestopp (1955–1973)," in *Moderne Zeiten: Freizeit, Massenmedien und "Zeitgeist" in der Bundesrepublik der 50er Jahre,* ed. Axel Schildt (Hamburg, 1995), 273–310. However, until 1960, fewer than 100,000 "guest workers" actually were employed in Germany. Compiled from Giersch, *Fading,* 127. As the foreign workers overwhelmingly found work as un- or low-skilled laborers, they passed through neither vocational counseling nor the vocational training system. Their role in the German labor force projects was only the indirect, though quite important, one of allowing Germans mainly to enter skilled positions.
82. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt*'s Administrative Board meeting, 30 June 1955.
83. As we shall see, all of the reports concur on this *Gestalt*-like shift in perceptions—which resembled the equally sudden transition in employers thinking about the skilled worker in the mid 1920s as well as the sudden recognition in 1937 that skilled labor was scarce.
84. BAK, B119/2656, 21 July 1955.
85. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt*'s Administrative Board, 1 September 1955.
86. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt*'s Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
87. Schildt, *Ankunft,* subtitle of chapter 2. Schildt draws his term from Ronald Inglehardt's seminal study of the sea change of values across the western world after the 1950s, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics* (Princeton, 1986).
88. Schildt, *Ankunft,* 64.
89. Ibid., 50.
90. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt*'s Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
91. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the North-Rhine Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt* Administrative Board, 22 November 1955.
92. Ibid., 18 October 1955.
93. In Rheinland-Hessen-Nassau, for example, mining companies were inviting "influential men," such as school directors and county doctors, to participate in hunting excursions, in order to gain their favor when it came time to recruit young workers. BAK, B119/3086, Report on the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Vocational Counselors, 2–4 October 1958.
94. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee on Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt*'s Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
95. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt*'s Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
96. Axel Schildt, *Moderne Zeiten. Freizeit, Massenmedien und "Zeitgeist" in der Bundesrepublik der 50er Jahre* (Hamburg, 1995), 62.

97. For the former figure, see Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt,* 43; for the latter, BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1963. In light of the revelations in 2002 about the *Bundesanstalt's* falsified data (hiding its poor record in job placements), however, we may have reason to be skeptical about these earlier figures as well.
98. Helmut Schelsky, ed., *Arbeiterjugend, gestern und heute: sozialwissenschaftliche Untersuchungen* (Heidelberg, 1955).
99. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 16 August 1956. According to the protocol, the central administration was "able to disprove" the board member's claims.
100. BAK, B119/3097, 31 August 1955.
101. There are numerous reports from the late 1950s documenting the persistence, and even intensification, of "recruiting." As just one example, the report from October 1958 by the heads of vocational counseling from all of the *Landesarbeitsämter* summarized the situation in the following fashion: "The competition for young workers has in part become even more intense. Time and again attempts are made to draw the schools into worker-recruitment." BAK, B119/3086, Report on the Meeting of Heads of Vocational Counseling in the *Landesarbeitsämter,* 2–4 October 1958.
102. BAK, B149/836, 15 March 1952.
103. BAK, B149/836, Summary Report, 25 July 1952.
104. Both the employers and the unions, in fact, still supported *Totalerfassung* and a role for the Labor Administration in distributing workers to various industries, as they had demonstrated in 1950 in their agreements with the Ministry of Labor.
105. BAK, B149/836, Summary Report, 25 July 1952.
106. AdsD, DGB 24/3412, DGB, Bundesvorstand, Hauptabteilung Sozialpolitik, 15 March 1951.
107. See the summary in BAK, B119/2574, Protocol of the meeting of the Administrative Board, 23 February 1956. A copy of the report could not be found.
108. BAK, B119/1998, report by Wilhelm Arnold, 15 March 1956.
109. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Presidents' meeting, 15 March 1956.
110. See the long report on the mounting "*Vertrauenskrise*" in BAK, B119/2574, Protocol of the meeting of the Administrative Board, 23 February 1956. A year later, after only five years on the job, Scheuble resigned.
111. These were the *Vorstand* (Executive Board) and the *Verwaltungsrat* (Administrative Board).
112. BAK, B119/2657, Protocol of the Executive Board Meeting, 12 March 1956.
113. BAK, B119/2657, Protocol of the Executive Board Meeting, 24 April 1956.
114. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Presidents' Meeting, 27 June 1956.
115. BAK, B119/ 2679, Protocol of the Commission's Meeting, 26 July 1956.
116. AdsD, DGB 24/3394, Protocol of Meeting, 6 July 1956.
117. See the DGB- and IG Metall- *Geschäftsberichte* for these years.
118. Mooser, *Arbeiterleben in Deutschland,* 224–36.
119. The proportion declined from 38 percent in 1951 to 31 percent in 1960. Frank Deppe et al., eds., *Geschichte der deutschen Gewerkschaftsbewegung* (Köln, 1977), 384.
120. Heinrich Popitz and Hans Paul Bahrdt, *Das Gesellschaftsbild des Arbeiters: soziologische Untersuchungen in der Hüttenindustrie* (Tübingen, 1957). See the analysis of the impact of the book in Schildt, *Moderne Zeiten,* 312–13.
121. See Klaus Peter Wittemann, *Ford-Aktion: zum Verhältnis von Industriesoziologie und IG Metall in den sechziger Jahren* (Marburg, 1994), on the unions' emerging worries in the 1950s, as well as the subsequent response by IG Metall at the Ford factory in Cologne.
122. BAK, B119/1999, Excerpted letter from the DIHT to the *Bundesanstalt,* 23 December 1955.
123. BAK, B119/3086, Document from Meeting of Vocational Counselors of the *Landesarbeitsämter* from 5/6 June 1956, 18 May 1956.
124. AdsD, DGB, 24/3394, letter from Henkelmann to Richter, 7 August 1956. Unfortunately, the employers' organizations—the DIHT, BDA, BDI—do not maintain publicly accessible

