

THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL HISTORY AS A PAWN OF NAZI SOCIAL RESEARCH

NEW DOCUMENTS ON THE HISTORY OF THE IISH DURING GERMAN OCCUPATION RULE FROM 1940 TO 1944

The 27th of January 1941 was a memorable day in the bizarre history of the Amsterdam International Institute of Social History during the German occupation.¹ Within the scope of activity of his “Office for the Occupied Territories”, NSDAP Reichsleiter Alfred Rosenberg placed the Lieutenant-Commander and Nazi publisher Eberhard Kautter “in charge” of the IISH: “It is your duty to be responsible for the organizational supervision and the deployment of those staff members who qualify for the utilization of the institute. Your mission is to be carried out in agreement with the head of the Netherlands work group of the task force from my office, Oberbeichsleiter Schirmer.”² On the same day, the bustling chief of the self-named *Einsatzstab* (task force), in his function as “Commissioner of the Führer for the Supervision of all Mental and Ideological Training and Education”, approached Robert Ley, the Reichsorganisationsleiter of the NSDAP and head of the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* (DAF – German Labor Front). He had a letter sent to him that Eberhard Kautter had drafted already in early January and had obviously withheld until Kautter had been named to the post of IISH administrator.³ Rosenberg reminded Ley that, in a decree from 29 January 1940, Hitler had entrusted him with all of the preparations for the establishment of a *Hohe Schule* (Supreme School), that was to be the “central site of National Socialist research, instruction

¹ On the history of the IISH under German occupation rule, see especially Annie Adama van Scheltema-Kleefstra, “Herinneringen van de bibliothecaresse van het Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis”, *Tijdschrift voor sociale Geschiedenis*, Amsterdam (June 1978), pp. 141–176, and *The International Institute of Social History, History and Activities* (Amsterdam, 1985); Maria Hunink, *De Papieren van de Revolutie, Het Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1935–1947* (Amsterdam, 1986) [hereafter, Hunink].

² Rosenberg to Lieutenant-Commander E. Kautter in Berlin–Charlottenburg, 27 January 1941. Bundesarchiv Koblenz [hereafter, BA], NS 8/217, folio 81.

³ Rosenberg to Ley, 27 January 1941. BA, NS 8/193, folio 75ff. The first draft, which was neither sent nor signed by Rosenberg, is dated 6 January 1941, and does not yet include the proposal to place this academy “within the scope of the DAF”. It is called the “academy for ideological social issues” in the first draft. A handwritten notation has been added: “not sent 8/1”. *Ibid.*, folio 92f.

and education”.⁴ Thus, he was “setting up a number of branch institutes of the Supreme School”. Among these was an “academy”, the task of which would be to work out the close connection between the “National Socialist *Weltanschauung*” and the “practical way of structuring life” both for the present and the future.⁵ Now he was contacting him, since Ley was also interested in “the relationship between *Weltanschauung* and social structuring” in his function as Reichsleiter of the DAF and had certainly run up against similar problems within the scope of the extensive “economic-statistical work” of his office. In order to avoid the unproductive duplication, they should work together in the future: “It would be conceivable to create an academy within the scope of the DAF that would be linked to the Supreme School in relation to its ideological functions. You would stipulate the location and administration of this institute. The director would be named by you in agreement with me. The other personnel appointments would have to be made according to our mutual functions.”⁶

It becomes obvious at a glance that functions were to be integrated with one another and offers wangled in order to link career plans with the accumulation of political power. The newly appointed IISH Commissioner had not only drafted the letter to Ley, he had also written up his own appointment and presented it to his superior Reichsleiter the same day for signature. Under Kautter’s supervision, a “Social Academy” of the “Supreme School” was obviously to be created out of the captured IISH, and it was to again bind the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront*, whose work was far too greatly oriented towards “economic-statistical work”, more to “National Socialist *Weltanschauung*”, whatever that might have been. The offer was ambiguous and, on top of this, obscurely formulated. In order to make it clear why the confiscated Amsterdam institute was made into a pawn of internal Nazi power conflicts over social policy and social science postwar planning, the preceding history of the intrigues spun by Kautter on Rosenberg’s orders needs to be reconstructed.

I

From mid-1938 on, memoranda were circulated in the Rosenberg Agency about a newly discovered research problem: The theoreticians of “*Lebensraum*” and “race” were preoccupied with the issue concerning the mobilization of a broadly based *volkstümhafter Wehrwille*, a popular readiness and willingness for war, with the help of a transformed *Sozialgestaltung*,

⁴ Nürnberg Document 136-PS.

⁵ Rosenberg to Ley, 27 January 1941 (see n.3), folio 76.

⁶ *Ibid.*, folio 78.

that is the restructuring of society appropriate to the race. These debates occurred not only in the context of the immediate preparations for war, but were connected to the so-called Fritsch crisis, the crisis which served to finally integrate the military leaders into the Nazi regime.⁷ The Nazi leadership now aimed to expand the conquered terrain and to bring all “ideological, *wehrgeistige* (a Nazi term of a type of militarized mindset) research and education” both inside and outside of the military under its control. A wide variety of NSDAP offices became active: newly budgeted funds and permanent positions needed to be distributed. Even Eberhard Kautter, publisher and staff member of the Rosenberg Agency had a contribution to make. In late November 1938, he contacted Werner Koeppen, Rosenberg’s adjutant, sending him a pamphlet on the transformation of the “community of the *Volk* to a military community” and asked him to get the Reichsleiter “interested” in his ideas.⁸ Kautter was well received and was taken into consideration in the negotiations that had been going on between the Rosenberg Agency and the SA command since the beginning of 1939 on a common approach to the research and transformation of the problems of the “*wehrgeistige* leadership”. A corresponding agreement between Rosenberg and SA commander Viktor Lutze had been perfected by March 1939. Kautter was put in charge of developing a research section on “Weltanschauung and *Wehrwille*” and authorized to continue the negotiations with the SA as Rosenberg’s personal representative. In late March 1939, he conferred for three days with the SA Gruppenleiter Max Otto Luyken. The resulting protocol stipulated the aim as being “to determine the special relationships between ‘race, Weltanschauung, the practical way of structuring life (*Lebensgestaltung*), and the readiness for war (*Wehrwille*)’ through relevant historical research within the systematic study initiated by the Rosenberg Agency”.⁹ In order to accomplish this, it would be necessary “not only to gather a corps of suitable researchers together, but also to incorporate and give a central purpose to the research posts currently existing in the various organizations, especially since these proceed from a variety of different assumptions”. In his very first attempt, Kautter was thus successful in making his newly founded research center the core of a later “*wehrgeistige* academy”. Once Hitler had sanctioned the joint leadership claim of the Rosenberg Agency and the SA leaders in this issue, statutes were to be drawn up and the academy was officially opened. Until then, it

⁷ See Harold C. Deutsch, *Das Komplott der Entmachtung der Generäle, Blomberg- und Fritsch-Krise – Hilters Weg zum Krieg* (Munich, 1974), and Klaus-Jürgen Müller, *Armee und Drittes Reich* (Paderborn, 1987), pp. 89ff.

⁸ Kautter to Koeppen, 14 November 1938. BA, NS 8/217, folio 87.

