ALBERT SPEER AT NUREMBERG

THESIS

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By

Diane K. DeWaters, B.A.
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This thesis examines Albert Speer, minister of armaments in Germany during World War II, and the charges against him during the trial of the major war criminals in Nuremberg, Germany, 1945-1946. This thesis portrays Albert Speer as a good man enticed by the power of his position and subsequently playing a role in the crimes of the Third Reich. Primary sources included the Nuremberg Trial proceedings published by the International Military Tribunal and Speer's books, *Inside the Third Reich*; *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*; and *Infiltration*. The thesis has six chapters: preface, biography, the charges against Speer, the verdict, the aftermath concerning his time in Spandau Prison, and a conclusion. Albert Speer accepted his guilt, yet came to resent his imprisonment and questioned the validity of the trial.
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CHAPTER I
PREFACE

From the perspective of fifty years after the end of World War II, the Nazi era appears as a catastrophic period. In 1945 Justice Robert H. Jackson, chief American prosecutor at Nuremberg said, "Our case against the major defendants is concerned with the Nazi master plan, not with individual barbarities and perversions which occurred independently of any central plan." The victorious allies accused the defendants of all of the evils of the Nazi regime, and they became a picture of the era as a whole. Those defendants became a metaphor of that evil time.

The allies tried individuals for the crimes of the Nazi regime. Whether justice was promoted when the Allies tried the main defendants together in an atmosphere set by Justice Jackson's tone in his opening remarks of November 21, 1945 is less clear. In describing the crimes against the Jews he said:

Here Nazi degeneracy reached its nadir. I dislike to encumber your records with such morbid tales, but we are in the grim business of trying men as criminals... Our proof will be disgusting, and you will say I have robbed you of your sleep. But these are the things

that have turned the stomach of the world and set every civilized hand against Nazi Germany.2

One of the major war criminals tried at Nuremberg was Albert Speer. In February, 1942, Fritz Todt, the first Reich Minister of Armaments and Munitions was killed in a plane crash (Speer had been Hitler's primary architect and became Armaments Minister because he was in the right place at the right time). As Hitler's Armaments Minister Speer was tried, convicted, and spent twenty years in prison.

Speer discussed his appointment in his memoirs:

One can only wonder at the recklessness and the frivolity with which Hitler appointed me to one of these three or four ministries on which the existence of his state depended. I was a complete outsider to the army, to the party, and to industry. Never in my life had I had anything to do with military weapons, for I had never been a soldier and up to the time of my appointment had never even used a rifle as a hunter. To be sure, it was in keeping with Hitler's dilettantism that he preferred to choose nonspecialists as his associates. After all, he had already appointed a wine salesman as his Foreign Minister, his party philosopher as his Minister for Eastern Affairs, and an erstwhile fighter pilot as overseer of the entire economy. Now he was picking an architect of all people to be his Minister of Armaments. Undoubtedly Hitler preferred to fill positions of leadership with laymen. All his life he respected but distrusted professionals such as, for example, [Hjalmar] Schacht.3

This thesis will examine what the Nazi regime did to Albert Speer. It contends that Hitler took an essentially good man and enticed him with power that his pre-war life

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would probably never have given him. He received a power which blinded him to the realities of his actions. Speer’s critics—and his judges at Nuremberg—said that as Minister of Armaments he simply found his real niche in life, one to which he was eminently suited, both morally and technically. This thesis will claim that the actions of Albert Speer show him to have been a good man who was enticed by the dark side of life, a man who strayed from his ideals in order to achieve something great. He was caught in a juxtaposition of aspirations, the good leading to the bad in order to achieve the greater good. One scholar, Peter Viereck, states that "the beautiful convenience of the German soul is that it enables one (like Goethe’s caddish Faust) to commit a crime and yet feel ecstatic and romantic about it." Speer, like Faust, eventually understood what evil was. Viereck, still discussing Faust added:

The romantic view of the demonic is that the genius and superman and Fuehrer, whether individual or nation, whether in art of foreign politics, are justified in breaking all law—artistic, moral, political or international. Goethe is claimed as the fountainhead of this view, with some justification in the case of the early Faust. But such elements were mostly repudiated in Part Two of Goethe’s Faust. The wiser, more classical Goethe repudiated the irresponsible romanticism of his ‘Storm and Stress’ period.

Karl Jaspers, writing about German guilt, said that


[5] Ibid. 199.
he distinguished between four concepts of German guilt—criminal guilt, political guilt, moral guilt and, most importantly, metaphysical guilt. "There exists a solidarity among men as human beings that makes each co-responsible for every wrong and every injustice, especially for crimes committed in his presence or with his knowledge. If I fail to do whatever I can to prevent them, I too am guilty."  

Albert Speer did not dispute his criminal or political guilt. After his indictment at Nuremberg on October 20, 1945 he told Dr. G.M. Gilbert, the prison psychologist, "the trial is necessary. There is a common responsibility for such horrible crimes even in an authoritarian system."  

What Speer did do, at the time of Nuremberg Trial, was to reject the moral and metaphysical guilt which Karl Jaspers describes. 

There are rich sources for the life of Albert Speer. His own memoirs, *Inside the Third Reich*, are an autobiographical look, primarily at the Nazi years 1933-1945, but they also discuss his earlier years and his life as a husband and father. His book *Spandau--The Secret Papers* recounts his twenty years of imprisonment with a great deal of looking back and soul searching. His last book, *Infiltration*, discusses Heinrich Himmler and the dealings of the SS as it

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7Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary*, 5.
attempted to build its own industrial empire separate from that being created by the Reich. Volume XVI of the International Military Tribunal's Trial of the Major War Criminals is the best source of information on the charges against, and subsequent trial of, Albert Speer. The verbatim report of the examination and cross-examination of Speer on June 20 and June 21, 1946, is a good reflection of those conducting the trial and of the trial itself. The Russian Prosecutor, General Raginsky's, cross-examination of Speer was often harsh and abrupt, and indicated that, for the Russians anyway, Speer was guilty until proven innocent.

Many of the documents presented in the trial were from Speer's own records. Toward the end of the war, he chose not to destroy them, feeling that there was little incriminating evidence within them and that these records would be useful for the new government of Germany in its attempts to rebuild industry. In *Spandau*, he stated that, with the end of the war nearing,

I had my assistants bring me piles of documents: records of conferences with Hitler, letters or decisions of Central Planning, and so on. Usually stretched out on my bed, I leafed through those documents at random to find passages that might seem incriminating . . . I did not have any of the documents destroyed. On the contrary, I was reassured and ordered that my files be preserved in a safe place.8

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Also used in the trial were minutes from the Central Planning Board. Speer was one of three members of that board, and much of what was discussed there concerned both German workers and foreign workers. The prosecution used those minutes. Records from the Office of the Plenipotentiary General for the Allocation of Labor (headed by Fritz Sauckel) were used by the prosecution to show Speer's knowledge of the use of foreign workers and, particularly, his constant requests for more of those workers.

The biographical information on Albert Speer includes information on the man who introduced Speer to the Nazi Party, Joseph Goebbels. As Matthias Schmidt says, "The Speer Era had begun when the Goebbels press said, 'he has the traits of youth in the best sense of the word, he is endowed with clear, calm reason, a passion for creative action, and an optimism that neither knows nor tolerates any doubts about success."\(^9\)

This thesis will also illustrate the successes of the Speer Ministry with armaments production and economic centralization. Two of the primary sources used are the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, *The Effects of Strategic Bombing on the German War Economy* written in 1945 (using a great deal of material acquired from Speer's


After Speer's biography is discussed in this thesis, the charges which were brought against Albert Speer by a court made up of the victors will be examined. The indictments were handed down in 1946 by a joint tribunal of an American, French, Russian and English judges. The trial was held in Nuremberg, Germany and became known as the Trial of the Major War Criminals. Two of the most powerful men within the Nazi regime were Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS and Hermann Goering, head of the Four-Year Plan. Both of these men will be discussed, particularly in their interactions with Speer as Armaments Minister.

Following that chapter is one on the defense which Speer and his lawyer, Hans Flächsner used. Matthias Schmidt says that "Flächsner also achieved his goal of presenting Speer to the court as an artist who had become a politician in spite of himself."\(^{10}\)

The final chapter concerns the verdict and its aftermath, Speer's imprisonment in Spandau Prison in Berlin. That chapter examines the twenty years Speer had to think about his earlier years and how he smuggled out notes which he later turned into the three books mentioned above. The conclusion discusses what Speer learned in Spandau about himself and his conclusions on the effectiveness of the

\(^{10}\)Ibid. 158.
Nuremberg Trial. He entered the prison July 18, 1947 and left on October 1, 1966. The book about Spandau was actually a diary which he kept during that time. Of it he said in 1975, "Diaries are usually the accompaniment of a lived life. This one stands in place of a life."\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11}Speer, \textit{Spandau}, xiv.
Albert Speer was born in Mannheim, Germany on March 19, 1905, into an upper middle-class family. His father and grandfather before him were architects. Although he had an aptitude for mathematics, subtle family pressure made him choose architecture as a profession. Speer studied at the Institute of Technology in Karlsruhe, the Institute of Technology in Munich, and the Institute of Technology in Berlin-Charlottenburg where he graduated in 1927. In 1928 he became an assistant at the Institute in Berlin-Charlottenburg and was financially able to marry Margarete Weber.1

In spite of the upheaval of World War I and the hardships of inflation through the early 1920s, Speer’s early years were in no way exceptional and were definitely non-political. Speer says:

In spite of the Revolution which had brought in the Weimar Republic, it was still impressed on us that the distribution of power in society and the traditional authorities were part of the God-given order of things. In school, there could be no criticism of courses or subject matter, let alone of the ruling powers in the

1Speer, Third Reich, 12.
state. Moreover, there were no subjects such as sociology which might have sharpened our political judgments.  

Speer further states that politics were not discussed at home. He had an indifference to politics that ignored even his father's avid pan-European ideas.

Speer's political awakening occurred in 1930, the same year Hitler's National Socialist Party (NSDAP) won 107 seats in a Reichstag election. Speer attended a meeting where Hitler spoke to a large gathering of university students. Weeks later Speer heard Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Propaganda Chief, speak at a large rally. While "repelled" by Goebbels, Speer nevertheless joined the Party in early 1930. He says, "It was an utterly undramatic decision. Then and ever afterward I scarcely felt myself to be a member of a political party. I was not choosing the NSDAP, but becoming a follower of Hitler." This point is important, because Speer maintains throughout his memoirs that he was not a political man. Everything he did for the Party, as an architect, as Hitler's architect, and as a minister was motivated by his feelings for Hitler. He claims that he was a Nazi because of Hitler, not because of any strong feeling for Party ideology. Matthias Schmidt refutes this in his book, Albert Speer: The End of a Myth. Schmidt is openly

\[2\] Speer, Third Reich, 8.

\[3\] Ibid. 17.
critical of Speer and his self-righteousness and claims that Speer eventually had designs to become Hitler's successor. "Minister Speer made no secret of his aspiration when speaking to others. He evidently felt so secure about his position in the Nazi hierarchy that he dared to voice these both ambitious and dangerous thoughts."\(^4\) It could be argued, however, that these thoughts did not occur until about 1942 or 1943. By then he had a taste of political life and may have decided that it was an alternative which suited him better than architecture. He may also, by this time, have felt that he could do a better job than many of those that he saw around him. He does admit in his memoirs that he had a few conversations with Field Marshall Milch on the possibility of becoming Hitler's successor.

