



The Effects of General Mobilisation on the Employment of Women in Germany

When the Orders for mobilising the total manpower of Germany for national defence were issued by the Commissioner-General of Manpower early in 1943¹, it was widely expected that women would provide the most effective reserves of labour. That this expectation was justified appears from the results of the mobilisation², which show an increase not only in the number of women employed but also significant changes in their occupational distribution. The following article, which supplements others previously published in the Review on German policy regarding women's work³, notes the changes that have recently taken place and briefly summarises a number of special measures which have been adopted in connection with the general mobilisation.

GENERAL MEASURES FOR THE MOBILISATION OF WOMEN

In January 1943, when general mobilisation was first enforced, there were already about 9,200,000 German women and 1,000,000 foreign women working for the German war economy in addition to women in agriculture and commerce employed as family helpers (in 1936: in Germany proper, 5,775,000; and in June 1939: 7,094,000). There were also 85,000 girls in the Girls' Labour Service and 89,000 women and girls engaged in air-raid defence.⁴ The proportion of women engaged in war industries had already increased greatly between 1939 and the beginning of 1943—the number of women per 100 men rose from 66 to 82 in the chemical industry, and from 35 to 55 in the rubber industry, and the increase was still more marked in various less essential industries: from 16 to 35 per 100 men in the leather industry, from 100 to 141 in the paper industry, and from 75 to 180 in hairdressing.⁵ Moreover, even in 1939, 80 per cent. of unmarried women and 37 per cent. of married women were in employment. As only pregnant women or mothers of one child under 6 years or two children under 14 living with them were exempt from general mobilisation, it was obvious that many married women and mothers of families would be called up.

¹ Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 1, July 1943, p. 95.

² *Idem*, Vol. XLIX, No. 1, Jan. 1944, p. 95.

³ *Idem*, Vol. XLIV, No. 6, Dec. 1941, pp. 617-659: "The Employment of Women in Germany under the National Socialist Régime"; Vol. XLV, No. 3, Mar. 1942, pp. 286-296: "Recent Aspects of the Employment of Women in Germany".

⁴ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 31 Jan. 1943.

⁵ *Basler Nachrichten*, 16 Nov. 1943.

The very detailed instructions concerning the mobilisation of women that were issued to the employment offices on 28 January 1943¹ were no doubt intended to overcome the major difficulties to be expected in the case of these categories. They stated that, as a general rule, unmarried or married women not having the care of another person should be found full-time work, but that women with household duties should be employed only part time, while women caring for a person disabled by war or an industrial accident, with not less than 50 per cent. invalidity benefit, should be exempt from compulsory service. The employment officers were required to see that care was provided for children under 14 years living with mobilised women, either through the Help the Neighbours' Movement² or in day nurseries.

The agencies responsible for general mobilisation were advised to avoid keeping people waiting who had come to register, to have women welfare workers with a kind and understanding manner do the questioning, and, in short, to take all possible precautions to reduce the fear of compulsory registration. At the same time the heads of undertakings to which these new workers would be sent were instructed to treat them with consideration, and their future fellow workers were urged to be friendly and helpful. It was emphasised that particular consideration should be shown to widows and to women who have been victims of air raids.³

To facilitate the placement of mobilised women who have household duties and to encourage mothers of families who are exempt from registration to volunteer for work, the Minister of National Economy issued a circular on 17 April 1943⁴ to the National Chamber of Economy, urging the various economic groups affiliated with the Chamber to extend the adoption of the part-time system, a subject which has engaged the attention of the German authorities since the beginning of the war.⁵ Since undertakings working 8 to 10 hours a day had proved reluctant to engage women with household duties who could only work part time, this circular suggested to the management of undertakings that in certain departments they should introduce part-time shifts, composed for the most part of women, in spite of the organisational difficulties entailed. They were also urged to give days off to women able to work normal hours but who needed one or more free days a week for their other duties. "In no case", added the circular, "is it permissible that labour which could serve the German economy should fail to be used merely because undertakings do not think they can overcome certain inconveniences or difficulties." Finally the circular directed that undertakings organising part-time shifts, or employing workers on certain days of the week only, should report to the competent employment office the number of workers they

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 5, 15 Feb. 1943, Part I, p. 107; Part V, p. 67.

² Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLIV, No. 6, Dec. 1941, p. 651.

³ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*; also, No. 7, 5 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 156. Cf. *Arbeiterium*, 1 May 1943, p. 7, for an account of interviews between vocational counsellors and women called for compulsory service.

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 16, 5 June 1943, Part I, p. 325.