⁹ File note: *Protokoll über die Besprechungen Luyken und Kautter am 21., 22. und 23. III. 1939 auf Grund ihrer Beauftragung durch die Reichsleiter Rosenberg und Lutze*. BA, NS 8/217, folio 88. The following citation is also quoted from above.

was agreed to maintain secrecy “since every disclosure would only result in intrigues or attempted disruptions by another interested party”.¹⁰

Together with a series of other planned institutions, Kautter’s concept for an academy was incorporated during the preparatory work for establishing the “Supreme School” of the Rosenberg Agency. The decree of the Führer of 29 January 1940, postponed its realization until the war was over. However, “the preparatory work which had been started [. . .] especially in the area of researching and establishing a library” was to be continued.¹¹ Nevertheless, Kautter not only had to put off writing the academy statutes and recruiting the research personnel, he soon saw himself forced to switch his topical terrain. The “*wehrgeistige* leadership” was staged in many respects without the SA. It was based on a compromise made by the Nazi leadership to the military, which had once again been successful in thwarting an advance of the SA by taking the bull by the horns. Kautter did continue to negotiate with the command of the SA on the academy project until the spring of 1941. As late as 5 May 1941, he informed Rosenberg by letter that the SA command viewed the “official recognition” of his meanwhile completed paper on the fundamentals of “*Weltanschauung, Sozialgestaltung, and Wehrwille*” as an “imperative prerequisite for initiating the research and instruction functions of the planned *wehrgeistige* academy” and had expressly acknowledged that in this way “decisive importance” be attributed to “clearly unveiling *Sozialgestaltung* as being a link between *Weltanschauung* and the readiness for war”.¹² Yet afterwards the negotiations came to a standstill. The “ideological war” unleashed against the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, definitely proved that the concept of “*wehrgeistige* leadership” that had been developed without the SA did indeed function¹³ with the participation of other “training offices” of the Rosenberg Agency.¹⁴ The *Wehrwille*, the readiness and willingness for war, was thus no longer a problem. It disappeared from Kautter’s plans, which now simply concentrated on the dichotomy between *Weltanschauung* and *Sozialgestaltung*. A new ally had to be found to replace the SA, an ally with

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, folio 89.

¹¹ Nürnberg Document 136-PS.

¹² Kautter to Rosenberg, 5 May 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 79.

¹³ See Manfred Messerschmidt, *Die Wehrmacht im NS-Staat – Zeit der Indoktrination* (Hamburg, 1969), pp. 306ff., 441ff., and Waldemar Besson, “Zur Geschichte des nationalsozialistischen Führungsoffiziers (NSFO), Dokumentation mit einer Vorbemerkung”, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (1961), pp. 76ff.

¹⁴ In his role as “Commissioner of the Führer for the Supervision of All Mental and Ideological Training and Education”, Rosenberg concluded a work agreement with the head of the Armed Forces High Command of which the army was notified on 23 December 1940, and which guaranteed him extensive opportunity to influence the ideological indoctrination of the army. This agreement has been reprinted in Messerschmidt, *Die Wehrmacht*, p. 247.

which the terrain of social science and social policy could be occupied, thereby advancing the “ideological” claim of hegemony of the Rosenberg Agency and its evolving “Supreme School”. In the correspondence between Kautter and Rosenberg, the DAF is mentioned as being a new party to approach in addition to the SA starting in June 1940.

II

On 15 July 1940, the IISH was closed by the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD – Security Service) of the SS following an inspection of the institution’s facilities in the Keizersgracht 264 for the first time by a German commission of experts in June.¹⁵ The protest of IISH Director N. W. Posthumus to the president of the *Deutsche Auslandswissenschaftliche Institut* (German Academic Institute Abroad) and chief of the office *Forschung und Auswertung* (Research and Evaluation) of the SD, Franz Alfred Six, had no effect.¹⁶ Albert Prinzing, the deputy director of the SD office “Research and Evaluation”, was sent to Amsterdam to evaluate the IISH’s collections with regard to their importance for the “enemy research” being conducted by the SD and to throw light on the institute’s international relations and financial backing. Prinzing filed his report on 24 August 1940. It was clear to him that, in light of the established agreements existing since the annexation of Austria between the SD and the DAF¹⁷ on the distribution of booty, the collections actually should have been allotted to the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* due to the “purpose(s) of the entire institute” and the fact, considered unbelievable,

¹⁵ See Hunink, pp. 129f.; Annie Adama van Scheltema-Kleefstra, “Herinneringen”, p. 168.

¹⁶ The closing was justified by the international character and the financial backing of the IISH. See Hunink, p. 130.

¹⁷ An initial agreement was made shortly before the invasion of Austria when the secret service of the DAF (*Amt Information*) was disbanded in 1937–38 and transferred to the security service of the SS. The sector of its records relevant to security police work was turned over to the Gestapo, the files relevant to social history or social science were transferred to the Central Archive of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*. In the case of the Austrian occupation, the SD obviously left the majority of the documents and the library of the *Wiener Arbeitskammer* (Vienna Chamber of Labor) to the DAF; however, the figure of 600,000 volumes that Prinzing mentions in his report is definitely an exaggeration. See BA, R58/447; Hans Richter, “Dokumentation in der Sozialwissenschaft: Arbeiten und Pläne der Zentralbücherei der Deutschen Arbeitsfront am Arbeitswissenschaftlichen Institut der DAF”, in *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Dokumentation* (ed.), *Die Dokumentation und ihre Probleme; Vorträge, gehalten auf der 1. Tagung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Dokumentation vom 21. bis 24. September 1942 in Salzburg* (Leipzig, 1943), pp. 151ff., and “Das Zentral-Archiv der Deutschen Arbeitsfront – eine Stätte dokumentarischer Tatsachenbestände des sozialen Geschehens”, in *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF* (ed.), *Wirtschafts- und Sozialberichte* (May, 1944), no. 1/2, p. 42.

that the institute had been financed exclusively by the union life insurance *De Centrale*. In order to prevent the collections from being divided up between the DAF and the SD, he thus included in his report a point meant to counter such argumentation in advance; however, he did not at all mention the most convincing argument favoring the DAF, namely the union financing up to that point:¹⁸ “The purpose of the entire institute becomes obvious from the justification used to develop the Amsterdam institute. However, the material found here should not be made available to the DAF since it already has come into possession of a great number of the books in this collection from the confiscation of the 600,000 volume library of the Vienna Chamber of Labor. The archives need to remain in the possession of the SD under all circumstances because they can provide possibly the most important points of reference for combatting leftist movements. The archives and the library are not to be separated from one another.”¹⁹ However, argued Prinzing further, since the SD did not at the time have the qualified staff to flawlessly catalog the inventory and then be able to “transfer” it to Berlin, he recommended integrating the IISH into the jurisdiction of the SD, depriving Dutch scientists access to it, and “leaving it in Amsterdam until the war was over”. The following was to be done immediately: “The immediate securing of the inventory in France and the preliminary inspection of the material present here in order to ascertain connections between various enemy groupings. The final purpose: providing material evidence to SD headquarters for detecting leftist movements.”

However, contrary to the previous secret operations against the archives and institutes of the labor movement, Prinzing and the SD did not at first have to contend with competition from the DAF for possession of the booty; instead it was Reichsleiter Alfred Rosenberg who for the first time laid his claim. The step that Prinzing proposed in late August 1940 to be taken next had already been anticipated by the Rosenberg Agency on 17 June. The Paris office of the IISH found itself from this day on in the hands of the precursor of his later task force.²⁰ On 5 July the pillage activities of the task force were officially sanctioned by Keitel, chief of the Armed Forces High Command, and on 17 September such pillage was extended to include

¹⁸ In a report, the Reich Archive had expressly entitled the Deutsche Arbeitsfront to the right of disposal over the files of the disbanded unions and of the former entrepreneurial associations, and had been thus proceeding with the distribution of the captured foreign archives and libraries since 1938. On the limitations of competence within the Reich, see the undated *Gutachten über die Errichtung eines Zentralarchivs bei der Deutschen Arbeitsfront* written by Erwin Hölk, Archivrat in the Reich Archive, Zentrales Staatsarchiv Potsdam, Reichsarchiv, no. 26.

¹⁹ Report of the SS Obersturmführer Dr. Prinzing, 24 August 1940, re: The International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. Quote reprinted in Hunink, Doc. no. 43, p. 309. The following quote is also taken from the above-mentioned source.