archives. Hence, their internal decision-making only can be reconstructed in a roundabout, less than satisfactory, way.

125. BAK, B119/1526, copy of the press announcement of the *Deutsche Arbeitgeberverbände,* 25 September 1956.
126. BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 5–6 June 1956. On the acceptance of individuals' freedoms, see the comment in the talk by the head of job-placement, Söllner: "In a democracy, measures for the steering of young workers and for achieving a healthy vocational balance can be based only on the principle of the freedom of vocational choice and the freedom of choice of firms."
127. Ibid.
128. BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 17–19 February 1959.
129. For an example of the extreme concern of the *Bundesanstalt's* leadership for its image in the public, see BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 9 April 1957, where President Scheuble appealed to the heads of the state offices to participate in upcoming exhibitions concerning vocational counseling. "The *Bundesanstalt* should not fail to participate in these things. Above all, it is necessary to take advantage of all possibilities to inform the public about the work of vocational counseling."
130. On the government's sensitivity to public opinion at this time in regard to another social-political theme, see Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische,* 414–15.
131. BAK, B119/3084, letter of the *Hauptstelle,* Ib2, to the presidents of the state offices, 28 February 1958.
132. See the reference to this change, in BAK, B119/1750, Protocol of the Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 26 November 1958.
133. Ibid.
134. BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 17-19 February 1959 [emphasis added, DM].
135. BAK, B119/3087, Protocol of Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 9 February 1960. On the *Bundesanstalt's* growing sensitivity to a series of legal decisions handed down from 1959 on, see the Executive Board Meeting of 17/18 March 1960, in BAK, B119/2660, Protocol. Some of the more important cases revolved around the *Bundesanstalt's* responsibility for its recommendations; the right of individuals to see vocational counseling's recommendations; and whether certain kinds of personality tests violated a person's privacy.
136. BAK, B119/1528, 30 November 1961.
137. BAK, B119/2679, 26 July 1956 .
138. Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt,* 43. The proportion would decline more quickly only after the late 1960s when, among other things, ever more secondary school students began to attend university.
139. See, for example, BAK, B119/3090, Annual Report, *Landesarbeitsamt* Rheinland-Pfalz-Saarland, 29 October 1963.
140. While the contributions to unemployment insurance steadily were reduced in the booming 1950s and early 1960s, the decline in unemployment payments that the *Bundesanstalt* had to make occurred even more rapidly. As a result, by the early 1960s, the *Bundesanstalt* had a surplus of more than five billion marks. See Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt,* 63.
141. Bundesanstalt Altaktei 6605.1/B. See the "Gesamtübersicht" in the preparatory materials for a meeting of *Landesarbeitsamt* psychologists from 10–13 December 1974. By 1973, the figure had risen to nearly 28 percent of all psychological examinations.
142. See the documents in BAK, B149/1246, pertaining to the battles in 1952 between the Ministry of Labor and *Bundesanstalt,* on the one hand, and the Interior Ministry, on the other.
143. BAK, B119/2619, Protocol of the Executive Board Committee for the Revision of the Law on Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance, 22/23 November 1956.
144. In 1957, the *Bundesanstalt* had developed its own guidelines for "rehab cases"—workers who, for whatever reason, needed physical or psychological rehabilitation measures before reenter-