⁵ Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLIV, No. 6, Dec. 1941, p. 639; Vol. XLV, No. 3, Mar. 1942, p. 296.

were able to utilise under such conditions. Another circular, issued by the Minister of Labour on 3 June 1943¹, deals with the hours of part-time workers; if possible, these may be fixed at so many (24, 30, etc.) a week, but they must in any case be adjusted to local conditions and the requirements of the undertaking and, as far as is reasonable, to the wishes of the women themselves. In no case, however, may the organisation of part-time employment lead to the withdrawal of workers from full-time work; to prevent this, a Decree of 17 September 1943 makes it necessary for a woman worker to obtain the consent of the employment office before she can change from full-time to part-time work.²

While the officers of the employment service were, on the one hand, advised how to build up a psychological atmosphere which would facilitate the application of the orders for the mobilisation of women, they were given instructions, on the other, for checking attempts to evade compulsory service. Thus certificates exempting women from compulsory service on the ground of ill health can be given only by doctors attached to the employment service; certificates from doctors in private practice, clinics, etc., are not accepted.³ The employment service was warned to be on the watch for women who try to avoid service by claiming that they help in the work of men in the family.⁴ The registration card issued by the employment office must be presented when a woman applies for the issue or renewal of her food ration book.⁵ The authorities have also complained that women employees have no sense of duty and that too many register for office work although it is in industry that they are needed.⁶

As an additional source of manpower for the armament industry, attention was drawn to the ways in which women home workers could be used. Owing to the shortage of raw materials for textiles the number of home workers employed in the clothing industry had been greatly reduced; these workers, and those previously in the paper and woodworking industry, could be transferred to munition making, and the Minister of Munitions and Supply accordingly directed the managers of munition factories not only to seek out home workers who might be free, but also to apply to their former employers for information regarding their special skills and training in order to utilise them to the best advantage.⁷ In November 1943 it was announced that heads of undertakings would be obliged from then on to have certain types of work given out whenever possible. A scale of priorities for this purpose was established in the clothing industry; when orders are given out to be filled at the worker's home, the heads of undertakings must provide sewing machines for the workers.⁸

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Nos. 17-18, 20 June 1943, Part I, p. 333.

² *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 27 Jan. 1944.

³ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 6, 25 Feb. 1943, Part V, p. 104.

⁴ *Idem*, No. 5, 15 Feb. 1943, *loc. cit.*

⁵ *National Zeitung* (Essen), 19 Sept. 1943; *National Zeitung* (Oberhausen), 21 Nov. 1943.

⁶ *Völkischer Beobachter*, 13 Feb. 1943.

⁷ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 15 Nov. 1943.

⁸ *Berliner Lokalanzeiger*, 15 Nov. 1943.

Another measure to facilitate the employment of married women relates to the granting of holidays during the husband's leave from the Army. New instructions were given to the labour trustees and to public services on 25 June 1943¹, stating that women workers should have 18 days' leave at this time if possible, and never less than 12 days. If the woman has already exhausted her right to a paid holiday, wages should be advanced to her against a future holiday. Employers are advised to grant holidays to any woman whose husband returns from the front even if she has already had one that year. Mothers of soldiers, too, who ordinarily lived with their sons should if possible be given time off during at least part of the son's leave.

According to a new regulation of the Minister of Labour women workers with household and family duties, if they work 48 hours or more a week, are entitled from 1 November 1943 to one day's leave every four weeks without pay and two days' leave if they have a child under 14 years living with them. Any woman in charge of a household must also have one afternoon off every week even if the other workers do not, and she may not be required to work on Sundays, at night, or overtime.

MEASURES AFFECTING PARTICULAR BRANCHES OF ACTIVITY

Industry

As mentioned above, the majority of women recruited in virtue of the Mobilisation Order were directed to industry. The Commissioner-General of Manpower issued a Decree on 20 February 1943 concerning the protection of women and girls employed for the first time, and on 25 February he drew the attention of the employers and staffs of all German undertakings to the need of precautions for their safety. The Decree required the industrial inspectors to pay particular attention to the conditions of employment of new workers. It called attention to existing legal provisions respecting women's hours of work, maternity protection, and the unhealthy or dangerous employments from which women are excluded, and pointed out that many kinds of work unsuitable for women had not yet been expressly prohibited because the question had never arisen, but that, as far as possible, women should still not be given such work. If it became necessary to employ women for heavy work, use should be made, in the first instance, of foreign women. Where women workers are employed, special attention should be paid to the safety devices for machinery; mechanical means of transport should be widely used; and seats for the workers should be provided where possible. The Decree stated further that safety engineers and factory doctors have an important part to play in protecting newly recruited workers, and that undertakings which have no special safety engineers should entrust the duties in question to an experienced engineer. The two objectives were safety and increased output, and to achieve them the labour inspection services should co-operate with the German Labour Front on all

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 19, 5 July 1943, Part I, p. 359.

important questions. Reports of experience gained in dealing with women workers should be sent to the Commissioner-General of Manpower in June 1943.¹

Since night work is generally agreed to be undesirable for women, the exceptions allowed by law to the prohibition of the employment of German women at night should be taken advantage of only after all possibilities of using male or female foreign workers or prisoners of war have been exhausted. When it is impossible to spare German women, the administrative authorities may permit their employment on three shifts, but only for essential war work, and after consultation between all the agencies concerned, that is, the regional employment office, the armaments authorities, the Labour Front, and competent economic groups. The undertaking applying to the inspection service for night workers must specify the number of women it plans to employ and their nationality.²

It may be noted that while women are to be supplied, as a safety measure, with suitable working clothes, they must procure them on their own ration cards since the textile supplies available are not sufficient to allow of additional clothing being issued.³

A few months after the mass recruitment of women for war industries, the Minister of Munitions and Supply held an investigation in two large undertakings and found that their work was proving satisfactory. The women showed great ability at their new tasks and on certain operations even surpassed the output of men workers. They had not been utilised for night work.⁴