²⁰ See Hunink, p. 135.

all of those archives, libraries and other cultural goods that had become state property following the declaration of war on 1 September 1939, in order to protect them from a German invasion.²¹ Thus in addition to the secret, task-specific *Sicherungsstäbe*, which were units of the SD, DAF, and the Foreign Office used to track down and confiscate,²² and the official *Archivschutzkommissionen* (Commissions for the Protection of Archives) of the occupation administrations,²³ a third organization of pillage became active in the occupied countries of Western Europe. In the following months, the country groups of Rosenberg's task force pushed themselves forcefully between the official authorities and the secret representatives of the "Archive Protection" and robbed important material from archives and libraries for the future "Supreme School" and especially for the *Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage* (Institute for Research on the Jewish Question) that opened its doors in March 1941.²⁴ In early January 1941, the Paris collections of the IISH were transferred to the depositories and central offices of the task force in Germany.²⁵ Also in early January, Kautter drafted that letter from Rosenberg to Ley sent on the 27th of the month to coincide with his appointment as IISH director. The principle decision to exploit the IISH to the benefit of the Kautter academy was thus made no later than early January as the inventory of the Paris IISH bureau fell irrevocably under the authority of Rosenberg's task force. Most likely, the IISH escaped the SD ownership claim once Kautter and Rosenberg realized that they needed an especially qualified pawn if they wanted to bring the competence of social science and economic statistics accumulated in the DAF under their own "ideological" concepts of *Sozialgestaltung*.

Following the coup on 27 January 1941, the negotiations with the SD dragged on for months. The head of the Security Police and the SD, Reinhard Heydrich, himself intervened on 2 May. In a letter addressed to Rosenberg, he signaled his basic willingness to concede. He claimed to be

²¹ See Nürnberg Documents 137-PS and 138-PS.

²² See Karl Heinz Roth, "Searching for lost archives. The role of the Deutsche Arbeitsfront in the pillage of West European trade-union archives", *International Review of Social History*, XXXIV (1989), pp. 272–286.

²³ A ministerial department for archival affairs was set up in the office of the Reich Commissioner for the Occupied Dutch Territories, and the military administration for France established an archival affairs group in its administrative staff. See Karl Heinz Roth, "Eine höhere Form des Plündern. Der Tätigkeitsbericht der Gruppe Archivwesen in der Militärverwaltung Frankreich 1940–1944", 1999, 4 (1989) no. 2.

²⁴ On this point, see the scattered material in: BA, NS 8 and NS 30; the trial protocol of the Nürnberg Trials against the main war criminals, especially from 17 April, 13 and 14 June and 31 August 1946; from the accompanying documentation of the PS-series, above all the memorandum of the staff leadership of Reichsleiter Rosenberg's task force dated 12 July, 1943 on the Library for Research on the Jewish Question (Nürnberg Document 171-PS).

²⁵ Cf. Hunink, pp. 135f.

interested “regarding those parts” of the IISH collections that would be “valuable as information in executive consideration of existing problems in Holland”. In this regard, he considered the “further unrestricted access to be important” once the institute, which “still had to remain in Holland for the time being”, had been “taken over” by Rosenberg’s work staff.²⁶ In conclusion, Heydrich referred to the competitor with whom he had always had to share the booty of the hunt for the documentation and libraries of the labor movement up until then, namely Robert Ley and the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront*. Ley was to have since “lodged his claim to this institute” with him and with Reichskommissar Seyss-Inquart. He thus asked Rosenberg “for this reason to contact the Reichsorganisationsleiter Ley immediately.”²⁷

This letter was water on the waterwheels of Rosenberg’s task force and those on the staff who were active aspirants of a “Social Academy” within the “Supreme School”. “Heydrich’s letter makes it possible to advance the issue of social research in connection with the Amsterdam institute a step further”, wrote Kautter on 16 June 1941, to Rosenberg’s adjutant Werner Koeppen.²⁸ The negotiations with the SD and the Reich commissioner for the Netherlands were now able to be continued in such a manner that the national head of the DAF, who had since been informed by the SD and sensed the background of the intrigue, was maneuvered into a hopeless constellation. Accompanying the memorandum to Koeppen was a letter to Rosenberg in which Kautter laid his cards on the table: “The response to this letter offers the opportunity to discreetly point out to SS Gruppenführer Heydrich and the Reich Commissioner Seyss-Inquart the one-sided approach of Dr. Ley and at the same time to substantiate your claim by enclosing the investigation report on the institute.”²⁹

The letters to Heydrich and Seyss-Inquart, the drafts of which Kautter had enclosed with his memoranda to Koeppen and Rosenberg, were sent out three days later and were accompanied by a report which Kautter had written at the end of April 1941 countering Prinzing’s memorandum.³⁰ Heydrich was informed that the IISH was “in a completely disorganized state” and could not be used at all. The collections themselves had been “clearly compiled for a systematic study of the ideological basis of certain periods of time and of the structuring of life determined by these” and therefore belonged “to the area stipulated by the Führer to be the fields of

²⁶ Heydrich to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 2 May 1941, quoted here from Hunink, doc. 45, p. 311.

²⁷ Quote cited *ibid.*

²⁸ Kautter to Koeppen, 16 June 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 72.

²⁹ Kautter to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 16 June 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 73.

³⁰ Kautter’s report to Reichsleiter Rosenberg on the IISH, 28 April 1941. BA, NS 8/252, folio 40-57.

research and instruction of the Supreme School".³¹ Because the prerequisites for a "reorganization" of the inventory did not exist in Amsterdam, it would be necessary in any case to transport them to the Reich. In addressing Seyss-Inquart, the special status of Rosenberg's task force, dedicated to the development of the "Supreme School", was stressed, and it was demanded that "all further attempts to place in doubt the takeover of the institute for the Supreme School" be relayed directly to Rosenberg.³²

With this procedure, ratified by Rosenberg, Kautter was able to pervade. In an angry response to Rosenberg in early October 1941, Heydrich did indeed repudiate Kautter's assertions concerning the supposedly chaotic state of the IISH and criticized several of the staff members that Kautter himself had hired. However, he finally agreed to the proposal to transfer the collections under the condition that first the sections on America and Russia would have to "be checked" by the SD "for their applicability in aiding the work of the secret police".³³ Even the Reich Commissioner for the Netherlands conceded, thus ending the hitherto state of suspense in late July and early August 1941 by expropriating the IISH to Rosenberg's task force and by approving the disintegration, "reorganization" and lastly the transfer of the material designated for the "Supreme School".³⁴ The decisive figure within the occupation administration was the Generalkommissar under "special assignment" Fritz Schmidt, on whom Kautter had intensively been "working" for his aims since the beginning of July 1941. Schmidt, a foreign affairs and propaganda expert of the NSDAP, had already discussed with Kautter "the clear conceptualization of the National Socialist premise for social structuring" (*Gestaltungsidee*).³⁵ Schmidt quickly became an ally: his animosities against the emerging supremacy of the SS in the Netherlands³⁶ were just as great an asset as was the fact that he preferred

³¹ Rosenberg to Heydrich, 19 June 1941, quoted here from Kautter's undated draft version, BA, NS 8/217, folio 74. The Kautter draft corresponds to the version of the letter actually sent as reprinted in Hunink (doc. 46, p. 312).

³² Rosenberg to Reich Commissioner Seyss-Inquart, 19 June 1941, quoted here from an undated and corrected draft. BA, NS 8/217, folio 76f.

³³ Heydrich to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 7 October 1941, quoted as reprinted in Hunink, document 48, pp. 351f.

³⁴ A written approval by Seyss-Inquart of the transfer to Rosenberg's task force has not been found to date. However, Kautter informed Reichsleiter Rosenberg in a memorandum that the "question concerning ownership of the Amsterdam institute" was now settled: Kautter to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 7 August 1941, BA, NS 8/217, folio 60. During his examination in the Nürnberg Trial of the major war criminals on 31 August 1946, Seyss-Inquart denied having permitted the removal of the IISH library.

