

**TOTALNÍ NAsAZENÍ: ČEŠI NA PRACÍCH V NĚMECKU, 1939–1945.** By *František Mainuš*. Brno: Universita J. E. Purkyně, 1970. 223 pp. Kčs. 32.

The scholarly literature on the foreign labor contribution to the Nazi war economy is comparatively small. The only comprehensive survey is Edward L. Homze's *Foreign Labor in Nazi Germany*. The monographs by Eva Seeber, Władysław Rusiński, and B. A. Sijés deal respectively with Polish and Dutch labor drafted for work in the Reich. In his study Mainuš seeks to provide a treatment of the same theme covering the recruitment and use of the Czech labor force in great detail. The book is divided into two main parts. The first surveys the Czech labor program. At the outset, recruitment for Germany was ostensibly voluntary. The author argues that, before the war, unemployment and the promise of higher income persuaded the Czech workers to seek job opportunities in Germany. With the outbreak of the war, Germany asserted increasing control over the Czech labor market. By 1942, total mobilization of Czech manpower was accomplished, mainly by the pressure of threats and police methods. The second part deals with the various aspects of the working and living conditions of some six hundred thousand Czech workers employed in the Reich from 1939 to 1945.

This account makes it easy to familiarize oneself with a body of detailed factual information on every phase of the Nazi foreign labor program. The author has carefully digested the great amount of public and private evidence and has gathered his material from a variety of archives. The volume is enriched by a list of the Czech workers who died in the Reich in 1943 and 1944, twenty-two illustrations of various documents, and many valuable tables. There are indexes of persons and places, and a synopsis in German.

Although Mainuš has shown great industry in going through the varied unpublished sources, the study is the work of a chronicler rather than a historian. It is strong in description, but makes little attempt to analyze the German labor practices or the administration and operation of the program in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Nor are we given analysis of the Czech labor market or of the relation of the labor movement and the National Socialist policies to the Czech national program. There is practically no conclusion.

This is an informed monograph that gathers together a mass of material and provides a foundation for further work. It presents a welcome addition to the literature on this still-neglected subject.

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**JUDENRAT: THE JEWISH COUNCILS IN EASTERN EUROPE UNDER NAZI OCCUPATION.** By *Isaiah Trunk*. Introduction by *Jacob Robinson*. New York: Macmillan, 1972. xxxv, 664 pp. \$14.95.

This monumental monograph on 405 Jewish settlements in German-occupied Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Belorussia, and Ukraine greatly supplements our knowledge of the particularly tragic aspects of the Holocaust and may rank together with the works of Hilger and Reitlinger among the best scholarly accounts of the extermination of Eastern Jewry during World War II.

Of the twenty-one coherently and thoroughly researched chapters, the most crucial is chapter 16, "The Strategy and Tactics of the Councils Toward German Authorities." The Jewish Councils were in a way a continuation of the prewar

religious communities (*Kehilas*), a modern version of the autonomous Jewish Councils of the Four Lands in the pre-partition Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. As Dr. Trunk correctly stresses, "The horrible difference between the *Kehila* bodies of the past and the Jewish Council was that for the first time in . . . history a Jewish organ was forced to help a foreign, criminal regime to destroy coreligionists."

An equally serious aspect of the dilemma before the Jewish Councils was their enforced services for the Nazi war machine. It seems that the "rescue through work" policy of such ghetto bosses as Rumkowski (Łódź), Gens (Vilna), and Merin (Eastern Upper Silesia) substantially contributed to the prolongation of the German military effort without producing the anticipated reward. Although one can appreciate the anxiety of the Jewish leadership "crippled by the nightmare of collective responsibility mercilessly imposed" by the Nazis, it is impossible to condone appeals such as that of the overzealous Gens, who claimed: "While working for ghetto industry or for the commandos [Germans] . . . we have . . . shown that we are very useful and irreplaceable. Under present war conditions, work in general and work for the German army in particular is the command of the hour." Or the equally obnoxious bragging by Rumkowski about his "exemplary ghetto": "I have forty thousand hands for work in the ghetto and this is my gold mine." It makes one wonder about the role Jewish Łódź played, until its liquidation in August 1944, as a major industrial enterprise whose "full working capacity was concentrated on executing mainly orders of the *Wehrmacht*." In view of the humiliating participation of the Jewish Councils in the so-called resettlement, it rather seems that any shortening of the war by active or passive resistance to the Germans might have saved at least some Jewish lives, thus proving the wisdom of Maimonides's twelfth-century ruling, "If pagans should tell them [the Jews] 'Give us one of yours and we shall kill him, otherwise we shall kill all of you,' they should all be killed and not a single Jewish soul should be delivered."

