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The Employment of Women in Germany Under the National-Socialist Régime

IT has been observed that two distinct phases can be discerned in the employment policy of the National-Socialist régime in Germany¹, the first stretching from the beginning of the régime until 1936, and distinguished by large-scale action energetically pursued by the Government to reduce unemployment, and the second beginning with the intensification of armament production and the initiation of the Four-Year Plan. In the second phase the scope of the employment policy was extended well beyond the normal objective of overcoming unemployment to the systematic utilisation and expansion of the labour resources of the country in order to carry out the economic programme adopted by the State in pursuance of its general policy. The purpose of this article is to consider the extent to which female workers were affected by the employment policy and to sketch, in some detail, the various steps that have been taken in order to regulate their employment at different times.² In the first phase measures were adopted for directing female labour to certain occupations considered to be essentially feminine in character and for keeping down the employment of women workers in others, while in the second phase the reserves of female labour were drawn on, and by degrees such labour came to be employed in all occupations in which it could be substituted for male labour.

RESTRICTIONS ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

At the time the National-Socialist Government came into power, the economic cycle in Germany had reached the trough of the

¹ Cf. P. WAELBROECK and I. BESSLING: "Some Aspects of German Social Policy Under the National-Socialist Régime", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLIII, No. 2, Feb. 1941, pp. 128-152.

² For supplementary information on the laws and regulations relating to women's work, see INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *The Law and Women's Work* (Studies and Reports, Series I, No. 4, Geneva, 1939).

depression. The number of registered unemployed was five and a half million in June 1932 and five and three-quarter million in December. To this must be added another million invisible unemployed who, for various reasons, were not covered by the statistics. Consequently, the reduction of unemployment was not only the foremost task which the Government had to tackle, but its own prestige and stability depended not a little on the measure of the immediate success achieved in dealing with a problem which had assumed such vast dimensions. In the pursuit of this task few expedients were left untried, and one that seemed likely to be readily accepted, as being justified both on the ground of National-Socialist philosophy and on that of the existing structure of the employment market, was restriction of the employment of female labour. During the war of 1914-1918, in Germany, as in other belligerent countries, men called up for active service were replaced in a number of occupations by girls and women, and these latter were retained in employment in appreciable numbers after the emergency. There were also other factors, during the decade following the war, especially favourable to the employment of female labour in commerce and industry, some of which were accentuated by the economic depression. Among these may be mentioned the increasing use of mechanical contrivances for work for which male labour used to be employed, the lower cost of female labour as compared with that of male labour¹, and, not least, the desire of women to escape from the drudgery of unskilled work. As a result of the interplay of these different forces the composition of the employment market was affected to a considerable extent. The change in the position of female labour as compared with males between 16 June 1925 and 16 June 1933 is shown in the following table.²

It will be noticed that during the eight years 1925 to 1933 there was a substantial fall in the total number of women wage earners and a substantial increase in that of salaried employees. Women wage earners declined in numbers in agriculture and forestry, industry and handicrafts, and private domestic service, but they formed a more important part of the labour employed in commerce and transport and public services and private administration. These changes were used by the National-Socialist leaders to support the

¹ For a discussion of some aspects of this question see Dr. Judith GRÜNFELD: "Rationalisation and the Employment and Wages of Women in Germany", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXIX, No. 5, May 1934, pp. 605-632.

² For further details see Henri FUSS: "Unemployment and Employment Among Women", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXXI, No. 4, Apr. 1935, pp. 463-497.

INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (—) BETWEEN 1925 AND 1933
IN THE NUMBER OF WAGE-EARNING AND SALARIED EMPLOYEES
(INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYED), CLASSIFIED BY SEX
AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS
(thousands)

Occupational group	Salaried employees		Wage earners	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Agriculture and forestry	— 62	+ 6	+ 119	— 196
Industry and handicrafts	— 184	— 19	— 74	— 261
Commerce and transport	— 32	+ 113	+ 275	+ 133
Public services and private administration	+ 97	+ 158	+ 126	+ 119
Domestic service	— 7	— 6	— 3	— 1
Private domestic service (<i>Hausangestellte</i>) ¹	— 7	— 100		
All groups	— 189	+ 252	+ 444	— 207

¹ Not included in the total.

view that it was necessary to restrict the employment of female labour¹, a view already inspired by considerations of economic and social policy peculiar to the régime.² It was urged that, mother-

¹ The relation of the employment of women to unemployment is considered by Marguerite THIBERT: "The Economic Depression and Employment of Women", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXVII, Nos. 4 and 5, Apr. and May 1933, pp. 443-470 and 620-630.

² In a statement of the principles governing the vocational guidance of women, issued by the Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance (cf. *Germania*, 17 Mar. 1935), it was observed that while women's labour was necessary for the national economy, account must be taken of the fact that their first duty was to fulfil their biological function. For women to work before their marriage was also useful to themselves in so far as such work was conducive to discipline. It was desirable, however, to direct women mainly to occupations involving activities similar to those they carried on within the household. In agricultural districts there were also openings for women in rural education and social service. A select body of women would still be admitted to the universities, but their first duty would be to work for the advancement of national culture in the fields proper to women. For unmarried women and widows employment would still be necessary, but their number, which was still high in consequence of the war of 1914-1918, was decreasing so that it was considered that the field allotted to women's employment should suffice to absorb such labour in the future.

The Leader of the Labour Front, Mr. Ley, in a report he submitted to its third annual congress at Nuremberg on 14 Sept. 1935, remarked that the employment of women was not in itself a danger or an evil for women and the race, for it was quite untrue that the health of women in industry was injuriously affected. But when a woman was required to perform a task beyond her physical capacity, she collapsed altogether. For that reason it was a crime to require exhausting work of women. (*Der Angriff*, 13 Sept. 1935; *Völkischer Beobachter*, 15 Sept. 1935).

hood being the primary function of women, strenuous effort should not be demanded of them, but that they should be employed in occupations considered to be essentially feminine in character. As a result of this policy a series of measures were adopted, some of which were intended to eliminate women who had near male relatives in paid employment from the employment market and to prevent their admission to it. Others were calculated to reduce and keep down their employment in all occupations other than agricultural, domestic, and welfare¹ work, for which they were considered particularly suitable, while at the same time steps were taken to stabilise the female labour employed in these latter occupations and to direct to them fresh contingents of such labour. These measures were intended, on the one hand, to make room in the employment market for the unemployed, more particularly unemployed men, by excluding those women for whom paid employment was not indispensable, and, on the other hand, to bring about an occupational redistribution of female labour. A summary of some of the more important of these measures is given below.

Measures to Restrict the Employment of Women.

Exclusion from public services. A beginning had already been made in 1932² with the restriction of the employment of women in public services. An Act of June 1933³ permitted the dismissal of married women who were not dependent on their own earnings and whose maintenance was ensured by their immediate relatives, and prohibited the appointment to permanent government posts of women under thirty-five; these provisions applied both to women officials and to teachers employed by the Federal, State or local authorities. Administrative regulations under the Act were subsequently issued, and an Order published on 22 June 1934 covered all classes of women officials and school teachers in the employment of the State and local authorities. The Act of 5 July 1934⁴ concerning the administrative reorganisation of social insurance contained similar provisions applicable to the women doctors of insurance funds, married women being permitted to practise only when this was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of their family. Similar restrictions were issued on 13 February 1935 concerning married women surgeon-dentists and dentists.

¹ Welfare work in industrial undertakings, including those in which no women were employed, also came to be regarded, along with domestic service and agriculture, as an occupation suitable for the employment of women, and the Women's Department of the Labour Front issued regulations relating to the training of such workers, in Oct. 1934 (*Völkischer Beobachter*, 11 Oct. 1934).

² An Act of 30 May 1932 empowered the Federal administrative services to dismiss women officials on marriage, subject to the payment of compensation proportionate to length of service; women wholly dependent on their salary for support were exempt. The same Act restored the power of the Federal States to apply similar measures in their own administrative services.

³ See article on "Doppelverdiener" in *Karten-Auskunft des Arbeitsrechts*, 9 Sept. 1933; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1 July 1933.

⁴ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 6 July 1934.

Stricter application to women of measures for the abolition of multiple earnings. An Order of 12 May 1933 provided for the abolition of multiple earnings, and the measure was applied more strictly to women, the work of married or single women with a husband or father in paid employment being covered by the definition of multiple earnings in a number of local and departmental Orders.¹

Discrimination in respect of placing. Priority of employment over women (except in the case of women with family responsibilities) was granted to male workers of over forty years of age by an Order of 10 August 1934² and an Administrative Order of 28 August 1934.³ An Order of 4 October 1934⁴ also called for the gradual replacement of young workers of both sexes under twenty-five years of age by male workers over forty years.

Stricter employment permits. The conditions for the issue of permits for the employment of women in more than one shift, especially in the textile industry, were tightened up by measures adopted in 1933.⁵

Restrictions on admission to universities. Measures were also adopted fixing the number of students to be admitted to universities and the quota of women students.⁶

Other devices. Various devices were adopted, in addition, for the elimination of women from occupations other than those which were considered to be suitable for them; examples are the collective rules for the hat-making industry throughout the country⁷, and for the brick industry in certain districts⁸, which provided for equal rates of pay for men and women. It must be added, however, that the ground on which these measures were adopted was the need for the special protection of women engaged in occupations regarded as unsuitable for them. In an Order issued on 5 June 1937⁹ concerning the employment of women and young persons in the brick industry, for instance, it was pointed out that, consequent upon changes in the conditions brought about by mechanisation, the previous prohibition of such employment was removed, but that the conditions of employment were regulated more strictly.

Marriage loans. Provision for the grant of loans to women who agreed to resign their posts on marriage was made by the Unemployment Act of 1

¹ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 18 June 1932; *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 13 and 16 Aug., 1 and 11 Sept. 1933.

² *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 25 Aug. 1934.

³ *Idem*, 5 Sept. 1934.

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Oct. 1934.

⁵ *Idem*, 5 Oct. 1933.

⁶ An Act of 25 Apr. 1933 fixed the number of students to be admitted to universities in 1934 at 15,000, and that of women at 10 per cent. of the total. The decline in the number of women students during the winter term 1933-34, as compared with 1932-33, was about 22 per cent. in medicine, 25 per cent. in dentistry, 15 per cent. in pharmacy, 47.9 per cent. in law and philosophy, including education, 35 per cent. in economics, 40.8 per cent. in industrial management, 52.5 per cent. in physics, 53 per cent. in chemistry and 58 per cent. in geography. (*Berliner Tageblatt*, 14 Mar. 1935).

⁷ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Feb. 1937.

⁸ *Deutsche Arbeitskorrespondenz*, 10 Jan. 1937.

⁹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 June 1937.

June 1933.¹ The conditions under which these loans were granted were revised by the Act of 28 March 1934, and Orders were issued to determine the actual amount of the loans, which was first lowered and then raised again slightly during the year 1934-35.

Measures to Promote the Employment of Women in Domestic, Agricultural, and Welfare Work.

The measures for the promotion of the employment of girls and women in domestic, agricultural, and welfare work may be grouped under two heads: those that indirectly favoured such employment and the more direct steps.

Indirect measures. Female domestic workers were excluded by an Act of 12 May 1933 from unemployment insurance and a reduction was made in the rate of their contributions to invalidity insurance, as an inducement to private households to employ them.² The National Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance issued an Order on 30 November 1934³ making it permissible to refuse compensation for short time to women who had been employed in domestic service for a period of 52 weeks during the three years immediately preceding the introduction of short time in the industry in which they were actually employed, if there were reasons for believing that they could find employment in their previous occupation. Typical of the measures to ensure that women employed in agriculture did not leave such work for other employment was the Order of 17 May 1934 to limit the placing of agricultural workers in non-agricultural undertakings and occupations, which categorically forbade the engagement of female farm servants and agricultural workers for work in canning factories, hotels, restaurants and cafés.⁴

Direct measures. A voluntary labour service for girls for a year's training in domestic service as aids to mothers in need of assistance was organised by various bodies in 1934⁵, and the women's labour service centres for

¹ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 22 June, 28 July, and 27 Aug. 1933; *Kölnische Zeitung*, 3 June 1933. Between Aug. 1933 and the end of Sept. 1935, 479,190 marriage loans were granted; in 260,379 cases part of the loan was written off on the birth of the first living child (*Wirtschaft und Statistik*, Nov. 1935).

