Forced labor was part of the program of the biological war introduced by Hitler. Its objective consisted primarily in reducing the number of populations in the occupied territories, and in using their manpower; in the case of the Jews, it was a stage on the way to ultimate annihilation. In his Memorandum of May 7, 1941, Rosenberg states that

"The Jewish question will have to undergo a decisive solution through the institution of ghettos or labor battalions. Forced labor is to be introduced." 1)

Forced labor began by forcibly separating families, confining to special labor camps, and separating men from women. The food rations were such as to keep them first barely alive and to enable them to carry out their work. Lack of freedom, long working hours, and the most inhuman conditions were designed for the purpose of the extermination of Jews.

As a rule forced labor began with deportation and ended in death chambers established in concentration camps or by torture in labor camps. However, this crime has its specific characteristics which stand out from the number of other crimes committed by the Germans.

One of the direct consequences of the anti-Jewish measures of the German Government was the recurrence of thousands of Jews and their male search for some kind of work — even the unskilled and most menial rejected by German industry. However, a new factor appeared to influence the situation.

As the military operations were approaching, the need for manpower became increasingly urgent. Goering, as chairman of the Four-Year Plan Committee, using his dictatorial power, invited Minister of Armament Walter Funk to take energetic measures for the creation of a large reserve of workers. The press was resounding with plaudits for the inclusion of Jews into the production process.

"It is not a question of Jews being unable to find work in Germany... It has now become a question of Jews not being allowed to be idle." 3)

Though badly in need of manpower and while utilizing Jews for the most difficult labor, the German Government continued its policy of segregation and discrimination even in regard to this category of the Jewish population.

In March, 1939, the President of the German Institute of Labor Placement and Unemployment Insurance declared the following:

"It is not in the interest of the state to leave the labor power of unemployed Jews unused, and perhaps even to have to support them from public funds without receiving any service in return. An effort must be made to employ all unemployed and employable Jews as soon as possible and to combine them with the reserve of German workers for urgent and important state political projects. The employment of Jews shall take place in fields of enterprises of building construction, soil amelioration, etc., separately from others." 4)

Though working under the harshest physical and moral conditions with a minimum remuneration, and under discriminatory laws, Jewish laborers still had some kind of personal freedom. To be sure, their labor was compulsory (Arbeitserzwingung). Forced labor (Arbeitserzwingung) for Jews was introduced in Germany after the outbreak of hostilities against Poland, and in Poland at the end of October 1939, when Jewish laborers were transformed into slaves.

At the end of September 1939, the Gestapo had worked out a detailed plan of dividing the entire Jewish population into labor battalions, supervised by SS men. At the same time, a decree of October 26, 1939 was published in occupied Poland concerning the introduction of compulsory labor for the Polish population in occupied Poland, with the provision that a special decree would be issued with regard to Jews. On the same date a decree was published concerning the introduction of forced labor for the Jewish population of the Government General, providing that Jews were to be assembled in forced labor battalions.

By virtue of this decree, an ordinance was issued on December 12, 1939, regulating forced labor in the territory of the Government General for Jews between the age of 14 to 60. The labor term was fixed at ten years in special labor camps, with a reservation that it was to be prolonged if the conditions also had not been observed. It was also ordered

5) Der Staat in Polen, September 30, 1939.
6) Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouvernements, Section 1, Subsection 2, 1939, p.6.
"Refuse, especially army of choice, should deliver their entire equipment... tools and accessories of those subject to forced labor should, after induction, be at the disposal of the Forced Labor Service."

Failure to register or report for forced labor carried a prison penalty up to ten years. The same punishment applied to members of Jewish Councils when failing to register Jews for forced labor. Male Jews from 13 to 60 years of age were subject to registration.

The difference between compulsory labor and forced labor becomes quite obvious when comparing this decree with the October 26, 1939 decree concerning compulsory labor for Poles. Basically, the difference consisted in the following:

(a) Poles had the right to select their occupation and conclude labor agreements. For that purpose they were to receive labor cards.

(b) Poles who could prove permanent employment useful to the community were not to be called for public work service.

(c) Wages for Poles were provided for "at equitable rates."

(d) The welfare of Poles subject to compulsory labor and that of their families were to be protected as far as possible.

Forced labor for Jews was conceived and established as a punishment. They were forced work on the basis of labor agreements and were classified as a special labor.