While Speer may not have taken his party membership seriously, it would lead him down a road to disillusionment, failure, and ultimately, imprisonment. "By entering Hitler's party I had already, in essence, assumed a responsibility that led directly to the brutalities of forced labor, to the destruction of war, and to the deaths of those millions of so-called undesirable stock--to the crushing of justice and the elevation of every evil."\(^5\)

As a party member, Speer did a few small architectural jobs for local organizations. He had no major commissions

\(^4\)Schmidt, *Speer*, 83.

until he was recommended to Goebbels. His first big break within the Party element was rebuilding the Ministry of Propaganda for Goebbels in 1933. He then designed two party rallies, one of which was the Nuremberg rally of 1934. This rally was noted for its first use of the gigantic eagle which had a wingspan of over a hundred feet. It was at this point that Speer was noticed by Hitler, who later said:

You attracted my notice during our rounds. I was looking for an architect to whom I could entrust my building plans. I wanted someone young; for as you know these plans extend far into the future. I need someone who will be able to continue after my death with the authority I have conferred on him. I saw you as that man.  

Speer's reaction to Hitler's attention was probably a little more emotional than the average young architect who had just been given his first large commission. "After years of frustrated efforts I was wild to accomplish things—and twenty-eight years old. For the commission to do a great building I would have sold my soul like Faust. Now I had my Mephistopheles. He seemed no less engaging than Goethe's."  

By 1934 Speer had become Hitler's primary architect and by his own words a member of the inner circle. Hitler's interest in architecture was used, according to Speer, to sometimes distract the fuhrer from disturbing or emotional events. Hitler's entourage would call Speer and have him hurry over to show Hitler a new design, such as happened on

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6Ibid. 31.
7Ibid. 31.
July 1, 1934, after the Rohem Putsch. 8 Hitler was a much calmer man than he appeared to be when he dealt with politics, when dealing with art in any form, but particularly with architecture. Speer was to work on many large projects for Hitler. Most of them, such as the Nuremberg Stadium which was to seat 400,000 were never started. Another, the rebuilding of Berlin which, according to Hitler, was to be Speer's greatest assignment, was never finished. Hitler's ideas for Berlin were grandiose and he was inspired by the Champs Elysees in Paris with its Arc de Triomphe. Hitler wanted a similar avenue in Berlin, only seventy feet wider than the Champs Elysees and two and a half times the length. 9

When Albert Speer became head of Armaments and Munitions, a new era began. It started with the creation of the Central Planning Agency. The Wehrmacht, the Reichsbank, industries, and all agencies who used raw materials and other critical materials were joined together in this agency. While the Wehrmacht had priority over orders, Speer's ministry took complete control of procurement and distribution of supplies. Plants which were uneconomical were shut down. Industry was encouraged to develop mechanized production to ease the manpower shortage and to cut wastefulness. By July of 1942 arms and ammunition production had increased by 55 percent over 1939 figures. By the middle of 1943 tank production had

8Ibid. 51.

9Ibid. 197.
increased 250 percent and aircraft 60 percent over the 1939 figures. In the beginning, Speer maintains, that Hitler's blessing allowed little to stand in his way. "For a considerable time I found myself moving in a kind of vacuum that offered no resistance whatsoever. Within the widest limits I could practically do as I pleased." It was owing to Speer that the biggest year of German manufacture of arms was 1944; only ten months before the end of the war, German production of airplanes and munitions reached an all-time high despite the thousands of bombers attacking German cities around the clock." An even more amazing fact is that in 1944 seven times as many weapons of all kinds were produced than in 1942. The appendix shows the increase in the production of all types of German aircraft from 1939-1944. It also shows the dramatic increase in Panzer production from 1940-1944.

Speer was able to increase productivity right up through the end of 1944, but allied bombing raids had by then brought heavy armament production to a halt. As William Manchester wrote in The Arms of Krupp, "The 800-acre Krupp plant [was] bombarded from the air for the fifty-fifth time. . . ."
raid brought about 100 percent stoppage of production in the Krupp works. Speer himself is much concerned and worried about it."\(^{14}\) The lack of fuel finally brought the armaments production to a halt. Even though some raw materials could be scraped together, it was impossible to get them to production plants, and once tanks and planes were produced there was no fuel to run them.

While it can be argued that Speer's excellent management of the Department of Munitions prolonged the war, his primary guilt lay in his use of foreign labor, prisoners-of-war, and concentration camp internees. The production figures brought up during his trial illustrate the successes of which Speer was obviously proud and the public's view of it as a form of guilt.

I succeeded up to that time (1944), in spite of bombing attacks, in maintaining a constant rise in production. If I may express it in figures, this was so great that in the year 1944 I could completely re-equip 130 infantry divisions and 40 armored divisions. That involved new equipment for 2 million men. This figure would have been 30 percent higher had it not been for the bombing attacks. We reached our production peak for the entire war in August 1944 for munitions; in September 1944 for aircraft; and in December 1944 for ordnance and the new U-boats. The new weapons were to be put into use a few months later, probably in February or March of 1945. I may mention only the jet planes which had already been announced in the press, the new U-boats, the new antiaircraft installations, et cetera.\(^{15}\)


To understand Speer's success with the war economy, it is important to look at the structures that were in place when he became minister. The German economy had not been extensively altered to handle a total war. In 1938 over twenty-nine percent of all industrial output was still devoted to the private sector's needs. Germany's economy for war was still seen as fulfilling the needs for blitzkrieg warfare and then using the industrial base of the conquered territory. In his book on the German war economy, Alfred Mierzejewski sums up Hitler's ambitious economic concepts:

Hitler applied them to his imperialist dreams by conceiving of a series of short, sharp wars of territorial conquest culminating in the final titanic confrontation with the Soviet Union. At the outset, the economy would generate only the military power necessary to defeat their initial opponents, who would be weak and isolated. The preliminary conquests would not only clear Germany's strategic rear but also enhance its economic position.16

There were five groups in 1938 vying to head the economy. The Nazi Party itself attempted to control the economy and the national industrial base. Eventually, this particular power base went to the Gau (district) structure representing the Party. The second was the military whose claim was inherently weak because each of the three branches of the service had its own material and production needs. The third was the Reich Ministry of Economics. While the top layer of

this ministry had a simple structure, the middle and lower levels had so many branches and sub-sections that it actually became a power base for industry. This fourth group, industrial interest groups and cartels, were able to use the lower levels to suit their own purposes without interference from the top level. The fifth group was Goering’s Four-Year-Plan personnel, which because of poor management eventually were incorporated into the Reich Ministry of Economics. The war economy was helpful to Hitler in that it created depression-era jobs and eventually a strong military. Because the economy lacked a strong central administration, however, it quickly reached a plateau beyond which it could no longer grow or even function. 17

When Speer became minister in 1942 one of his first priorities was to reform steel allocation. Control and distribution of items such as coal, iron ore, and transportation space was important to Speer’s reform of the supply-and-demand procedures in place. Distribution was based on anticipated production, thus speeding up the entire process. 18

In March of 1942, Speer created his committees and rings system of industrial operation. As the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey reported:

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid. 11.
He established separate bodies, the Committees and Rings, to control each munitions and components industry separately, and gave them a large measure of autonomy. These bodies consisted of the best men Speer could find in each field of armament. Their job was to extend the most efficient production methods over the whole field, to simplify product design and parts, to lower labor and material costs by lowering quality specifications, and to put as many industries as possible on a rationalized mass production basis.¹⁹

It was Speer's intent to make use of the creativity and energy of industry. Speer also moved on three goals that Todt, his predecessor, had set. These were introducing mass production techniques, concentrating production in the most efficient factories, and stopping the development of projects that would not quickly mature.²⁰

Speer was hindered by two major problems. First, his control did not extend to iron production because it was under the Armaments Supply Office. The second problem was that the heads of the Gaus, the Gauleiters, were very much against moving workers from their districts to another in spite of wartime economic needs. They construed efforts to do so as an infringement on their power. So Speer requested that Hitler name a plenipotentiary of labor, responsible to Speer under armament production. Speer suggested that it be a Gauleiter in order to appease the disgruntled group,

¹⁹United States Department of the Army, U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. The Effects of Strategic Bombing on the Germany War Economy (U.S. Economic Effects Division: 1945), 141.

²⁰Mierzejewski, Collapse, 7.
someone who could deal effectively with his peers. Hitler agreed but chose one of Bormann’s candidates, Fritz Sauckel, Gauleiter of Thuringia. At first, Sauckel and Speer cooperated without problems. Speer said, "Sauckel gave us his pledge to eliminate all labor shortages and to provide replacements for specialists drafted into the services. For my part, I helped Sauckel gain authority and supported him wherever I could."21

For Speer the situation worsened when Hitler made Sauckel’s position independent of Speer’s ministry. Sauckel soon strengthened his position, and as Matthias Schmidt points out, "the two men kept squabbling about the problem of foreign laborers. Their cooperation was marked by mutual antipathy and was sustained only by the requirements of their positions."22 While being interrogated by the Americans in July, 1945, Speer said, "Sauckel was one of the few who succeeded in misinforming Adolf Hitler so systematically about me that his decisions almost always went against me. In his personal attitude toward me, Sauckel was often quite hateful."23

The next phase of Speer’s ministry came about as a direct result of the war. The disaster at Stalingrad, allied victories in Africa, and, after the end of 1942, allied air

21Speer, Third Reich, 219.
22Schmidt, Speer, 156.
23Ibid. 157.
attacks, all showed the need to increase production of military supplies. For Speer this meant, first, an increase in industrial production and, second, a reduction in civilian consumption. As the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey reports however, it was not easy to meet those aims.

The latter [i.e. reducing civilian consumption] was blocked by many hindrances. The gauleiters, who before protested vigorously every infringement upon civilian standards, continued their opposition even in the hour of their greatest peril. In spite of all solemn declarations about the necessity of Spartan life, there was not, in 1943, a marked reduction in the production of civilian goods. Though the total civilian outlay declined somewhat, the resources freed here and there by reduction of civilian consumption were far from sufficient to support the desired increases of armament production.24

There were three specific emergencies which strengthened Speer's power and completed the centralizing of his planning and controlling bureaucracy. The first was the Allied bombing of the ball-bearing plants at Schweinfurt in 1943. The second, also in 1943, was a series of air attacks on airframe plants in Germany and Austria. The third was in May of 1944 when synthetic fuel plants in central Germany were heavily bombed. By this time, Speer had obtained control over air armaments and with the emergencies created by these three bombing offensives, he was able to further consolidate wartime production under his ministry. He did it by responding to the emergencies rapidly and fixing the resultant problems. The bombing of the airframe factories,

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eventually resulted, for example, in the doubling of fighter plane production.

Even up until January of 1945, Speer's munitions industries were successful enough that London actually experienced increased bombing over the six to seven month period before that date. The *New York Times* on January 9, 1945 reported:

> German V-Bomb attacks on Britain are, according to German broadcast today being stepped up. If the acceleration that the enemy talks about materializes, it may bring the weight of the assault back to the peak reached last June and July. Already it has been unofficially estimated that up to 100 V-Bombs have been directed at Britain during recent 24-hour periods.

The bombings of industry, rail lines, and fuel plants were the beginning of the end for industrial production. Along with these attacks were the loss of territory owing to enemy advances and the accompanying loss of labor and raw materials as well as the deaths of industrial workers in bombings. Indirect causes, such as having to use manpower just for restoring and cleaning up bombed industries, also contributed to a decrease in production. From 1943 on, air force fighter pilots were not well-trained, thus accounting for a less effective defense of industries. The Bombing Survey reports that,

> By 1945 the situation had deteriorated to such an extent that 4,000 sorties daily by the Allies could be answered by only 300 sorties from the German air force, which was losing aircraft in air combat at a rate of 6 or 7 to 1. By spring, the air force could obtain only
6,000 tons of aviation gas monthly, in contrast to
total consumption of 195,000 tons the previous May.25

At the beginning of Speer's ministry, one person who
cooperated with him was Joseph Goebbels. As propaganda
minister, Goebbels repeatedly called for total economic
mobilization to meet wartime demands. During the Speer
ministry, however, he vacillated between championing Speer
and fearing Speer's increased authority.