According to an enquiry made by the Statistical Office of Düsseldorf, couples in receipt of marriage loans between Aug. 1933 and Apr. 1935 in that city showed a birth rate of 37 per mille, as against 19 per mille for all other marriages (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 24 Nov. 1935).

² *Kölnische Zeitung*, 3 June 1933; *Soziale Praxis*, 25 May 1933.

³ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Dec. 1934.

⁴ *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger*, 18 May 1934.

⁵ In a survey by the heads of the Women's Labour Service of the work performed by the Service during 1935, it was stated that at the end of the year there were 355 centres, of which 195 were for assistance to settlements, 48 for social work, and 112 for vocational training. During the year about 18,000 girls passed through these centres. (*Berliner Tageblatt*, 27 Dec. 1934). On 31 Jan. 1935 the number of women volunteers was 10,651, showing an increase of 50 per cent. in one year (*Informationsdienst*, 10 Mar. 1935).

It was also stated that while labour service was voluntary, matriculated girls who had obtained permission to enter a university might not begin their studies until they had completed six months of compulsory labour service. There were a national centre and eleven provincial centres for the training of instructresses in the Service (*Völkischer Beobachter*, 21 Feb. 1935). The

unemployed women also started training women for certain branches of agricultural work and animal husbandry. The President of the Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance stated that the number of young persons leaving school at Easter 1934 was almost double that of previous years. It amounted to 1,300,000, of whom 600,000 were girls. Many of these latter, he said, could be employed for domestic work, but the arrangement was not to result in the dismissal of paid domestic servants. Families would be found who were prepared to receive girls sent to them by the vocational guidance services of the employment offices. After a trial period of six weeks, the housewife and the girl would be bound by a sort of contract of apprenticeship. At the end of the year of domestic service, the girl would receive a certificate and the vocational guidance service of the Institution would undertake to place her in domestic work or some other suitable occupation.¹

But this system did not, it was stated later, produce satisfactory results, and in order to improve the training, steps were taken to establish closer contact between the authorities, the girls, their parents, and the housewives. The Women's Department of the Labour Front was placed in charge of the training of welfare workers for employment in undertakings, and the period of training was fixed at five to six months: four to six weeks in the Labour Service, three months of practical work in a factory, and a fortnight in a vocational training centre. The cost of the training was to be borne by the candidates, who were selected by the Women's Department, and through the Department's good offices it was hoped to obtain for them a worker's wage during the period of their practical work in the factory.²

The Youth Office of the Labour Front and the National Youth Office (*Reichsjugendführung*) organised a winter scheme of supplementary training, particularly in housekeeping, for girls under twenty-one in all undertakings.³

The head of the Maternity Service of the German Women's League stated in a report that 12,000 courses in maternity training were given during the year 1934-35 and that they were attended by over 300,000 women.⁴

The year of labour service for girls was made compulsory by the Act of 26 June 1935, at the same time as it was made compulsory for young men, but the obligation was not immediately binding except in the case of intending women students. By an Order of 15 August 1936 the responsibility for the Girls' Labour Service was transferred from the National Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance⁵ to the German Labour Ser-

duties in regard to social welfare devolving upon the Women's Labour Service consisted mainly in providing assistance to housewives and overworked mothers. Such assistance was particularly necessary in land settlement undertakings, but it was also required in the poorer industrial districts of large towns. (*Informationsdienst*, 2 Feb. 1935). During the winter nearly all the centres in the country districts were transferred to the outskirts of the towns or into the towns themselves. The girls were placed at the disposal of the local social service department of the National-Socialist Party in order to help in the winter relief movement by going to work in the households of needy families. (*Der Deutsche*, 9 Dec. 1934).

¹ *Berliner Tageblatt*, 3 May 1934; *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 4 May 1934.

² *Informationsdienst*, 20 Dec. 1934.

³ *Berliner Tageblatt*, 17 Oct. 1935.

⁴ *Idem*, 5 Nov. 1935.

⁵ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 18 Aug. 1936.

vice, and a Decree of 26 September 1936¹ provided for the gradual development of the Girls' Labour Service in order to prepare for the change from a voluntary to a compulsory system. A special National Employment Exchange Service was established during the year 1936-37 to deal primarily with the placing of women social assistants, youth leaders, technical assistants, teachers for vocational education of agricultural domestic economy, etc.², and an Order of the National Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance of 24 March 1937 provided for the organisation of the placing of women migrant and seasonal workers in the food industry.

During the year 1937-38 the question of introducing or increasing classes for the vocational guidance of women received attention, and vocational re-training classes for occupations in which women were employed were also organised by the German Labour Front in collaboration with the National Placing Service. Moreover, in accordance with an Order of 24 November 1937, steps were taken to increase further the strength of the Girls' Labour Service³, and a Decree issued by the Minister of Education called on mothers of school girls to begin their daughters' training in household duties. The Decree also provided that from Easter 1937 girls would not be promoted into the third highest class in secondary schools without passing an examination in easy household tasks.⁴

As an example of the vocational training schemes may be mentioned one which related to handicrafts and affected dressmakers, milliners, furriers, hairdressers, and photographers among others. Under the rules for 1937 relating to training periods away from home for young craftsmen, which were issued by the German Handicrafts Leader, girl "journeymen" might be exchanged between one workshop and another and might, in particular, be sent from the country and small towns to the cities. Only young women between nineteen and thirty years of age belonging to the Labour Front were eligible for admission to the scheme, and evidence of good vocational training was also required. The exchanges were to last for six months and the trainee was required to undertake to return to her original workplace.⁵

In the summer of 1937, after an investigation into the conditions in the employment market, the Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance reported that female labour was in great demand in forestry, agriculture, and the hotel trade, and in certain branches of industry in which young women workers were particularly required. The Institution,

¹ *Idem*, 28 Sept. 1936.

² *Berliner Tageblatt*, 24 Apr. 1936.

³ This Order required the strength of the Service to be increased from 17,350 (Oct. 1937) to 30,000 on 1 Apr. 1939. An Order of 7 Sept. 1938 provided that the strength was to be raised to 50,000 before 1 Apr. 1940. At the beginning of 1938 it was reported that 70,000 girls had already passed through the Service since its establishment, and it was expected that a more comprehensive organisation would have an important effect on the distribution of women workers on the labour market.

⁴ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 26 Nov. 1935. The Minister of National Economy also prohibited, as an experimental measure, the admission of girls to apprenticeship in handicrafts in the area covered by the Hanover Chamber of Handicrafts until at least one year after leaving school; and after such period, priority was to be given to girls who could show that they had had at least one year of agricultural or domestic work, or of labour service, or of a similar class or course (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 6 May 1936).

⁵ *Idem*, 31 Jan. 1937; *Berliner Tageblatt*, 11 Dec. 1936.

it was stated, would therefore continue its efforts to direct girls mainly towards agriculture. The experiments made with camps for retraining in agricultural work had been satisfactory and an increase in their number was contemplated. The propaganda among girls and their parents in favour of domestic employment had also been continued.¹

Relaxation of the Restrictions

Practical difficulties were, however, encountered from the outset in enforcing the more drastic at any rate of the restrictive measures. The President of the Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance issued a warning as early as 7 September 1933, asking local governments to suspend action concerning the dismissal of women with close male relatives in paid employment, until the Government had had time to consider all the principles involved. A similar warning was contained in a memorandum on multiple earnings, dated 20 November 1933, by the Ministers of Labour and National Economy.² The replacement of women workers under twenty-five years by older men and their guidance towards domestic service would also seem to have met with a certain amount of resistance among girls who feared that they would be obliged to remain permanently in domestic service; for in a circular issued by the President of the Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance it was pointed out that girls desiring to return to their ordinary occupation would not be prevented from doing so, and that they would not be asked to relinquish their employment a second time.³

The systematic discrimination against female labour was not, however, without its effect, and it led to a decline in the proportion of females in industrial employment. According to the returns of the National Statistical Office, the ratio of females to all persons employed in industry decreased from 30.1 per cent in the first half of 1933 to 24.5 per cent. in the first half of 1936; the corresponding proportions for all insurable occupations, according to the returns of the sickness funds, were 36.1 per cent. and 31.1 per cent. respectively. The female workers brought into employment never-

¹ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 6 July 1937.

² *Karten-Auskunftei des Arbeitsrechts*: "Doppelverdiener", 9 Sept. 1933.

Statements of the same kind were also issued by the Postmaster-General (*Kölnische Zeitung*, 2 June 1933, and *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 Sept. 1933), the State Railway Company (*Berliner Tageblatt*, 16 Sept. 1933), the Labour Trustee for East Prussia (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 25 Sept. 1933), the Federal Minister of the Interior (*Der Angriff*, 13 Oct. 1933), and the Prussian Minister of the Interior (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 13 Oct. 1933).

³ *Deutsche Arbeitskorrespondenz*, 5 Nov. 1936; *Berliner Tageblatt*, 10 Nov. 1936.

theless outnumbered those thrown out of the employment market as a result of the restrictive measures; for the total number of female workers in industry rose from 1,100,000 at the beginning of 1933 to 1,500,000 in the first half of 1936. The corresponding figures for males were 2,550,000 and 4,500,000 respectively. The main effects of the restrictions would seem to have been, in the first place, a slower rate of increase for females in industrial employment, as compared with males, and, secondly, an occupational redistribution of female labour, since it was found that, at the end of the period under consideration, it had decreased in the production, and increased in the consumption, industries, as compared with the position at the beginning of the period. The increase in the number of females employed in industry as a whole was attributed mainly to the improvement in the economic situation, but partly also to the shortage of male labour in certain trades.

The change in the situation was due to the coming into effect of the Four-Year Plan and the consequent increase in the demand for labour. This led to the gradual relaxation and in some cases abolition of the restrictions on the employment of women. The system of priority in respect of placing which had been introduced in order to give male workers over forty years of age precedence over women, except in the case of women with family responsibilities, was abolished on 1 December 1936; and on 1 October 1937 the discrimination against women in receipt of marriage loans was also abolished. Statements made by employment authorities showed, moreover, that the earlier rigour of the doctrine in respect of the employment of women had, to some extent, been mitigated.¹

The shortage of labour had so far increased by 1938 that the authorities sought actively to remedy the situation by attempting to make fuller use of female labour.² The view was generally expressed

¹ Speaking at Cologne on the employment position, the President of the National Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance stated that to eliminate women from employment would be an error, but that women should not be employed in occupations likely to injure their health; in particular they should not work to any great extent at night (*Kölnische Zeitung*, 26 Jan. 1937). Mrs. Scholtz-Klinck, head of all the German women's organisations, in an interview spoke against the tendency to consider certain occupations as exclusively feminine simply because they involved domestic or welfare work; women had long since proved their aptitude for office and commercial work, and teaching, medicine, and law offered wide fields for qualities which women possessed; by their occupational activities women made an indispensable contribution to the national life (*Die Frau am Werk*, Feb. 1937).

