

THE LABOR ADMINISTRATION IN THE ECONOMIC MIRACLE



*I*n the summer of 1945, after the Allies had defeated and occupied Germany, few Germans could be certain about their own, or their society's, future. The country faced even bleaker prospects than those of 1918: this second world war had come home to Germany, turning cities to rubble and destroying infrastructure and industrial capital, as the first one had not. The human losses—of killed and wounded soldiers and, for the first time, targeted civilians—had been even greater than the carnage of 1914 to 1918. Millions of homeless people, displaced or expelled from central Europe, threatened to overwhelm available resources. Above all, Germany's future status—its borders, its political constitution, and its economic system—lay, at least for the foreseeable future, in others', in the Allies,' hands. At the time, few could imagine what kind of Germany, what kind of economy and vocational system, would emerge in 10 or 20 years time.

The War's Aftermath¹

Amidst the ruins of postwar Germany, the reconstruction of a national Labor Administration and system of vocational training, like the future of much else in the defeated and occupied country, only could have seemed a distant and uncertain prospect. In the event, the road to the establishment in 1952 of the new Labor Administration, the *Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung*, would be filled with delay, power struggles, and debate. And yet, in

retrospect, it is clear that no significant opposition or alternative to a reconstitution ever presented itself.² As had been the case since the 1920s, the support for a Labor Administration was broad among the nascent interest groups and the political parties. At the local and state levels, labor offices resumed their activities as soon as they could. The reconstitution of the vocational training system, which also encountered delays and perhaps more serious challenges to employers' power, though not to the system per se, followed a similar path: the local bodies, the individual companies, and chambers of industry, resumed—or, in fact, simply continued—earlier patterns; organizing nationally took longer.

Even as the Allies assumed all political authority in conquered Germany, German administration, particularly at the local level, continued to operate.³ However, the labor offices now faced even more obstacles to effective service than they had in the waning years of the Third Reich, when conscription into the army of their own personnel, the regime's interventions in the economy, and the breakdown of transportation and bomb attacks had disrupted work. Surprisingly, perhaps, the fact that most industrial production had ground to a halt was not itself directly responsible for the labor offices' problems:⁴ despite their production problems, employers continued—as they had throughout the war—to seek a high number of apprentices. Rather, the labor offices had to overcome many of the same obstacles that hampered industrial production (though not industrial training). A report of the vocational counselor in Bielefeld from August 1945 described the constraints under which his office had to work and the necessity of continuing the simplified forms of counseling and psychological testing he had developed in the last three years of the war:

In the current emergency condition of the local economy, it is hardly possible to consider individual vocational interests, not to mention fine gradations in ability. Examination rooms are not available and cannot at present be set up. Extensive psychological examinations would be premature given the large quantitative question of putting youths to work.... [G]iven the current transportation conditions the reestablishment of a supra-district testing station appears at present completely impossible.⁵

Addressing the human costs of the war, which the Bielefeld report also mentioned, diverted many of the remaining resources from vocational counseling's previously central purposes of advising and placing school-leavers. Adults, especially returning POWs, expellees, the war-wounded, and those compelled to change vocations or in need of further training, flooded the vocational counseling stations. In North Rhine-Westphalia in 1946/47, for example, such "older advice-seekers" made up nearly 60 percent of the offices' total caseload.⁶

Despite their firms' low output and the bleak prospects for improvement at least in the short-run, German employers sought to hire and train large numbers of school-leavers. In North Rhine-Westphalia in 1946/47 and 1947/48, for example, companies' requests of the labor offices for apprentices "exceeded considerably" the number of available trainees. In the first year, 159,000 candidates faced 177,000 openings; in 1947/48, the respective figures were 177,000 and

183,000.⁷ In the face of conditions detrimental to producing goods for sale, in particular the lack of a stable currency, firms turned their efforts to restoring and enhancing their capital, in both its material and human forms.⁸ As they had under the perhaps equally, if differently, challenging conditions of wartime production, German firms planned for a long-term future in which, they expected, a high-skilled workforce would be one of their greatest assets.

Compared to the concrete requirements and goals of the local and state labor offices and of companies, the *Weltanschauung* of political parties and the populace played a much smaller role in the reconstitution of the workforce optimization projects, at least in the first years after the war ended. For the great majority of Germans, exhaustion and the practical, daily challenge of making do amidst the ruins and shortages precluded much political engagement or reflection about the distant future.⁹ To the extent that the Allies permitted them, the early German political decisions did not rely on a mass-basis, but instead on elites of Weimar and even the late Kaiserreich.¹⁰

Supporters of the Labor Administration found in the postwar German outlook reasons to be optimistic about their institution's future, as well as looming challenges. For those Germans who could afford to think about more than simply making ends meet, print media, and in particular magazines, early on began a lively public debate about the nature and causes of the recent catastrophe (however defined) and the path to Germany's recovery. Though the answers and prescriptions often varied, a persistently strong theme in these early years was the call for ethical renewal, both of the individual and of society as a whole. Individuals sought new or, more often, old sources of value and orientation. They turned to religion, but also to work and vocation, which in addition to satisfying compelling material needs also "could serve as a new life-philosophy."¹¹ The yearning for individual orientation to some higher purpose, which might include devotion to work, fitted well with aspects of the Labor Administration's program of vocational counseling—such moral grounding had been at least one of the goals of many of the original proponents of vocational training and counseling in the Kaiserreich and Weimar Republic. However, at least in the discussion in the first years after 1945, the emphasis had shifted away from the economic and toward the spiritual role of skilled work.