³⁵ See Kautter to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 6 July 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 67.

³⁶ Prior to his transfer to the Reich Commissioner's Office of the Netherlands, Fritz Schmidt was Reichsamtsleiter, directly subordinate to Martin Bormann, secretary to the Führer and staff leader. He thus represented the NSDAP in the Reich Commissioner's Office and resisted the growing influence of the SS and thus also that of the SD. On the

Rosenberg's "ideologically" determined "premise of social structuring" over Ley's social-political ambitions. Schmidt eventually used his influence on Martin Bormann, then still staff director in the office of the deputy of the Führer (*Dienststelle des Stellvertreters des Führers*) on behalf of Kautter's plans for an academy³⁷ and contributed to the fact that the "showpiece" of the collections captured in the Netherlands was finally awarded to the Rosenberg Agency. With this, the material prerequisites were fulfilled for challenging the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* with the help of its own research center for social science and social history.

III

In all of the remaining files from the Rosenberg Agency, one aspect recurs almost like a keynote: The most dangerous adversary of Rosenberg's ideological claim to leadership and control over all the trends developing within the Nazi movement was Robert Ley. In 1934 as Reichsorganisationsleiter, Ley had advocated Rosenberg be named the "Führer's commissioner" to watch over the homogenizing and the common direction (*Gleichrichtung*) of Nazi ideology.³⁸ However, by 1936–37 the cooperation between the "Führer's commissioner" and the Reichsorganisationsleiter had turned into open rivalry.³⁹ This remained the case until 1940–41, all the more so since Ley had been able to acquire status in social policy through his function as the Reichsleiter of the DAF and had integrated a greater portion of the cultural and propaganda activities of the NSDAP in the DAF apparatus.⁴⁰ These confrontations became especially harsh in the fight over the "Supreme School", for Ley himself had developed the initial conceptual formulations in this direction.⁴¹ This explains why a second-rate career-

confrontations, see M. K. C. A. In 't Veld (ed.), *De SS en Nederland, Deel I* ('s-Gravenhage, 1976), pp. 597ff., 674ff., 812ff., 831f.

³⁷ In Kautter's correspondence with Rosenberg's adjutant, this report of Schmidt to Bormann is discussed and finally announced, however no evidence of it has yet been found. See BA, NS 8/217, folio 59ff.; yet evidence of Bormann's involvement in Hunink, p. 133.

³⁸ See Reinhard Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg und seine Gegner* (Stuttgart, 1970), pp. 54ff.

³⁹ Reconstructable using the file NS 8 in the BA; expanded upon using Bollmus, *Amt Rosenberg*, pp. 85ff., who only works out the process of the "systematic diffusion of power" (p. 102) without questioning the indeed grave, substantial differences between the two Reichsleiter, differences that stemmed from their respective functions of social rule.

⁴⁰ This was based primarily on the training work and the broad scope of activities of the Nazi community "Strength through Joy" (*Kraft durch Freude*). See BA, NS 8/178–180.

⁴¹ See Ley to Rosenberg, 3 June 1941. BA, NS 8/193, folio 48f., in which he points out his priority claim. In his function as Reichsorganisationsleiter of the NSDAP, Ley had

ist in the Rosenberg Agency could write to his superior, without being contradicted, that “the current dispute concerning possession of the Amsterdam institute” is “chiefly a result of the greater confrontations between you and Dr. Ley over the field of social research”.⁴² The tricks and intrigues that Kautter therefore staged and Rosenberg blessed were aimed against a powerful adversary. In 1940–41, the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* possessed a highly developed and well-known research and planning apparatus in social science, whereas Rosenberg’s supporters were still attempting to develop comparable structures which they called “instruments of social structuring”. This disadvantageous position was quite evident, and therefore the Rosenberg Agency wanted to get its hands on the IISH at all costs.

“Should you succeed in obtaining possession of the Amsterdam institute quickly and definitely and to restructure it for a new purpose [. . .], then Dr. Ley’s present lead can be rapidly diminished”, wrote Kautter shortly before the final transfer of the IISH by the Reich Commissioner’s Office of the Netherlands to the task force for the “Supreme School”.⁴³ The “valuable material of the Amsterdam institute” would “be very attractive to scientists”, especially “if it is still properly expanded for social research”.⁴⁴ Before we present the last chapter of the power struggle over the IISH, we need to briefly describe the social science research and planning structures against which the Rosenberg Agency was pitting itself.

Since the spring of 1935, there existed in Berlin the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* (Institute on the Science of Labor) of the DAF. Hundreds of labor and social scientists, economists, former trade-union secretaries, social statisticians and historians were there to design a concept of total social rationalization, incorporating all aspects of labor, education, leisure, health and social policy into a program of complete social control.⁴⁵ The “*Sozialwerk*” (social plan) of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*, completed in 1940–41, resulted during the phase of rapid rearmament from a wealth of empirical data on the development of work and wage conditions and represented a large-scale attempt to systematically overcome all of the social crises of the Nazi dictatorship from rural exodus to the piecework wage problem to the east–west income differential and the fragmented

indeed assembled a series of Order Castles and in this context developed for the first time the model of a “Supreme School” as being the “highest level” of the Nazi indoctrination system. See Harald Scholtz, “Die NS-Ordensburgen”, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 15 (1967), pp. 269ff.

⁴² Kautter to Rosenberg, 6 July 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 67.

⁴³ Kautter to Rosenberg, 14 July 1941. *Ibid.*, folio 65.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ See Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF (ed.), *Das Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut der Deutschen Arbeitsfront 1935–1942* (Berlin, February 1943). On the staff planning of the peacetime organization of the institute, see additionally BA, NS 22/279 (preliminary).

system of social insurance. Thus, first-class facilities of complementary sciences were available to Ley's social planners. A main statistical office critically analyzed the methods and instruments of the established official statistics. The archives of the smashed German trade-union movement were compiled into a central archive, organized according to the most modern criteria of archival science. Beginning in 1936–37, the Central Library edited extensive bibliographic material. It was organized into numerous departments that provided the functionary apparatus of the DAF with information services, some appearing daily. At the same time, it worked with the widely branched out departmental sectors and auxiliary sectors of the Research Center.⁴⁶

In addition to this, the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* served as a center for social imperialistic war preparation starting in 1937–38. For one, it evaluated the entire spectrum of publications on labor, social, and economic policy of the neighboring countries in the country departments of the Central Library/Central Archive and the Research Center, which were associated with one another. For another, the institute controlled, under the arrangement of an “International Central Office Joy and Labor”, the communication of Nazi Germany on social policy with the fascist regimes and movements abroad and with its help procured information from the labor organizations and trade unions. As the military crushed Western Europe, the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* provided extensive files and analyses on the labor and social policies of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.⁴⁷ The special bureaus of the DAF central office that were established directly after the occupation were in a position, thanks to the help of such background material, to immediately move against the trade-union movement and to seize the first initiative in the fields of labor and social policy within the framework of occupation administration.

With regards to the Netherlands, for example, several dossiers with information on such important social problems as unemployment, labor relations, wage and income conditions, etc. had been in existence since 1937.⁴⁸ The Dutch trade-union movement had also been thoroughly examined. Exactly eight days after the start of the German invasion, a study on the *Nederlandsch Verbond van Vakverenigingen* (NVV – Dutch Orga-

⁴⁶ On this point see Hamburger Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts (ed.), *Sozialstrategien der Deutschen Arbeitsfront, Edition der Denkschriften, Jahrbücher und Periodika des Arbeitswissenschaftlichen Instituts der DAF* (Munich, London, New York, Paris, 1986)ff.

⁴⁷ See *ibid.*, part B/sec. 2: *Denkschriften, Gutachten und Veröffentlichungen*.

