

OFFICE OF U. S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL  
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of: SPEER, Albert

By: Major John J. Monigan, Jr., 10 October 1945, a.m.

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Persons and organizations implicated, and subjects

1. SPEER

- a. Conscription of foreign labor (p. 1)
  - (1) East (p. 3)
  - (2) France (p. 3)
  - (3) Belgium (p. 3)
  - (4) Poland (p. 3)
  - (5) Quotas from each country (p. 3,4)
  - (6) Employment of Jews (p. 17)
- b. Arbeitseinsatzant (p. 7)
- c. Betriebsobmann (p. 8,9)

2. SAUCKEL

- a. Responsible for labor quotas (p. 3,4)
  - (1) His methods in making quotas (p. 6)
  - (2) Inspected factories re manpower (p. 7)
  - (3) PW's in armament production (p. 21)
- b. Responsible for unrest in France (p. 3)

3. OKW

- a. Armament inspectors (p. 10,11)
- b. Over Sauckel on labor (p. 3,4)

4. SS

- a. No armament program of their own (p. 16)

5. OT Organization
  - a. Obtained personnel from occupied countries (p. 19)
6. TODT Organization
  - a. No authority to request foreign labor (p. 19)
7. SCHMELDTER
  - a. Member of OT (p. 19,20)
  - b. Workers recruited in France (p. 19,20)
8. POLICE
  - a. Transported workers (p. 5)
9. GOERING
  - a. Authority over military commanders regarding labor (p. 3)

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Speer states he does not know how Sauckel's quotas for conscription of foreign labor in the several countries were filled. Sauckel dealt directly in these questions with his representatives, Hildebrandt in the West and Letsch in the East; Sauckel best to give information ( p.1)

He says that Sauckel had an agreement with Laval for transport of labor to Germany; but he does not know exactly how it was done in the East. Sauckel had Peukert there ( p.1). Thinks that Sauckel concentrated more on France for his labor, less on Belgium and Holland. In France, Sauckel had a representative who formerly was subordinate to Stuelpnagel, the military commander. Speer states that the question of competence in the various occupied areas was very complicated, but believes that he and Sauckel respectively are responsible for what happened there in their special field of work, although they had no right to command the military commanders. To his knowledge, only Goering, as Plenipotentiary General for the Four-Year Plan, had such a right. Speer adds that there was in France some quiet sabotage against Sauckel's activities on the part of the military commander, through his man, Michel. Their opinion was that Sauckel's activities caused unrest in the country. (p.3)

Sauckel always had to approach the military commanders on direct orders from Hitler, to enforce fulfillment of his quotas. Speer, trying to reconstruct Sauckel's letter to the president of the land labor office in the winter of 1942, containing the program of labor allocations for 1943, thinks that the letter ( which Sauckel had called a manifest - outlined labor quotas of the different countries, as well as the measures required to obtain them. This manifest caused great concern among administrative departments in occupied areas because it was feared production would suffer (p3-4) Sauckel's task was to see that his labor allocations were complied with. Objections by the military commanders would have been futile. Speer does not believe that even a fraction of these quotas were fulfilled.

There were two periods in the "Arbeitseinsatzamt", the first covers the time until Spring 1943. Owing to Germany's tremendous prestige abroad until that time, manpower came to Germany voluntarily in very large numbers. After Stalingrad, things changed and workers had to be brought to Germany by some executive power, such as the police. ( p.5) Speer thinks that Hildebrandt, as well as Schmeldter (Speer's representative in Arbeitseinsatzamt) may be able to give information about Sauckel's methods in making these quotas ( p.6).