Born Paul Joseph Goebbels in Rheydt, Germany in 1897 of
Catholic parents. He had a deformity (clubfoot or crippled
leg) from childhood on and the stigma of not being physically
attractive created lifelong suffering. He used his
intelligence, however, to get him where physical health and
beauty could not. An early member of the Nazi Party,
Goebbels, by 1933, had become Propaganda Minister.

He regarded his role in this way:

In itself propaganda does not possess any set of
fundamental methods. It has but one goal, and in
politics this goal always revolves around one point:
the conquest of the masses. Every method which
further this goal is good. And every method which
misses this goal is bad.26

In other words, the end would justify the means. In the
1920s, when the Nazi Party was struggling to maintain its
membership and to grow, Goebbels thrived on the use of
violence in meetings. Being banned by the authorities was

25U.S. Dept. of Army, Effects, 162.

26Robert E. Herzstein, The War that Hitler Won—Goebbels
and the Nazi Media Campaign (New York: Paragon House
Publishers, 1987), 47.
even better. Out of adversity grew recognition and a sense of sacrifice and martyrdom. "No one could create martyrs with words the way Goebbels could. Joseph Goebbels was in the vanguard of those Nazis who turned such symbols into the emotional fertilizer of the movement."\textsuperscript{27} Conversely, it took until 1943 for Goebbels to recognize the value of Albert Speer. "Goebbels was impressed by the competence of the arrogant, cool, young architect, long a Hitler favorite."\textsuperscript{28}

By the winter of 1943 Albert Speer had become crucial to Goebbels' war plans and resultant propaganda. He became a "star" in Goebbels' weekly newsreels (the Deutsche Wochenschau). Speer's successes in armament production were touted alongside pictures of factory inspections, worker gatherings and speeches to industrialists. By the time work on the "miracle" weapons (rockets) and, to a certain extent, the atomic bomb was reaching feverish heights, the war was starting to go badly for the Germans. So Goebbels became dependent upon Speer's successes and promises of great new weapons. Speer said:

\begin{quote}
In this war of technology, it is absolutely necessary to place the quality of weapons over the quantity of weapons. Given the enemy's present and future superiority in the number of his weapons and the size of his manpower, we are forced to outdo the foe by producing weapons that are increasingly better than his
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid. 46.

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid. 94.
in all areas. That is the great chance we have in this war.29

Goebbels saw Speer as the deliverer of retaliation. By 1944 retaliation was just about all that the propaganda minister had left. By 1944 the V-2 rocket would, in Goebbels words, "force England to her knees." In talking about a film showing the experimentation of the V-2 rocket Goebbels said, "If we could show this film in all German movie theaters, I would not have to give any more speeches or write any more articles. Even the most hard-boiled pessimist could no longer doubt our victory."30

In July 1944, Goebbels was named plenipotentiary for total war. He immediately proclaimed several serious measures, the first of which was lowering the draft age from 17 1/2 to 16 years of age. He then increased the standard work week from 48 to 60 hours and raised the age limit on the conscription of women from 45 to 50. Newspapers were shut down and printing was reduced. Concerts and plays were banned, university activities were minimized, and postal service was cut in half. The result was widespread unemployment. In October 1944, Goebbels created the Volksturm (People's Army) with the intent of having all civilian Germans responsible for the actual military defense of Germany.31 Many times

29 Schmidt, Speer, 113.
30 Ibid. 115.
31 U.S. Dept. of Army, Effects, 39.
during his ministry Speer had actually requested all of the measures Goebbels took. He repeatedly pointed out the need to get rid of non-essential civilian functions. He had also requested the widespread use of female labor. But by October 1944, all of these measures were coming too late.

When it became apparent that the miracle weapons would never work, Goebbels lost faith in Speer and openly turned against him. Speer would also reveal his true feelings about Goebbels in his memoirs, calling him a demagogue and recounting anecdotes of Goebbels making fun of higher party members solely for Hitler's amusement.

It would be hard to say who used whom more--Speer or Goebbels. Goebbels needed Speer's successes in production and his optimism about retaliatory weapons. Speer used Goebbels propaganda to enhance his image and to give him the power he required in Hitler's bureaucratic maze. Speer was certainly not averse to the publicity Goebbels created to enhance Speer's position. By the time of the Nuremberg Trial the optimism about such things as the "miracle weapons" had been conveniently forgotten.

Speer and Goebbels were certainly never friends in the social sense and each man was jealous of the other's relationship with Hitler.

Goebbels was jealous of Speer's closeness to Hitler based upon the Fuhrer's delight in the architect's profession and the almost fatherly friendship which Hitler lavished upon the munitions minister. By 1944 Speer was increasingly isolated, even from Hitler, for the fortunes of war had not vindicated his policies.
He became the victim of conspiracies in which Bormann, Himmler and Goebbels participated.\textsuperscript{32}

Speer was not successful, and the war was lost, with or without Goebbel's propaganda. And for Goebbels the war was lost, with or without Speer's successes.

Albert Speer became the Reich minister of armaments and munitions in February, 1942. Speer claims that it was a reckless appointment, but one in keeping with Hitler's character. Hitler did not choose professionals to fill Reich positions. He chose those he could rely on to answer solely to him. This would ensure a power struggle below him, with himself as the final authority. Speer speaks of his own role in contributing to Hitler's success, thus feeding his own misguided ego. His training as an architect did not qualify him for the job of armaments minister, yet he was extremely successful in this task.

Speer wrote three books after his release from Spandau Prison in 1966. His most successful book, \textit{Inside the Third Reich} describes his early years, his life as a husband and father, and his early years in the Nazi Party. It offers a good description of how he became armaments minister and his success in that role. The book ends with his surrender in 1945 and the days leading up to the Nuremberg Trial. This book also reveals how Speer took an economy focused only on blitzkrieg warfare and turned it into a fully functioning war

\textsuperscript{32}Herzstein, \textit{War}, 94.
economy. Speer's success was due to his ability to set priorities, and to delegate tasks to competent industrialists whose opinions and abilities he recognized and used. Emergencies, such as the bombing of the Schweinfurt ball-bearing factory, while detrimental to the industry, shored up Speer's power and control of industry by showing his ability to respond to problems.

By the end of 1944, the problems had become too great even for Speer. Transportation stoppages, bombings of factories, and lack of workers were all problems too large to overcome. At this point Goebbels, as propaganda minister, was relying on the Armaments Ministry's talk of miracle weapons (V-Rockets) to keep up German morale. Retaliation became the war cry with the V-Rockets as the deliverer of Germany's message. But by March 1945, production on the V-Rockets was impossible and the war of weapons and war of words were both lost.
CHAPTER III

THE CHARGES

On October 6, 1945 the International Military Tribunal, trying the major war criminals, indicted Albert Speer. The trial was conducted in Nuremberg, Germany, from November 1, 1945 to October 1, 1946. Speer was indicted on all four counts brought against the major war criminals: Count One, that he was part of a "Common Plan or Conspiracy" to make war; Count Two, "Crimes against Peace"; Count Three, "War Crimes"; and Count Four, "Crimes against Humanity." Count Three, which was a general indictment against most of those on trial and more specifically directed against Speer, stated a number of crimes.

It read that the Nazi plan involved, among other things, the practice of 'total war' including methods of combat and of military occupation in direct conflict with the laws and customs of war, and the commission of crimes perpetrated on the field of battle during encounters with enemy armies, and against prisoners of war, and in occupied territories against the civilian population of such territories.\(^1\)

Count Three was broken down into ten different crimes:

a) murder and ill-treatment of civilian populations of or in occupied territory and on the high seas, b) deportation for slave labor and for other purposes of the civilian

\(^1\)Trial of the Major War Criminals, 1:43.

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populations of and in occupied territories, c) murder and ill-treatment of prisoners of war, and of other members of the armed forces of the countries with whom Germany was at war, and of persons on the high seas, d) killing of hostages, e) plunder of public and private property, f) the exaction of collective penalties, g) wanton destruction of cities, towns, and villages and devastation not justified by military necessity, h) conscription of civilian labor, i) forcing civilians of occupied territories to swear allegiance to a hostile power, and j) Germanization of occupied territories.\(^2\)

Count Four, another general indictment, listed two different acts: a) murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against civilian population and during the war and b) persecution on political, racial, and religious grounds in execution of and in connection with the common plan mentioned in Count One.\(^3\)

After these general indictments, the court prepared specific indictments against the individual defendants. The indictment against Speer read:

The Defendant Speer between 1932 and 1945 was: a member of the Nazi Party, Reichsleiter, member of the Reichstag, Reich Minister for Armament and Munitions, Chief of the Organization Todt, General Plenipotentiary for Armaments in the Office of the Four-Year-Plan, and Chairman of the Armaments Council. The Defendant Speer used the foregoing positions and his personal influence in such a manner that: he participated in the military and economic planning and preparation of the Nazi

\(^{2}\)Ibid. 63.

\(^{3}\)Ibid. 66.
conspirators for Wars and Aggression and Wars in Violation of International Treaties, Agreements and Assurances set forth in Counts One and Two of the Indictment; and he authorized, directed and participated in the War Crimes set forth in Count Three of the Indictment and the Crimes against Humanity set forth in Count Four of the Indictment, including more particularly the abuse and exploitation of human beings for forced labor in the conduct of aggressive war.\footnote{Trial of the Major War Criminals, 1:73.}

On December 11, 1945, Thomas J. Dodd, the Executive Trial Counsel for the United States stated in reference to Speer specifically, that the prosecution would:

show that the Defendant Speer as Reich Minister for Armament and Munitions, Director of Organization Todt, and member of the Central Planning Board, bears responsibility for the determination of the numbers of foreign slaves required by the German war machine, was responsible for the decision to recruit by force and for the use under brutal, inhumane, and degrading conditions of foreign civilians and prisoners of war in the manufacture of armaments and munitions, the construction of fortifications, and in active military operations.\footnote{Trial of the Major War Criminals, 3:404.}

On October 1, 1946, Albert Speer was found guilty of Counts Three and Four. The primary charge against Speer was his recruitment of foreign workers and his use of those workers under brutal and inhuman conditions. While being examined by his own attorney, Speer often made comments which, although intended to defend his actions, actually corroborated the charges. When asked if he approved of the use of force and terror against workers he said:

I had no influence on the method by which workers were recruited. If the workers were being brought to Germany against their will that means, as I see it,
that they were obliged by law to work for Germany. Whether such laws were justified or not, that was a matter I did not check at the time. Besides, this was no concern of mine.\footnote{Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:457.}

In the very next statement about violent measures against foreign workers Speer reveals his desire to get the job done at whatever cost. He shows no compassion for the individuals who had been harmed.