Although it is clearly intended to avoid employing German women on heavy work, the new regulations concerning their employment on planing machines and other kinds of woodworking show that the shortage of labour is forcing such use. However, the regulations allow only strong women over 40 years of age who are not overburdened with housework to be employed and even they are not to be used to stack wood.⁵

Transport

Many women are being employed for the first time in the transport industry and a number of regulations have been adopted for their protection. To take the place of truck drivers on military service, women holding driver's licences were urged to volunteer for this work, and regulations were issued in a Decree of 23 March 1943 which suspended certain provisions of the Order of 30 October 1940 limiting the employment of women to the driving of small trucks with a maximum load of one and a half tons. Now women are authorised to drive trucks with a gross weight of three and a half tons and a maximum capacity load of three tons. The following conditions are made: women drivers must be over 21 years; they

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 6, 25 Feb. 1943, Part I, p. 148; No. 7, 5 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 156; *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 26 Mar. 1943; *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 5 and 25 Mar. 1943.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 11, 15 Apr. 1943, Part V, p. 188.

³ *Idem*, No. 16, 15 June 1943, Part V, p. 265.

⁴ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 8 Aug. and 1 Sept. 1943.

⁵ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 31, 5 Nov. 1942, Part V, p. 589; Nos. 1-2, 10 Jan. 1943, Part V, p. 18.

must not be expectant or nursing mothers; their work is to be limited to an average of 8 hours a day and must as far as possible take place during the daytime; they must not ordinarily have to work on narrow roads or roads with heavy traffic or with obstacles which obstruct the view; strong, healthy women should be selected; they must not have to load or unload heavy merchandise. It is also specified that the labour inspectors may make further conditions as the need arises.¹

An Order of 20 April 1943 authorised the employment of women drivers on electric tramways on similar conditions, except that the minimum age is fixed at 25 years and the maximum 8-hour day is calculated as the average over three weeks; the special rest periods allowed to other women workers are not granted to them.² Women from 18 to 40 years may be employed to collect tickets on tramways if they do not suffer from varicose veins, cramps or serious defects of vision, and provided they know how to count money. They should not be employed at this work more than 9 hours a day on the average or for more than three years at a stretch, after which they should be moved on to other employment.³

Auxiliary Military Services

For the purposes of general mobilisation the employment offices were informed of the requirements of the auxiliary military services in order that suitable women should be directed to them either as volunteers or in virtue of the Mobilisation Order. These services needed mainly girls suitable for information work⁴ and as translators trained for stenographic work in all European and Asiatic languages.⁵

Women who have taken Red Cross nursing courses may not be directed to other work until the needs of their local Red Cross organisation have been ascertained.⁶ Women Air Force assistants are required for seven kinds of service, including the information, anti-aircraft, meteorological, administrative, and health services. Whether engaged voluntarily or in virtue of the Mobilisation Order, they are given an employment contract whose conditions are determined by collective rules. They are considered to be members of the civil staff, not of the Air Force, and so do not wear uniform and are not subject to military discipline. They have the same rights as men members of the civil service as regards social insurance (accident, pension, and unemployment insurance). If they have no canteen of their own, they use those of the soldiers. Unless they live with relatives, hostels are provided where they live together. According to recent reports similar regulations exist for salaried workers in Army offices; young girls of 15 to 17 years are being trained under a contract of apprenticeship for semi-skilled trades

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 8, 15 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 177; No. 10, 5 Apr. 1943, Part I, p. 213; No. 1, 10 Jan. 1944, Part V, p. 8.

² *Idem*, No. 8, 15 May 1943, Part I, p. 280; No. 1, 10 Jan. 1944, Part V, pp. 8-11.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Idem*, No. 4, 5 Feb. 1943, Part I, p. 86.

⁵ *Idem*, No. 16, 15 June 1943, Part I, p. 324, and Part V, p. 266.

⁶ *Idem*, No. 3, 25 Jan. 1943, Part I, p. 53.

to work on the permanent staff of the Army; graduates of commercial schools are also recruited for this work.¹

Women are also required to act as air-raid wardens in the anti-aircraft services for the protection of industrial undertakings, "because of the heavy defence responsibilities transferred to these services".²

In June 1943 it was also announced that municipal fire departments, if they cannot secure male workers, may have recourse to women and girls. The Hitler Youth Movement, numbering some 300,000 members, which has filled the gaps in this service since the outbreak of war, is no longer sufficient, and women may be directed to it, first in communities of less than 1,000 inhabitants. Instructions have been published by the Leader of the S.S. and the Chief of the German Police which specify that when women are used they may be on duty only during the day; women of all ages between 17 and 40 years and from all social classes must be represented in the various sections; those with driver's licences may drive fire engines in larger communities and in cities; while on duty they must wear a special uniform. They are given two 8-hour instruction periods, after which they are required to attend weekly drills but are excused from ladder and jumping exercises. The dangers of the work must be fully explained to them and they should be called up for service together with experienced firemen.³

Domestic Service

Domestic workers on farms are immobilised unless authorised to leave their work by the employment office concerned.⁴ Otherwise the rule is that German women may not be mobilised for compulsory service in private homes, apart from exceptional cases. Foreign women liable to mobilisation were not to be left in private homes because of the difficulties of supervision, and were to be placed on the expiry of their contract in hospitals, clinics, factory canteens, and other institutions.⁵

The conditions of employment of foreign domestic workers recruited in the occupied territories of the U.S.S.R. have been described previously in these pages.⁶ Supplementary provisions concerning holidays specify that Russian women have no right to any holiday whatever, while Polish women must secure an authorisation from the employment office, which may be given them only after all German workers have had their holidays. Domestic workers of other nationalities theoretically have the same rights to holidays as Germans except that the expenses of their journey home are not paid. Their employers may pay their expenses voluntarily, but only as far as the German border.⁷

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54; *Preussische Zeitung* (Königsberg), 5 Jan. 1944.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 8, 15 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 180.

³ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 12 June 1943.

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 4, 5 Feb. 1943, Part I, p. 92.

⁵ *Idem*, No. 6, 25 Feb. 1943, Part V, p. 105.

⁶ Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 5, May 1943: "Soviet Workers in Germany", pp. 588-589.

⁷ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 3, 25 Jan. 1943, Part V, p. 39.

The employment of domestic workers in private households, which had been limited since the beginning of the war, was still further restricted. Formerly any mother of a family with children under 14 years of age living at home had the right to engage a servant. Now, according to an Order of 23 February 1943, the employment offices are empowered to take domestic workers from private homes and allocate them to more urgent work, whether domestic or of any other kind. A person who works 12 hours a day in a household is considered to be a domestic worker. These changes are effected only after the employment authorities interview the mistress of the house and the domestic worker. In difficult cases the National Socialist Party district chief is present. As a result of this Order, by December 1943, 8,000 domestic workers had been withdrawn from their former employment and placed in other households where there was greater need of their services. A much larger number continued part time in their former employment and were directed to other households for half time or a few hours a day. In July 1943, out of a total of 1,100,000 women working in private homes, 80 per cent. were paid German domestic workers, 13 per cent. were German girls allocated to household work for their year of labour service, and 7 per cent. were foreigners.¹

By these new provisions it is hoped to release domestic workers from urban households and to place them in farm households. However, midwives, because of the essential nature of their work, are allowed to keep a servant or a daughter at home if there is no-one over or under compulsory labour service age to answer the calls of their clients.²

Social Services

Many women were engaged in social service even before the war. From early days the National-Socialist régime has considered welfare work a career especially suitable to women and has consistently encouraged all girls who showed aptitude to train for its various branches. Since the war the social services have expanded still more, largely in consequence of the increased employment of women and, since January 1943, of their compulsory recruitment, in particular that of married women and the mothers of young children. Because of the increasing need of staff for such services they were given a special place in the general mobilisation scheme.

A circular of 6 February 1943 issued by the Commissioner-General of Manpower provided that all women called up for compulsory labour service who had suitable experience of social or pedagogical work should be sent to such work, whether they were placed directly in kindergartens, day nurseries, or children's homes or put at the disposal of the Women's Branch of the Labour Front to be employed in the management of residential centres for women workers.³ The household assistants employed by the National-Socialist Welfare Department (*National-Socialistische Volkswohl-*

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt* No. 14, 15 May 1943, Part V, p. 230; *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 29 Dec. 1943.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 11, 15 Apr. 1943, Part I, p. 225.

³ *Idem*, No. 8, 15 Mar. 1943, Part I, p. 177; No. 10, 5 Apr. 1943, Part V, p. 162.

fahrt) to help the mothers of families in emergencies are frozen to their work¹, and social service students are not required to register for compulsory labour, provided they continue their social service training.²

To provide personnel for crèches and day nurseries and helpers for large families, the Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan, by a Decree of 16 June 1943, decided that if mobilisation did not supply the welfare workers required by the National-Socialist Welfare Department, seventh-grade pupils in secondary schools might be called up. These girls would be given eight days' training, after which the district leader of the German Girls' League would be responsible for placing them as assistants in crèches, nurseries, and the small units organised to care for the children of harvest workers, or attaching them to the Department services in charge of recreational activities for young persons or the evacuation of children. Once these needs were filled, seventh-grade pupils could be placed in families to help with children but always on condition that they were free to return home at night.³

The Development of Social Services.

Some figures showing the development of social services during the war were published at the beginning of 1943 on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the National-Socialist Welfare Department and in February 1944 on the tenth anniversary of the setting up of the "Mother and Child" section of this Department. According to these figures, seven million women were affiliated in 1942 to the Department and the Women's Branch of the Labour Front, of whom more than one million were engaged in some form of welfare work; 98 per cent. of these welfare workers were unpaid volunteers. At this date the Department was operating 15,500 permanent day nurseries and from 7,000 to 8,000 seasonal crèches and day nurseries for agricultural workers, making a total of 22,000 or 23,000 units. By 28 February 1944 the number had risen to 33,314. The permanent crèches and nurseries employed 32,000 trained social service workers and assistants in 1942; by the end of 1943 they employed 73,000. In addition 700 large undertakings operated crèches at their own expense, in which 20,000 infants could be cared for. Children's centres with canteens have also been opened in many undertakings, where meals are provided for children of working women and salaried employees and where they can do their lessons after school. In southern Germany alone there were more than 1,900 by June 1943; the figure for the whole country was not given. The Department also runs centres to help young persons and to give advice to mothers. By the beginning of 1944 its "Mother and Child" section operated 32,518 offices, to which more than ten million mothers had come for advice and help. The Health Office of the Department also widened the scope of its activities for the protection of children's health in wartime,

¹ *Idem*, No. 3, 25 Jan. 1943, Part I, p. 54.