As for remaking society, a broad, if vague, consensus united many leftists and Christians who favored some form of socialism.¹² Likewise, Germans from across the political spectrum held that the nation, if it ever were to emerge from its current catastrophic state, must use and mobilize its human resources as effectively as possible. Even the "Ordoliberal" architects of West Germany's "social market economy," while firmly rejecting socialism, embraced the need for a Labor Administration that would steer people into skilled work.¹³ Unlike the prior postwar period, however, after 1945 there were few explicit calls for *Menschenökonomie*, and certainly little of the earlier fervor.

Support for some form of socialism was congruent with a Labor Administration run in the public's interest. Of concern to officials in the labor offices,

however, were the criticisms of centralization and bureaucracy in general, which many Germans associated with Nazi rule and blamed for the destruction of humane (or religious) values.¹⁴ More particularly, the Labor Administration itself had become associated in many people's minds with the open dirigisme of the Nazi period, just as the heavy hand of the labor offices in World War I had earned them popular enmity.¹⁵ The pressures resulting from these attitudes on the part of the public, to emphasize the individual, almost ethical aspect of vocations and vocational counseling and to personalize the bureaucracy, would play some role in the coming years in efforts to highlight vocational counseling's connection to the individual. As it had in the past, *Berufsberatung* found itself torn between the means of "complete inclusion" and the desire to win the confidence and cooperation of its actual and potential clients in order to achieve the goal of a highly skilled workforce.

All in all, then, in the first years after World War II, the Labor Administration could build on broad support for its general mission of controlling and improving the workforce, while some aspects of implementation remained more contested. Compared to the situation after 1918, the urgency of the labor force projects had faded somewhat—if only because the collapse now encompassed so many aspects of life and because occupied Germany's fate rested to a much greater extent in others' hands. However, the institutions of the human economies, scattered critiques notwithstanding, were much more firmly in place.

Soon after the end of the war, higher levels of the Labor Administration also were reconstituted. Between 1945 and 1948, Allied restrictions, German political struggles, and simple practical considerations determined a heterogeneous sequence and pattern of reviving the bodies important to the workforce projects. However slowly the supra-local organizations arose, their reestablishment virtually went uncontested, reflecting the broad support among relevant German circles as well as among the Allies. Only the British, whose new Labour government envisioned a more centralized Germany with strong elements of a planned economy, created zone-wide Offices, including one for Labor, in addition to state ministries.¹⁶ As a result of this administrative decision, as well as the Rhineland's traditionally leading role in vocational counseling and its central position in the economy of the incipient West German state, the British Central Office for Labor became the basis for the future West German Labor Administration. The delays in reestablishing a unified national Labor Administration meant that—as so often in the past—state and local offices, as well as the British Central Office, shaped the practices of the human economies and, especially in their dealings with local employers, assured a high degree of continuity.

One of the few existing discontinuities, the lack of corporatist governing boards, spawned tensions within the incipient Labor Administration. In 1946 and 1947, the attempts by some Social Democratic politicians and union leaders to gain decisive influence over the Labor Administration seemed, to key figures within the Central Labor Office of the British Zone, to pose a threat to its mission. Unhampered by any corporatist governing boards, the Social Democratic

Labor Ministers of such important *Länder* as North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, and Schleswig-Holstein applied obviously political criteria in selecting the presidents of the state offices.¹⁷ Indeed, the head of the Zonal Central Office objected that the North Rhine-Westphalia Labor Minister had called several meetings of Social-Democratic directors of local labor offices in order to give them “political instructions.” If this were not stopped, the Zonal chief warned, other parties would do the same and the Labor Administration would be split into political camps.¹⁸ A related dispute arose over whether labor office figures could be active members of unions.¹⁹ While the head of the Zonal Office was willing to pay some attention to political affiliation in hirings (“otherwise, strong attacks could be expected from the parties and unions”), it was the British Occupation authority that insisted most forcefully upon the strict neutrality of labor office members.²⁰ Thus, without permanently alienating any party, the emerging Labor Administration in the British Zone began to reestablish important characteristics that had distinguished the Labor Administration in the Weimar period and that had not been violated fully even under the Nazis: a principle of relative non-partisanship and support from across the political spectrum.²¹ A substantial continuity of personnel from the Weimar and Nazi periods strengthened the incipient Labor Administration’s dedication to the national cause of creating a high-skilled workforce.²²

The Central Office for Labor in the British Zone regarded itself, as we have mentioned, as the precursor to a restored nationwide Labor Administration, in which view it found the full support of the British.²³ It swiftly took the initiative in preparing and systematizing materials for vocational counseling, including psychological testing. These efforts shed light on the thinking and motives within the Labor Administration during these tumultuous years. They demonstrate that, after some initial pathos-inspired, religiously colored idealism, more concrete goals, including—most pragmatically of all—the need to win the cooperation of employers, reasserted themselves. In addition to this form of continuity, the Central Office’s efforts to create uniform standards and methods for vocational counseling formed a direct bridge between the *Reichsanstalt* and the future *Bundesanstalt*, as those efforts drew on the systematizing work of the late 1930s and would provide the blueprint for the *Bundesanstalt*’s vocational counseling and psychological service.