Because through violent measures of that kind a regular allocation of manpower in the occupied countries would not have been possible in the long run. However, I wanted production to be regulated and orderly in the occupied countries. Measures of violence meant to me a loss of manpower in the occupied countries, because there was the danger that these people would in increasing numbers take to the woods so as not to have to go to Germany, and thus strengthen the lines of the resistance movements. This in turn, led to increased acts of sabotage and that, in turn, to a decrease in production in the occupied countries.\footnote{Ibid.}

The prosecution was also able to refute Speer's constant claim that he had little effect on the actual movement of foreign workers. The number of foreign workers (civilians and prisoners of war, and including Jews) working in Germany from 1939-1944 is charted in Appendix 3. At the beginning of his examination, prosecutor Hans Flachsner asked Speer, "The Prosecution is charging you with the fact you share the responsibility for the recruiting of foreign workers and prisoners of war and for taking of manpower from
concentration camps. What do you say to this?" Speer's response was:

Neither I nor the Ministry was responsible for this. The Ministry was a new establishment, which had a technical problem to deal with. It took no competence in any field away from an existing authority. The conditions of work were still handled through the old existing authorities. The Food Ministry and the various offices connected with it were responsible for the food supply, and the occupation-supervising agencies in the Reich Labor Ministry were responsible for the maintenance of safe and bearable conditions at the places of work; the Trustees of Labor, working under the Plenipotentiary for Labor Commitment, were responsible for the salaries and the quality and quantity of work done; and the Health Office of the Reich Ministry of the Interior was responsible for health conditions . . . The fact that the SS put itself and its concentration camp internees outside the control of the State is not a matter with which I or my Ministry was concerned.9

However Dr. Karl Servatius, the defense lawyer for Hans Sauckel asked Speer the very next day, "Witness, did you in 1943, acting independently and without consultation with Sauckel transfer 50,000 French Organization Todt workers to the Ruhr District?" Speer answered that he had transferred a large number of specialists to work on dams which air raids had destroyed and that the specialists had brought along the 50,000 workers. Justice Jackson reinforced Speer’s admission in his cross-examination.

Now I want to ask you [Speer] about the recruiting of forced labor. As I understand it, you know about the deportation of 100,000 Jews from Hungary for

8Ibid. 438.
9Ibid.
10Ibid. 505.
subterranean airplane factories, and you told us in your interrogation of 18 October 1945 that you made no objection to it. And you told us also, quite candidly, on that day that it was no secret to you that a good deal of the manpower brought in by Sauckel was brought in by illegal methods. That is also true, is it not?\textsuperscript{11}

Speer answered affirmatively and then Jackson also reminded Speer that at the Fuehrer’s conference of August 1942 Hitler had approved obtaining labor by coercive measures if voluntary measures did not fulfill German needs. Speer did not deny his responsibility in agreeing to Hitler’s plan.

The workers were brought to Germany largely against their will, and I had no objection to their being brought to Germany against their will. On the contrary, during the first period, until the autumn of 1942, I certainly also took some pains to see that as many workers as possible should be brought to Germany in this manner.\textsuperscript{12}

To understand the indictments against Speer, it is necessary to look at two men who had a great impact on the way in which Speer conducted his job as armaments minister--Hermann Goering and Heinrich Himmler. Hermann Goering set the stage for Speer’s success by his own failures. By the end of 1941 Hitler realized that wartime production was not what it should be. Goering, as head of the Four-Year-Plan had a tendency to inflate production figures and promise the impossible. In early 1942 the need for organization and precise planning had been recognized and it was at that point that Albert Speer became director of wartime production.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{11}Ibid. 520.
  \item \textsuperscript{12}Ibid. 521.
\end{itemize}
Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, wanted to create his own armaments industry, "an SS-owned industrial concern in order to make the SS permanently independent of the state budget."\(^{13}\) What Himmler's actions did for Speer was take away desperately needed labor and materials and allocate them for the SS projects when they could have been used in the armaments industries.

Speer and Hermann Goering first met at a dinner with Hitler in 1933. To renovate his residence, Goering wanted the same architect Hitler had. It had just been renovated, but Hitler had made a derogatory remark about the result, so Goering wanted something Hitler would like. Speer said, "If Hitler had roses climbing the walls of his room, Goering would have insisted on roses."\(^{14}\) That was a decade in the past. When Speer took over Todt's position, he and Goering had to work together in an official capacity. Goering had assumed that he would be given Todt's job and was not happy at Speer's appointment. As head of the Four-Year Plan, begun in 1936, Goering had widespread jurisdiction. He claimed that his authority was unrestricted and that he could take arbitrary action whenever he saw the need for doing so. "The Four-Year-Plan," Goering later claimed, "was a basic prerequisite for the entire building up and expansion of the

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\(^{14}\)Speer, *Third Reich*, 38.
armament industry.\textsuperscript{15} Goering did admit rather openly that living standards would deteriorate under the Four-Year-Plan, but he claimed that "our generation has the happiness and tranquil assurance that it has been chosen to make life easier and more beautiful for the coming generations."\textsuperscript{16} 

At the start of the Four-Year-Plan, Goering immediately began an economic strategy that was ultimately detrimental to Germany, but it was directly in line with Hitler's directives. Goering increased government regulation and the level of state investment in industry and also invested in direct state ownership in industry. Goering's methodology was to threaten private industry, particularly large industry. "The time has now come," he told an audience of industrialists, "when private enterprise can show whether it has the right to continued existence. If it fails [I] am going over to state enterprise regardless."\textsuperscript{17} Goering was only too eager to "acquire" industry--by nationalization or by confiscation if they didn't follow his rules.

In 1937, Goering built the Hermann-Goering Works. Initially, it was to be one very large plant--an industrial complex which would extract and smelt iron. The Hermann-Goering Works were mainly a reaction to Goering's inability


\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid. 60.
to "control" the leading industrialists, particularly those of the Ruhr Valley. But the idea ran deeper than that. The Hermann-Goering Works eventually grew as Goering acquired more businesses (most of them confiscated from newly acquired territories) and Goering soon had a virtual industrial empire. What Goering had in mind went beyond the war. The Hermann-Goering Works was a sample of how things would be run economically after Germany had won the war.

As head of the Four-Year-Plan, Goering had every intention of extending his control into almost all areas of the economy. He achieved this by gradual infiltration and the subversion of large economic institutions by supporters of the Nazi party or in some cases with party members. An example is the Dresdener Bank, a major German bank with widespread connections. The pro-Nazi directors on the board slowly replaced those not favorable to the party with Nazi supporters. This bank and its subordinate banks became the major money lenders to the Four-Year-Plan. The same thing happened in many of the leading industries such as I.G. Farben, which was Germany's largest private business. Pro-Nazis eventually gained control of the managing boards and the companies were then welcomed into the Four-Year-Plan.\(^\text{18}\)

R.J. Overy describes the growth of the Four-Year-Plan. The foundation for this process of infiltration and usurpation was the Four-Year-Plan administration itself. Despite

\(^{18}\text{Ibid. 56.}\)
Goering's innocent claim that the plan required little in the way of new offices and personnel, it rapidly developed its own bureaucratic apparatus and its own executive agencies. Indeed the scope of the plan was such that the administration established in 1936 resembled that of the Ministry of Economics itself. Not only did Goering acquire the power to take decisions in questions to do with foreign exchange and raw materials but he arrogated to himself responsibility for labour allocation, agriculture, price control, industrial investment and, through the foreign exchange section, ultimate control over foreign trade itself.19

Goering's administration of the Four-Year-Plan was weakened from the very start by its excessive bureaucratization and by Goering's desire to make almost all of the administrative decisions himself. There were many who felt that Goering's appointment to the Four-Year-Plan was a disaster and said so from the start. They repeated their assessment throughout the Nuremberg Trials. Justice Jackson said to Hjalmar Schacht (Minister of Economics before the war), "As a matter of fact you have described Goering as a fool in economics, have you not?" Schacht said:

Goring's knowledge in all fields in which a government member should be competent was nil, especially in the economic field. Of all the economic matters which Hitler entrusted to him in the autumn of 1936 he had not the faintest notion, though he created an immense

19Ibid. 57.
official apparatus and misused his powers as lord of all economy most outrageously.\textsuperscript{20}

Heading the Four-Year-Plan was an almost impossible task for one man and this problem was exacerbated by Goering’s other jobs. He had, by 1938, become head of the Luftwaffe and was responsible for getting it ready for war. He had also been promoted to Field Marshall, becoming the highest ranking officer in the armed forces. In spite of his falling out of favor with Hitler later, he would hold that title until Germany surrendered to the Allies.

What happened to the German economy between 1939 and 1941 could, according to Speer, be placed directly at Goering’s door:

It was the period when the German economy failed to respond to the demands of war, the period of political empire-building, poor co-operation and administrative mis-management. It was inefficiency and ineptitude that kept the output of military material too low for the strategic tasks which Hitler set the German armed forces.\textsuperscript{21}

It had been assumed that newly acquired territories would supply Germany with the materials needed. What was not realized was that it would take years to integrate those territories’ economies into the German economy. The blitzkrieg masked the real problem. Easy victories gave a false sense of readiness and of the ability to produce

\textsuperscript{20}Trial of the Major War Criminals, 13:7.

\textsuperscript{21}Overy, Iron Man, 138.
whatever was necessary for war. When the war escalated, the
demands on production could not be met.

Goering and his economic empire were simply not able to
cope with the management of the wartime logistics. And
Goering had too many jobs. "At the height of the Battle of
Britain Goering found himself involved in a bitter dispute
within the Reichswerke over managerial efficiency which
compelled him to spend days away from the battle zone where
he was commander-in-chief." He was not capable of
organizing the flow of materials and manpower in such a way
that it would result in increased production.

Manpower shortages were critical. It was a problem that
resulted from several factors. The armed forces were
drafting skilled laborers who could have been doing a more
productive job in industry. For many years women were not
used as laborers because Hitler said it hurt the morale of
the men in the armed forces to think that their wives were
out working instead of staying home. And foreign labor and
POWs were not always the answer. While plentiful in supply,
foreign labor took months to train, and fears that foreign
labor might sabotage production prevented their use. The
number of foreign workers (including prisoners of war) as a
percent of total employment is illustrated in appendix 4.

Goering set the tone of the working relationship with
Speer immediately after Speer became minister. Goering asked

22Ibid. 144.
Speer to sign an agreement which would keep Speer from infringing on areas covered in Goering's Four-Year-Plan. Speer refused to sign and appealed to Hitler to intervene. The next day, in a speech to about thirty representatives of the military and industry, Hitler said, "This man (Goering) cannot look after armaments within the framework of the Four-Year-Plan. It was essential, Hitler continued, to separate this task from the Four-Year-Plan and turn it over to Speer."23

It is important to note that Speer, as minister of armaments and munitions, reported directly to Hitler. It is also important, at this point, to note the two basic differences between Speer and Goering in relation to the Nazi party and the German economy. Goering was a member ideologically of the party. While swearing his allegiance to the party and its ideals, Goering also swore allegiance emotionally and physically to Hitler. Speer was probably not a true Nazi (certainly not as Hitler had envisaged in Mein Kampf). His allegiance was to Hitler, not the party, and the party (and initially his architecture) were the way to get to Hitler. They were also both very different in their approach to economic matters. Goering's economic regime was disorganized, distrustful of anyone else in power, and distrustful of large industry. Speer was goal-directed, and he was willing to work with large industry.

23Speer, Third Reich, 202.
Like Goering, Heinrich Himmler had also been a very early Party member and had been Gregor Strasser’s secretary during the middle 1920s. Gregor Strasser was an early Party leader and recruiter who, while more of a radical, was also very loyal to Hitler. It was during this early radical period that two of Himmler’s central themes of discourse were formulated. Anti-Semitism was the first.

The countryman’s worst enemy was international Jewish capital because it set the townsman against the countryman. By speculation and playing the markets, the Jews ensure that production prices are low and consumer prices high. The farmer is supposed to earn little, the townsman to pay much! The Jews and the hangers-on grab the middleman’s inflated profits.24

The Slavs were the second group Himmler vilified. Since the German peasantry needed land, it meant looking to the east. Himmler said:

The sons of farmers and farmworkers must be settled there to prevent the second and third sons of the German farmer being forced into the towns. The countryman can only regain decisive influence in Germany by widespread resettlement. Increase of our peasant population is the only effective defence against the influx of the Slav working-class masses from the East. As six hundred years ago, the German peasant’s destiny must be to preserve and increase the German people’s patrimony on their holy mother earth in battle against the Slav race.25

Through hard work and unfailing loyalty, Himmler worked his way up through the Party ranks. In 1929 Hitler appointed him Reichsführer of the SS. At that point only 200 men

25Ibid. 46.
strong, the SS was the personal bodyguard for Hitler. It would undergo many changes over the next sixteen years and eventually would include over one million men (with the Waffen SS). Himmler set up strict selection qualifications which included height, racial purity (not just in background but in looks), and willingness to undergo strict mental and physical scrutiny.