² *Idem*, No. 10, 5 Apr. 1943, Part I, p. 205.

³ *Idem*, No. 20, 15 July 1943, Part I, p. 367.

particularly by giving guidance to mothers in difficulties caused by the war.¹

A special assistance service was organised for the families of miners to help in the home and to replace mothers while they were at work. This service resembled the Help the Neighbours Movement, which in 1939 had one and a half million volunteer workers and in 1943 about eight million.²

Industrial social services are to a large extent provided by the Women's Branch of the Labour Front. In 1942 these services employed about 3,000 professional welfare workers and 119,000 volunteer assistants, divided into 7,000 groups. It operated a replacement service, which provided unpaid substitutes on 450,000 days to enable women workers to take a holiday. In 1943 the Branch was faced with new tasks as a result of the general mobilisation. To minimise the difficulties of adjustment, welfare workers in employment offices and in undertakings supervised the transfer of women workers from non-essential to essential industries, from one undertaking to another to satisfy local needs, and from one job to another in the same undertaking, especially where the transfers were to jobs usually performed by men. The Branch also extended its holiday camp facilities to accommodate 1,200 women a month for fourteen days' supplementary holiday each. Places were made available especially for pregnant women who, because of their condition, had had to change their work and were waiting for new employment. During the war the holiday camps have received about 52,800 women (12,187 in 1943 alone) who were given a supplementary holiday.³ The Women's Branch of the Labour Front, which also runs the residential centres for women workers and trains their executive staff, has opened several new centres, particularly for foreign women workers. In the Cologne-Aachen district alone there were, in the autumn of 1943, 290 such homes. By the beginning of 1944 there were about 6,000.⁴

Recently the Labour Front endeavoured to expand the activities of its welfare department into occupations other than industry. It established a Social Institution for Handicrafts (*Sozialgewerk des Handwerks*) and a Social Association for Commerce (*Sozialgenossenschaft des Handels*), and extended to these occupations its services for replacing women workers on holiday, caring for the children of working mothers, advising mothers, etc., each welfare worker being made responsible for several small undertakings.⁵

The social service for peasant women established a "harvest help" organisation, through which 61 million hours of assistance

¹ *Monatshefte für N. S. Sozialpolitik*, Nos. 3-4, Feb. 1943, p. 27; *Der Angriff*, No. 65, 1942; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 6, 25 Feb. 1943, Part V, p. 102; *Der Vierjahresplan*, No. 3, 15 Mar. 1943, p. 116; *Arbeitertum*, No. 12, June 1943, p. 7, No. 17, Sept. 1943, p. 7, and No. 20, Nov. 1943, p. 7; *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 3 Oct. 1943; *Kölnische Zeitung*, 22 Nov. 1943; *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 Mar. 1944.

² *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 19 Feb. 1944.

³ *Der Vierjahresplan*, No. 3, 15 Mar. 1943, p. 116; *Arbeitertum*, No. 15, Aug. 1943, p. 6, and No. 3, Feb. 1944, p. 6; *Kölnische Zeitung*, 22 Nov. 1943; *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 Mar. 1944.

⁴ *Kölnische Zeitung*, 22 Nov. 1943, cited in *News Digest*, 9 Dec. 1943; *Arbeitertum*, No. 4, Feb. 1944, p. 2.

⁵ *Arbeitertum*, No. 13, July 1943, p. 6.

were given during two years, and a service to provide substitutes for housewives so that they could have a holiday during the winter months.¹ The special measures taken in connection with the State land settlement schemes are described later.²

Social services have been organised in German-occupied territories to protect the interests of the increasing numbers of German women and girls who are serving there in the auxiliary services of the Army, Air Force and Navy, or are employed by the welfare services of the Todt Organisation or by the German Red Cross, the German Post Office, the German administrative authorities or the communications and commerce authorities. The principal duty of the welfare workers is to set up and supervise residential centres for these women and girls. By the beginning of 1943 there were already 870 in existence. They must also investigate rooms requisitioned in private houses for German women, a method of housing which is common in the Netherlands. They organise spare-time activities, encouraging practical educational courses, such as child care and cooking, and scientific and cultural courses, such as history and art. They also set up and supervise clubs open to Germans of both sexes. A medical service is operated by women doctors, and attendance twice a month is compulsory. The welfare services for women include also officials of the Department of Racial Policy.³

Another service gives courses in child care to working women. By the end of 1942, 585 "schools for mothers" were operating in Germany and in the occupied territories. These courses were often given in the factories to save time, and were attended by an average of 500,000 women and girls each year, or a total of five million by 1944.⁴

MATERNITY PROTECTION

The General Mobilisation Order, as already stated, exempted pregnant women from compulsory work. The condition of those who become pregnant during the course of their compulsory service had previously been regulated by an Order of 7 March 1941⁵, according to which a pregnant woman must be released from work on her request if she cannot be persuaded to continue working until her maternity leave is due. The Commissioner-General of Manpower restated this point in a Decree of 16 November 1943 specifying that it would be against the spirit of the law to force a pregnant woman to remain at work or to direct her against her will to other employment; her consent is necessary.⁶

However, when a pregnant woman is engaged in an essential industry she is not free to give up work merely by reaching an understanding with the manager of the undertaking. The consent

¹ *Monatshefte für N.S. Sozialpolitik*, Nos. 3-4, Feb. 1943.