ing the workforce. See, for example, BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 26 June 1957, which suggested an eagerness on the part of vocational counseling, now facing sustained criticism of its traditional role, for such expanded tasks.

145. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report Vocational Counseling, 1961. The almost immediate impact of the law can be seen in the jump in the share of handicapped cases in the psychological service's entire workload—from 6.8 percent in 1960/61 to 12.3 percent a year later.
146. Competition in electoral politics also contributed to the burgeoning welfare expenditures. See Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische Entscheidungen.* On the claim that West Germany boosted its social programs in order to compete with its East German rival, see, somewhat skeptically, Hans Günter Hockerts, ed., *Drei Wege deutscher Sozialstaatlichkeit: NS-Diktatur, Bundesrepublik und DDR im Vergleich* (München, 1998), 23–24.
147. BAK, B149/851, President's Order, 29 December 1954.
148. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 188, Letter of the *Landesarbeitsamt* to the Directors of the *Arbeitsämter,* 23 March 1961 (originally 7 March 1958).
149. At the start of another "inspection measure" in late 1957, the main reason given was "to provide the economy with [laborers]." BAK, B119/3143, Protocol of Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 17 December 1957.
150. It generally was recognized that "the individual counseling conversation" and personal attention were important elements of any effort to get the long-term unemployed back into work. See ibid.
151. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 27 June 1956.
152. Schildt, *Ankunft,* 88–90.
153. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1956.
154. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1957.
155. These measures permitted older students to rejoin more demanding educational "tracks" even after several years.
156. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1958/59.
157. For a small sample of a large collection, see from the BAK: B119/1751, Protocol of the meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 18/19 February 1960; B119/1700, Protocol of the North Rhine-Westphalia Administrative Board Meeting, 28 June 1960; B119/3087, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Vocational Counselors, 16/17 November 1961; B119/3143, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 24 July 1962; B119/2345, Annual Report 1963/64.
158. BAK, B119/3087, Protocol of Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Vocational Counselors, 16/17 November 1961. "Public relations" in English in the original document.
159. *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages,* 3. Wahlperiode, Stenographische Berichte, vol. 39 (Bonn, 1958), 19.
160. BAK, B119/3143, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 24 July 1962.
161. Wilhelm Arnold, the head of the *Bundesanstalt's* psychological service, was, by this point, also in charge of the Wurzburg institute.
162. See the extensive documentation of the negotiations over this research contract and of the Tubingen investigation itself in the Psychological Institute of the University of Passau, Wilhelm Witte Nachlass.
163. See the records in the Witte Nachlass documenting the delays in a receiving final approval from the governing boards.
164. Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt,* 47.
165. BAK, B119/2688, Protocol of the Meeting of the Ausschuss für Rechts- und Verwaltungsangelegenheiten, 4 March 1959; BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 9/10 June 1959.
166. BAK, B119/2628, Protocols of the Committee for Youth Affairs, 7 February, 1961; 5 October 1961.