In 1933 Himmler's job was extended to the construction of concentration camps. Dachau, the first camp, opened in March of 1933, and it was soon followed by dozens more. Originally a prison for political prisoners, eventually over 70,000 of Dachau's 206,000 inmates would die. It was a comparatively small camp with a comparatively small amount of deaths. By 1936 Himmler controlled all German police forces. But World War II brought him his greatest power.

Many people described Himmler as an enigma. Albert Speer says of him that he was a good-mannered man whose murderous activity came from a perverted morality rather than ideology. Speer says that Himmler, who was appalled at the sight of blood, was transformed "from the well-bred offspring of a prominent middle class family into the murderer of millions of Jews." And of these murders,

It can scarcely be doubted that it reproduced the dark side of his own nature, impossible though to believe that it was his creation alone—that such dehumanization of guards, doctors and inmates alike can be traced simply to the self-disgust of the Bavarian

26Speer, Infiltration, 12.
schoolboy who believed himself deficient in physical and martial values or Aryan appearance. 27

His role as armaments minister vying for labor to keep armaments production at a war-time peak pitted Speer against Himmler. It was not simply that Himmler was in charge of the concentration camps and the labor force sent to them. By 1944 Himmler's dream of an SS-owned industrial concern would also drain the labor force. This industrial base would keep the SS independent of the state and party. "In case a successor should try to use the state budget as an instrument to curtail the power of the SS and the Gestapo, Hitler wanted to create a financial source to provide the SS with its own budget." 28

This independent organization was a further example of how Hitler ruled by division. It would, as Speer said, create opposition between Speer and Himmler in many areas and would lead to constant conflict which Hitler would have to mediate. This financial empire also fed Himmler's megalomania.

Himmler's initial plans were to set up armaments building productions in or near concentration camps to make good use of "idle labor." Obviously Himmler's idea was to keep these concentration camps well stocked with labor even if it meant drawing necessary laborers from occupied territories who were


28 Speer, Infiltration, 3.
already employed in armaments factories over which Speer had charge.

Speer did accept the indirect help of the SS, when he dealt with what were called "Bummenlanten." During the Nuremberg trial he referred to the so-called Bummenlanten, "and by that name we meant workers who did not get to their work on time or who pretended to be ill. Severe measures were taken against such workers during the war, and I approved of these measures." Justice Jackson goes on to quote Speer speaking at a meeting of the Central Planning Board on October 30, 1942:

We must also discuss the slackers. Ley has ascertained that the sick list decreases to one-fourth or one-fifth in factories where doctors are on the staff who examine the sick men. There is nothing to be said against SS and Police taking drastic steps and putting those known to be slackers into concentration camp factories. There is no alternative. Let it happen several times, and the news will soon get around.

But it was not Speer's wish to feed Himmler's machine. For one thing Himmler had a very unrealistic view of the capabilities of concentration camp workers.

I am not satisfied with the simple calculation that labor prisoners can perform only 50 percent of what German skilled workers can perform. It is, of course, very easy and convenient to simply assume the double amount. However, pressure must be applied here. As a practical result, the imprisoned manual laborer must perform more than the free manual laborer. It is not clear why the imprisoned skilled worker cannot achieve the same performance as the skilled worker who lives in

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29Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:516.

30Ibid.
freedom. Here we have the greatest reserve of manpower.31

Speer added that Himmler felt it was necessary to provide industrial prisoners with incentives, particularly women in brothels, and to pay industrial workers a small amount for piecework. With these incentives, production would increase.

Speer certainly knew the conditions in a few concentration camps since he had visited some. One was Mauthausen, which was to become the site of one of the underground testing sites for the V-2 rocket over which Speer had control. It was after a visit to Mauthausen in March 1943 that "Speer, exasperated, noted in a memo of 5 April to Himmler that in the face of existing labor shortages the SS was still taking 'more than generous' advantage of its pool of captive labor to meet its own requirements."32 Peter Padfield says in his book, Himmler, "Albert Speer, the very image of rational, technological man, inspected the cave factories where emaciated, lice-ridden wretches worked on aircraft and V-rocket parts, inspected Mauthausen, smiled and shook the hand of the Kommandant."33 In all, over 119,000 inmates of the Mauthausen complex died during the war years.

During the Nuremberg trial, Russian prosecutor Raginsky and Speer often "misunderstood" one another and the intent

31Speer, Infiltration, 300.


33Padfield, Himmler, 552.
and content of each other's statements and questions. On one item they did agree. Speer admitted to an article he had written for Das Reich on 19 April 1942. In it he said, "One thing, however, will be necessary, and that is energetic action, including the most severe punishment, in cases when offenses are committed against the interests of the State . . . [Punishment must include] severe prison sentences or death . . . The war must be won." Speer claims that it was a paradox that the Nuremberg trial indicted him for using prisoners in the armaments factories. Speer maintained that conditions were better for forced labor in the armaments factories than they were in the camps. "By the court's standard of judgment, which was purely numerical, my guilt would have been greater had I prevailed over Himmler and raised the number of prisoners in our labor force, thus increasing the chances of more people for survival." 

Raginsky also demonstrated to the court that Speer knew of another type of laborer. He reminded Speer of a letter Speer wrote to Himmler in May 1944. In it Speer asked Himmler to set free convicts whose prison terms had expired. Himmler refused, believing that those convicts should be kept in custody. The point was, however, that Speer showed that he knew conditions were bad in the munitions factories. After reading some of his articles while in Spandau, Speer

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34 Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:571.
35 Speer, Third Reich, 375.
addresses the judgment of American historian, Eugene Davidson, who said that Speer loved machines more than people.

He is not wrong. I realize that the sight of suffering people influenced only my emotions but not my conduct. On the plane of feelings only sentimentality emerged; in the realm of decisions, on the other hand, I continued to be ruled by the principles of utility.36

It can be argued that Speer did not understand the true depth of his own self-indictment when Justice Jackson cross-examined him at Nuremburg concerning Jewish labor. By the end of 1942 Himmler and Hitler wanted Jews removed from the armaments factories. Speer argued that these skilled laborers should be kept in their jobs, but his efforts, by March 1943, had failed. In response to Jackson's questions, Speer said, "I knew about it before action was taken; I knew because the question had to be discussed as to how one should get replacements . . . it was going to make things difficult for me."37 He added that, "it is equally clear that if the Jews who were evacuated had been allowed to work for me, it would have been a considerable advantage to me."38

Speer says of Himmler that his need for power and his own misguided delusions of grandeur were evident even toward the end in April 1945. His power to control the destinies of


37Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:419.

38Ibid. 520.
millions was something that Himmler seems to have been unwilling and unable to give up. Visiting Himmler, Speer said of him:

The world in which Himmler was still moving was fantastic. 'Europe cannot manage without me in the future either,' he commented. 'It will go on needing me as Minister of Police. After I've spent an hour with Eisenhower he'll appreciate that fact. They'll soon realize that they're dependent on me--or they'll have hopeless chaos on their hands.'

At that point, Himmler said he had no time to visit Hitler—not even a farewell visit. He added, "Now I must prepare my new government. And besides my person is too important for the future of Germany for me to risk the flight."  

Albert Speer was indicted on all four counts brought against the major war criminals. The primary charge against Speer was his responsibility for the recruitment by force of foreign workers for the German war machine. The prosecution charged that Speer's association with Goering, under the Four-Year-Plan, and Himmler, in charge of concentration camp labor, led Speer to condone any measure which would provide his armaments ministry with the necessary number of workers. On October 1, 1946, Speer was found guilty of charges three and four of the indictments, specifically the deportation of civilians for slave labor and inhumane acts against these civilians.

39 Speer, Third Reich, 486.
40 Ibid. 487.
CHAPTER IV

THE DEFENSE

Speer and his lawyer used four defenses. First was Speer's establishment of "blocked industries," industries where the laborers were protected from being transported to Germany. Second was his insistence that workers be healthy enough to do the work. Third was his refusal to carry out a scorched earth policy which was destroying industries, bridges, and anything which the enemy might use to their benefit. Last was his claim that he had attempted to assassinate Hitler in 1945.

While these defenses did not always refute the prosecution's charges, they were not intended to do so. As Speer said:

Deportation of labor is unquestionably an international crime. I do not reject my sentence, even though other nations are now doing the same thing we did. I am convinced that behind the scenes during the discussions about German prisoners of war someone will point to the laws on forced labor and to their interpretation and prosecution by the Nuremberg Tribunal.¹

Speer's lawyer Flächsner cautioned him against taking too much of the blame.

If you go ahead and declare yourself responsible for everything that happened during those years, you are making yourself out more important than you are and in

¹Speer, Spandau, 53.
addition calling an inappropriate degree of attention to yourself. That will not only make a dreadful impression but may also lead to your receiving a death sentence. Why do you yourself insist on saying that you are lost? Leave that to the court.²

Speer’s defense centered on his use of blocked or protected industries. Speer described these factories in his testimony of June 20, 1946.

Therefore, approximately since June 1943, I established the so-called blocked factories through the military commanders in France. Belgium, Holland, and Italy soon followed suit in establishing these blocked industries. It is important to note that every worker employed in one of these blocked factories was automatically excluded from allocation to Germany; and any worker who was recruited for Germany was free to go into a blocked factory in his own country without the labor allocation authorities having the possibility of taking him out of this blocked factory.³

When asked what consequences this situation had for recruiting laborers in occupied western territories Speer said:

After the establishment of the blocked factories, the labor allocation from the occupied countries in the West to Germany decreased to a fraction of what it had been. Before that between 80,000 and 100,000 workers came for instance from France to Germany every month. After the establishment of the blocked factories, this figure decreased to the insignificant number of 3,000 or 4,000 a month.⁴

Speer defended his actions, noting that when he shipped raw materials out of Germany, he was able to keep western workers

²Ibid. 39.
³Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:460.
⁴Ibid.
in their countries and German workers in Germany concentrating on armaments production.

At that time, I had already worked out the following plan. A large part of the industry in Germany produced so-called consumer goods. Consumer goods were, for instance, shoes, clothing, furniture, and other necessary articles for the Armed Forces and for the civilian requirements. In the occupied western territories, however, the industries which supplied these products were kept idle, as the raw materials were lacking. But they nevertheless had a great potential. In carrying through this plan I deprived German industries of the raw materials which were produced in Germany, such as synthetic wool, and sent them to the West. Thereby, in the long run, a million more workers could be supplied with work in the country itself; and thus I obtained 1 million German workers for armament.  

When asked to defend this action, to explain his plan, Speer really was showing the efficiency of his idea. The court interrupted his testimony to disagree with the relevance. Flächsner, however, said that this presentation was important to the defense, for it would show that Speer attempted to use workers in their own countries and not bring them to Germany.

Through this plan [Speer said] I could close down whole factories in Germany for armament; and in that way I freed not only workers, but also factory space and administrative personnel. I also saved on electricity and transportation. Apart from that, since these factories had never been of importance for the war effort they had received hardly any foreign workers; and thus I almost exclusively obtained German workers for the German production, workers, of course, who were much more valuable than any foreign workers.  

Answering the specific charge that he promoted the transportation of foreign workers to Germany and was even the

5Ibid. 461.