² See below, p. 350.

³ *Völkischer Beobachter*, 21 Jan. 1943.

⁴ *Monatshefte für N.S. Sozialpolitik*, Nos. 3-4, Feb. 1943; *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 19 Feb. 1944.

⁵ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 10, 5 Apr. 1941, Part I, p. 166.

⁶ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 29 Dec. 1943.

of the employment office concerned is necessary if she has not reached the sixth week before her confinement is expected. She can apply for a change of work if her regular work affects her health, and her application will be supported, if necessary, by the employment office. She is reminded that she must not ask for her release without mature consideration, and that if she gives up work before the legally prescribed time, she will lose her rights to supplementary benefits under the Maternity Protection Act¹, and will receive only the ordinary sickness insurance allowance. On the other hand, when the interruption of work is caused by general evacuation, and the woman does not afterwards return to work, she remains entitled, in virtue of a Decree of 15 November 1943, to her rights under the Maternity Protection Act as though she had continued working.²

Interesting information on the working of the Maternity Protection Act of 1942 can be drawn from some of the many measures relating to its administration. Several of these deal with the special requirements of particular branches of activity. Thus an Order of 3 September 1942 concerning maternity protection in home work and handicrafts explained how the provisions limiting the working hours of pregnant women and fixing the period of maternity leave should be enforced in giving out orders.³ Another, of 18 February 1943, concerning the tobacco industry, withdrew the prohibition on the employment of pregnant women on pedal-operated machines for rolling cigars.⁴ In the hotel industry they may work until 11 p.m. if they belong to a group of workers working on a shift system and receiving rest periods; arrangements are also made for the changing of their work without reduction of wages so that they will not be constantly on their feet.⁵ Women in the public service may work longer than 8 hours a day provided they do not average more than a 48-hour week, and they must obtain a doctor's certificate in order to change work without the loss of salary. The methods of applying to them the provisions against dismissal during maternity leave were also defined.⁶ An Order of 29 April 1943 specifies that the Act applies to all women on compulsory service but not to those on urgent relief work unless they have a work contract.⁷

An Order of 28 June 1943 provides that when an undertaking is closed down by war regulations pregnant women are granted the allowance equal to their wages during the twelve weeks' statutory maternity leave, even if their contract is ended before the right to this benefit falls due; the excess sums paid by the insurance institution are to be refunded by the State.⁸

¹ Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVI, No. 5, Nov. 1942, p. 598.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Nos. 8-9, 25 Mar. 1944, Part V, p. 99; *Arbeitertum*, No. 1, Jan. 1944, p. 6; No. 4, Feb. 1944, p. 4.

³ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 27, 25 Sept. 1942, Part I, p. 418.

⁴ *Idem*, No. 8, 15 Mar. 1943, Part III, p. 7.

⁵ *Idem*, No. 31, 5 Nov. 1942, Part V, p. 589; No. 20, 15 July 1943, Part III, p. 221.

⁶ *Idem*, No. 3, 25 Jan. 1943, Part II, p. 30; Nos. 8-9, 25 Mar. 1944, Part III, p. 32.

⁷ *Idem*, No. 14, 15 May 1943, Part III, p. 141.

⁸ *Idem*, No. 19, 5 July 1943, Part II, p. 278.

When a pregnant woman lives far from her place of work and must use a means of transport that might induce a miscarriage, the employment office, on the advice of a doctor, must arrange for her transfer, without loss of wages, to an undertaking near her home. Her contract in the first undertaking may be suspended or annulled. If her wages in the new place of work are lower than in the first undertaking, she must be paid a wage equivalent to the average of what she earned for the last thirteen weeks' work in her former employment.¹

The scope of the Maternity Protection Act was extended by an Order of 12 March 1943 to include the occupied Eastern territories, but only for women of German nationality and those who are members of the "German community" (*Volksdeutsche*). A Decree of 13 November 1943 applied it to the same categories of women employed by German undertakings or the German administration in other territories outside the borders of Germany, and an Order of 7 February 1944 included the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in its provisions.²

Similarly, only German families or families belonging to the German community are entitled to the maternity benefits granted to the families of insured persons.³ A clause of the Maternity Act, however, allows its application to foreigners employed in Germany who are nationals of friendly countries or those of related blood. As a result of this clause, at the beginning of 1943, Germany concluded agreements concerning maternity protection with Bulgaria, Italy, Croatia, Slovakia, Spain, and Hungary.⁴ Further, a decision which was taken by the Minister for the Interior and the Commissioner responsible for questions of nationality in virtue of an Order of 30 April 1943 confers all the benefits of the new Maternity Protection Act on nationals of Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Rumania, Sweden, and Switzerland and on Flemish women who have official certificates proving their nationality.⁵ An Order of 8 January 1944 added the nationals of Estonia, Lithuania, and Finland to this group.⁶

Other measures designed to encourage German motherhood may be mentioned. One of them concerns the right of insured persons, their wives, and other members of the family to obtain treatment against sterility at the expense of the social insurance fund.⁷ Another gives three days' additional holiday a year to German mothers of large families who have been awarded the Cross of Honour.⁸ The training and conditions for securing a certificate to practise as a maternity nurse are regulated in detail by an Order of 7 February 1943. In addition to having to pass examinations the applicant and her husband (if she is married) must be of

¹ *Idem*, Nos. 17-18, 20 June 1943, Part II, p. 243.