⁴⁸ Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF (ed.), *Sozialpolitische Probleme in Holland im Jahre 1937* (Berlin, December 1937); Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut, *Arbeitslosigkeit, Arbeitslosenunterstützung und Arbeitseinsatz in den Niederlanden bis Sommer 1939 mit Ergänzungen bis Mai 1940* (Berlin, 24 May 1940), and Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut, *Beiträge zur niederländischen Sozialpolitik* (Berlin, September 1940).

nization of Trade Unions) was completed, for example, which contained a survey of its history, current political currents, membership fluctuation, the financial state, as well as a "list of the important and leading personalities in the Dutch trade unions" and an address list of the secretaries and treasurers of the sections of the metal workers union.⁴⁹ With the help of the "International Central Office Joy and Labor" which it controlled, the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* was able to gain a precise picture of the limited influence that Mussert fascism had made on the highly organized Dutch trade unions.⁵⁰ Because the institute was so well informed, favorable conditions were created to block the way to more extensive resistance activity on the part of the Dutch trade-union movement by introducing an infiltration and "Kommissar" politics immediately following the occupation of the country until 1942.⁵¹ The DAF bureau Hellwig, established in early June 1940 in Den Haag, could take advantage of the element of surprise and therefore had an easy time of it at first.⁵²

The DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* had come into contact with the IISH in 1939 during the inquiry into Dutch social policy, following the earlier, failed attempt of the IISH Director Posthumus to buy the library of the Vienna Chamber of Labor in order to save it from falling finally into the hands of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*.⁵³ The occasion was an IISH request for the 1938 yearbook of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*, which was answered with the proposal to regularly exchange publications. How-

⁴⁹ Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF (ed.), *Beiträge zur niederländischen Sozialpolitik* (see n.48), part B: *Die Gewerkschaften* (completed 18 May 1940), pp. 25ff., especially pp. 41ff.

⁵⁰ See Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts Bonn [hereafter, PAA], file Inland I Partei, package 48/1 to 50/2.

⁵¹ See J. J. van Bolhuis and B. C. Slotemaker, "De Duitse Penetratie in Vakcentralen en Sociale Wetgeving", *Onderdrukking en Verzet, Nederland in Oorlogstijd*, vol. III, pp. 369ff., and Gerhard Hirschfeld, *Fremdherrschaft und Kollaboration, Die Niederlande unter deutscher Besatzung 1940–1945* (Stuttgart, 1984), pp. 68ff.

⁵² See L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 11 vols (Den Haag, 1969–1985), vol. 4, 1, p. 452, and E. Kupers, "Labor and Employer Organizations", in N. W. Posthumus (ed.), *The Netherlands during German Occupation* (Philadelphia, 1946), pp. 61ff. The bureau Hellwig was disbanded in the late summer of 1940 and subordinated to General Commissioner z.b. V. Schmidt; but the influence of the DAF on the labor market and social policies of the Reich Commissioner's Office remained. For example, the DAF Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut conducted a comparative study in February and March 1941 on the development of the cost-of-living in the Netherlands and the German border regions, a study that was to be very important for the labor market and price policies in the occupied Netherlands: Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF, *Die Lebensverhältnisse des holländischen Arbeiters (Schriften zur Sozialstatistik)*, no.2 (Berlin, October 1941). On the subordination of the bureau Hellwig under General Commissioner Schmidt, see E. Fraenkel-Verkade (ed.), *Correspondentie van Mr. M.M. Rost van Tonningen* (Den Haag, 1967), 1, Inleiding, pp. 105f.

⁵³ See Hunink, p. 133, n.14.

ever, official contact failed due obviously to the opposition of the German consul general of Amsterdam, who held to the opinion he had made two years previously “that this was basically an institute not friendly to Germany that was attempting with great impertinence to obtain material by directly addressing German bureaus and counting on their good faith”.⁵⁴ Perhaps this blockade saved the IISH from an ugly fate. The *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* was apparently not sufficiently attuned in the initial weeks of the occupation to the significance of the IISH and was first informed by the SD of the intervention of Rosenberg’s task force. As was mentioned earlier, the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*, together with special commandos from the SD and the Foreign Office, otherwise tracked down and confiscated the documentation collections and libraries of the labor movement, and transferred them to the Central Archive of the DAF.⁵⁵ The stolen material that made up the inventory of the Central Archive of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* is as lost today as is the main body of the DAF records that was compiled in it.

IV

It was in this way that the resources on social science and social history were secured which the Rosenberg Office meant to bring under its control. In June 1940, Kautter first attempted to test the waters as the DAF postwar planning of social policy – in addition to the problem of the “*wehrgeistige* leadership” – began to unsettle the traditional power elite of the Nazi regime just as much as it did the chief ideologist of the Nazi movement. Kautter began “probing negotiations” with the DAF *Amt für Berufserziehung und Betriebsführung* (Office for Occupational Training and Business Management) in order to now examine “the prerequisites necessary to ideologically influence social and business subfields”.⁵⁶ Discussed in these negotiations was a new variation of the “Social Academy”, namely an “Academy of Labor”. According to Kautter, these talks appeared at first to be very promising but were then halted by Ley’s intervention.⁵⁷ Precisely when this occurred cannot be determined since the corresponding internal DAF file material has not been located to date. In any case, the Rosenberg

⁵⁴ Copy of a memorandum of the German Consul General of Amsterdam, 3 July 1937, to the Foreign Office, an enclosure to a memorandum of the Consul General, 12 May, 1939, to the Foreign Office, re: Internationales Institut für Sozialgeschichte in Amsterdam. PAA, Inland I Partei, package 49/4.

⁵⁵ See n.22.

⁵⁶ Kautter to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 26 June 1940. BA, NS 8/217, folio 83.

⁵⁷ See Kautter to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 5 May 1941, and 6 July 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folios 79 R and 67.

Agency had approached the DAF agency that appeared to be the most suitable for such an offer. The DAF Central Office for Occupational Training and Business Management emerged in 1933–34 from the *Deutsche Institut für Technische Arbeitsschulung* (DINTA – German Institute for Technical Labor Training) of Rhenish-Westphalian industry and had further developed a militarized variation of Taylorist labor science within the DAF.⁵⁸ As opposed to the other central offices, it had further cultivated especially close relations to the heavy industry group of big business and had maintained a certain independence, that expressed itself in a strong resistance to the approach of the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* of rationalizing the entire society. It was therefore logical for reasons of both organization and content to start with this DAF office. However, Ley's Central Office was alert to this move and prevented this incursion. It must still remain uncertain just how responsible the apparently rather prolonged preliminary negotiations with the Rosenberg Agency were for stripping the director of the DAF Office for Occupational Training and Business Management, Karl Arnhold, of power from 1940 to 1942.⁵⁹

Whatever the case may be, the meanwhile successful securing of the IISH as a substitute for the failed “Academy of Labor” encouraged Kautter and Rosenberg to make the renewed attempt of 27 January 1941 outlined in the introduction. This time Ley was addressed directly. He took his time in replying, preferring instead to involve himself in the controversy surrounding a scientific exponent of the “Supreme School”.⁶⁰ Such “rejecting silence” prompted Kautter in turn to use the issue of “*wehrgeistige*” education “to bring the problem of social research quickly and inconspicuously before Hitler” and thus to achieve a decisive advantage over Ley.⁶¹ But this trick also led nowhere. Rosenberg had to turn again to Ley and remind him of his proposal “that, in order to study certain issues in which Weltanschauung and social questions overlapped, we jointly establish an academy, the

⁵⁸ See *Arbeitsschulung, Zeitschrift des DINTA*, 1 (1929)ff., and Peter C. Bäumer, *Das Deutsche Institut für technische Arbeitsschulung (Dinta), Schriften des Vereins für Sozialpolitik*, vol. 181 (Munich and Leipzig, 1930); for a critical presentation, see Peter Hinrichs, *Um die Seele des Arbeiters – Arbeitspsychologie, Industrie- und Betriebssoziologie in Deutschland 1871–1945* (Cologne, 1981), pp. 271ff.