² The possibility was considered of transferring clothing factories and textile works with an inadequate supply of female labour to the mining and heavy industrial areas in which there were fewer openings for women workers, but the reports from the Rhineland Employment office, for instance, would seem to have shown that even in these areas any large reserve of female labour could no longer be expected (*Die Frau*, Oct. and Dec. 1938).

that the employment of married women had become necessary¹, and the authorities recommended it. It was also held that the discrimination against multiple earnings was no longer justified and that all married women, particularly those who had no children, should work at least temporarily, for instance, as substitutes for women workers during the holiday period, in order to maintain their occupational skill unimpaired.² The provisional re-engagement of former women elementary school teachers who were married or widowed was also authorised.³ As the Leader of the Women's Office of the Labour Front observed, the question was no longer that of determining which were the typically feminine employments, but rather that of deciding which were not specifically masculine so that women might be placed in them.⁴ In an appeal made by the Berlin authorities to the population of the city, with a view to the proper distribution of labour, it was stated that many men were engaged in work—as telephone operators, for instance—which women might well perform.⁵ Women were also increasingly engaged as salaried employees and professional workers. In the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Bochum, for instance, a request was made to engage more women in retail trade so that the men might be freed for other work⁶; and for the same reason the Labour Front recommended an increase in the employment of women in banks and insurance offices.⁷

Steps were taken at the same time, however, to ensure an adequate supply of labour for the so-called feminine occupations, which were also affected by the shortage. A voluntary women's service of assistance in social and hygiene work was set up in 1938⁸, and on 5 August the National Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance issued an appeal to housewives to engage girls who were leaving school or were liable to the

¹ *Völkischer Beobachter*, 22 Oct. 1938.

² *Der Angriff*, 16 and 17 Nov. 1938.

³ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 21 Feb. 1939.

⁴ *Berliner Tageblatt*, 8 Sept. 1938.

⁵ *Völkischer Beobachter*, 10 Dec. 1938.

⁶ *Ruhr und Rhein*, 30 Sept. 1938.

⁷ *Der Angriff*, 10 Dec. 1938.

⁸ An Act of 28 Sept. 1938, with three Orders for its administration issued on the same date, concerning the exercise of the occupation of male or female nurse and the establishment of schools for the training of such persons, fixed the age of admission to these schools at eighteen years and the period of training at eighteen months. It was also provided that in order to be able to engage freely in the occupation nurses must show that they had worked successfully for a year in an approved hospital establishment. (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 30 Sept. 1938).

year of compulsory labour, and to undertake to train them, with a view to the organisation of domestic apprenticeship.¹ By an Order of 23 December the year of compulsory labour, the application of which was at first limited to girls who wished to work at certain occupations, was extended to all girls seeking manual or non-manual employment in any public or private undertaking.² Instructions were moreover issued to the consular authorities that, save in exceptional cases, they should not renew at the end of the year the passports of German maidservants employed abroad, so making them return to Germany.³

Largely as a consequence of the coming into effect, in 1936, of the Four-Year Plan, and notwithstanding the persistent attempts to turn the flow of female labour into certain selected occupations, by 1938 there was a complete reversal of the earlier tendencies. A comparison of the results of the occupational census for 1933 and those of the investigations made by the National Institution for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance in June 1938 concerning persons required to hold work books showed that between 1933 and 1938 the increase was both relatively and absolutely greater among women than among men. The proportion of women workers (wage earners and salaried employees) rose from 30.9 per cent. (or 6,306,000) in 1933 to 32.8 per cent. (or 7,313,000) in 1938, while the corresponding figures for males were respectively 69.1 per cent. (or 14,128,000) and 67.2 per cent. (or 14,974,000).⁴ The fresh annual contingents of labour included 24.4 per cent. of females in 1936, 30.8 per cent. in 1937, and 44 per cent. in 1938. The increase in the employment of women was not only quantitative, but also qualitative, since it extended to branches of industry which had previously been almost entirely male, such as metallurgy, the paper industry, electricity, leather, furniture, etc. The employment of women also increased in commercial occupations, banking, and especially retail trade, and even in the liberal professions, in which there was a greater demand for women engineers, professors, doctors, chemists, and physicists.

ORGANISATION OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

The tendency to resort to the reserve of female labour in order to meet the increasing demand for workers was further accentuated in

¹ Domestic training was regulated on a uniform basis for the whole of Germany by an Order of 1 Feb. 1939 (*Deutsche Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung*, 20 Feb. 1939).

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Jan. 1939, Part I.

³ *Der Auslandsdeutsche*, Mar. 1939.

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Oct. 1938.

1939 and, more particularly, after the outbreak of war. The increase in the number of female workers during the first six months of that year was 579,000 (or 8.9 per cent.), while the corresponding figure for males was 516,000 (or 3.6 per cent.).

At the beginning of the war the total number of females over sixteen and under sixty years of age who were not in gainful employment, but who might be employed, was estimated at 5,000,000, and there were in addition, it was stated, 1,250,000 women workers employed on work not essential to the war effort.¹

The systematic organisation of the employment of women in order to absorb this reserve was not undertaken, however, until some months after the war had started; for the tendency to take more females into employment, following the commencement of hostilities, was to a certain extent counteracted by the fresh supplies of labour that were made available consequent upon the return to civil life of men who had been mobilised but released from military service, the utilisation of prisoners of war, the recruitment of Polish workers², and the slackening in certain branches of economic activity owing to the dislocation caused by the war.³ But with the intensification of the war and the preparation for new offensives, there was a growing demand for workers, and it became increasingly necessary to turn to women in order to overcome the shortage.

Until the spring of 1941, however, there was no need for further recruitment of female labour on a considerable scale, because of the occupation of large areas in the West and the large increase in the numbers of prisoners. On 4 May of that year the Führer, in an address to the Reichstag, made an appeal to the nation, and more particularly to the women, to sustain the fighting forces by adequate effort in respect of the production of essential supplies. "I believe",

¹ *Soziale Praxis*, 15 Sept. 1939.

² *Völkischer Beobachter*, 26 Sept. 1939.

³ The number of workers in search of employment in Germany (including Austria, Sudetenland, and the Memel Territory) rose from 73,905 (including 34,580 females) at the end of July 1939 to 128,000 (including 63,000 females) in Dec. 1939. The increase was due in part to seasonal factors; moreover, only 18,000 of the 128,000 unemployed (including some 6,000 women) were fit for employment. The textile, clothing, leather, and hotel industries and retail trades were particularly affected by the war.

Between the end of July and Dec. 1939, the number of unemployed females rose from 1,551 to 6,310 in the textile industry, and from 1,295 to 4,125 in the clothing industry. The number of females working short time was 128,085 and 21,249 in the textile and clothing industries respectively. The number of unemployed female salaried employees rose from 7,827 to 11,439 during the same period, and that of unemployed unskilled women workers from 10,009 to 17,107. These numbers, though not large, were significant in view of the general improvement in the employment situation in the other industries. (*Reichsarbbeitsblatt*, 25 Aug. 1939; 5 Jan. 1940).

he said, "that it is particularly the German girl and woman that can make a further contribution", adding that while large numbers of them had already replaced men who had been called up, and were engaged on agricultural, industrial, or clerical work, there were still hundreds of thousands who could come forward and reinforce the ranks of the workers. The appeal was followed by a similar statement by Dr. Syrup, State Secretary in the Ministry of Labour, who observed that there were millions of women who were not bound by household duties and who could undertake to work, especially if provision were made for the care of their children during the working hours.¹ In an article in the organ of the Ministry of Labour², reference was again made to the controversy on the desirability of the employment of women in occupations other than domestic service, agriculture, and welfare work, and it was pointed out that women, who were indispensable to the national economy, had already proved their worth, not less than 39 per cent. of the workers holding work books being females.

Various measures were adopted for the systematic organisation of the employment of women, such as the establishment of a system of priority calculated to bring into employment, in the first place, women dependent on their work for their maintenance; the organisation of part-time work; the relaxation of restrictions on, and the promotion of, the employment of women in the professions and in skilled trades; and the establishment of certain forms of compulsory labour service.

Priority in Respect of Engagement

An Order issued by the Minister of Labour on 29 September 1939³ provided that the increased demand for female labour in industries essential for the war effort (agriculture, metal-working, chemical industry, transport, health and welfare services) should be met primarily by the usual methods of placing and by the transference of workers, if necessary, from non-essential industries (textile, clothing, leather, and hotel industries and the retail trades), priority being accorded, in the first place, to women who had lost their jobs in private undertakings or public services as a consequence of the war and, secondly, to those who had not previously been in paid employment, or had only temporarily been in such employment. Precedence in respect of engagement was given to women who had to earn their

¹ *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, 10 and 25 May 1941.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 June 1941.

³ *Idem*, 5 Nov. 1939.

living, more particularly those with families to maintain, and the employment of women for work usually performed by men was permissible only if no suitable male labour was available for the purpose.¹ Domestic servants were not as a rule to be assigned for such work, but those working in households with children under fourteen years of age, in which their services were indispensable on account of the inability of the adult members to mind the children, were to be wholly excluded.²

Restrictions on Changes of Employment

An Order of 1 September 1939, issued by the National Defence Council which was set up on 30 August, imposed general restrictions on changes of employment.³ The application of this Order to domestic service was dealt with in an Order of 27 October. Under this latter Order, the employment offices, in dealing with applications for permission to engage a domestic worker, were required to take into account both the general condition of the employment market and the needs of households with children, especially in the case of large families. The permit had to be granted in certain cases, including the following: when the mistress of the household was pregnant, or unwell, or over fifty years of age, or in training for an essential occupation; when the household included persons requiring special attention; when the position of the head of the family in public life imposed on him duties which made the domestic work especially heavy. In all such cases permission to engage a domestic worker might be obtained, provided that no member of the family was able to do the work. A domestic worker employed by a household in one of the categories mentioned above might not be permitted to leave her job if no one could be found to replace her on account of the scarcity of labour.⁴ Later, however, when the labour shortage increased owing to the continued expansion of the production of war material, an attempt was made to divert some of the labour engaged in domestic service to occupations in which the need was more pressing. By an Order of 10 July 1941 the cases in which

¹ The classes of work for which women might not be employed even in time of war were enumerated in an Order of the Ministry of Labour of 5 Oct. 1938.

² Order of 27 Oct. 1939 (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Dec. 1939).

³ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 4 and 7 Sept. 1939; *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 8 Sept. 1939. Under the provisions of an Administrative Order of 6 Sept. 1939 it was not necessary for households with children under fourteen years to obtain permission from the employment office before engaging staff, unless the persons to be engaged were previously working in agriculture (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 7 Sept. 1939).

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Dec. 1939.

the employment offices were required to issue permits to householders wishing to engage domestic servants were further restricted, and provision was made for a review of the households employing more than one servant.¹

Employment of Women in the Professions and Skilled Trades

There were reports early in 1939 that women with university training, primary and secondary school teachers, doctors, chemists and physicists, were in demand², and their engagement for government service was facilitated by an Order of 1 September 1939 providing, among other things, that women civil servants were no longer to be dismissed on their marriage on the ground that their income was not indispensable for the maintenance of their families.³ A specialised employment office for the whole country for the placing of women holding a university diploma was also opened in Berlin on 1 October 1939.⁴ The Labour Front, it was reported, had under consideration steps for directing women more towards the engineering professions in order to replace men in building and construction offices (draughtsmen's work) and in light industry (scientific instrument making, small-scale engineering construction, manufacture of household utensils, etc.).⁵ Measures were, moreover, taken in order to send German women workers to the occupied parts of Poland incorporated with the Reich, for employment as assistants in the Red Cross services and in offices and commercial establishments.⁶ Subsequently authority was also given to appoint girls in the Labour Service with a secondary education as temporary assistants in primary schools and kindergarten schools in those parts of Poland, after a period of training in camps situated near the old eastern frontier.⁷ The employment in the same areas of female stenographers and clerical workers from Germany was also facilitated by a Circular of the Minister of Labour of 13 August 1940,

¹ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 14 July 1941.

² *Völkischer Beobachter*, 4 Jan. 1939. In Jan. 1939, for the first time since 1933, a woman was entrusted with a course of lectures at a university, in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Berlin (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 24 Feb. 1939). An appeal was also made later to women to replace men teachers, apothecaries, doctors, chemists, etc. engaged in the war (*Die Innere Front*, 21 and 25 Nov.; 7 and 12 Dec. 1939).

³ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 4 Sept. 1939.

⁴ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 7 Oct. 1939.

⁵ *Der Angriff*, 6 and 7 Apr. 1939.

⁶ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 16 Sept. 1939.

⁷ *Idem*, 5 Nov. 1939. A Circular of the Minister of Labour of 31 Aug. 1940 (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 31 Aug. 1940) exempted girls who had served for at least one year in kindergarten schools in Poland from compulsory labour service.

in which provision was made for permitting the necessary transfer in appropriate cases.¹ The Minister of Labour, in a Circular of 16 February 1940, moreover instructed the employment offices to invite the attention of women in search of employment to the shortage of welfare workers in various undertakings.²

Measures for the Distribution of Labour

A number of measures were adopted for the distribution of labour in accordance with the changing requirements of the situation. These measures, details of which are given below, may be considered under three main heads: those which were taken in order to enable the authorities to move labour from one industry or undertaking to another, and so to determine the composition of the employment market at each successive stage in the development of the general policy; those in virtue of which the authorities were empowered to requisition labour for dealing with specific tasks of comparatively short duration in special emergencies; and, finally, those primarily designed as an educational measure to provide manual training for young persons³, although employed later as a means of utilising them, where necessary, in one way or another in agricultural or industrial production. There were, in addition, other measures, in effect compulsory and affecting women, also concerned with the organisation of the employment market.

Under the National Defence Act of 21 May 1935, females, like males, might be called upon to perform work of national importance⁴, but the compulsory labour service introduced by the Order of 22 June 1938 for all German citizens was for limited periods only. It was subsequently extended by the Order of 13 February 1939 to all persons residing on German territory and it could be required of them for an indefinite period of time, the employment offices being empowered to compel undertakings to place part of their staff at the disposal of the authorities. The application of this Order was regulated by the Administrative Orders of the Minister of Labour of 2 March, 27 July, and 4 September 1939.⁵

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Sept. 1940.

² *Idem*, 15 Mar. 1940.

³ For an account of the aims and organisation of the year's compulsory labour service for girls, see Dr. Ilse RICHTER: "Das Pflichtjahr für Mädchen", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Sept. 1940.

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 June 1935. This provision, in a revised form, was contained in an Act of 9 Sept. 1939 (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 13 Sept. 1939).

⁵ For an account of the compulsory labour service measures, see *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLI, No. 6, June 1940, pp. 590-592; also INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Labour Supply and National Defence* (Studies and Reports, Series C, No. 23, Montreal, 1941), pp. 164-166.

An Order providing for emergency service was, in addition, issued by the Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan on 15 October 1938, the application of which was dealt with in an Order effective as from 26 August 1939.¹ Under this latter Order the liability to emergency service did not apply to persons under fifteen or over seventy years of age, mothers with children who were not in a position to engage in such service, childbearing women from the sixth month of pregnancy until two months after confinement, and persons unfit for employment. If any person was called upon to perform long-term service (service for more than three days), the employment office had to be notified, and its approval was determined with reference to the conditions in the employment market, and was withheld in the case of persons in certain occupations and, more particularly, in the health services, including midwives, nurses, laboratory assistants, nutrition experts, welfare workers, etc. The right of all persons affected by these provisions to revert eventually to their former employment was safeguarded.

Reference has already been made above to the organisation of a voluntary labour service for girls and to some of the steps taken to make the service compulsory during the period preceding the outbreak of the war.² The Labour Trustee issued an appeal on 3 September 1939 asking girls between seventeen and twenty-five years of age who were not in full-time employment or were not otherwise occupied (either because they were attending school, or were receiving training for an occupation, or were indispensable to their families for agricultural work) to enrol voluntarily for the Labour Service.³ An Order of 4 September 1939⁴ raised the membership of the Service from 40,000 to 100,000 and also empowered the National Work Leader to requisition girls in the category mentioned above, while another Order, of 5 September 1939⁵, required the young women who were due to terminate their service at the end of that month to continue it until further notice.

Under an Order of 21 September 1939⁶, laying down the rules for the application of the Order of 4 September, young women not belonging to the exempted classes already mentioned might be

¹ The Administrative Order was not issued by the Minister of the Interior until 15 Sept. 1939. For an account of the emergency service measures, see *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLI, No. 6, June 1940, pp. 593-594, and *Labour Supply and National Defence*, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

² See pp. 622-624.

³ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 4 Sept. 1939.

⁴ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 8 Sept. 1939; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Sept. 1939.

⁵ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 7 and 8 Sept. 1939.

⁶ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Oct. 1939; *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 21 Sept. 1939.

exempted from compulsory labour service for special reasons (for family or economic reasons or on the ground of the occupation or trade to which they belonged). Those who had worked as volunteers in agriculture for at least nine months between 1 July 1937 and 1 November 1939 were likewise to be exempted, provided that they had reached the age of sixteen when they took up such work, and also young women who had already completed their period of service.¹ Volunteers were to be allowed to serve as before, but girls in possession of a work book might enrol voluntarily only if the employment office concerned raised no objection. Coercive measures were to be applied by the police to young women who did not answer calling-up notices or knowingly made false statements.²

An Order of 25 September 1939³ especially provided that there would be a year of compulsory service for unemployed girls under twenty-five years of age during the war, as before.

¹ In 1940, by an Order of the Minister of Labour, German girls accepting employment in occupied Polish territory as shop assistants or in offices were also exempted from compulsory labour service (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1 May 1940).

² *Völkischer Beobachter*, 14 Oct. 1939. The first calling-up notice, issued at the same time as the Order, applied to young women born in 1920 and 1921. It was stated that 1,575 women's labour camps were already working in Oct. 1939, or double the number at the beginning of Sept. This number had risen to 1,800 by the end of the year, and it was to be increased further to over 2,000 by 1 Apr. 1940 (*Völkischer Beobachter*, 11 Oct. 1939). The number of centres for training national service leaders was also increased from 16 to 27 at the end of Dec. 1939 (*Völkischer Beobachter*, 12 Dec. 1939); and by two Orders of 11 and 12 Nov. 1939 (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 15 Nov. 1939) the status of the leaders was approximated to that of civil servants.

The system of disciplinary penalties for women members of the compulsory Labour Service was strengthened by regulations of 30 Jan. 1940, which, among other things, included penal sanctions. The penalties for acts of omission or commission tending to prejudice or compromise the honour of the community or the reputation of the Labour Service or its *esprit de corps*, or contrary to discipline in the Service, were the following: (1) reprimand; (2) severe reprimand; (3) open arrest in camp for not more than 30 days; (4) simple detention (which might take the form of imprisonment) for 1 to 42 days; (5) punitive detention (which might take the form of imprisonment in the local gaol) for from 1 to 90 days; (6) suspension from the Labour Service; (7) expulsion from the Service. The two last-named penalties might be imposed in addition to punitive detention. Any breach of discipline might be punished once only and by only one of the penalties mentioned above. In petty cases the penalty might be replaced by simple remonstrance, admonition or censure.

The regulations also contained detailed provisions in regard to the procedure to be followed. The accused person must be given an opportunity of proving her innocence and of lodging a complaint in regard to the execution of the penalty. In cases where simple or punitive detention could not be imposed in an institution of the Labour Service, the public prosecutor of the competent higher regional court might be asked to impose such detention. The accused woman, however, must be kept apart from other prisoners. In certain cases the procedure might be resumed even when it had legally terminated. (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 2 Feb. 1940).

³ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Oct. 1939.

Women studying law and the natural and applied sciences or training for journalism who had not completed more than three terms of their course of study were required at the end of the first term of the academic year 1940 to perform compulsory labour in factories. Students in philology volunteered for such service, and a weekly service of work in rural districts and in factories was also organised for medical students.¹

In an article² reviewing the first results of the introduction of a year of compulsory labour service for girls it was stated that, while in the period March-July 1938 the girls doing their year of service numbered 80,737, including about 47,000 engaged in domestic service and 30,400 in agriculture, in the same period in 1939 their total number had risen to 217,480, including some 90,000 doing agricultural work. The extension of compulsory labour service by the Order of 23 December 1938 to all girls desiring to take up paid employment had thus resulted, it was observed, in providing considerable assistance to householders and agriculturists who were in need of it. The article proceeded to remark, however, that the efforts made to induce girls to remain permanently in domestic service or agriculture had not yielded the expected results and that the girls seemed to have regarded their year of compulsory service as merely a transitional period, after which they would be entitled to preferential treatment when applying for employment in other occupations.³

By a Decree of 29 July 1941 the system of compulsory labour service was again extended. The strength of the service was increased from 100,000 to 130,000, provision being made for raising it further to 150,000.⁴ On the completion of the first six months of service, the girls were required to engage in the war effort for the remaining six months and replace men who had to be freed for other work. During this latter period, the girls would continue to work at the same places as before, board and lodging being provided for the different contingents placed under the supervision of the labour service organisations. They would, in addition, receive specified sums for pocket money and clothing, and would also be admitted to

¹ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9 Mar. 1940.

² *Das Junge Deutschland*, 5 Nov. 1939.

³ A Circular of the Minister of Labour of 14 Nov. 1940 prohibited girls from attending courses in commercial subjects during their term of compulsory labour service. Exceptions were allowed, however, in the case of those who had already been in a commercial school and intended to continue their studies on the completion of the service. (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 14 Nov. 1940).

⁴ According to an article by Dr. BEISIEGL, in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, quoted in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9 Oct. 1941, 800,000 young women have performed compulsory labour service since March 1939.

social insurance schemes. They would be assigned as a rule to offices, national defence services, public administrative services, and health and social services, but in certain cases they might be asked to do domestic work, especially for families with several children.¹

Women were affected also by another measure of general applicability, which, it was stated, was especially designed to secure the return to active practice of women doctors who had lately retired.²

The wives of mobilised men were, moreover, required to register with the employment offices if they had formerly been in employment, unless they were unable to take up paid work on account of their domestic duties or because they were no longer fit for employment.³

Arrangements for Training and Retraining

The arrangements for the training and retraining of girls and women were extended when hostilities began. A Decree of 25 September 1939 relating to vocational guidance provided that girls should preferably be employed in positions with facilities for training, whether in occupations essential to the war (agricultural and national defence industries) or in domestic service.⁴ An Order issued on 28 September 1939 by the Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan provided, among other things, that employers must undertake the retraining of women, and the need for this was further emphasised by the boards that were appointed to make investigations on the spot into the distribution of labour in the undertakings in order to ascertain the extent to which the Order had been applied.⁵ The employment offices were also directed to give information to the schools on the occupations for which labour was in demand, so that the necessary arrangements might be made for providing vocational guidance. The Minister of Education observed that it was important that pupils who were embarking on a career should have

¹ *Der Angriff*, 4 Aug. 1941.

² In virtue of a Circular of the Minister of the Interior of 2 Sept. 1939, the National Medical Chamber, membership of which was compulsory for all doctors of German nationality, issued instructions requiring, in effect, all medical practitioners to undertake any kind of medical work assigned to them by the medical authorities, more particularly in insurance medical practice, medical assistance under welfare institutions, and other services rendered in fulfilment of obligations assumed collectively by the medical profession. The doctors concerned included women doctors who had lately retired from practice, and medical practitioners with a private practice only who subsequent to the Circular might be required also to undertake insurance practice.

³ Orders of 11 July and 1 Sept. 1939, in application of the Act of 30 Mar. 1936; Ministerial Decrees of 25 Sept. and 24 Nov. 1939.

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Oct. 1939.