² *Idem*, No. 16, 5 June 1943, Part I, p. 314; see also *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, 25 Feb. 1944, p. 57.

³ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 9, 25 Mar. 1943, Part II, p. 127.

⁴ *Idem*, No. 4, 5 Feb. 1943, Part V, p. 58.

⁵ *Idem*, No. 14, 15 May 1943, Part III, p. 141.

⁶ *Idem*, Nos. 8-9, 25 Mar. 1944, Part II, p. 60.

⁷ Circular of 14 Nov. 1942, IIa, 14729/42.

⁸ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 31, 5 Nov. 1942, Part V, p. 589.

German or related blood, and politically they must be above suspicion.¹

WAGES

A Decree of 9 April 1943 of the Commissioner-General of Man-power contains rules for fixing the wages of women workers recruited under the General Mobilisation Order. The previous experience, age, and skill of the person concerned must always be taken into account. When mobilised women are directed to tasks which require no special training, their wages are to be those of unskilled women workers or of salaried employees engaged on routine work. If, because of former experience or ability, the new worker is directed to semi-skilled or skilled work, she will have the right to the same wage or salary as women workers already engaged on similar work. If her output is inferior to that of experienced women workers, deductions will be made for this difference until she reaches the average output. The new worker should in general be placed in her age group for wages. However, if, as a result, she would be paid more than experienced workers who are younger but more highly skilled, the labour trustee will solve the difficulty by making her wages proportionate to her output. If she is given work previously performed by men and there are no collective rules to cover the case, the labour trustee will set her wages, taking into account the general level of women's wages compared with men's, the output of the woman herself, and the wages earned by women workers already engaged on similar work. During the training period the wages may be those for unskilled labour.²

According to an enquiry made in the metal industry of Saxony, it was found that although previously nearly all women were in the lowest wage groups, now a large number of them have reached class V on the wage scale, that is, the class of skilled workers. In all classes women receive 75 per cent. of a man's wage.³

As regards wage supplements, family allowances are paid only to the husband when husband and wife are employed, but separation allowances are paid to both if they still maintain their regular home. Married women are not to be paid for any time off allowed them to fulfil their domestic duties. Marriage loans are to be refunded at the rate of 3 per cent., instead of 1 per cent., of the monthly wage if the wife works.⁴

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The vocational training of German girls is systematically directed according to very different principles from those applied to young men.⁵ Their training is designed to fit them for occupations considered essentially feminine or to train them as quickly as

¹ *Reichsgesetzblatt*, Part I, 12 Feb. 1943, p. 87.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Nos. 12-13, 5 May 1943, Part I, p. 264, and Part V, p. 212.

³ *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, 2 Nov. 1943.

⁴ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 6, 25 Feb. 1943, Part I, p. 147; *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 9 May 1943.

⁵ For an account of the training of young men, cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLIX, No. 2, Feb. 1944, p. 230.

possible for semi-skilled work in occupations open to both sexes but not to prepare them for advancement in such occupations. These principles have been applied in the last two years both in the general organisation of vocational training and in the training of newly mobilised female labour for war industries.

The results of an enquiry on the diplomas given for so-called feminine occupations in Germany and annexed territories, which was undertaken in 1942 by the National Placing Office for Women's Occupations, throw light on the character of the general organisation of vocational training. There are about twenty of these occupations and they may be divided into three groups: first, those entailing some scientific knowledge, such as medical assistants, technical assistants in chemistry, assistant dietitians, metal testers, and botanical assistants for the protection of plant life; secondly, pedagogical and welfare work, such as supervisors of kindergartens, leaders of youth groups, and leaders in physical education; and thirdly, domestic social work such as rural household helpers and teachers of household economy. In the nine years 1933-1941, 45,812 diplomas were issued in Germany proper and 2,648 in Austria and the Sudetenland (in 1939-1941), or 48,460 in all. A study of the demand showed that young women should continue to be directed to these occupations.¹ The occupation of maternity nurse, previously mentioned, was added to the list in 1943.