167. BAK, B119/3087, Addendum to Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 16/17 November 1961.
168. BAK, B119/3087, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 4 April 1963.
169. BAK, Protocol of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee, 5 July 1962.
170. AdsD, DGB, 24/8797, Records of Meetings between representatives of the *Bundesanstalt* and of the DGB, 24 April 1963; for the contacts with the employers, see the Derow Collection, Protocol of Meeting, 12 June 1963.
171. BAK, B119/1999, memo of the head of the psychological service to Ib, 7 October 1963.
172. BAK, B119/2663, 28 July 1966.
173. A survey in October 1962 had revealed that "in the different districts quite heterogeneous examination methods are used." In response, headquarters in November 1963 imposed binding uniform regulations regarding permissible psychological tests and procedures. BAK, B119/3361, 27 November 1963.
174. BAK, B119/1999, memo of the head of the psychological service to section Ib, 7 October 1963.
175. In 1973, 295 psychologists were employed in the *Bundesanstalt*'s Labor Offices. *Bundesanstalt,* Altaktei 6672.1A/1, Protocol of the Meeting of Chief Psychologists of the *Landesarbeitsämter,* 4–6 December 1973.

Conclusion

The Age of Organization

The familiar dates and concerns of modern German history help us little to understand the Labor Administration and its program to control and improve the German workforce. The turning points were not 1933 or 1945, but 1910, when the Law on Job Placement gave preference to neutral, public control of the labor market, and 1961, when the Labor Administration finally abjured *Totalerfassung*. Other pivotal moments included 1916, when the turn to total war prompted the authorities to create the first centralized network of labor offices and greatly heightened the sense of national threat, and 1925, when German industry began to commit itself to producing a high-skills workforce.

Nor did the Labor Administration project replicate the uncontrolled, catastrophic chain reactions occurring in other realms of the fissiparous German society. Irreconcilable conflicts of interest and murderous ideologies played no role here. Certainly, interest groups fought over access to labor and jobs, but increasingly these clashes led before and during World War I to all sides preferring or at least tolerating some kind of neutral intervention. The corporatist framework of the Labor Administration, which the major interests easily lived with even after their cooperation in other areas had ended, cemented this modus vivendi. Rather than major conflict, the astonishing continuity of the Labor Administration resulted from two basic areas of consensus. During these decades, Germans agreed that their nation was at risk, whether from domestic strife or from outside threats. Complementing this consensus about the goal of national survival was widespread, passionate belief in the best, indeed only, means to overcome the threat. Germany had to optimize its workforce, by "organizing" and improving it. The unanimous or nearly unanimous approval of the legislation undergirding the Labor Administration—laws in 1910 (Job Placement), 1922 (Labor Exchanges), 1927 (Unemployment Insurance), and 1949 (restoration of the Labor Admin-

Notes for this section begin on page 231.

istration)—attests to this widespread support. However, the salience of the goal (saving the nation), its relationship to the means (optimization), and finally, the balance between different forms of optimization (organization and improvement)—all of these aspects changed continually, especially with the onset of total war in 1916.

The roots of the Labor Administration project stretched back to the 1890s, when Germany was in the midst of its first economic miracle. The main challenge in this era was domestic stability. Unprecedented internal migration and urbanization overwhelmed city resources and made control of access to jobs and workers the subject of increasingly bitter disputes between agriculture, industry, and labor. Reformers and politicians from across the spectrum pinned their hopes for a resolution on the neutral "organization" of the labor market, an aspiration fueled by the real successes of technocratic control in other areas (corporations, state-building, science) and the apparent inevitability of democracy. The unanimously supported 1910 Law on Job Placement gave public labor offices priority over commercial or partisan ones and anticipated the former's eventual "predominance." As yet, however, the authorities took no steps to centralize control of the labor market, though some interest groups (SPD, labor office movement) called for exactly that.

Not only matching men and jobs, but improving the workforce was also on the agenda of the authorities. The Prussian Ministry of Trade pioneered efforts to encourage more young people to enter apprenticeships and more industrial firms to train them. A skilled workforce, the ministry and its allies believed, promised much: it would assure Germany's success in foreign markets; at the same time, the *embourgeoisement* of the working class would provide another path to domestic stability. Not organized from above, such stability would rest instead on the economic, and thus political, independence of individual Germans, a necessary condition for a sustainable democracy. However, before World War I, indeed, before the mid 1920s, authorities and industry did not stake out as clear a path in worker training as in the case of job placement. Germany's booming economy, at least until 1914, made the urgency for reform appear to be weaker than in domestic matters. Additionally, German manufacturers themselves remained ambivalent about the future of their workforces. Many discounted the role of the skilled worker and instead were enamored of an "American" vision of productivity, built around technology, mass production, and scientific management.