⁵ *Der Deutsche Volkswirt*, 9 Feb. 1940.

their attention directed to the more essential occupations in the emergency, and instructed the schools to adapt the vocational courses to the requirements of the employment market.¹

Numerous special retraining courses for women workers were instituted, but the women replacing male labour in the war industries received as a rule only a short period of training for semi-skilled jobs, more particularly in large-scale production. Training for skilled work was confined in the case of women to a small number, since their employment for such work was regarded as a temporary measure.² Wives of mobilised men were trained in handicrafts so that the men might be replaced³, and banks and insurance institutions organised special commercial training centres for former saleswomen to enable them to qualify themselves for clerical work.⁴

While no detailed reports have been published on the results of the measures taken in respect of training⁵, it has been stated that they led to the employment of more women and girls, although the proportion to the total labour force in the different industrial undertakings engaged in defence work ranged from 1 per cent. to 20 per cent.⁶ Milliners and saleswomen were successfully retrained for work in canning factories and electrical undertakings. The training was given in workshops, and in the larger undertakings special workshop schools were fitted up for the purpose. Not only did the women adapt themselves to their new work, but owing to their manual dexterity, their output was in some cases greater than that of men. Women chemists were frequently employed in positions of responsibility in the chemical, electrical, and textile industries.⁷ So far as skilled work in the war industries was concerned, it was stated in the course of meetings held in March 1940, under the auspices of the Engineering Union and the Economic Chamber of Berlin-Brandenburg, that only in a few exceptional cases did women have the necessary training and were found capable of replacing men. Generally the work had to be split up into a number of simple tasks

¹ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9 Oct. 1939.

² Cf. Dr. STUDDERS: "Die Anlernung von Ersatzkräften in der Kriegsindustrie", in *Arbeitsersatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, 25 Oct. and 10 Nov. 1939.

³ *Völkischer Beobachter*, 19 Oct. 1939.

⁴ *Der Angriff*, 21 Mar. and 3 Apr. 1940.

⁵ The decrease in the number of unskilled female workers by as much as 6.4 per cent. between July 1938 and July 1940 provides a measure of the extent to which women were trained. It shows that, during this period, the women who had received training were in excess of those who were newly taken into employment.

⁶ H. HILDEBRANDT: "Betriebseinhaber-Arbeitseinsatz", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Feb. 1940.

⁷ *Die Innere Front*, 12 Dec. 1939.

which women could do. But their employment was facilitated by the installation of new machinery and technical equipment, and women illustrators and fashion designers were found suitable for draughtsmanship in mechanical engineering.¹

Women volunteers, engaged for the most part in welfare work, or in providing assistance to neighbours or mothers, or in helping to gather in the harvest, numbered no less than 15 million in November 1939, according to the Head of the German Women's Organisations.²

Organisation of Part-Time Employment

Arrangements were made for the employment of women who, on account of their household duties, could only spare a part of their time for other work. Five-hour shifts were organised for such women in the iron and steel and metal industries.³ Married women were also employed for four and a half hours daily in the textile industry in München-Gladbach and Rheydt⁴; and in the summer of 1939 the railways in the Rhineland began employing women as conductors for four hours a day (on an average).⁵ Part-time employ-

¹ *Soziale Praxis*, 1 Apr. 1940; *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 6 Mar. 1940. Such meetings were also held in the following year, at which, among other things, it was stated that women from rural districts had been found capable of adapting themselves to industrial work (*Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 23 Feb. and 1 Mar. 1941). For an account of these meetings, see *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLIV, No. 1, July 1941, pp. 81 and 82.

² *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 15 Nov. 1939.

³ *Deutsche Arbeitskorrespondenz*, 24 Mar. and 2 Apr. 1939.

⁴ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 4 Aug. 1939.

⁵ *Ruhr und Rhein*, 7 July 1939, p. 619.

The organisation of the employment of women with household duties for half-day work was already under consideration before the last war (cf. Dr. Friedrich SCHOMERUS: "Halbtagschicht statt Ganztagschicht für verheiratete Fabrikarbeiterinnen", in *Sozialer Fortschritt*, No. 72, Leipzig, 1906), and during that war the introduction of such a system was recommended in a Decree of the Ministry of War of 14 Feb. 1917. It failed, however, to find general acceptance among employers, and not more than eleven undertakings would seem to have acted on the recommendation (cf. *Jahresberichte der Gewerbeaufsichtsbeamten und Bergbehörden für die Jahre 1914-18*, Vol. III, pp. 14-26). The question came up again for discussion during the depression (cf. Else LÜDERS: "Arbeitsstreckung durch Halbtagschichten für weibliche Arbeitnehmer", in *Soziale Praxis*, 12 Jan. 1933, pp. 49-54), but it was only latterly that systematic action was taken.

The authorities issued appeals from time to time to women who were not in gainful employment to engage in part-time work. In an appeal, issued late in the summer of 1939 by the National-Socialist Party to women staying at home to take care of the children of working women during working hours, it was pointed out that no less than one third of all the workers in Berlin were women, not including those who had replaced mobilised men. An appeal was also made by the Directorate of the Women's Organisations for an increase in the number of kindergartens and children's centres in rural areas, and also for an expansion of the social services concerned, so as to provide greater assistance to the wives of peasants and agricultural workers carrying

ment was also regarded as a means of reducing overtime by increasing the labour force. In a detailed account of the organisation of part-time work in an undertaking, it was stated that there were two shifts for the women: a morning shift from 6 a.m. to 11.24 a.m. on Monday to Friday and from 6 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. on Saturday; and an afternoon shift starting at 11.06 a.m. on Monday to Friday. The total weekly hours of work were fixed at $30\frac{3}{4}$ hours. The women alternated from the morning shift in one week to the afternoon shift in the following week. Only work that could be done at piece rates was allotted to part-time workers. The experience was found to be quite satisfactory, and the industrial inspectors were asked by the Minister of Labour to give special consideration to the question.¹ Early in 1941 it was particularly urged that, having regard to the importance of recruiting additional labour from among women, the undertakings should consider the possibility of extending the system of part-time employment.²

It has been stated, moreover, that owing to the shortage of clerical workers, the system of part-time employment has been widely resorted to in offices, but that, with a view to preventing the employment on a part-time basis of persons who can work full time, the employment offices place in part-time work only those who have not previously been in paid employment or have been unemployed for a long time.³

THE REGULATION OF WOMEN'S CONDITIONS OF WORK

Even at an early stage in the development of the employment policy of the National-Socialist régime it was urged, as has already been seen⁴, that the more appropriate course was not to eliminate

on the work of men who had been mobilised (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 5 Sept. 1939). A Help the Neighbours Movement was subsequently organised by the National Federation of Women's Organisations for the same purpose (*Idem*, 21 Sept. 1939). These appeals would seem to have had some effect; for it was reported that many women who had previously been in employment offered their services to the military authorities (*Der Angriff*, 25 Sept. 1939). In the spring of 1940 it was stated in the press that daily an increasing number of women were volunteering their services, and that the requirements of the situation had made it urgently necessary to employ a larger number of women workers (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 6 Apr. 1940); and the Ministry of Labour contemplated the possibility of the employment, if necessary by half-day shifts, of women who were unemployed or had never been in paid employment (*Idem*, 29 Mar. 1940).

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Oct. 1940.

² *Idem*, 15 Jan. 1941.

³ Cf. J. W. GOSSELK: "Betriebsschutz bei der Frauenarbeit", in *R. K. W. Nachrichten*, Apr. 1941.

⁴ See above p. 619, footnote 2, for the remarks of the Leader of the Labour Front.

women workers from employment but to restrict them to selected occupations. It was accordingly proposed to prohibit the employment of women on work for which they were not considered to be suited by nature and which might "imperil the fulfilment of their vocation as wives and mothers". Women workers, especially those who had already been engaged, remained, however, in industrial employment while this policy was being implemented, and the industrial inspectors were therefore asked to give special attention to the employment of women in industrial undertakings and to take the necessary steps to avoid their employment in unsuitable occupations.¹

Accordingly, the employment of women in quarries² was abolished and their employment in the canning³, bootmaking⁴, and clothing⁵ industries and in brickworks⁶ was made conditional on the provision of the necessary safeguards. When there was an expansion in the employment of women consequent upon the coming into effect of the Four-Year Plan, the press urged that steps should be taken to ensure that the rise in marriage and birth rates brought about by the National-Socialist policy would not be adversely affected.⁷ The Social Responsibility Office (*Amt für Soziale Selbstverantwortung*) of the Labour Front advised undertakings employing women to fit foot-rests, take special precautions against accidents, introduce additional breaks for persons employed on conveyor work, and provide nursing rooms and kindergartens⁸; and on 10

¹ *Ministerialblatt für Wirtschaft und Arbeit*, 26 July 1933.

² It was reported that there were only five women employed in quarries in the whole country in Nov. 1935; women had been employed in quarries previously despite the prohibition contained in the Industrial Code, but had been replaced (*Informationsdienst*, 8 Nov. 1935).

³ The inspectors were instructed that the employment of women in the canning industry at machines for the closing of tins weighing more than one kilogramme was to be prohibited, and that their employment at treadle machines for closing lighter tins was to be permitted only if the necessary facilities were provided for them to be seated while they worked (*Informationsdienst*, 16 Oct. 1935).

⁴ The Minister of Labour, in a Circular of 9 Jan. 1936 to the industrial inspectors, also required the provision of seats in the bootmaking industry in the case of women operating fast treadle machines (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Mar. 1936).

⁵ In a Circular issued by the Minister of Economic Affairs on 7 Nov. 1936, the inspection services were instructed to ensure that in the clothing industry (manufacture of uniforms, men's and women's clothing, and working clothes) the speed of conveyor work was not such as to cause overstrain, particularly for women (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Dec. 1936).

⁶ The attention of the industrial inspectors was especially drawn to breaches of the instructions prohibiting the employment of women on exhausting work, and they were asked to submit a report on the matter to the Minister of Labour (*Deutsche Arbeitskorrespondenz*, 31 Mar. 1936).

⁷ *Deutsche Arbeitskorrespondenz*, 19 Nov. 1938; *Germania*, 16 Dec. 1938.

⁸ *Deutsche Arbeitskorrespondenz*, 24 Jan. 1939.

October 1938 the Minister of Labour drew up guiding principles concerning the provision and arrangement of rest-rooms, dining rooms, lavatories, dressing rooms, etc.¹ A higher level of protection was moreover recommended in the case of married women.²

With the outbreak of war, various regulations were issued in order that exceptions might be allowed to the application of the legislation relating to conditions of work. By an Order of 1 September 1939 the competent authorities were empowered to suspend the provisions for the protection of women workers relating to prohibited occupations, hours of work, breaks, night work, and leave of absence before and after childbirth; in addition, under the War Economy Order of 4 September 1939³, exceptions might be made to the application of labour protection provisions in general. The exceptions allowed in respect of the hours of work of women and young persons were set out in the Instructions issued by the Minister of Labour on 11 September 1939, but the industrial inspection offices were authorised to extend their scope in particular cases, or to restrict it if they deemed such action necessary for the protection of women workers.⁴ An Order of 12 December 1939⁵, however, restricted the exceptions, and the preamble to the Order observed that, since the traditional period of adaptation to new conditions had passed, the protection of women workers had again to be intensified. The application of the Order was dealt with in the Administrative Orders of 12 December 1939⁶ and 11 March 1940⁷, and in a Circular of the Ministry of Economic Affairs of 26 January 1940⁸ relating to the employment of women in mines. A brief summary of the provisions is given below.

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Oct. 1938.

² *Völkischer Beobachter*, 22 Oct. 1938. It was stated that nearly one third of all female workers were married women and that most of the latter had children.

In an article by J. W. GOSSELK (*loc. cit.*), it was stated that enquiries had shown that women newly engaged in industry were particularly liable to accidents, and that heads of undertakings had been asked to provide adequate safeguards (wearing of protective caps in workshops with unguarded revolving machine parts; wearing of goggles against the risk of injury from flying particles in grinding work; proper ventilation; installation of running water and provision of clean, dry towels and lanoline or other ointment for the skin, and disinfection of wash rooms, in order to safeguard the health of women employed in spray painting and varnishing). It was also stated that the particular types of work for which women workers were to be trained were determined in accordance with the results of a vocational test given by the medical officer of the plant, and that training was given in special workshops.

³ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Sept. 1939.

⁴ *Der Angriff*, 15 Sept. 1939.

⁵ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Dec. 1939.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Idem*, 15 Mar. 1940.

⁸ *Idem*, 25 Feb. 1940.

Hours of Work

Under the Order of 1 September 1939 and the Instructions for its application issued on 11 September, women might be employed in an emergency for 10 hours a day and 56 hours a week. Pregnant women during the last three months of pregnancy and nursing mothers were excluded from the application of this provision, in addition to women engaged in occupations injurious to health, which were covered by special regulations. The Order of 12 December 1939 and the Administrative Order of the same date for its application provided that the extension of working hours up to 10 hours a day was to be resorted to only in cases of important munitions orders, urgent export orders, or work essential for the nation's food supply, and only if the additional labour required was not available. Women might be employed for more than 10 hours a day only in exceptional circumstances, a special permit being required for the purpose. The inspection authorities were empowered to issue such permits for periods of not more than three weeks, but for longer periods it was necessary to obtain the approval of the Ministry of Labour.

In the case of married women, and especially of mothers of families, the inspection authorities might order a reduction of hours of work on certain days of the week to enable them to attend to household work, obtain ration cards, and do their shopping. Some such adjustment had apparently become necessary on account of the rapid increase in absenteeism; and the suggestion was also made that married women should be allowed one day's holiday every fortnight.

Commenting on the Order of 12 December 1939, the Minister of Labour observed that the fixing of a limit of 10 hours for the daily hours of work in no way affected the principle that the normal hours should not exceed an average of 8 without special reason. The new provision meant merely that indispensable overtime might be worked, within the limits laid down, without special authorisation, for example, when it was necessary to expedite the completion of essential war work. But it would be contrary to the intention and object of the Order to have overtime also worked in cases where it could be avoided by taking on additional labour or by other means. Above all, the extension of hours must not result in undue exploitation of labour. On the contrary, the head of the undertaking must, as in the past, see to the welfare of his employees. He must carefully consider in each separate case to what extent he could order overtime without endangering the health and working capacity

of the staff, and without diminishing their joy in work and, in the end, their output. If necessary, the inspection authorities might order a reduction of hours of work.¹

The Administrative Order of 11 March 1940 set out the general lines laid down by the Minister of Labour for the guidance of the inspection officials in dealing with applications for exceptions to the regulations relating to women's normal hours of work and employment at night. The Order stated that so far as possible overtime and night work should not be required of women under twenty-one years, especially in the case of prolonged or arduous work, women unfit for such employment, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and mothers with children under fourteen years. Reasoned refusal on the part of women to work at night was not to entail dismissal or other disadvantages for them. Shifts were to change places every week. The permits were to be limited to a period of three to six months. The employment of women in day shifts of more than 10 hours, or in alternate day and night shifts of 10 hours or over, might be permitted only for a short transition period to allow the employer to reorganise the work in a different way. Consultation with the employment offices was required prior to the granting of permits, in order to ascertain whether and how far exceptions might be avoided or terminated by the engagement or retraining of other workers, and in a Circular of the Ministry of Labour of 5 April 1940² the need for close collaboration between the placing and inspection authorities was particularly emphasised.

As to the employment of women in mines, a Circular of the Minister of Economic Affairs of 26 January 1940³ stated that, if the provisions relating to the protection of women workers had been suspended wholly or in part in certain undertakings in virtue of the Order of 1 September 1939 (apart from any exceptions under the Orders of 11 September and 12 December 1939), the Minister could only grant a temporary extension of the exceptions, should that be justified by special circumstances or on account of shortage of labour. The practice, followed in certain undertakings, of extending the hours of underground shifts to 10 in the day and those of surface shifts to 12, including 10 to 11 hours of actual work, could not be permitted. The mining authorities were instructed to ensure that women were exempted from overtime and that the protective provisions in force were applied to them in their entirety.

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Dec. 1939.

² *Idem*, 15 Apr. 1940.

³ *Idem*, 25 Feb. 1940.

By Instructions of 28 March 1941, issued by the Office of Mines, the employment of women was prohibited on certain types of work, including underground work and the manufacture of coke. The employment of girls under eighteen years of age was also prohibited, and females could be employed on work requiring considerable physical effort, such as loading or transport work, only with the previous approval of the Office of Mines. Hours of work were fixed at $8\frac{3}{4}$ per day, and shifts had to be changed weekly.¹

The restrictions on exceptions to the normal hours of work regulations did not apply, however, to women employed in health services, in whose case the provisions of the Act of 13 February 1924 limiting their daily hours of work to 10 and weekly hours to 60 might be suspended in virtue of the Order of 11 September 1939.

Rest Periods and Holidays

Under the Instructions issued by the Minister of Labour on 11 September 1939, the *breaks during the working day* might be shortened, in order to avoid its undue prolongation, by the abolition of the 20-minute breaks in spells of $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 hours of work and the provision of a half-hour break in a working day of 6 to 9 hours (in place of the half-hour break in a working day of 6 to 8 hours and of the three-quarter-hour break in that of 8 to 9 hours), but the one-hour break in a working day of over 9 hours was to be retained. This regulation, however, was to be enforced only if the work was not essentially of an intermittent nature providing sufficient breaks for rest in the course of its execution. The regulations of 12 December 1939 provided that the breaks might not be shortened if the work required considerable physical effort or was performed in difficult conditions, even if it involved frequent interruptions.

The regulations relating to the *weekly rest*, prohibiting the extension of the daily hours of work to over 8 hours on Saturdays and on the eve of public holidays, might also be suspended, and the hours of work extended up to 10 hours, under the Order of 11 March 1940.

The right to *annual holidays*, which was suspended on the outbreak of war in respect of both sexes, was subsequently restored. Special regulations were issued, however, so far as holidays for the wives of men serving in the armed forces were concerned. In an Order of the Minister of Labour of 26 February 1940² it was stated that employers should consider themselves in honour bound to meet the requests of women employees for leave of absence in

¹ *Idem*, 5 Aug. 1941.

² *Idem*, 5 Mar. 1940.

order to be with their husbands returning from the front after a prolonged absence. Such leave should be deducted from the annual holiday by arrangement between the employer and the worker. If leave with pay could not be granted to the women in such circumstances, they should at least be allowed to absent themselves from work, and they might then claim an increase in the allowance to which they would be entitled as wives of mobilised men, in compensation for their loss of wages. Similar facilities for women in the public services were provided for by an Order of the Minister of Labour of 27 July 1940.¹

The provisions of the Act of 16 July 1927 concerning the right of women in employment to leave of absence before and after childbirth could be suspended under the Order of 1 September 1939 and the Instructions of the Minister of Labour of 11 September 1939, but the Order of 12 December 1939 prohibited such exceptions.

Night Work

While the Minister of Labour's Instructions of 11 September 1939 maintained in principle the prohibition of night work for women, it authorised their employment in regular alternating shifts from 5 a.m. to 12 p.m. (the normal limits being 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.).² Such exceptions might be continued under the Order of 12 December, but they were limited to exceptional cases.³ A special permit was moreover required for the exceptions, being given by the inspection officials in cases in which the exception was limited to a period of not more than three weeks and by the Minister of Labour in all other cases. Before authorising the exceptions, however, the authorities were required to consider whether establishments working two shifts could not introduce a third night shift on which women were not employed.

Employment in Occupations Injurious to Health

The provisions of the Order of 1 September 1939 which permitted suspension of the regulations relating to the prohibition of

¹ *Idem*, 5 Sept. 1940.

² The Leader of the Labour Front, in an address to the workers on 20 Nov. 1939, observed, however, that women should not as a rule be employed on night work and that the indispensable exceptions, for example for the production of munitions, would require the previous approval of the Minister of Labour (*Der Angriff*, 20 Nov. 1939).

³ The strain would seem to have been excessive, however, since there was an increase in absenteeism: 50 per cent. in the case of married women, and as much as 80 per cent. in the night of Saturday-Sunday (cf. J. W. GOSSELK, *loc. cit.*).

the employment of women on work injurious to health or involving considerable physical strain do not appear to have been applied. It may be recalled in this connection that reference was made in the Order of 23 September 1939 on the employment of women during the war to the Instructions issued by the Minister of Labour on 5 October 1938 to prohibit their employment in occupations which might be prejudicial to their health.¹ In cases of doubt the industrial inspection offices were to be consulted and, if necessary, also the medical officers.

In a Decree of the Minister of Labour of 11 January 1941 attention was again drawn to the prohibition of the employment of women on work calculated to prejudice their health. The Decree also laid down that exceptions should be granted only in individual cases and for special reasons, and then only on condition that the woman concerned was properly protected against risks to her health. The employment of pregnant women on work normally prohibited for women might in no circumstances be permitted.² In particular, exceptions might in no case be allowed with regard to the employment of women on transporting materials in any kind of building work, or on clearing, excavation, and transport work or preparatory work in china-clay pits and stone quarries. The same applied to clearing work and the excavation, loading, transportation, and preparation of raw materials in sand and clay pits. The industrial inspection offices were empowered to issue the necessary instructions and the employment offices were instructed not to supply women for the kinds of work specified in the Order.³

Moreover, in the course of the Berlin-Brandenburg meetings held in 1941, to which reference has already been made⁴, various doctors employed in factories pointed out that work which demanded constant physical effort, such as particularly heavy lifting, should not be assigned to women. The limit for lifting and carrying was generally fixed at 15 kilogrammes. Should any job require the continual use of tools, their weight should be examined and taken into

¹ It was urged that "the source of the life of the nation" should not be exposed to risks, that women should not be employed on work injurious to their health which might interfere with their normal function of motherhood.

² In the chemical industry in the Sudetenland, the collective rules made special provision that pregnant women should be assigned, where necessary, to work not involving undue exertion, without any diminution of wages, and that they should be accorded special leave for six weeks before and six weeks after the birth of the child. During this period, provided that they had worked in the industry for not less than one year, they were to be paid at a rate of not less than 90 per cent. of their average wage for the preceding three months. (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 20 Dec. 1940).

³ *Der Deutsche Volkswirt*, 7 Feb. 1941.

⁴ See above, p. 638.

account before employing women on it. A drill gauge, for instance, which had to be lifted 1,000 to 1,500 times a day by a woman in a seated position should weigh less than 5 kilogrammes. Much actual foundry work was men's work, demanding excessive physical effort so far as women were concerned. But core making, which was an essential part of foundry work, could be performed by women and offered a wide opportunity for the replacement of men by women in wartime, on condition that account was taken of the weight of the cores and the capacity of the women workers. Women should not, as a rule, be employed in pattern-makers' shops and in pattern-smiths' shops or as crane conductors. Their health would be affected by the smoke, and the complete concentration necessary for the handling of pans filled with liquid iron could not be expected of them.¹

Wages

In an Order of 25 January 1939² the Minister of Labour dealt specifically with the problem of women's wages and stated that it had not yet been possible to apply the—in itself—fair principle of equal wages for equal work, owing to the effects which an increase in women's wages would undoubtedly have on the price level. Moreover, in the metal working industry an increase in women's wages up to the very high level of men's wages would have undesirable psychological repercussions among certain groups of less well-paid workers (male workers in other industries and women employed at light work in the metal working industry).

Measures would seem to have been adopted in various districts to restrict the remuneration of women salaried employees. In the Brandenburg district, for example, on taking up a new post no rise in salary was permissible until after six months in the case of women stenographers, typists and secretaries, and, subsequently, of all salaried employees in commerce and offices who had been earning over 120 RM. a month for at least one year. There was a similar restriction in the Hesse district. These measures were intended to prevent employers who were affected by the scarcity of female staff from enticing other persons' employees by offering them higher salaries.³

The War Economy Order of 4 September 1939 required the labour trustees, acting on the instructions of the Minister of Labour,

¹ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 23 Feb. and 1 Mar. 1941.