In regard to the training of girls for mixed occupations where the standards differ from those established for boys, the steps taken for the training of women shop assistants and women clerks are particularly important. These two occupations are recognised by the occupational groups for commerce, industry, and handicrafts as requiring a training of from six months to two years under a semi-skilled apprenticeship contract, while similar posts for boys as salaried employees in commerce and in offices require a training of three years under a skilled apprenticeship contract. Model apprenticeship contracts for shop assistants and clerks were drawn up in 1942 and extended later to clerks in the social insurance services.²

The general mobilisation of women has led to the adoption of certain decisions concerning vocational training based on the same principles. In addition to rapid training given in the factories to newly mobilised women to fit them for unskilled work, steps have been taken to transfer women from non-essential jobs and fit them for more essential work. Women who have experience in drawing, fashion designers, for instance, have been given three months' intensive training as draughtsmen for the munitions industry. The training is designed to enable them to do the drawing accurately but not necessarily to understand the calculations upon which it is based.³

Although, as previously stated, mobilised women should not perform their compulsory service in a household, household apprenticeship has been maintained. An Order of 21 May 1943

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 21, 15 July 1942, Part V, p. 388.

² *Idem*, p. 386; No. 33, 25 Nov. 1942, Part I, p. 518.

³ *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 18 May 1943.

issued under the Four-Year Plan sets these conditions: the training may be given only in households approved by the Organisation of German Women (*Deutsches Frauenwerk*); it takes two years, the first to be passed either in the apprentice's own family if approved for this purpose or in the domestic services of an institution, and the second in the private household of a non-related family. A housewife who wants to train household apprentices must be in possession of a certificate attesting her German blood, National-Socialist training, and civil rights, and finally must have aptitude for teaching young people and practical experience in managing a well-ordered household, that is, she must work in it herself. The woman instructor of household training in an institution must have the same qualifications.¹

The establishment of a special school in Berlin for women leaders was announced in the autumn of 1943. Leaders are trained to direct the training of other women for the auxiliary military services. There are also schemes for training forewomen and factory group leaders.

These efforts seem to be the result of an enquiry held at the outset of female mobilisation in 1943 by the Düsseldorf Chamber of Labour to find out whether the instruction of newly employed women could be more effectively given by men instructors or by women. The enquiry showed that women instructors were more satisfactory. The National School of Labour Management (*Reichsschule für Arbeitsführung*) in Düsseldorf gives women instructors special courses in training women workers by methods based on feminine physiology and psychology. These methods are said to have led to a shortening of training time and to have increased the output of women workers by 15 per cent.²

LAND SETTLEMENT IN THE EASTERN TERRITORIES

Social services in the eastern territories, that is, in East and West Prussia, Upper Silesia, Danzig, the Polish incorporated territories, and the General Government of Poland, are designed to open the way for German colonisation and to give aid to the settlers. They have absorbed during the last two years a steadily increasing number of women welfare workers. Special training courses for welfare workers, visiting nurses, school welfare workers, etc., have been organised to fill the requirements in these territories. From 1,400 in 1940, the number of girls engaged in this kind of work, all belonging to Hitler Youth groups, had increased to 19,000 by the end of 1942. They are recruited under the motto "employment in the East and rural service". Six months in these services counts as the equivalent of a year of labour service. The girls are recruited at 16 years of age or over as kindergarten assistants, at 18 as school welfare workers, and at 20 as managers of camp hostels—for this last they must have thirteen months' training, including four weeks in a special school and seven months on probation in a camp. They are also placed in charge of rural social centres

¹ *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 16, 5 June 1943, Part I, p. 326.

² *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 23 Feb. 1943.

and may become colonisation advisers or agricultural teachers after a year's training in a camp in Carinthia.¹

At the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943 women were in great demand for work in commerce and offices in the incorporated territories and the General Government of Poland. Hence, regardless of former provisions, the employment of young girls of 18 to 21 years in these territories was authorised on condition that they lived in youth hostels or with relatives.² However, the contracts of those employed in the General Government of Poland and not living with their parents or husbands were annulled on 31 March 1943 and they were sent back to Germany. Their places were taken by women over 21.³

POST-WAR PROSPECTS

Of all belligerent countries Germany makes the most extensive use of the compulsory recruitment of female labour. While in Great Britain a woman with one child under 14 years living with her is not called up, in Germany, to be exempt, a woman must have the care of two children under 14 years, or one child under 6.

The first result of compulsory recruitment seems to have been a considerable increase in the already large numbers of women in the service of the German war economy. But in spite of this, and in spite of the fact that the Chancellor himself has said that "millions of women and girls are replacing the men in the Army" on what he called the "home front"⁴, the authorities still insist that their object remains the same—to take German women out of the factory.⁵ In their opinion the work being done by women gives them no rights for the future: "compulsory work" and the "right to work" are not complementary terms, and after the war compulsory work will disappear without leaving to German women any counterpart in rights.⁶

¹ *Das Junge Deutschland*, No. 1, 30 Jan. 1943, p. 57; *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, No. 7, 5 Mar. 1943, Part V, p. 111.

² *Reichsarbeitsblatt*, Nos. 1-2, 10 Jan. 1943, Part I, p. 27.

³ *Idem*, No. 6, 25 Feb. 1943, Part I, p. 139; No. 7, 5 Mar. 1943, Part V, p. 120.

⁴ *Arbeitertum*, No. 7, Apr. 1943.

⁵ Speeches by the Commissioner-General of Manpower concerning general mobilisation (*Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 20 Mar. 1943) and the Chief of the Organisation of German Women (*Völkischer Beobachter*, 3 Nov. 1943).

⁶ "Recht auf Arbeit und Arbeitspflicht", in *Deutsche Bergwerks-Zeitung*, 6 Mar. 1943.