6Ibid.
primary reason for foreign workers being brought to Germany, Speer pointed out speeches he had made disproving those charges:

I can further quote a speech, which I delivered on 18 April 1942, showing that at that period I was still of the opinion that the German building industry, which employed approximately 1.8 million workmen, was to be discontinued to a large extent to divert the necessary labor to the production of armaments. This speech which I made to my staff, in which I explained my principles and also discussed the question of manpower, does not contain any mention of the planning of foreign labor draft. If I had been the active instigator of these plans, surely I would have mentioned the subject in this speech.  

Flächsner's closing statement on the 23rd of July reminded the court that witnesses such as Walter Schieber, Hans Kehrl, and Hans Schmeller (all administrative workers in the armaments industry) had testified about Speer's attempts to get German rather than foreign labor.

But in the first place, we must examine to what extent the Defendant Speer actually contributed to the dispatch of deportees to Germany. Here we must start from the principle that the Defendant Speer had a purely technical assignment which he described adequately in his evidence, to which reference can be made. In order to carry out this assignment, he stated his labor requirements. The way in which these requirements were met has been described in detail by the witnesses Schieber and Schmelter. Requirements were submitted in terms of totals needed, and it was incumbent upon the Defendant Sauckel to satisfy them. These requirements referred to the total number of workers as a whole, and it was the Defendant Sauckel's task to meet these requirements as far as possible and in accordance with his judgment. He had power to exhaust the entire resources of the home labor potential as well as to recruit foreign labor. The witnesses Schieber, Kehrl, and Schmeller stated, in the course of their interrogations, that the Defendant

7Ibid. 480.
Speer tried to procure German labor, in the first place, for assignments given to him by the Government.\(^8\)

Speer and Flächsner discussed at length Speer's desire to keep good and healthy workers in the armaments factories. Flächsner asked Speer if he knew "that workers, particularly foreigners, were not returned to their old places of work when for certain acts they had become involved with the police, but that they were taken to concentration camps."\(^9\) Speer answered that he had received a letter from Oswald Pohl, an associate of Himmler, in May 1944. This letter affirmed that workers were being removed to concentration camps.

Its contents greatly upset me because, after all, this is nothing more than kidnaping. I had an estimate submitted to me about the number of people thus being removed from the economic system. The round figure was 30,000 to 40,000 a month. The result was my declaration in the Central Planning Board on 22 May 1944, where I demanded that these workers, even as internees, as I called them, should be returned to their old factories at once . . . Anyhow, what I wished to express by it was that the workers would have to be returned to their original places of work. This statement in the Central Planning Board has been submitted by the Prosecution.\(^10\)

Speer also pointed out a specific action which he said showed his disagreement with Hitler's harsh humanitarian policy in dealing with sabotage.

My attention was drawn to one case in which 10 hostages were to be shot as a reprisal for acts of industrial

\(^8\)Trial of the Major War Criminals, 19:185.

\(^9\)Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:473.

\(^10\)Ibid. 474.
sabotage committed in the Meurthe-et-Moselle district. At that time I managed to prevent the sentence from being carried out. [Hermann] Roechling, who was at that time in charge of iron production in the occupied western territories, is my witness in this case. That is the only case I know of where hostages were to be shot on account of sabotage in production.\footnote{Ibid. 477.}

Speer also rebutted specific charges brought by the different prosecutors. In answering the French prosecutor's assertion that Speer plundered from western countries, he stated:

I can also prove that, through a decision by Hitler dated September, 1943, I was responsible for providing a supplementary meal in addition to the existing ration for factory workers employed in France. In a letter which I sent to the Plenipotentiary General for the Allocation of Labor in December 1943, I strongly urged the necessity not only of paying wages to the workers in the occupied western territories, but also of making available to them a corresponding quantity of consumer goods—a line of policy which doubtless does not accord with the policy of plundering the western regions, on which so much stress has been laid by the French Prosecution.\footnote{Ibid.}

Speer also claimed that his concern for foreign workers held right up through to the end of the war.

At the beginning of March I made the proposal that 500,000 foreigners should be repatriated from the Reich to the territories which we still held; that is to say, the Dutch to Holland, the Czechs to Czechoslovakia. The Reichsbahn, however, refused to take responsibility for these transports, since the traffic system had already been so damaged that the carrying out of this plan was no longer possible. Finally, both in the speech I intended to make over the German broadcasting system on 9 April and in the attempted Hamburg speech, I pointed out the duties which we had toward the
foreigners, the prisoners of war, and the prisoners from concentration camps during this last phase.\(^\text{13}\)

One of Speer's main defenses was his refusal to carry out Hitler's scorched earth policy. Anticipating occupation by the Allies, Hitler had ordered a far-reaching system of destruction of war industries in territories that were likely to be recaptured. According to planned preparations, coal and mineral mines, power plants, and industrial premises were to be destroyed. Speer's justification for this refusal was that by this point he had realized that the war was almost lost and over, and he wanted industry, bridges, etc. to be usable for post-war production.

In addition, in order to prevent such destruction, on 5 September 1944, acting without authorization, I directed the managers of the coal and iron production and the chief of the civilian administration in Luxembourg to prevent destruction in the Minette ore mines, in the Saar coal mines, and the coal mines of Belgium and Holland, et cetera.\(^\text{14}\)

Speer admitted that this ran counter to his attempts from 1942 on when he had tried to increase armament production to its highest possible level.

From January 1945 onward, a very unpleasant chapter begins: The last phase of the war and the realization that Hitler had identified the fate of the German people with his own; and from March 1945 onward, the realization that Hitler intended deliberately to destroy the means of life for his own people if the war were lost.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^{13}\) *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, Exhibit, Number Speer-30, 503.

\(^{14}\) *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, 16:487.

\(^{15}\) Ibid. 490.
Flächsner maintained in his closing argument that one of Speer's priorities was to save bridges from being demolished and that on 6 April 1945 Speer had issued orders to "spare the bridges of essential railway lines in the Reich and in the entire Ruhr territory. These unauthorized orders were confirmed by the statements of the witnesses Von Poser and Kempf."\(^\text{16}\) Manfried Von Poser and Wilhelm Kempf were military liaison officers assigned to Speer's ministry.

Along with the bridges, food supplies became a high priority. Flächsner said that "Speer, therefore, allowed the requests for armament and production which were in his jurisdiction to be superseded and gave priority to the supply of food."\(^\text{17}\) While not directly a part of his job, Speer had said, during his testimony of 20 June, that protecting food supplies and giving preferential treatment to their transport ran directly counter to armament production and transport. Speer testified:

I can say quite briefly that the preferential food supplies which I finally put into effect were arranged at the time for the purpose of planned reconversion from war to peace. This was at the expense of armament, which I personally represented. It was a question of arranging, contrary to the official policy, that shortly before their occupation large towns should be sufficiently supplied with food and of taking every step to insure that, despite the catastrophe in transportation, the 1945 crop should be insured by sending the seed in good time, which was a burning problem just then. Had the seeds arrived a few weeks

\(^{16}\)Trial of the Major War Criminals, 19:215.

\(^{17}\)Ibid.
Speer also stated that he had the production of two war
gases, Tabun and Sarin, stopped in November 1944. It
was his understanding that these gases were going to be used
against the approaching enemy and he felt that the use would
be dangerous to German cities. He said that there was no
protection against them.

When rumors reached us that gas might be used, I
stopped its production in November 1944. I stopped it
by the following means. I blocked the so-called
preliminary production, that is, the chemical supplies
for the making of gas, so that the gas production, as
the Allied authorities themselves ascertained, after
the end of December or the beginning of January,
actually slowed down and finally came to a standstill.
Beginning with a letter which is still in existence and
which I wrote to Hitler in October 1944, I tried
through legal methods to obtain his permission to have
these gas factories stop their production. The reason
I gave him was that on account of air raids the
preliminary products, primarily cyanide, were needed
urgently for other purposes. Hitler informed me that
the gas production would have to continue whatever
happened, but I gave instructions for the preliminary
products not to be supplied any more.19

He also said he stopped the gas production to save the German
people on a moral issue. "It was because at that stage of
the war it was perfectly clear that under no circumstances
should any international crimes be committed which could be
held against the German people after they had lost the
war."

18 Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:495.
19 Ibid. 527.
20 Ibid. 528.
The last defense Speer and his lawyer used was Speer's intention to assassinate Hitler. Of all of Speer's testimony, this was the area that created the greatest stir in the media covering the trial. In February 1945 Speer testified that he had demanded a supply of poison gas which he intended to use for the assassination of Hitler, Bormann, and Goebbels. He planned to release the gas into the ventilator of the air-conditioning system of the Reich Chancellery in Berlin where Hitler was living and conducting all of his business.

In his testimony, Speer was adept at dodging responsibility. He often refused to answer outright or dodged questions upon which he knew the prosecution did not have specific evidence. While being cross-examined by Mr. Justice Jackson on the condition of the manpower in production, Speer said:

What I knew is contained in the reports of the Central Planning Board; there you will get a picture of what I was told. Although there were many other meetings I cannot tell you in detail what I knew, because these were things outside my sphere of activity. Naturally, it is a matter of course that anyone closely concerned with the affairs of State will also hear of matters not immediately connected with his own sphere, and of unsatisfactory conditions existing in other sectors; but one is not obliged to deal with these conditions and later on one will not remember them in detail. You cannot expect that of me. But if you have any particular passage, I shall be glad to give you information on it.21

He also showed a naivete' or unwillingness to accept what conditions really had been like for the workers. During his

21Ibid. 562.
testimony he said that "I assert that a great number of the foreign workers in our country did their work quite voluntarily once they had come to Germany."\(^{22}\)

Albert Speer did not refute the charges brought against him. Instead, he and his lawyer, Hans Flächsner used four defenses to lessen the weight of the indictment. They used the "blocked industries," as well as Speer's insistence on healthy workers, as proof of his compassion for the laborers. His refusal to carry out the scorched earth policy Hitler had ordered showed Speer's love for Germany and its people. His attempt to assassinate Hitler, in the beginning of 1945, Speer claimed, was an effort to end further useless destruction and loss of life.

\(^{22}\)Ibid. 517.
CHAPTER V

THE VERDICT AND AFTERMATH

Albert Speer was found guilty of Counts Three and Four and was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment, which he served in Spandau Prison. G.M. Gilbert maintains that Speer was fairly quiet during the period of the trial and quite openly admitted the guilt of the Nazi regime. "The trial is necessary. There is a common responsibility for such horrible crimes even in an authoritarian system," Speer said to Gilbert.¹ While Speer admitted the collective guilt of the regime, he also attempted to downplay his own guilt. During his own testimony he had said:

The task which I have to fulfill is a non-political one. I was content in my work as long as I personally and my work were evaluated only according to professional achievements and standards. I do not feel strong enough to carry out successfully and without hindrance the technical work to be accomplished by myself and my co-workers if it is to be measured by Party political standards.²

Speer also used other tactics to downplay his guilt. He explained that his ministry was to have been dissolved when peace came. It was his intention that his job as Armaments Minister be terminated after which he would immediately

¹Gilbert, Nuremberg Diary, 5.
²Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:433.
return to being an architect. Consequently he did not tolerate (so he told the court) any wartime activities which could be construed as peacetime construction, which had little wartime contribution.

I learned, when I inspected industries at Linz, that along the Danube, near the camp at Mauthausen, a large harbor installation and numerous railroad installations were being put up so that the paving stone coming from the quarry at Mauthausen could be transported to the Danube. This was purely a peacetime matter which I could not tolerate at all, for it violated all the decrees and directives which I had issued.  