Surely our admiration is owed to the "folly" of the Warsaw heroes of the Uprising of April 1943 and the fighters of the minor Eastern ghettos, to the fallen leaders of the Jewish underground, and to the fearless resisters of the Lwów and Nowogródek Councils who preferred death to cooperation with the Nazis. *Gloria victis!* It is their courage and not the well-meaning but shortsighted prudence of Dr. Adam Czerniakow (of Warsaw) or of Ephraim Barash (of Białystok) that serves as a constant inspiration to the Israeli patriots.

This great book is seriously marred by one shortcoming—its bitterly one-sided treatment of the complex Jewish-Polish relationship. Together with many democrats I actively deplored anti-Semitic outbursts of Polish ultranationalists. Fortunately, however, this ugly racism was greatly subdued during Poland's struggle against the Nazis. Numerous Jewish testimonies proving that tens of thousands of Poles did risk their lives to save tens of thousands of Jews from German extermination are overlooked by the author, who overemphasizes the "hostile environment" and the allegedly anti-Jewish character of the official Polish underground. (See, for example, the documentary accounts by Bartoszewski and Lewin, Berenstein and Rutkowski, Chciuk, Friedman, and Iranek-Osmecki.)

Trunk wrongly maintains that the Soviet partisan units were the "only ones which were not openly hostile to escapees from the ghettos." In fact the Polish Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*) was accused by Nazis and by the Polish extremists of the NSZ (*Narodowe Siły Zbrojne*) of consistently being pro-Jewish. Similarly

the author's statement that the "Jewish underground movement could not rely on direct aid from any institution abroad, while the non-Jewish resistance groups systematically received arms, manpower, training, and money from their respective governments-in-exile in London" requires a basic qualification. As a special envoy of the Polish wartime authorities in London, this reviewer, though fully aware of insufficient support on the part of the West (including Western Jewry!), was, like many of his fellow paratroopers, personally involved in delivering financial aid to the Jewish underground's representatives: "Borowski," who was Adolf Berman of the Jewish National Committee (Zionist), and "Mikołaj," the late Dr. Leon Fajner of the Bund (Jewish Socialist Labor).

Only one anti-Polish generalization is substantiated by a (single) testimony, that of a Shmuel Lerer, with which Trunk chose to conclude his chapter 17, "The Attitude of the Councils Toward Physical Resistance," implying that Leib Felhendler, the heroic leader of the October 1943 Sobibor revolt, "was killed by some[?]" partisans of the Polish secret army (*Armia Krajowa*, A.K.) in April 1945."

The refusal of the unintelligent officials in Warsaw to give Isaiah Trunk "access to the archives of present-day Poland" is regrettable, but does the author of this otherwise remarkable work believe that justice to the Jewish cause is best served by disregarding the countless Polish friends?

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**THE BULGARIAN JEWS AND THE FINAL SOLUTION, 1940–1944.** By *Frederick B. Chary*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972. xiv, 246 pp. \$9.95.

A detailed study of the fate of Jews in Bulgaria during World War II is made in this book. The author surveys step by step the efforts of Nazi Germany to enforce its own solution of the question, the behavior of Bulgarian authorities during the period, and the opposition they faced in attempting to impose the "final solution." Bulgaria was the only country in occupied Europe where the Jewish population was preserved intact. This indisputable fact poses the logical question: who saved the Bulgarian Jews? Chary endeavors to supply the answer.

The author makes use of a strikingly wide range of sources. His investigations took him to numerous archives in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Israel. There he examined almost the whole literature available, as well as published memoirs, and took interviews from contemporaries of the events—Bulgarians, Jews, and others, and even Hitler's envoy to Bulgaria, the German minister plenipotentiary Beckerle. The author did his best to find all possible sources of information.

On the basis of his broad knowledge of all aspects of the question, Chary offers his analysis. Facts are put forward in great detail, and events are carefully followed up. A picture is outlined of the country's complicated political life and of the strife among diverse groups, which also had its impact on the status of Bulgarian Jews. The various trends and influences are dealt with in detail and with precision.

Considering the complicated nature of the problem and the numerous factors that influenced the fate of the Jews in Bulgaria, the author's conclusion could profit from a certain amount of correction. The main arguments in support of this statement are supplied by some insufficiently used information related to the actions