² *Arbeitsrechts-Kartei*, 9 Feb. 1939.

³ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 30 June and 24 July 1939.

to adjust earnings immediately to war conditions by fixing binding maximum limits for wages, salaries, and other conditions of employment. In new or transformed undertakings or services, and in the case of workers and salaried employees who changed their occupation, the rates of wages and salaries were to be the same as those in force for similar establishments or occupations. This policy, it was stated in the press, was intended to bring about a reduction in wages, which in certain cases had risen unduly owing to the labour shortage, and to maintain the rates that were justified by output.¹

Early in 1940 a communication to the press from the Ministry of Labour on the subject of women's wages stated that in cases in which collective rules fixed the rates of wages for women or explicitly provided that their wages should be the same as those for men, there was no cause for doubt. Where no such provision had been made, account had to be taken of the fact that in the past the remuneration of women had as a rule been lower than that of men. Except in special cases, that principle had to be maintained, especially in view of the measures that had already been taken in order to prevent an increase in wages. Should there be any doubt in respect of individual cases, the competent labour trustee might be consulted, who would fix the rates of payment for women. It was also observed that in occupations in which women were employed already before the war their wages were as a rule from 10 to 40 per cent. lower than those of men. A reduction of 25 per cent. as compared with men's wages might therefore be regarded as normal in the occupations in which women had been newly engaged since the outbreak of war.²

With the intensification of the war and the consequent shortage of labour, however, the wages of women workers would seem to have risen very considerably in some cases, such as domestic service, for example. In an Order of 28 June 1941, the Labour Trustee for the Brandenburg district fixed maximum wages for domestic servants—housekeepers, cooks, and laundrywomen—with a view to preventing any further rise, observing that in comparison with other similar occupations the remuneration was already very high.³

Reference may also be made in this connection to a measure apparently intended to encourage domestic workers to remain in their occupation, without implying a direct rise in their wages. An Order of the Ministry of Labour of 12 May 1941 provided for the grant of

¹ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 7 Sept. 1939; *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 8 Sept. 1939.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Mar. 1940.

³ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 8 July 1941; *Soziale Praxis*, 15 July 1941.

outfits to female domestic servants employed in households with large families, the administration of the Order being dealt with in an Order of 10 July. Under these Orders, domestic servants engaged in households with not less than three children under fourteen years of age were entitled to the payment of a sum, ranging from 600 to 1,500 RM. according to length of service, for the purchase of an outfit when they married or set up an independent establishment. The minimum period of service qualifying for a grant was fixed at four years, and the maximum amount was payable only after ten years of service. The payment was to be made from the public funds through the Ministry of Labour, either on marriage or on the attainment of the age of thirty years.¹

In the ceramic industry the collective rules provided that women engaged for work previously done by men should be paid at the same rates as those in force for the latter.² Collective rules for the printing and paper industries fixed the rates for women replacing men at 75 per cent. to 85 per cent. of the men's wages, according to the duration of the training that the women had received and the type of work they performed.³ Instructions, dated 28 March 1941, were issued by the Office of Mines fixing the rates of wages for women at 80 per cent. of those for men, provision being made for equal rates in certain cases.⁴

Special Welfare Measures

As has already been observed, the National-Socialist Party has from the outset taken the view that, in the interests of the community, women should not be exposed to risks that might be prejudicial to their health. Moreover, without the provision of special facilities, it was difficult in practice to expand the employment of women in industry and, more particularly, that of married women. Various measures were taken, therefore, to promote the welfare of women workers. The Order of 29 September 1939⁵, for instance, required the employment offices, before placing women with children or other dependants in employment, to ensure in collaboration with the social services of the National-Socialist Party and the Federation of Women's Organisations that the dependants would be pro-

¹ *Soziale Praxis*, 15 July 1941; see also Special Instructions of 16 July 1941 issued by the Minister of Labour (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Aug. 1941); and Dr. TIMM: "Die Neuordnung der hauswirtschaftlichen Arbeitseinsatz", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 July 1941.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 5 Jan. 1941.

³ *Idem*, 15 Aug. 1940.

⁴ *Idem*, 5 Aug. 1941.

⁵ See above, p. 631.

perly taken care of during the absence of the women from their homes. The Help the Neighbours Movement and similar organisations¹ particularly aimed at securing volunteers to help working women with their household work, including the daily purchases of rationed supplies, and to mind children or sick persons. Kindergartens and children's centres, established by the welfare institutions of the Party, increased in number from 12,000 to 15,000 between 1 August and the end of September 1939.

Soon after the outbreak of war the Labour Front was instructed by its Leader, Dr. Ley, to continue its canteens and kindergartens in factories and encourage their extension, and to associate closely with the welfare institutions of the Party, the National-Socialist Women's Union, the public authorities, and industry in promoting welfare work.² A direct appeal was made in October 1939 by the Labour Front to the undertakings themselves to provide crèches, kindergartens, and similar facilities on or near their own premises.³ The Minister of Labour, moreover, in his Order of 11 March 1940⁴ directed the authorities responsible for issuing permits for the employment of women for over 10 hours a day and on night shifts, to require the employers to provide facilities at the workplace for warming up food which the workers might have brought with them, or even to have a hot meal served, especially to persons working at night. Women welfare workers in industry numbered about 1,200 in October 1939⁵; and this number had already been raised to 5,000 in the latter part of 1940, with 2,000 more in training, according to a statement made by the Head of the Women's Organisations.⁶

Women with family responsibilities were assured of retaining the services of domestic servants, as has already been seen, by the Order of 27 October 1939⁷, which prohibited the employment offices from granting permits to change their employment to domestic servants in households where their services were indispensable; and the Order of 12 December⁸ of that year enabled the hours of work

¹ See above, p. 639, footnote 5.

² *Der Angriff*, 14 Sept. 1939.

³ *Bauen, Siedeln, Wohnen*, Oct. 1939.

⁴ See above, p. 644.

⁵ *Der Angriff*, 17 Oct. 1939. It may be recalled that the Women's Department of the Labour Front issued regulations concerning the training of women for welfare work in industry and made arrangements for providing such training in 1934. When war broke out the demand for the services of such workers increased considerably and the training facilities were extended (see p. 620, footnote 1).

⁶ *Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitslosenhilfe*, 10/25 May 1941.

⁷ See above, p. 631.

⁸ See above, p. 643.

of married women, and more particularly of mothers of families, to be adjusted so that they might be free to attend to their household requirements. Peasant women whose husbands had been mobilised were likewise assisted, the importance of this form of social service being emphasised by the Head of the Women's Organisations.¹ The organisation of part-time employment² was also calculated to utilise for the war effort the services of women who had to devote some of their time to the care of their own homes. Reference may also be made in this connection to a comprehensive system of staggering the daily time-table over a period of 2½ hours, introduced by the larger undertakings with a view to sparing the workers the strain of travelling to the workplace in overcrowded trams and buses.

Suitable residential centres were organised by the Labour Front, and by some undertakings, for young girls working for war industries situated away from their own homes.³ Reception centres, organised by the employment offices or the Labour Front, had in any case to be provided for such workers.

CONCLUSION

In Germany, since the advent of the National-Socialist régime, employment policy so far as female labour is concerned has always been determined, on the one hand, by the continued expansion of the demand for labour caused by the general economic policy of the Government, and on the other hand, by the National-Socialist theory of woman's function in the community and place in the employment market. So long as the opportunities for employment proved insufficient to satisfy all applicants for work, the Government's aim was to give men the first chance of reabsorption in employment, by eliminating women from occupations regarded as specifically masculine and promoting their engagement only in those occupations which corresponded to the position in the community and in the national economy accorded to them in the National-Socialist scheme.

The expansion of employment from 1933 to 1936 was, in consequence, far less rapid for females than for males; the proportion of females to the total number of persons in employment fell from 37.3 per cent. to 31.8 per cent., and this relative decline was accompanied by systematic action to confine female labour to agriculture and domestic service. Since 1936, owing to the increasing demand

¹ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 12 Sept. 1939.

² See above, p. 639.

³ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 12 Jan. 1940.

for labour for the execution of the Four-Year Plan, the employment of females has had to be resorted to in larger measure, in the first place in order to reinforce male labour, and subsequently, when mobilisation for the armed forces began in 1939, to replace it. The index number for the employment of females, calculated on the basis of the average for 1932, rose from 118.7 in 1936 to 135.9 in 1938 and 154.0 in 1940.¹ During this period the proportion of females to the total number of persons in gainful occupations increased from 31.8 per cent. in the middle of 1935 to 32.8 per cent. in 1938 and 39.0 per cent. in 1940. Since then recourse has been had in continually increasing measure to the employment of prisoners of war, and of workers of either sex recruited in the occupied countries or countries politically linked to the Reich, thus relieving the employment situation to a considerable extent; and it was only in the spring of 1941, when fresh contingents of men had to be called up in preparation for the forthcoming military operations, that the campaign was renewed, on a more extensive scale, for the recruitment of female labour, and more particularly of married women. No statistical information on the results of this campaign is yet available, but the general lines on which it was to have been conducted are known, and the presumption would seem to be justified that, if the results were known, they would hardly affect the conclusions that can be drawn from the figures for 1940, which are available and are given in the Appendix.²

The first conclusion suggested by these figures is that from the middle of 1938, when the systematic mobilisation of female labour began, to the middle of 1940, such labour was recruited mainly from among women aged over thirty-five years, and that the higher the age, the larger, as a rule, was the percentage increase in the number of new recruits. This increase amounted to nearly 25 per cent. in the age group 35-44 years and to 44 per cent. for persons of 45 years or over. The situation is very different in respect of the age groups 21-24 years and 25-34 years, that is to say, the ages at which women usually marry and have young children. If the small number of recruits from the first of these two latter age groups can be ascribed to essentially demographic reasons, it is not the less noteworthy that neither of them was drawn upon to any considerable extent for the purpose of furnishing the supplementary contingents of labour of which the national economy stood in need.

The second conclusion suggested by the available figures is that preoccupation with the overriding needs of national defence has led

¹ See Appendix, p. 657, figure 1.

² See below, p. 656-659.

to certain changes in the occupational distribution of female labour. The number of females in employment increased during the period under review by 59.1 per cent. in the metal working industry, 67 per cent. in the chemical industry, and 51.1 per cent. in the transport industry. But it should be noted that there was no diminution on this account in the concentration of female labour in occupations regarded as essentially feminine; on the contrary, this was intensified. While the percentage increase in the latter occupations (14.3 per cent. in agriculture and 7 per cent. in domestic service) was lower than in the metal working and chemical industries, the absolute figures were higher (increases of 122,600 in agriculture and 168,900 in domestic service, as against 113,700 in metal working and 29,700 in the chemical industry) and reflect the persistence of the National-Socialist policy with respect to the employment of female labour. In July 1940 about 40 per cent. of the total number of females in gainful occupations were engaged in agriculture and domestic service. Another important group (20.9 per cent.) consisted of employes in commerce, offices, and public services; the increase in this group in the last two years amounted to 21.5 per cent., or nearly 400,000 persons. The increases in the other occupations in which females had in part replaced males are much less important when the absolute figures are considered.

While it is possible, by an examination of the occupational distribution of females during the period 1938-1940, to ascertain the more lasting changes in the character of female labour, such an analysis throws no light on the temporary shifts resulting from the transfer of persons belonging to one occupation to a different occupation for a short period. In July 1940, 8.4 per cent. of females in the skilled or specialised trades were in fact employed in a trade totally different from their own. The proportion was highest—over 15 per cent.—for those belonging to chocolate and sweet factories and canning factories and for maidservants and waitresses in hotels and restaurants. It was 10-15 per cent. in the textile, paper, leather, wood, clothing, and printing industries and for shop assistants. For domestic servants, the proportion was 11.5 per cent. A large number of the women workers transferred to occupations other than their own were engaged in the munitions industries and in agriculture. No less than 100,000 women workers engaged in the metal working industries had been drawn from other skilled or specialised trades, the corresponding figure for the chemical industry being over 30,000, and for agriculture 50,000. It would thus appear that the employment of females on defence production was facilitated by temporary

emergency measures which, because they had no permanent influence on occupational distribution, did not undermine the official long-term employment policy.