⁵⁹ First Karl Arnhold was “praised away” in May 1940 to assume the direction of a special department for occupational training and business management in the Reich Ministry for Economics and finally left the DAF completely at the end of November 1942. See the DAF directive no. 13/40 and 40/42, reprinted in *Amliches Nachrichtenblatt der Deutschen Arbeitsfront* (1940), no.3 (1942), no. 7.

⁶⁰ The controversy was over the first director of the Institute for Research on the Jewish Question, Wilhelm Grau, who was fired following an intrigue. See Ley to Rosenberg, April 25, 1941. BA, NS 8/193. For background information see Bollmus, *Amt Rosenberg*, p. 122.

⁶¹ Kautter to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 5 May 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 79 R.

practical management of which would be your responsibility and its approach to research and ideology would be determined by me".⁶² In addition, he informed Ley, who had reacted to the "Academy of Labor" project with competing plans for an "Academy of Business Management" to be controlled exclusively by the DAF, that the controversies caused by Kautter's negotiations with the DAF Office for Occupational Training and Business Management had not remained a secret.

That was too much for the DAF Reichsleiter. On 3 June 1941 he dictated an angry rebuff to Rosenberg. What he had proposed to him as a mutual project within the scope of the "Supreme School" had already been in existence for six years as the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*: "You must also be aware that this institute has made an academic name for itself in the party, the state and its agencies, in business and even everywhere abroad. You yourself use this institute and so you must also be aware that the lead was taken in this institute to study, research, and compile such major social plans as 'The Old Age Pension Plan of the German Volk', 'The German Health Plan', etc." It was not his intention, he argued, to let it be smashed or placed under Rosenberg's supervision. Nor was he able to understand how Rosenberg could derive such a demand "from the Führer order for the Supreme School". "This means that you would be in charge of all institutions of research and learning in Germany." That could certainly not be the task of the "Supreme School" of the NSDAP.⁶³

With this open warfare had been declared. The attempt had failed to divert to the "Supreme School" the labor scientists of the DAF Office for Occupational Training and Business Management, or more specifically the social-technical planning potential developed in the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*. There was nothing left to do but to advance the development of the "Social Academy" as quickly as possible on one's own. Up until then, Kautter and Rosenberg had played with the idea of "baiting" the DAF with the respective "reorganized" resources of the IISH. Now they were left to fend for themselves. On 7 July 1941, Kautter was authorized by Rosenberg to conduct "preliminary negotiations" with Seyss-Inquart "on transferring the institute to Germany".⁶⁴ Exactly one month later, Kautter wrote to Rosenberg that the issue of ownership over the IISH had now been resolved in the Rosenberg Agency's favor.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Rosenberg tactically backed down from his old position a good deal, recanted his claim to the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*, and offered Ley the opportunity to participate in the pillage, which by now had been expanded to the Soviet Union.

⁶² Rosenberg to Reichsorganisationsleiter Ley, 5 May 1941. BA, NS 8/193, folio 54.

⁶³ Ley to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 3 June 1941 (copy). BA, NS 8/193, folios 47f.

⁶⁴ Rosenberg to Lieutenant-Commander Kautter, 7 July 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 71.

⁶⁵ See Kautter to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 7 August 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folio 60.

He believed, so he wrote, “that we will find a great deal in Russia that could also be very valuable to you. Following a survey of all of the libraries concerned with the social questions, I would thus be willing to turn over to you that material which can be beneficial and necessary to your work as long as it does not detract from the research aims of the Supreme School.”⁶⁶

In this manner, the status quo was reestablished, and Ley came around once he had become convinced that the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut* was no longer at disposal. He ordered Wolfgang Pohl, the director of the institute, “to contact” the Rosenbergian power complex “in order to set up the structure of this cooperation.”⁶⁷ On 19 August 1941, Pohl reported in writing to Rosenberg. For the institute, the social science literature from the confiscated “libraries in the west and east” was especially important, he wrote. Therefore, in order to transfer these as quickly as possible, he would like to delegate his chief assistant Glänzel to Rosenberg’s task force. Then Pohl turned to the topic of the IISH library, which Rosenberg had “already assumed control” for the “purposes of your future research”: “There will certainly also be special literature in this library that is not very useful for the purposes of the Supreme School but could be exceptionally important for our work. I would therefore also be very obliged if in the course of time the opportunity would offer itself to relinquish material from this library that would be important for our task.”⁶⁸ However, Pohl did not mention the archival collections of the IISH. Perhaps he wanted to let sleeping dogs lie, for the material existing in the Amsterdam headquarters of the umbrella organization of the trade unions, the NVV, had been captured and carried off by a commando of the NSDAP Central Archives long before falling into the clutches of the Netherlands work group of Rosenberg’s task force.⁶⁹ In conjunction with an agreement between the various archival departments of the NSDAP, trade-union archives were to be automatically submitted to the Central Archive of the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut*.⁷⁰ Rosenberg’s adjutancy reacted to Pohl’s offer in typical fashion: It pointed out that first “the entire issue of cooperation” between them had to be clarified before any discussion concerning “specific proposals” could be had.⁷¹ When it actually came to a

⁶⁶ Rosenberg to Ley, 10 July 1941. BA, NS 8/217, folios 36ff., quote on folio 38.

⁶⁷ Ley to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 28 July 1941. BA, NS 8/193, folio 33.

⁶⁸ Reichsamtssleiter and director of the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*, Wolfgang Pohl, to Reichsleiter Rosenberg, 19 August 1941. BA, NS 8/196, folios 32f.

⁶⁹ See the weekly report of the Netherlands work group in Reichsleiter Rosenberg’s task force for the period from 7 to 15 September 1941, p. 1. BA, NS 30/15.

⁷⁰ See “Das Zentral-Archiv der Deutschen Arbeitsfront – eine Stätte dokumentarischer Tatsachenbestände des sozialen Geschehens”, in *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF* (ed.), *Wirtschafts- und Sozialberichte*, no. 1/2 (May, 1944), p. 42.

⁷¹ SA Sturmbannführer and Rosenberg adjutant Langer to Wolfgang Pohl, DAF Ar-

“working agreement between the two Reich leaders”, we do not know. Instead there is evidence that the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* profited at least in the last two years of the war from the activities of Rosenberg’s task force, which in the meantime had risen to become a group of pillage monopolists. During the course of 1943, a section of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut*, including part of the library as well, was moved to the NSDAP Order Castle “Falkenburg am Krössinsee” in Pomerania. The library director soon maintained lively contact with the task force and submitted search lists of “Bolshevik literature” and especially literature on problems of social and economic policy in certain areas of the Soviet Union.⁷² As isolated files show, he was generously supplied by the “Central Book Office”, which had since been established in Ratibor/Silesia, as well as by the “Eastern Library” of the task force which had also relocated there.⁷³ Together with 78 other facilities for social and economic research, the main address of the *Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut* was additionally noted on a distribution list of the “Eastern Library”.⁷⁴ Book doubles were also sent to the DAF from the task forces’ “Western Library”, which has not yet been found. In the archival files there exists a delivery list with 565 volumes of German language literature sent to the Order Castle Krössinsee; unfortunately only the signatures of this literature are noted.⁷⁵ It is highly probable that at least fragments of the journal and book inventories of the IISH which were carried off from Paris in 1941 and from Amsterdam in 1943–44 landed in such a roundabout way at the disposal of the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut*.

beitswissenschaftliches Institut, 23 September 1941. BA, NS 8/196, folio 26. Kautter drafted this letter as well, see *ibid.*, folio 27.

⁷² Files in: BA, NS 30/19 and 55.