Before the verdicts were handed down, all of the defendants of the Nuremberg Trial were allowed to speak in their own behalfs. These speeches were broadcast on the radio and Speer used his speech to warn of the dangers of technology coupled with unrestricted rule,

The nightmare shared by many people that some day the nations of the world may be dominated by technology—that nightmare was very nearly made a reality under Hitler's authoritarian system. Every country in the world today faces the danger of being terrorized by technology; but in a modern dictatorship this seems to me to be unavoidable. Therefore, the more technological the world becomes, the more essential will be the demand for individual freedom and the self-awareness of the individual human being as a counterpoise to technology. Consequently this trial must contribute to laying down the ground rules for life in human society. What does my own fate signify, after all that has happened and in comparison with so important a goal?

On October 1, 1946 Albert Speer was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment. Almost all of that time he spent in

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3Ibid. 444.
4Speer, Third Reich, 521.
Spandau Prison just outside of Berlin in Spandau, Germany. Initially he had six fellow prisoners, all with varying sentences: Rudolf Hess, Deputy Leader of the Nazi Party, sentenced to life imprisonment; Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz, sentenced to 10 years imprisonment; Foreign Minister Baron Konstantin von Neurath, sentenced to 15 years imprisonment; Grand Admiral Erich Raeder, sentenced to life imprisonment; and Minister of Economics Walther Funk, sentenced to life imprisonment. On July 19, 1947 all of them were taken from Nuremberg to Spandau Prison where Speer was to remain until October 1, 1966. There were several attempts made to have Speer released on the grounds of leniency. Other people wanted to release the prisoners simply because they wanted the prison closed. In 1955, Speer wrote:

> These have been days of careening between hope and despair, and in the midst of these shifting moods comes a letter from General Speidel, the first German officer to hold a high post in NATO. The letter comes from Washington, addressed to my wife, and informs her that through contacts with an important figure he has been able to do something about a release in the near future for me.⁵

Speer had helped Speidel and his wife during the war when they were being held after the July 20, 1944 attempt on Hitler’s life. Speidel, who was a Field Marshal and Erwin Rommel’s Chief of Staff, was implicated through his association with Rommel. Now, Speer seemed to believe that Speidel might repay his debt.

⁵Speer, *Spandau*, 313.
Again in 1959 Speer wrote:

Four times in the last few days I have been told about an article in the Sunday Times. This morning, under seal of absolute silence, a fifth guard actually let me read the newspaper myself. After lunch it was brought to me again, and in order not to betray the fact I had to study it once more, with all the signs of joyful surprise, including loud 'ahs' and 'ohs.' The article is headlined: LAST NAZIS MAY QUIT SPANDAU.6

Nothing came of any of these attempts. Speer himself petitioned for his release but also had mixed feelings on doing so. He said that "above all, it seemed to me inconsistent first to assume responsibility and then to ask for mercy."

The administration of Spandau was divided among the four major Allied powers: Russians, Americans, French and British. Each month there would be a change from one group to the next. The troops actually guarding the prison and the food served were the only major changes from one month to the next. Speer found it interesting that Spandau was a bureaucratic world all to itself.

Aside from the director and the chief guards, each nation provides seven guards who relieve one another in a complicated twelve-day routine so that two guards and the chief guard always belong to three different nations. The system functions; everyone is busy. They keep each other occupied. Reports are drawn up, conferences called, disputes arbitrated. Spandau is the bureaucratic equivalent to the invention of perpetual motion.7

6Ibid. 379.

7Ibid. 97.
Speer recognized early in his imprisonment that he would have to make projects for himself in order to survive the twenty years mentally and physically. A first priority was to keep up on his profession of architecture. The prisoners were able to check out books from a nearby library, and Speer read profusely, particularly on architecture and related subjects. This effort, in turn, led to related projects such as writing a "History of the Window." Never published, it was his investigation of the shape and style of windows in different eras. As late as 1964, he indicated that he had been reading a lot of architectural books in anticipation of using his new knowledge after release.

As a historical classicist Speer was not happy with much of the rebuilding of Germany and stated:

it seems to me that the formerly distinct character of German cities has been lost in the fever of rebuilding. The everlastingly stereotyped form of commercial buildings as well as residential units has obliterated the difference between a north German commercial metropolis and a south German episcopal seat. It has also given to the profile of German cities a quality of international facelessness.8

Speer was disturbed by the trend of architects during the 1950s and 1960s to break away from the past in order to disassociate themselves from the architecture of the Third Reich. He saw it as breaking off the search for a new form and possibly the end of architecture itself. He also saw it as a second devastation of Germany and said, "how jealously

8Ibid. 458.
the country always used to guard its national individuality; how much its special sense of being a cultured nation meant to it—even to excess. In the light of that, how much goodbye and giving up there is in this new trend."^9

Speer was able to keep a diary of his years in Spandau and wrote notes on his earlier years, particularly as regarded his Ministry in the Third Reich. These notes written on toilet paper, backs of letter, scraps of paper, leaves of calendars, and similar media, were smuggled out of Spandau and sent to his family. After twenty years, over 20,000 pages had accumulated, which eventually gave form to his three published works, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries, Inside the Third Reich* and *Infiltration*. The last book was written because Speer had been planning to write a book on German armaments during the war and in his document search found Himmler's writings about SS industrial efforts. Speer wanted to present this effort from the viewpoint of his own ministry. Some of what Speer found in the mass of papers that had been saved from Spandau was the result of monotony and depression. He had to remove repetition, banalities and even change names to protect those who helped him communicate with the outside world.

It took several years after his release before he would even look at the papers. As he said in August 1975:

^9Ibid. 459.
For many years after midnight on September 30, 1966 when the gates of Spandau opened for me, I shied away from looking at that mass of papers which is all that has remained of my life between my fortieth and my sixtieth years. There are various reasons for my presenting this journal now. But ultimately it is an attempt to give form to the time that seemed to be pouring away so meaninglessly, to give substance to years empty of content. Diaries are usually the accompaniment of a lived life. This one stands in place of a life.\textsuperscript{10}

Another project which Speer undertook in Spandau was a "walking tour of the world." As he walked in the exercise yard at Spandau, he imagined that he was going from one place to another in the outside world. He counted his steps, as well, so that his "walking tour of the world" took place over real distances. Begun in 1954, Speer's tour started out as mere exercise and became a geographical trek. By September of 1966 he had walked over 31,000 kilometers. In his journal papers he wrote about the areas that he "visited" on his walk, sometimes describing the sights he saw in particularly cities.

In recent weeks the gardening has left me little time for my long hike. It took 415 days for the 2,280 kilometers from Kunming to Peking, but that still makes a daily average of 5.4 kilometers a day. Since the beginning of my pilgrimage to the continent of Asia four years and ten months ago I have covered 14,260 kilometers. If anyone had told me, at the beginning of my walk to Heidelberg, that my way would lead me into the Far East, I would have though him crazy, or that I was going to be. Now I have the distance from Peking to Vladivostok before me, and have requested books on that route.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid. xiv.

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid. 373.
By 1961 he had come close to the eastern edge of Asia, "still 3300 kilometers to Bering Strait." His descriptions of the surrounding areas even included features of the terrain which impeded his progress such as, "grass often over my head, which slows progress." At the end of his imprisonment, he called his walking tour the greatest athletic achievement of his lifetime.

Much of what Speer reflected on in Spandau and recounted in his journal was about the Nuremberg Trial and its effect on the world after World War II. In general terms, he saw the obvious: that it was a trial of the defeated by those who were victorious. Over the years Nuremberg became more and more important to Speer. In 1954 when the United Nations was debating on the use of Nuremberg Trial principles as a basis for international law. Speer wrote then:

For to me Nuremberg was never just a settling of accounts with past crimes. Rather, to this day I have drawn strength from the hope that the trial's principles would become international law. Now it turns out that evidently only a few nations are willing to accept it.\(^{12}\)

It was important to Speer that Nuremberg's judgments were based in legality. That, he thought, would make the lessons learned from that trial endure for future generations. He had said in 1947:

I consider it a mistake on the court's part that it did not admit into evidence the statement by Admiral Nimitz, the American commander in the Pacific. Nimitz said he had been forced to ignore international
agreements in the same way that the Germans had. The indiscriminate air raids on Berlin, Dresden, Nuremberg, Hamburg, and many other cities—raids whose only purpose was to terrorize the population were also, like our own raids that preceded them, serious violations of the law established in Nuremberg (insofar as such law was 'established' at all, and not in existence from time immemorial, which was the premise of the prosecution and the court). The moral undeniable. Up to now it has been hard for me to admit to legal guilt. But were not most of the verdicts based on the committing of such conventional crimes as murder and manslaughter, pillaging and coercion? If I recruited foreign laborers, the fact of coercion was implicit in that act. And that is punishable under the law. Who could survive twenty years of imprisonment without accepting some form of guilt? 13

As might be expected, much of Speer's reflections focused on Adolf Hitler. Speer vacillated over the years on what he actually remembered about Hitler. In his journal he wrote about Hitler the artist, the commander, the leader and the private man. An insightful statement of May 4, 1965, shows Speer's uncertainty of his own memories. For Speer, in 1947, the guilt and the sentence were acceptable only if the lessons were learned.

Today in retrospect I am completely uncertain when and where he was ever really himself, his image not distorted by playacting, tactical considerations, joy in lying. I don't even know what he felt for Germany. Did he love this country even a little, or was it only an instrument for his plans. 14

Speer acknowledged that his own success was created by Hitler and Hitler's success was helped by those like himself.

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13Ibid. 58.
14Ibid. 474.
Speer likened himself to Dorian Gray, the fictional character whose real, hideous, evil self was reflected in a hidden painting while the physical Dorian Gray remained angelic and youthful looking.

To return to Dorian Gray, or the borrowed personality: as a result of my meeting with Hitler, something alien to me, something hitherto remote from me, certainly came into my life. I, who was basically a modest fledgling architect without any marked character of his own, suddenly began thinking in surprising terms. I dreamed Hitler's architectural dreams. I thought in nationalistic categories, in imperial dimensions—all things that did not belong to my world.15

Dorian Gray had a power for evil with a sense of debauchery and degradation that Speer likened to Hitler.

Speer went on to question if Hitler was his great seducer or had Hitler simply helped Speer find himself. In 1964 Speer again asked himself, "But is it true that Hitler was the great destructive force in my life? Sometimes it seems to me as though I also owed to him all the surges of vitality, dynamism, and imagination that gave me the sense that I was soaring up above the ground on which everyone else was condemned to stand."16 But along with this destructive force came the power.

First and foremost there was the personality of Hitler, which for a long time exerted a hypnotic and compelling effect upon me. But it was not that alone. Almost as strong, if not stronger, was the sense of intoxication Hitler engendered in me, the tremendous intensification of my confidence in my abilities, and which I soon needed like an addict his drug. Then, during the war,

15 Ibid. 154.
16 Ibid. 451.
as armaments minister, I noticed for the first time that power also meant something to me, the ordinary ambition to belong among the actors in historic events. I remember when Hitler gave me the assignment to build the Atlantic Wall, a system of fortifications from North Cape to the Pyrenees, what feelings of exultation filled me when my signature could mean the expenditure of billions of marks and direct hundreds of thousands of people to the construction sites. Only in retrospect do I become aware that as an architect at Hitler's side I was also seeking the pleasures of power.17

Speer acknowledged that the ambivalence of his feelings about Hitler troubled him. "In the interval I have realized the dangerous, criminal nature of the regime and have publicly acknowledged it."18 In his ambivalence Speer also regretted that it was the lack of technology that helped lose the war, while it was his role in technology that sent him to Spandau.