Since 1938 the authorities had the necessary coercive powers to enforce such a regulated employment policy. So far as female workers are concerned, it is, however, the avowed policy of the authorities to make use of these powers only to a limited extent. From the middle of 1938 to the middle of 1940, the employment offices called up 450,000 females for compulsory labour service as against 1,400,000 males.¹ In most cases the period of service was short, so that in the middle of 1940 the number of females in employment in virtue of a calling-up notice was 113,000.² They belonged for the most part (96,000) to skilled or specialised trades, and in 65,000 cases calling-up resulted in their changing to a trade other than their own, most often in the metal working industry (38,000) and the chemical industry (14,000). Compulsory transfer of female workers to jobs away from their place of residence was avoided as far as possible; it was estimated that the number so transferred was 19,000.³

The dual influence of the needs of production and of the National-Socialist attitude to the employment of women may be traced in the regulation of conditions of work as in the employment policy. At first, when hostilities began, the pressure of the former needs led to a general relaxation of the protective regulations; but concern for the welfare of women as workers and as mothers caused the authorities to retrace their steps after a few months and restore such of the restrictions as were dictated alike by the long-term needs of production and by considerations of the future of the nation. Moreover, the recruitment of female labour on an extensive scale from sources other than those from which it was ordinarily obtained, and the employment of females on work for which until then only men had been engaged, necessitated a great many safeguards to prevent women from being engaged for work unsuited to their physique. It was necessary, in particular, to ascertain the types of work on which they could be employed without prejudice to their health, or which could be made suitable for them by an appropriate adjustment of the processes and tools or by adequate subdivision. In

¹ Statement by Dr. Syrup (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 29 Oct. 1940).

² A year later this figure had risen to 174,000 (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9 Oct. 1941). It may be recalled that the number of women called up for essential work under the general compulsory labour service scheme does not include the young women covered by the special system of labour service for young persons.

³ Dr. SCHARLAU: "Der Arbeitseinsatz der Frauen im Kriege", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Feb. 1941.

addition to these difficulties of organisation, there were others of a personal character where married women were concerned, due to their responsibilities as housewives and mothers. The need for overcoming these difficulties led to special arrangements of hours of work and holidays, and to a considerable extension of the social services, particularly in the shape of crèches and nurseries, making it easier for married women to perform their duties or relieving them of their responsibilities. Up to the middle of 1940 these measures did not, however, lead to substantial results, so far as the younger married women were concerned, as will be seen from the fact that there was no appreciable increase from 1938 to 1940 in the number of women of twenty-one to thirty-five years in gainful occupations.

It is obviously too soon to consider the problems that the expansion in the volume of employment and the occupational redistribution of labour in Germany, consequent upon the war, may give rise to in the future. As has already been stated, the recourse to the employment of prisoners of war and of foreign workers has made it possible, since July 1940, to avoid a further extension of the employment of women workers, and there is as yet no precise information on the results of the recruiting campaign begun in the spring of 1941. But from the changes that have taken place during the period 1938-1940, it may even now be concluded that the urgent requirements of the war have not had the effect of relegating to the background the fixed policy of the National-Socialist régime, which is inspired by its theory of the social function of women and their place in the employment market. The influence of this theory continues to be felt in the manner in which the employment of women has been regulated, and it is to be expected that the theory will be applied in all its rigour when, in accordance with the Order of 1 September 1939, demobilisation of the armed forces automatically puts an end to the employment of female workers who have been engaged in order to replace men called to the colours.

APPENDIX

The following supplementary statistical information may be found useful in forming an estimate of the variations in the employment of females in Germany under the National-Socialist régime.

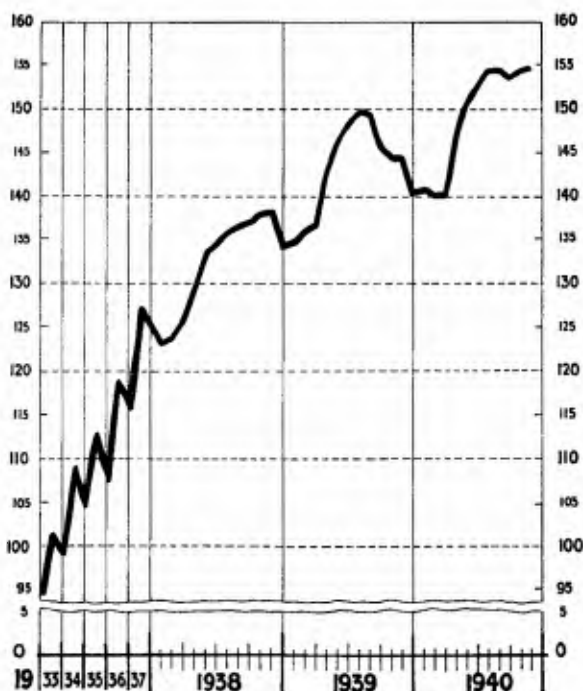
An article on "Women's Work in the War"¹ by Dr. Scharlau, Ministerial Councillor, based partly on the returns of the sickness funds but mainly on the results of two censuses of persons holding work books, which were carried

¹ Dr. SCHARLAU: "Der Arbeitseinsatz der Frauen in Kriege", in *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 15 Feb. 1941, Part V, pp. 85-93.

out by the employment offices on 25 June 1938 and 5 July 1940, includes two graphs, one showing the changes in the employment of females in Germany proper during the period 1933-1940, which is reproduced in figure 1, and the other the proportions of males and females in the total number of wage earners and salaried employees in different occupations in 1940, reproduced in figure 2. Tables I and II, also compiled from information contained in the same article, show the age distribution and the occupational distribution, respectively, of females in employment in 1940 as compared with 1938. According to the census made by the employment offices on 25 June 1938, the number of persons in possession of a work book at that date was 22,287,084 (or 33.8 per cent. of the total population), as against 20,708,454 in 1933.¹

A comparison of the numbers of male and female workers in each year during the period 1933-1940 is given in table III.²

FIGURE 1 INDEX OF THE VOLUME OF EMPLOYMENT OF FEMALES (WAGE EARNERS AND SALARIED EMPLOYEES) IN GERMANY PROPER FROM 1933 TO 1940¹ ACCORDING TO THE RETURNS OF SICKNESS FUNDS
(Base: 1932 average = 100)



¹ Half-yearly index from 1933 to 1937, monthly from 1938 to 1940.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, 25 Oct. 1938.

³ *Idem*, 5 Mar. 1939; *Wirtschaft und Statistik*, 1941, No. 5.

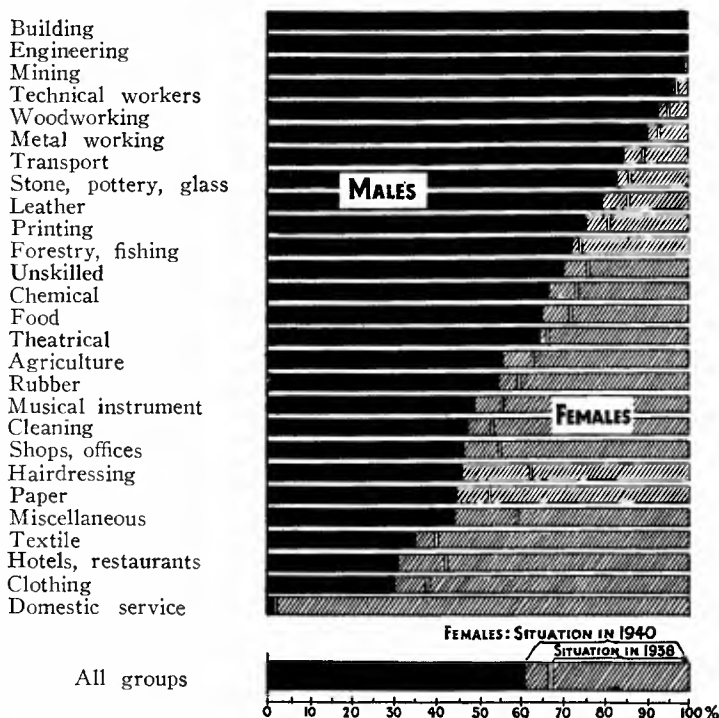
TABLE I. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE WORKERS (WAGE EARNERS AND SALARIED EMPLOYEES HOLDING WORK BOOKS) BY AGE GROUPS AT 5 JULY 1940, AND PERCENTAGE INCREASE OR DECREASE OF THE NUMBER IN EACH GROUP SINCE 1938

Age group	Percentage of total in 1940	Percentage increase (+) or decrease (—) since 1938
14 — 15	4.6	+ 15.4
16 — 17	8.8	— 5.3
18 — 20	16.1	+ 29.4
21 — 24	11.1	— 9.4
25 — 34	25.7	+ 4.2
35 — 44	18.1	+ 24.9
45 — 54	10.6	+ 34.5
55 — 64	4.2	+ 31.6
65 and over	0.8	+ 51.2
All groups	100.0	+ 12.6

TABLE II. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE WORKERS (WAGE EARNERS AND SALARIED EMPLOYEES HOLDING WORK BOOKS) BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS AT 5 JULY 1940, AND PERCENTAGE INCREASE OR DECREASE OF THE NUMBER IN EACH GROUP SINCE 1938

Occupational group	Percentage of total in 1940	Percentage increase (+) or decrease (—) since 1938
Agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture	11.9	+ 14.3
Forestry, hunting, fishing	0.7	— 2.5
Stone-working, pottery, glass	0.7	— 0.1
Metal working and allied trades	3.7	+ 59.1
Musical instrument and toy making	3.1	— 7.8
Chemical industry	0.9	+ 67.0
Rubber and allied industries	0.2	+ 16.8
Textile industry	5.3	— 3.9
Paper industry	1.3	+ 9.0
Leather and allied trades	0.3	+ 28.9
Woodworking and allied trades	0.5	+ 35.2
Food, drink and tobacco industry	2.5	+ 8.4
Clothing industry	6.0	+ 8.2
Hairdressing, etc.	0.8	+ 19.8
Printing industry	0.4	+ 10.7
Cleaning and disinfecting	0.6	+ 23.3
Hotels and restaurants	2.5	+ 15.7
Transport industry	3.3	+ 51.1
Domestic service	27.7	+ 7.1
Unskilled work of all kinds	6.9	— 6.4
Shops, offices, etc.	20.9	+ 21.5
Technical workers	0.2	+ 56.7
Other occupations	2.6	+ 17.7
All groups	100.0	+ 12.6

FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGES OF MALES¹ AND FEMALES IN TOTAL NUMBER OF WAGE-EARNERS AND SALARIED EMPLOYEES IN DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS IN GERMANY, 1938 AND 1940



¹ Excluding men called up for military service.

TABLE III. DISTRIBUTION OF THE OCCUPIED POPULATION OF GERMANY PROPER BY SEX, 1933-1940

Year	Total occupied population ¹	Males		Females	
		No.	Per cent. of total.	No.	Per cent. of total.
Annual average:					
1933	18,236,871	12,545,500	68.8	5,691,371	31.2
1934	18,188,374	12,641,023	69.5	5,547,351	30.5
1935	18,574,860	12,984,427	69.9	5,590,433	30.1
1936	19,184,287	13,408,967	69.9	5,775,324	30.1
1937	19,797,432	13,741,904	69.4	6,055,528	30.6
1938	20,543,349	14,141,597	68.8	6,401,752	31.2
June 1939	21,923,433	14,829,061	67.6	7,094,372	32.4
End 1940	22,670,000	14,250,000	62.8	8,420,000	37.2

¹ Including unemployed persons.