⁷³ See for example the letter of the Ratibor command to Otto Gohdes, Nazi Order Castle “Die Falkenburg am Krössinsee”, 5 February 1944; Castle Commander of the Order Castle Krössinsee, 18 May 1944 to the Ratibor command of the Rosenberg task force. BA, NS 30/19.

⁷⁴ See the directory of the agencies and institutions in contact with the Eastern Library (*Ostbücherei* – OBR), 15 December 1944. BA, NS 30/55. All of the leading addresses of the Third Reich were represented on this list: the Eastern European Institute of Breslau (*Osteuropa Institut Breslau*), the Science Department of the Nitrogen Syndicate (*Wissenschaftliche Abteilung des Stickstoff-Syndikats*), the Hamburg Archive of International Economy (*Welt-Wirtschaftsarchiv*), the Eastern Department for Foreign Armies of the Army High Command (*Abteilung Fremde Heere Ost*), the heads of the security police and the SD, the I.G. Farben industry, the AEG, etc.

⁷⁵ See the signature lists according to the Alphabetized Author Directory of the Western European Department, German language books (*Alphabetischen Verfasserverzeichnis der Westeuropäischen Abteilung, Deutschsprachige Bücher*), with the handwritten note: “to Krössinsee”. BA, NS 30/19.

V

All in all it remains certain that the “Operation IISH Pawn” was a failure. The Rosenberg Agency did not succeed in getting the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* interested in a “Social Academy” and in this manner to integrate it into the “Supreme School”. Left on his own, Kautter was, however, not in a position to use the social history and social science collections concentrated in the IISH and to indicate the ways to “ideologically” solve the “social problem” that he so vehemently advocated in his brochures and memoranda. The scientists and librarians that he hired for taking inventory and “reorganizing” the IISH material as part of the Netherlands work group of the task force were third-rate down the line⁷⁶ and were not competent to do the job they were assigned. No known contributions exist that could have stood up to the social policy planned for the postwar period by the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut*. The institute reigned unchallenged over the terrain of social policy and social science in the European Nazi sphere of power until the end of the war. For example, when it organized a “European Social Science Discussion Conference” in the spring of 1944 in Bad Salzbrunn on the best way to achieve a “Europe without proletarians”,⁷⁷ Rosenberg made only a few dogmatic comments on the concluding protocol. Among other things, he took exception to the perspective of an integrated labor market of the “*europäische Volksgemeinschaft*” (community of the European people) as stipulated in point 17 which he wanted to see replaced by the term “*Völkergemeinschaft*” (community of peoples).⁷⁸

Kautter was much more “successful” in dismantling the International Institute of Social History step by step. It is evident that the first sections of the collections were removed, packed in boxes and prepared for transport at the end of May and beginning of June 1942.⁷⁹ On the appointed date of 1 January 1943, the Netherlands work group of the task force compiled a list of all the boxes ready for shipment at that point, at which time they recorded a total of 776 boxes with newspapers and journals from the IISH,⁸⁰ these were originally earmarked for the Frankfurt branch of the “Supreme School” for “research on the Jewish question”, but in the end were shipped to the central library of the “Supreme School” located near Villach/Kärn-

⁷⁶ See the personnel directory under the rubric “II. Institut” in the weekly and monthly reports of the Netherlands work group of the Rosenberg task force (*Arbeitsgruppe Niederlande des Einsatzstabs Rosenberg*). BA, NS 30/15.

⁷⁷ Zentrales Staatsarchiv Potsdam, file 62.03 DAF, no. 39 902.

⁷⁸ Rosenberg to Ley, 3 May 1944. BA, NS 8/194, folios 42–43.

⁷⁹ See the file note of the director of the Netherlands work group, Schmidt-Stähler, on the operation locations of the central Netherlands work group for the period from 24 May to 6 June 1942. BA, NS 30/15.

⁸⁰ See the list on the number of boxes packed by the Netherlands work group by 1 January 1943. BA, NS 30/15.

ten on 16 August 1943.⁸¹ On 22 June 1944, an additional 271 boxes with IISH material that were being reserved for the “Supreme School” were shipped off, however, this time to Ratibor.⁸² The last act of dismantling began in September 1944. Rosenberg announced to Seyss-Inquart on 11 September that the rest of the IISH library was to be transferred: “Because the library consists of a unique collection of documents on European Marxism, it is irreplaceable for our ideological-political struggle.”⁸³ The fact of the matter was that not just the library, but the entire IISH inventory had been packed up and was “ready to march” in the Amsterdam Handelskade as of November 1944. The convoy went by way of Groningen and arrived on 5 January 1945 in Emden. There the material was loaded onto two Rhine barges and set off in the direction of Berlin. In April 1946, the barges “Alkmaar” and “Komet” were tracked down in Windheimhafen, forty kilometers west of Hannover. It took until 1956 to locate the rest of the sections and have them returned. The IISH Paris inventory has yet to be found.⁸⁴

Otherwise, the IISH building was used as the headquarters of the Dutch work group of the task force. From here, the confiscation and pillage of the Dutch bookshops, the libraries of the lodges and Jewish congregations, as well as the still untouched parties and trade-union organizations were planned and executed. The activities were recorded in minute detail in the weekly and monthly reports.⁸⁵ Even in autumn 1941 the work group boasted “that the library inventory, which has so far been secured, packed and the greater part sent to Germany, possesses an extraordinary, scientific value and will represent a very important part of the library of the Supreme School. The material value of these libraries can only be roughly estimated. However, it certainly amounts to 30–40 million Reichsmark.”⁸⁶ Once Rosenberg had been further “authorized” by the Führer order of 1 March 1942 to expand his activities to such cultural goods which were “the possession or property of Jews, ownerless, or of unclear origin”,⁸⁷ the Nether-

⁸¹ The shipment was delivered to Annenheim in Kärnten. The central library of the “Supreme School”, directed by Dr. Walther Grothe, was located in the Grandhotel Annenheim/St. Andrä. See the annual report of the central library for the year 1943, in BA, NS 8/267.

⁸² See Hunink, p. 138.

⁸³ Rosenberg to Seyss-Inquart, 11 September 1944. Quote cited by Hunink, document 49, p. 316.

⁸⁴ See the detailed description of this by Hunink, ch. 7, pp. 151ff.

⁸⁵ See BA, NS 30/15.

⁸⁶ An undated report of the Netherlands work group of the Rosenberg task force on the confiscation of libraries in Holland, p. 7, Nürnberg Document 176-PS. The time period has been estimated on the basis of the comparison of the acts of pillage that had occurred to that point and the regular monthly reports.

⁸⁷ Nürnberg Document 149-PS. The Führer order was officially announced on 5 July

lands work group also intervened in the deportation of the Jewish population. It started a "Special Action M" ("M" for *Mobilier*, furniture). In the monthly report for March 1942, it can be read how this action was conducted: "The first step taken in starting the work was to obtain the necessary papers for the clearance action. The inventory lists compiled by the 'household survey' of the towns Arnheim, Alkmaar, Den Helder, Zaandam, Hilversum, and Utrecht were first copied and ordered alphabetically. A suitable warehouse owned by the firm Meyer & Co., in the new harbor of Amsterdam was found and rented in Loods S. (Borneo-Kade). Negotiations on the transportation of Jewish furniture were conducted with the firm Kühne & Nagel, and a contract concluded."⁸⁸ The IISH had become a "den of thieves" (N. W. Posthumus), whose members worked through the archives, libraries, museums and lastly the apartments of the deported Jewish population with cold, calculated precision.