Despite their differences, the two projects of labor force reform already were demonstrating some mutual affinities of purpose and means even before World War I. The backers of vocational training aimed to improve not only Germany's economic power, but also its domestic stability. From the turn of the century, as Germany's international rivalries heated up, many social reformers and politicians extended the purpose of reform beyond domestic stability to also include the country's strategic power, moving from "Christian" to "national socialism." The boosters of skilling and individual improvement, on the other hand, began to adopt ideas about the best means available from the "organization" camp. Their

1910 call for a national system of vocational counseling thus emphasized the necessarily "comprehensive" nature of such measures.

World War I recast Germany's labor force programs. The total mobilization in the second half of the war established the infrastructure of a central, nationwide authority to distribute labor most efficiently. Politically, the contributions of labor to the war effort meant that its union and political wings, the most adamant advocates of public control of the job market, would hold great sway afterwards. More importantly, the loss in the war united nearly all Germans in the feeling that they were an embattled nation. For the next forty years, foreign adversaries or economic calamity, and sometimes both, threatened the country's very survival. While many deep disagreements festered and some exploded in Weimar Germany, the need to mobilize the workforce for the sake of national survival found widespread, indeed, nearly unanimous, support. For Germany's opponents, France and Britain, by contrast, the war was devastating, but it did not produce a national trauma as it did in Germany. It was no accident, then, that in those countries the war did not redirect and concentrate previous efforts to control and improve the workforce.

In addition to elevating the *goal* of survival, the war greatly reinforced previous convictions about the best *means* as well. They would involve "organization," the conscious steering of resources, and more ambitiously, "*Totalerfassung,*" the manipulation of *all* resources. Survival and organization intrinsically were connected, for the latter presupposed a purpose, a telos of *Totalerfassung.* And no goal could be as motivating as survival.

Concretely, this consensus produced the Labor Administration, a Weimar-era institution that would survive largely unchanged for almost four decades. The Administration enjoyed a monopoly on job placement and aspired to the "complete inclusion" of all movements in the labor market. Tensions persisted between organization and improvement: the Administration's job placement and vocational counseling wings, subscribing to these different visions of optimization, mistrusted each other. Yet the latter, in its effort to create a high-skills workforce, had become one of the staunchest defenders of *Totalerfassung.*

For all of the bureaucrats' efforts, the project of skilling the German workforce only took flight when German manufacturers saw its value. In the mid 1920s, after wartime restrictions finally had lapsed, the fog of an inflationary mark given way to the hard realities of a new currency, and the Germans recognized the challenge of US mass production, leaders of German industry reevaluated and reconceptualized the potential contribution of skilled workers. Even as efforts to draft a law on vocational training foundered, manufacturers launched an effort to standardize and significantly expand vocational training and certification. The German "skills machine" began to roll.

Both labor force projects, now tightly intertwined, flourished in the anarchic authoritarian Nazi state. After it had conquered mass unemployment, the new regime wanted a labor force of highly skilled workers to compensate for the country's quantitative deficits vis-à-vis future military opponents. The encroachment

by hyperactive Nazi deputies, such as Robert Ley, on the prerogatives of both the Labor Administration and industry spurred both to cooperate even more closely. By the late 1930s, the Labor Administration's vocational counseling had finally achieved near-*Totalerfassung* of boys and girls leaving school. It cooperated closely with industry to ensure that the latter now offered more apprenticeship positions than there existed people to fill them.

After a second, even more devastating war, not much changed—at least at first. Despite constitutional promises of the free choice of vocation, the restored Labor Administration used its old methods—above all, cooperation with the schools—to ensure itself the same level of "complete inclusion" it had achieved in the late 1930s. By now, there was much less enthusiasm for "organization" than there had been after the first war. Indeed, there was a new hunger for individual responsibility. However, Germans still felt themselves an embattled nation. If the Labor Administration could no longer promise national regeneration, as it had after World War I, at least the familiar institution promised an orderly domestic labor market.