7) "Zentralstelle der Generalgouvernements, 1939, p. 326.
8) "A.M.S., 1940, 20. 79, p. 371."
The decree made no provision for their wages; they were deprived of their working equipment (tools) and subject to hard labor up to ten years for any violation of the provisions of this decree. The work of Jews assumed the character of slave labor, the sole feature being lack of freedom in selecting work and in concluding labor agreements. The return of slave labor in even more exaggerated by the

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Dear Chief Director of SS and Police in the Government General for the Occupied Polish Territories, charging the Jewish Councils with conscription, conscription and control of Jewish laborers; the Jewish Councils were also charged with selecting men for labor battalions, and often were required to fill labor quotas beyond their possibilities.

In addition, the Jewish Councils were compelled to send workers to set up barracks for Jewish labor camps and to furnish constrictions with working clothes, shoes, and food until they reached destination.

Three labor groups were introduced under this system: labor battalions, labor camps, and penal camps. The labor battalions were located in the vicinity of towns in which the Jews lived; the labor camps were built in centers where large public works projects were to be carried out and the laborers were brought to those camps for an extended stay; the penal camps were concentration camps destined for those who violated regular forced labor or in any other way violated the forced labor laws. Among these Jews there were skilled workers whom the war industry needed badly.
Frank also admitted it in his diary:

"...just in these territories the Jews had had various skilled workers, and it would be a lot if this manpower could not be usefully exploited."

However, this rational exploitation Frank saw only in that the Jews had to be "...gathered in colonies and had to be employed wherever there was a pressing need."

But Frank's views changed his opinion as to using Jews where there was a need for manpower, since the Jewish population "...must be extracted from the Jewish Jewish citizen, it was to be put to work on roads.

Sending of Jews for compulsory labor went on in an accelerated tempo and was estimated the reserves of Jewish manpower. In this connection is of interest a memorandum of A. Plcker, Governor of Vienna, of November 9, 1940 concerning a telephone conversation he had with General Luber of the Gestapo. In reply to the question of "...how many able-bodied Jews are still available in order to take places for the contemplated case projects," the author of the memorandum basically stated that "...there are not many more Jews available." However, he cautiously called attention to the fact that "...if some should still be available, the Gestapo has no scruples to use the Jews even for the removal of the destroyed synagogues."

Many deportations to Poland had already begun in the fall of 1941. At the same time, the Polish Labor Gazette published overt-official statements to the effect

12) concerning employment of Jews, whereby the author, H. Kosiński, legal expert, presented that

"The German people's sound racial feelings will not allow unreserved participation of the foreign workers in the social improvement of the third Reich. It is necessary to emphasize their racial inferiority as compared to the German race. Workers of alien races are merely servants of the German Reich, and as such, not entitled to the privileges enjoyed by German workers."

According to this decree (October 22, 1941) Jews were barred from the German working community and thus excluded from legislation protecting German workers.

They could not work as apprentices and were not entitled to special pay for work on Sundays, holidays or overtime work; they received no pay for time off caused by illness or childbirth. Jews were excluded from old age security, unemployment, and limited to the barest maintenance, and they could be discharged on 24 hours' notice. Also, they were forced to work in segregated groups and had to accept whatever work was assigned to them by official employment agencies, regardless of the nature of the work or its location.

Jewish labor service camps were set up very rapidly all over Germany. In the vicinity of Berlin separate barracks were built for Jews working on road crews under

17) Direktive der Reichsregierung, April 26, 1942.
18) Direktive der Reichsregierung, November 25, 1942.
On November 26, 1940, the Plenipotentiary General for Warsaw sent a secret circular to the President of the "Marcel" Employment Offices requesting exchange of Jews still in the Baltic against Polish laborers who in turn were to be deported. The Jews were to be deported on a satellite system. The circular also states that as a rule this should first be applied to Jews engaged in metal work. The remaining skilled Jewish laborers will be left until their Polish replacements have become sufficiently familiar with the work.

In addition, in February, 1943, Hitler, as Reich Leader of the SS, in agreement with the Plenipotentiary General for Warsaw and the Polish Minister for Occupations and Maritime, for reasons concerning the security of the State, decided to remove all Jews who were still working freely and not in camps and either transferred them to a labor camp or collected them for removal.