It is strange: here I am sitting in my cell; I believe in the validity of the trial and of the verdict that has brought me here; and yet I cannot resist the temptation of going back over all the squandered opportunities, the chances for victory that slipped away because of incompetence, arrogance, and egotism.19

As the Spandau years went by, Speer vacillated also on the importance of assuming responsibility for what had happened. Making a break with the past, yet assuming responsibility for one's actions created an uncertainty. At times his feeling was: just how responsible must one be? How much of a price did one have to pay. Speer certainly regretted the years he missed with his children, Hilde, Arnold, Ernst, Margret,

17Ibid. 452.
18Ibid. 55.
19Ibid. 55.
Albert and Fritz. His youngest son was only seventeen months old when Speer was captured. By the time Speer left Spandau he already was a grandfather twice over. In 1955, after a visit with Fritz, who was then 12, Speer wrote about his responsibility.

Was my stand in court really an intelligent repudiation of the high-flown bathos of those years? Was it not rather only a different kind of blind self-sacrifice, one more piece of romantic mania for self-surrender, mindless youthful emotionalism? And sometimes the thought alarms me that Hitler, for all that I so strongly disavowed him and all he stood for in court, would have been keenly delighted by the role Albert Speer played as a defendant. The emotional atmosphere from which my self-accusations sprang was wholly Nazi--I had learned my lesson well. Only the content differed: 'You count for nothing; your guilt counts for everything.'

In 1959, however, he wrote that after reading Karl Barth's treatise *Dogmatik* he felt a tranquilizing effect from the material. Barth's statements that an evil man was still responsible for his actions reminded Speer of Plato's saying: "Therefore it is better for him to suffer this punishment than to escape it for it sustains man's inward being."

While Speer regretted missing the years with his children, he did correspond with them and was able to visit with them several times over the years. His children all went to universities, some even pursuing doctorates. His son Albert became an architect, and won awards before Speer was released from Spandau. Their educations were all paid for by contributions made to a fund by friends and family. Many of

\[20\text{Ibid. 315.}\]
those who contributed did so out of feelings of obligation to Speer himself. At one point he figured that contributions into the fund averaged out to 700 German Marks a month over the twenty year period.

One of Speer's greatest fears while in Spandau was that the world was passing him by and that he would be unable to cope with post-Spandau reality. He experienced the world's events of 1947-1966 only vicariously through reading newspapers or as they affected the lives of the guards. For example, during the Bay of Pigs incident of 1962, the tension between the Russian guards and the other allied guards made everyone extremely nervous. Speer said, "this Cuban crisis, which is threatening the very life of the world, provides a certain element of life for us." For Speer, however, the newer technology being developed after the war and the resulting events such as satellites and high-technology being used in wars were frightening. In October 1957, he wrote:

> Huge headline in today's newspaper that the first satellite is circling the earth. For a minute I lay on the bed with pounding heart. Some events really hit me hard. During the first forty years of my life I admired technology. When Wernher von Braun told me about his future projects, such as a flight to the moon, I was fascinated. But Hitler, with his technologically based dictatorship and his assembly-line extermination of the Jews, shocked me so deeply that I can never again be naive about technology. Every advance nowadays only frightens me. News like this account of the first satellite makes me think of new potentialities for annihilation, and arouses fear.

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21 Ibid. 422.
If they fly to the moon tomorrow, my fear will be all the greater.\textsuperscript{22}

This technology created a dilemma in his mind since he considered himself a romantic with a strong technological side. While these two elements could work together, they could also be contradictory.

All the new technological achievements fascinate me. I admire the mind that has made the earth subject to itself and now is beginning to reach out into the universe. But faced with the inexorable transformation of the world into modern technological ugliness, I am filled with panic and grief.\textsuperscript{23}

During his 20 years imprisonment in Spandau, Speer reflected on the war, the trial and subsequent sentence, and the role he played. While Speer had agreed that the trial and sentences of the major war criminals were justified, by the end of twenty years, he was questioning the futility of the trial and his imprisonment. While in Spandau he kept a diary which was smuggled out page by page, and he lamented in his book, \textit{Spandau: The Secret Diaries} that he had little else but the diary to show for twenty years of his life. When Speer was released in 1966 he became reacquainted with his wife and six children, wrote several books, and gave lectures. He died in 1981.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{22}Ibid. 351.

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid. 435.
\end{flushright}
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Albert Speer was born into an upper middle-class family and by his own statement was apolitical until the beginning of 1930. He was drawn to Hitler not because of the Nazi Party and its ideals—he was drawn to the charismatic Hitler himself. It was as an architect that Speer first met Hitler, and it was as Hitler's architect that Speer would take the first step toward unimagined heights of power and his ultimate downfall. Eugene Davidson wrote in 1970 that when Speer met Hitler "something resembling the Faustian pact was made." When he became armaments minister, the conflict within Speer actually began as he saw the darker side of what the Nazis represented.

As armaments minister Speer was successful in centralizing and increasing German armament production. He did so in spite of difficulties he had in his working relationships with Hermann Goering, Joseph Goebbels and Heinrich Himmler. He was able to centralize the wartime economy, encourage and support industrial successes, and increase munitions production even as the war began to turn against the Germans. Production increased 56 percent in 1943 over 1942, and the 1943 figures were twice as high as 1941. In spite of air
1944 saw the highest total German industrial output of the war. The air raids may even have helped Speer in his task by creating a tense atmosphere and showing the need for continued sacrifice on the part of the civilian population. Ultimately, the loss of fuel due to bombings and transport problems caused Speer to face the reality of a lost war. This realization, along with his abhorrence of Hitler's scorched earth policy, caused Speer to do little to continue with armaments production after the beginning of 1945. As Speer said during his trial, "the sacrifices made on both sides after January, 1945, were without sense. The dead of that period, just as much as the destroyed cities, will be the accusers of Hitler and the men responsible for the continuation of the struggle." 1

Speer's self-proclaimed primary function from March of 1945 on was to set priorities on transportation for returning troops, for food, and for emergency supplies beneficial to the civilian population. His priority from April forward was to place himself in a position where he could help rebuild the new Germany after the surrender. Captured in May 1945, he was not given this opportunity.

In November 1945 Speer was indicted by the International Military Tribunal consisting of judicial representatives of the Americans, French, English and Russians, and in June 1946, he was tried in Nuremberg, Germany. The primary charge

against Speer was his use of foreign labor in his armaments industries. This was a charge which he did not refute. Indeed, he admitted his responsibility concerning that charge. Sentenced to twenty years imprisonment, Speer accepted the verdict. He did, however, question the validity of the trial itself.

From the very beginning, the program which the allied task force had put in place for the trial of the major Nazi war criminals was both attacked and defended. A primary legal argument against the trial was that as a war crimes trial, it would be held post facto—punishing an act that had not been determined to be a criminal one when it had actually been committed. In his closing statements at Nuremberg on July 26, 1946, Sir Stanley Shawcross, the Chief Prosecutor for the United Kingdom answered that charge:

But then it is argued, even if the state is liable, it is only the state and not the individual who can be made responsible under international law. That argument is put in several ways. States only, it is said, and not individuals, are the subject of international law. But there is no such principle of international law. One need only mention the case of piracy or breach of blockade, or the case of spies, to see that there are numerous examples of duties being imposed by international law directly upon individuals. War crimes have always been recognized as bringing individuals within the scope of international law. It is a startling proposition that those who aid and abet, who counsel and procure the commission of a crime are themselves immune from responsibility. The international crime does not differ from the municipal offense in this respect.²

²Trial of the Major War Criminals, 16:464.
In 1966, Speer summarized his feelings regarding the sentencing he had received at Nuremberg:

Today, a quarter of a century after these events, it is not only specific faults that burden my conscience, great as these may have been. My moral failure is not a matter of this item and that; it resides in my active association with the whole course of events. I had participated in a war which, as we of the intimate circle should never have doubted, was aimed at world dominion. What is more, by my abilities and my energies I had prolonged that war by many months.\(^3\)

From Spandau Prison in 1965 Speer wrote his thoughts about the "Auschwitz Trial" taking place. Adolf Eichmann, the head of the Jewish office of the Gestapo, had been captured by the Israelis and was being tried.

Meanwhile the newspapers are full of reports on the Auschwitz trial, and I have the impression that the past, which seemed already sunk in oblivion, is once more being revived. Suddenly I feel something akin to fear of the world out there, which I no longer know and which is beginning to rediscover with so much new passion the things that have been slowly fading for me since Nuremberg, by dint of my conscious acceptance of atonement. And suddenly Spandau seems to me not so much the place of my imprisonment as of my protection.\(^4\)

Speer states, however, that the crimes of those like Eichmann were a gauge for him. They were his measure against which he could recover his own moral clarity. "The crimes were so ghastly and the criminals who had taken refuge either in suicide or patent evasions were so abysmal that given only a moderate sense of justice, humanity and dignity, my attitude

\(^3\)Speer, *Third Reich*, 523.

took shape of its own accord."5 Earlier in his imprisonment he had said that he would "never be able to get over having served in a leading position a regime whose true energies were devoted to an extermination program."6

For Speer Spandau was a time of imprisonment yet release. He realized that he had paid a great price, a part of his life that was irrecoverable. In 1965 he wrote rather bitterly:

The cruelty of the Spandau penalty suddenly stood plainly revealed to me. At the Nuremberg trial, high moral and humanitarian principles were voiced. I was sentenced in accordance with them, and I inwardly accepted those principles; I even made myself their advocate to my fellow prisoners and my family when they were unhappy about the verdicts. But I did so without knowing the limits of my own strength. Today I know that I long ago used it up. I am an old man.7

So, while it was a time to regain pride and dignity, it was a time also to regret the past. What had been easy to accept in 1946 became less so in the twenty years to follow.

5Ibid.

6Ibid. 392.

7Ibid. 478.
APPENDIX

MILITARY EQUIPMENT PRODUCTION AND FOREIGN WORKERS
NUMBER OF GERMAN AIRCRAFT PRODUCED BY TYPES, 1939-1944

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>FIGHTERS</th>
<th>BOMBERS</th>
<th>TRANSPORTS</th>
<th>OTHERS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>1,856</td>
<td>2,877</td>
<td>1,037</td>
<td>2,525</td>
<td>8,295</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>3,106</td>
<td>3,997</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>10,826</td>
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<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>3,732</td>
<td>4,350</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>2,725</td>
<td>11,776</td>
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<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>5,213</td>
<td>6,539</td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td>2,539</td>
<td>15,556</td>
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<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>11,738</td>
<td>8,589</td>
<td>2,033</td>
<td>3,167</td>
<td>25,527</td>
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<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>28,926</td>
<td>6,468</td>
<td>1,002</td>
<td>3,411</td>
<td>39,807</td>
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PANZER PRODUCTION, 1940-1944\textsuperscript{2}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>MONTHLY AVERAGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1,643</td>
<td>136</td>
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<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>3,790</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
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<td>1942</td>
<td>6,180</td>
<td>516</td>
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<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>12,063</td>
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<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>19,002</td>
<td>1,583</td>
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</table>

\textsuperscript{2}U.S. Dept. of Army, \textit{Effects}, 278.
FOREIGN WORKERS (CIVILIANS AND PRISONERS OF WAR)

INCLUDING JEWS

MAY 31, 1939-44\(^3\)

(IN MILLIONS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>FOREIGN CIVILIANS</th>
<th>PRISONERS OF WAR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.36</td>
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<td>1941</td>
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<td>6.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>7.13</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\)U.S. Dept. of Army, Effects, 34.
FOREIGN WORKERS (INCLUDING PRISONERS OF WAR) AS PERCENT OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY DIVISION

MAY 31, 1939-44

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Division</th>
<th>1939</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1942</th>
<th>1943</th>
<th>1944</th>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>HANDWORK</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRANSPORT</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>DISTRIBUTION</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATION</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOMESTIC SERVICE</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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