By the mid 1950s, finally, the strategic security provided by Germany's place in the western alliance and, especially, the unfamiliar experience of sustained economic growth in the economic miracle ended the Labor Administration's forty-year-old labor project. In the face of an effervescent seller's market for labor, the Administration reluctantly had to abandon its hold—its *Totalerfassung*—on the German workforce. Hundreds of thousands of young West Germans continued to find apprenticeship positions on their own. The two sides of the Labor Administration project—controlling the workforce and giving it skills—had come undone. The skilled workforce created with the help of the Labor Administration no longer accepted the terms of *Totalerfassung*. Workers, increasingly thinking of themselves as middle-class *Bürger*—as the boosters of vocational counseling and training had long hoped—now could help themselves.

A paradox is evident: one period of economic dynamism ended the project of organizing the labor force, just as another, sixty years earlier, had witnessed its birth. What had changed in the meantime? Answering this question helps us to place the Labor Administration projects in the larger perspective of Germany's tortuous modernization.

In several ways, both of the dominant features of the age of organization—the sense of national embattlement and the confidence in organization itself—had lost their motive force by the 1950s. Germany was, and felt, more secure. After two wars and defeats, the second as decisive as possible, the country was no longer the focus of fears in a continent brimming with rivalries. Rather, Germany was increasingly well ensconced in the security sphere provided by the United States. Certainly, the Cold War spawned its own worries—but these fears Germany did not have to face alone. Domestic dangers also seemed less threatening, as both extreme right and extreme left had been discredited. The single most divisive economic trend from earlier—the growth of socialism—belonged to the past. If the first economic miracle around 1900 had fueled the growth of the SPD and the

socialist unions, the second was doing precisely the opposite. The heady sense of *individual* opportunity in the 1950s and 1960s—deproletarianization—began to unravel the ties binding socialist organizations together. While alarming downturns had repeatedly (1873–80, 1891, 1900–1902, 1907–1908) interrupted the earlier period of growth, the economy expanded after 1950 for more than fifteen years before the first, mild recession hit. In addition to this steadiness of growth, the sheer levels of affluence and technology mattered as well. The economy had not grown quickly between 1914 and 1950, but it had grown. After taking care of the basic necessities (housing, food, clothing), the average worker in 1950 had 25 percent of his income available for discretionary expenditures and in 1970, he would have as much as 40 percent—rather than the 10–20 percent he had had around 1900.[1] By the 1950s, new or newly cheap technologies—car, radio, television—held out the promise of *individual* enjoyment. Not least, industry's "great cooperative endeavor" with the Labor Administration since the 1920s and 1930s to build a vocational system now yielded more attractive apprenticeship positions than could be filled. The economic growth around 1960, as opposed to that around 1900, brought many working-class Germans to the threshold of middle-class aspirations and even lifestyles.

Like the threat of national peril, the promise of organization also had waned by the 1950s. The reality of the Labor Administration itself hardly demonstrated the effectiveness of centralization on a large scale. Despite *Totalerfassung* and the single, ineffectual attempt around 1940 to implement a national vocational plan, forty years after the founding of the Labor Administration, its business of job placement and vocational counseling remained largely a local affair, with local *Arbeitsämter* determining how to woo local employers.

More generally, the turbulence and suffering of the decades since 1914 had spread doubts about the desirability of organization per se. Its main supports in fact were implicated deeply in the failures of those years. Earlier, the march of science had seemed to demonstrate the superiority of expert knowledge, potentially in any realm. The real achievements of large enterprises, above all, the nation state, justified the growing confidence in organization. But both had failed since 1914, and their joint failure had led to the very worst developments of the mid twentieth century. States had become authoritarian or totalitarian and plunged their people into terrible war. They had turned science to the production of terrifying new weapons and the abuse of individuals in the name of collective purification. Understandably, after 1945, organization held much less appeal for many Europeans than it had earlier. Or at least it did for Germans: both the French and the British governments now tried to organize their labor services on a comprehensive basis. Few German politicians and opinion-leaders argued after the defeat of the Nazis, as Friedrich Naumann had half a century earlier, that "[a]ll relations are pervaded by the thought of organization, that is, the regulation of the masses." Instead, many of them longed, however vaguely, for a society in which individuals were more robust, their rights "untouchable," as the Basic Law put it.