In France the deportations of Jews to labor camps were announced by an edict of General von Stulpnagel:

"A large number of criminal Juden-Bolschewist elements will be deported to forced labor in the Eastern territories."

Similar measures were introduced by the occupation authorities in other occupied countries as well. Jews were deported to Poland where they were placed in 27 labor camps.

General Entwistle, in his report (which as mentioned above) states that at first the SS and Police leaders set up 27 camps and that Jewish laborers, under the most difficult conditions, carried out the task assigned them in building yards at a distance of 160 km. He also states that Jews worked by the Star of David were sent to perform other tasks. But laborer as Jewish laborers were not placed in camps, because of shortage of the latter, the authorities came across all sorts of improper means on the part of the Jews. Of such crimes Gen. Entwistle particularly stresses.

There were, in order to acquire any certificate of labor, not only demanded all wages, but even paid them themselves. For the benefit of the German war it was deemed necessary to interfere most energetically to stop these actions. Perhaps the German have understood the horror faced by starved and compelled people who gave away everything they owned in order to save their lives at least for a while. Thus for the triumph of right and justice, all labor camps were closed.
affiliated houses by seven or administrative offices were declared illegal.

One of the above supervisors, Walter Fischel, in a sworn statement verifies
above the conditions which prevailed in the camp.

"I am told that these women were standing near the oven, I
had to drive them back to their work. And this smoke the poor women were
so badly affected against the cold. As they only had thin rails on their
heads. Most of these people had no stockings or even shoes. The bodies,
their legs were frozen blue and had shabby clothing and they are half-naked. The women received no food all day, they were
left in the snow. I could not bear to see the sufferings of the women..."

In order to create a facade of supervisors of these camps, the Nazis sent
5,200 Israelis to special schools for training in the art of administration of these
who to lesser extent work. The prison work in Poland was so pitiful.
After the Nazis drove the peasants of the Jews together with Polish to drain the
Paddie Swamps under the superintendence of the Saxons. In connection with this work
reports have been received from Srodek to the offices there:

"Thousands of these Jews are dying every day from starvation and dysentery,
when a continuous stream of new arrivals fills the camps of the Jewish slave laborers. The camps are being cleared in con-
nection with the deportations the German military authorities are
constructing in various sections of occupied Poland;"

By the end of 1943 only about 100,000 Jews remained in the labor camps of
Poland. They were concentrated in special labor camps in Galicia, Galicia, and the

With these divisions. They were subject to military discipline and had to work.

[16] In addition to the above statements was attached an order of the 11th and
Polish Legion in the Eastern Galicia, concerning disposition of Jewish labor.
It provided for shaving - special instruction on sexes; food - main meals, breakfast
and supper; no type of food, however, has not been provided for;
clamping of payments - amounting as of Nov. 1, 1942 the Jewish laborers will not
receive any payment in cash, clothing - the Jewish laborers will be permitted
to take with them only clothing, especially winter clothes.
seven days a week, with one hour rest during the day and not more than five hours sleep during the night. During their "free" rest hour they were permitted to take walks, but not more than two persons together.

The Jewish labor camps were cut off from the outside world. There was no cultural life. The slightest infraction of camp regulations was punished by death. The interned were treated in the most inhuman fashion. To the superiors they represented no individuals but numbers under which they were identified. Jews were killed not only for infraction of camp regulations, such as walking on the sidewalk instead of the pavement, unauthorized change of position in a factory, or absence from work; reasons for killing were also a lingering illness or loss of working capacity. This has been testified also by Jan Laszewski who cites the following words of one of the leaders of the Jewish underground:

"Those who are capable of any effort are used for forced labor. The others are murdered by quotas. First, the sick and aged, then the unemployed, then those whose work is not directly connected with the German war needs; finally, those who are ready, in groups, in factories. Ultimately, they intend to kill us all."

Laszewski, whose name will forever be connected with the establishment of slavery in the first half of the twentieth century, in one of his orders

described in the following words the conditions under which the slaves were to live:

"All the men must be fed, sheltered, and treated in such a way as to exploit them to the highest possible extent at the lowest possible source of expenditure." 239 (italics ours).

This, however, was the general minimum program for non-Jewish workers.

For Jews a minimum program was not enough, which stopped neither before torture nor extermination.