Speer describes complicated question of competence. His view was that the manpower was subordinate to him from the moment it came into the factory, etc. But Sauckel thought it his task to inspect the different factories to see whether manpower was used properly, etc. To oppose this, Speer set up an Arbeitseinsatzamt in every plant. This acted also as defense against interference by the DAF ( Labor Front) (p.7)

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The Arbeitseinsatzamts were concerned merely with the individual's productivity, not which question of welfare or wages. Welfare question remained the concern of the DAF and of the union supervisors (p.8) Thinks it was the task of the Betriebsfuehrer to provide quarters and food, under supervision of the DAF. Says the dual position of the Betriebsfuehrer was but a formal one; in practice it was the task of the Betriebsobmann to look after the welfare of the workmen, and that he could use political pressure on the Betriebsfuehrer. (p.8-9)

Describes the task of the armament inspectors whom he inherited from the OKW in the spring of 1942. They were not as efficient as had been expected. (p.10-11) There was a supervisory position over the Arbeitseinsatzamt. Speer describes organization of the armament department. Schmeldter was in charge of Arbeitseinsatz, Hupfauer in charge of Arbeitsordnung (p.12)

Is not sure but believes that the living quarters for the workers were provided by the factory. Foreign and German workers were not segregated but working together; separate foremen and supervisors would have been a luxury. Feels sure that their living quarters were separated. Thinks that Schmeldter could give exact information on policy used in quartering workers from the West. Schmeldter is in Oberursel. (p.13)

Use of concentration camp labor did not fit in with the general labor problem at all, because SS would not permit interference with conditions of living quarters (p.13) Denies that the SS engaged in an armament program of their own; his ambition was to have a coordinated, unified organization, and therefore he could not tolerate an SS individual arms industry, as desired by Himmler in 1943 who wanted to produce arms in the concentration camps. All machine tools were occupied anyhow, and he could not have spared the necessary technical personnel for transfer to concentration camps. Thus, Speer suggested that workers of the concentration camps should work in his plants, and that the SS in payment should receive one-fifth of their hourly production, translated into armament products. Speer draws attention to the Fuehrer's protocol, submitted by him to the interrogation, which confirms his statement. Hitler agreed to this solution. Schmeldter will be able to give details of the SS conditions, supervision by SS men in camps as well as in plants where inmates of concentration camps worked. (p.14-15) Factories were generally subordinate to Speer, not to SS, with some exceptions, i.e., the construction of underground storage and plants which was carried out by the SS. As soon as such a plant to operate, it was part of the ordinary industry. (p.16)

Speer claims that, in the interest of armament production, he wanted to keep the Jewish manpower. In Spring of 1942, many Jews were employed in Berlin but that the Gauleiter and the Political posts opposed the employment of Jews in industry, wanted to evacuate them from the city as soon as possible. The Betriebsfuehrer who employed Jews had great difficulty keeping ~~them~~, for Jews were always politically suspect and attacked.

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On his initiative, Bormann released a circular instruction to Gauleiters that no Betriebsfuehrer who employed Jews was to suffer any disadvantages. Speer published a poster showing this Bormann circular in all factories, and this caused much annoyance. (p.17)

Speer cannot remember clearly whether a meeting was held between himself and Himmler's representatives and Sauckel's people concerning the program for evacuation of the Jews. Calls this problem difficult because the Jews were mostly workers in electrical industry: Siemens, A.E.G., and others, in Berlin. Claims his consent was necessary, not for political reasons, but because he had to maintain high production level. Feels certain that he has prolonged the stay of the Jews by his activity, but that he could not alter the course of events in the long run. ( p.17-18)

Believes that the decision to move the Jews out of industry was later made by Goebbels, as Gauleiter of Berlin. Colonel von Nikolai, whose last position was that of armament inspector in Spitzburg, should be able to supply further details. He was in charge of the Arbeitseinsatzamt. ( p.18)

Had similar difficulties with Mutschmann, Gauleiter of Saxony(18).

Organization Todt had no executive power to request manpower from foreign countries; describes the methods used by which O.T. obtained personnel in occupied countries (19). Within Germany, the situation was the same as in the general economy; the labor offices arranged for allocation of workers. But Schmeldter, formerly working in the Arbeitseinsatz of the O.T., can give details, (19-20) also with regard to obtaining workers in France, for the Atlantic Wall. Believes methods varied in Belgium, Holland, and occupied eastern areas.

Speer wishes to correct his statement made yesterday, that he was only in charge of requesting manpower for army needs. Says this was incorrect, for he received the armament department from the OKW, etc. (20). Says he cannot reconstruct exactly in his mind how it was that PW's were working in arms production. He believes that Stalag had transferred the PW's from labor departments to the plants. Thinks Schmeldter knows all the details (21). Does not believe there was an over-all program for the use of prisoners of war (21).