These shifts in sentiment did not lead, as we have seen, to the end of the Labor Administration overnight. However, when the economy began to expand again and job seekers exulted in their opportunities, there was little support for maintaining the traditional Labor Administration. The intellectual shift away from organization and toward the individual, already in the air, now found confirmation in the lived experience of millions of upwardly mobile Germans.

If ideational constellations around organization and individual independence long sustained the Labor Administration projects, who were the most important carriers of those ideas? Who stood behind the age of organization and who, if anybody, behind its demise?

Even more than was the case in other policy arenas, elites drove the Labor Administration project from beginning to end. The political parties repeatedly and unanimously (or nearly so) had sanctioned the creation of the Labor Administration. In the crucial years after 1918, unions and industrial associations also put their imprimatur on the corporatist compromise. Yet it was not these partisan groups so much as those elements standing above party—or at least claiming to—who forged the German human economies. Modernizing bureaucrats from the Reich Interior (and later Economics and Labor) and Prussian Trade Ministries pushed first and hardest for a labor administration, complete inclusion, and universal vocational counseling and training. In the Kaiserreich, whose Reichstag lacked the right to initiate legislation, this was bound to be the case. But even in Weimar, when the groundwork for these projects was laid, long-serving ministry officials provided the necessary continuity of vision and detailed knowledge, while ruling coalitions and ministers changed regularly. The same applied even across regime boundaries. In the last year of World War I, the Prussian Trade Ministry had helped to shepherd a law on vocational counseling into effect. Even after the Kaiserreich fell in the revolution and the ministry came under the influence of the liberal German People's Party, the same high-level bureaucrats used the authority of the old law to pioneer universal vocational counseling in the new Germany.

Above all, when the laws remained silent, the bureaucrats played a key role in implementing their plans. This was the case with *Totalerfassung,* which, aside from the period of 1938 to 1951, had no legal backing. The Labor Administration had to compensate for its legal impotence—and, after 1949, even its violation of the spirit of the Basic Law—by obtaining the cooperation of the schools. Nor was a national law achieved in regard to vocational training.[2] Here too it was up to the bureaucrats from the Prussian Trade Ministry and later the Reich Economics Ministry to cajole industry and *Handwerk* into crafting a national system of training.

By contrast with these ambitious modernizing bureaucrats, ordinary Germans stood out for the longest time thanks mainly to their silence. In the dynamic economy of the Kaiserreich, and throughout the 1920s and even into the 1930s, the majority of them found jobs and chose vocations without any intervention from the authorities (World War I was an exception, of course). Once the net-

work of labor offices was established after the war, many Germans gave generic support to their mission. They thought the nation, in fact, did need to husband its human resources. However, many of those who had occasion to visit their local labor office criticized its "bureaucratism." Too often, people were not treated individually, according to their abilities and preferences, but merely according to their place in line. In the years of consistently high unemployment (even before the Depression), when the labor office might have knowledge of or access to one of the rare, coveted jobs, this grumbling did not pose a serious threat to the Administration. Additionally, at least in regard to first time job seekers, the Labor Administration was in the 1920s and 1930s assiduously building its key instrument of "complete inclusion"—its connection to the local schools. The compulsions of the Nazi era, especially the 1938 laws of *Totalerfassung,* only crowned a development long underway. And even grumbling now became risky.

In the early years of the *Bundesrepublik,* most Germans evinced the same mixed reaction they had for the previous decades. They cursed the offices' size and anonymity, but apprenticeship seekers, in particular, had almost no other alternatives. Besides, their teacher would take them to the labor office en masse, or the counselors would come visit their classroom. For the average German, the Labor Administration was never an especially beloved institution, but during the period from the 1920s to the 1950s, it became a fixture of working life, tolerated, at least, by most.

In the late 1950s this changed. The Labor Administration had helped to create a nation of skilled workers. Now, in the economic boom, those increasingly independent, middle-class citizens dared to reject or simply bypass their institutional forebear. The obsolescence of the Labor Administration—perhaps planned by its founders, at least those advocating a program of skilling, but now regretted as a self-inflicted wound by many within—thus marked a stage in the coming of real German democracy, what Tocqueville would have called its democratic social state.

Notes

1. Görtemaker, *Die Geschichte,* 175–76; Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte, 1866–1918,* vol. 1, 312
2. One would be, finally, in 1969.

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