VI

On the surface it would appear that the events outlined here should be interpreted as being the expression of critical rivalries for power and influence which lent a special mark to the expansionism of the Nazi system of rule and also greatly accelerated it. This argumentation appears to be thoroughly convincing precisely in explaining this case: A power group within the NSDAP apparatus, with an incomprehensibly complex and quasi fluid organization, fought for an ideological position of hegemony within the Nazi movement. It planned the establishment of a "Supreme School" and made every effort, with the help of academies and research institutes, to bring under its control the sprawling Nazi power complex with its manifold mass organizations (the "*wehrgeistige* Academy" to integrate the SA, "Academy of Labor" or "Social Academy" for the purpose of "*Gleichrichtung*" or bringing the DAF into line). Since the DAF was further advanced both in institutional and conceptional terms, the Rosenberg Agency attempted to make up for this deficiency from abroad; it "reorganized" the captured social science and social history resources and transformed them into pawns so that its ideological claims to supremacy would prevail. What was involved in the case of the IISH was the attempt to clearly reverse the priority of an institute that was established to save the documentation and thus the history of the Socialist labor movement, and in

1942, by a circular of the head of the Reich Chancellery to the supreme Reich authorities (*Oberste Reichsbehörden*) and the "offices directly subordinate to the Führer", see Nürnberg document 154-PS.

⁸⁸ Monthly report of the Netherlands work group for March 1942, p. 3: "4. Sonderaktion M." BA, NS 30/15.

addition, to stand up to the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront*. This operation failed. The captured scholarly resources on the European labor movement were merely analyzed for their value for “security police work” and were otherwise made available for an increasingly illusionary postwar controversy. Had we accepted this explanation, our conclusions would have corresponded with the predominate interpretation of West German research on recent history, namely that internal Nazi rivalries were the manifestation of a “polycratic system of rule”,⁸⁹ and we would have enriched it with a brilliant facet.

However, the first glance does not look closely enough. It is not taken into consideration that up until the beginning of the 1940s, the IISH established itself as a center of socialist-oriented historical social science and had saved the key documentary material and the libraries of the European labor movement from the Nazis.⁹⁰ Comparable facilities, even if oriented somewhat differently, existed only in the USA, the Soviet Union and England. They were just as extensively supported by German emigrants as was the IISH. Thus, the “run” of the Nazis on the Amsterdam institute has exemplary significance. When the members of the Rosenberg Agency laid their hands on it and used it for making a deal with the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront*, they did this in the knowledge that the DAF had built up a major social science institute six years before from archival assets and with the help of a handful of intellectual renegades from the social reformist trade-union movement of the Weimar Republic. This new institute set completely new standards for the future of the social–technical planning of Nazi Germany. But Amsterdam was not Berlin and the *Gewerkschaftsschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbunds* (Trade Union School of the General German League of Trade Unions) was not comparable to the International Institute of Social History. The attempt to instrumentalize it failed due to the political, moral, and intellectual integrity of the men and women working at the IISH and to the process of alignment of the opposition.

In the rivalries between Rosenberg, Heydrich, and Ley over the captured sources on worker and revolutionary history in the IISH, three tactical lines of practical Nazi rule were actually revealed which nevertheless complemented each other in the concerted action against all efforts of social, anti-racist, and political resistance. Heydrich best represented the common basis of Nazi rule; namely, a theory of prevention keeping “society sanitary” that aimed to locate and eliminate all oppositional stirrings in their initial phases of emergence with the help of modern methods of gathering

⁸⁹ See Peter Hüttenberger, “Nationalsozialistische Polykratie”, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 2 (1976) 4, pp. 417ff.

⁹⁰ See Annie Adama van Scheltema-Kleefstra, “Herinneringen”, and Hunink, pp. 21ff.

individual statistics, investigative techniques of empirical and social science, and last but not least a continual analysis of captured documents. “Research and Evaluation” (so the designation of Office VII in the Reich Security Head Office) ranked so high in this that it was considered to be the basic prerequisite of any “enemy control”.⁹¹ Connected to this research agency of the SD was the German Academic Institute Abroad of the Berlin university. It was considered to be the public, scientific arm of the SD for contributing to the systematical study of “enemy fields” (“leftist movements”, “free masons”, “liberalism”, “church issues”, “Eastern research”, etc.) and at the same time built these geopolitically into the concept of universal domination of the power elite of the “Third Reich”.⁹² SS Obersturmführer Albert Prinzing knew why he not only made an appeal for the collections and libraries of the IISH for the SD following the first drop-in visit of a civilian archival commission, but additionally advocated a permanent integration of the entire institute in the “scope of work” of the Security Service of the SS.

Compared with this, the Reichsleiter Rosenberg and Ley pursued goals in social policy and social science that went far beyond the needs of a social research “applicable” directly to “enemy control”. It should not be overlooked that for both of them the preventive action taken by security police against any opposition formed the common, self-evident basis for rule. With his multivarious ideological functions of controlling and censoring within the NSDAP apparatus, Rosenberg considered himself to be the guardian of a social Darwinist utopia of totality,⁹³ which – combined with an uncompromising anti-semitism and anti-communism – enabled Nazism to become a concept of rule held by the German power elite and firmly anchored in the old and new middle classes. In this concept, the “social question” definitely had its place, but it was incorporated into the tension between “*Wirtschaftsgeist*” (economic mindedness) and “*Wehrgeist*” (military-mindedness).⁹⁴ Robert Ley was in no way against these principles,

⁹¹ See Georg C. Browder, “The SD: The Significance of Organisation and Image”, in George L. Mosse (ed.), *Police Forces in History* (London and Beverly Hills, 1975), pp. 205ff.; Robert Koehl “Toward an SS Typology: Social Engineers”, *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 18 (1959) 2, pp. 113 ff., and Alwin Ramme, *Der Sicherheitsdienst der SS* (Berlin, 1970).

⁹² See Erich Siebert, “Entstehung und Struktur der Auslandswissenschaftlichen Fakultät an der Universität Berlin (1940 bis 1945)”, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe*, 15 (1966), 1, pp. 19ff.

⁹³ See Raimund Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf im Dritten Reich* (Mainz, 1977), pp. 42ff.

⁹⁴ On this point the writings of the later IISH commissioner are an important additional source: Eberhard Kautter, *Wirtschaftsgeist, Sozialgeist, Wehrgeist* (Berlin, 1935), and E.

but he demanded a stronger integration of the social reformist-bourgeois heritage of social policy in order to develop them further on the long run into a strong, social racist and social imperialistic model of rule.⁹⁵ With this, he thoroughly mastered his double function as Reichsorganisationsleiter of the NSDAP and as Reichsleiter of the DAF. The anti-egalitarian social racism of the Nazi movement had to associate itself with a concept of social rationalization in order not only to oppress and tame the working class and the labor movement, but also to actively integrate them in the process of industrialization and expansion. In Ley's eyes, the only ones capable of consolidating the emerging European world power bloc of Nazism and of ruling it over a long period of time was an elite of social engineers dedicated to the rationalization of all societal living conditions.⁹⁶

In the postwar development of West German social policy, it has not been the influence of the aspirants of the "Supreme School" that imbued this development with continuity, but that of the intellectuals of the DAF *Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut*. Superimposed with the newly disposed anti-communism of the Adenauer-restoration and the Cold War, significant elements of their "social plan" could be established and gave the social "modernization thrust" of the fifties and sixties a special imprint.

Kautter, *Das Sozialproblem im Wandel deutscher Geschichte, Nationalpolitische Aufklärungsschriften*, vol. 7 (Berlin, 1937).

⁹⁵ See above all Robert Ley, "Die Überwindung des Geistes von 1789", in the Zentralamt für Internationale Sozialgestaltung und Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF (ed.), *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*, 1 (1941) 1, pp. 1ff.

⁹⁶ See Robert Ley, "Die deutschen Sozialwerke als Ausdruck unseres Leistungswillens", *Neue Internationale Rundschau der Arbeit*, 1 (1941) 2, pp. 135ff., and "Die Wissenschaft im Dienste der Sozialordnung", in Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut der DAF (ed.), *Wirtschafts- und Sozialberichte*, nos. 5–7 (September, 1942), pp. 83ff. Both articles were written by the DAF Arbeitswissenschaftliche Institut for Ley.