Within months of the war’s end, the work of coordinating and preparing materials for vocational counseling had begun, first at the state level, and then at the Central Office. In February 1946, Julius Scheuble, who was the head of vocational counseling in the most important state of the British Zone, North Rhine, and would later become the first president of the reconstituted *Bundesanstalt*, called the first of several meetings to revive work at the state level.²⁴

In July, the British established the Central Office for Labor in Lemgo, with Scheuble as its director. Citing the “especially difficult task of vocational counseling at present,” Scheuble two months later organized the first zone-wide conference on vocational counseling. As Scheuble explained later to his British superiors

(and presumably to those at the conference), the “most important task” of his agency’s vocational counseling unit was “the new formation of a skilled labor force calibrated to the needs of a peace-time economy.”²⁵

Even after the British Zone’s Central Office was absorbed into the new Bizonal Administration for Labor that summer and thereby lost jurisdiction over vocational counseling,²⁶ efforts to systematize vocational counseling and psychological testing continued. The states, above all North Rhine-Westphalia, pursued both the Central Office’s project as well as their own work, which they had carried on in parallel to the Central Office’s. From early 1947, the North Rhine-Westphalia labor office had organized and encouraged training sessions for its vocational counselors and regional “working groups” to consider the future tasks and methods of vocational counseling.²⁷ Thanks to the energetic activity of these sessions and working groups, North Rhine-Westphalia, which since Weimar had boasted easily the densest network of vocational counseling and psychological testing stations, further cemented its leading role in the nascent Labor Administration.

Along with much continuity, the discussions in the working groups (and elsewhere) in North Rhine-Westphalia also revealed some shifts in thinking about the purpose and future of vocational counseling. In the first years after the end of hostilities, the leaders of the state labor offices could be as profoundly shaken as anybody by the magnitude of events. The head of vocational counseling for North Rhine-Westphalia, Karl Pardun, opened the first training session with pathos-filled reflections on the moral crisis of the times and the requisite characteristics of the vocational counselor:

The power of trust and mutual respect, the power of awe and of love for all living things must grow in the soul of the vocational counselor ... It is necessary to lead [the advice-seeker] to responsibility, to behavior appropriate to his nature and to the courage to duty; [the counselor must] help the individual to be guided again into the correct, living relation to himself, to other men and to whatever new human order is created.²⁸

With the passage of time, however, such high-minded goals gave way increasingly to more pragmatic concerns, such as reestablishing ties to employers and securing vocational counseling’s role in the new political landscape of the Federal Republic. In Schleswig-Holstein, the leading vocational counselor convinced his superiors to approve such efforts without reference to any “higher” values. The skewed relation between individual vocational wishes and real economic prospects necessitated a selection of apprentices, he observed matter-of-factly.

In 1947 and 1948, the relevance of employers loomed ever larger in the discussions among vocational counselors. “There are no legal means to prevent companies from doing suitability-tests,” Pardun had to inform the vocational counselors of North Rhine-Westphalia. “These efforts of the firms can only be overcome by better performance [of the labor offices].”²⁹ Beyond achieving a high-skilled workforce, which companies that tested candidates presumably were contributing to in any case, the vocational counselors now embraced *Totalerfassung* per se as a goal. Vocational counselors in the “Cologne Circle” raised the issue at their meet-

ing in April 1948. “In all districts,” as the protocol of the meeting put it, “there is an increasing number of requests by economic organizations to have their young workers suitability-tested [by vocational counseling.] Attention must be paid that the monopoly position of the vocational counseling in this regard is preserved and that not every arbitrary institution performs suitability-tests.”³⁰ The leading figures of the state vocational counseling office apparently concurred with the assessment at another counselors’ meeting that the percentage of suitability tests “must in future be increased ten-fold [from 2 percent to 20 percent] especially in light of the efforts of the large companies to achieve self-sufficiency in the realm of performing suitability-tests.”³¹ By 1948, then, even before the rapid revival of the German economy and the establishment of a new political framework in the Federal Republic, vocational counseling was again grappling with the challenges that had long shaped its strategies: accommodating the wishes of employers in the interest of maintaining its own control of the selection and placement process, and deciding whether *Totalerfassung* was a means to achieve a high-skilled workforce or, as it increasingly seemed to be, an end in itself.

The Vocational System within the Social Market Economy and Federal Republic: *Totalerfassung* Challenged and Maintained

In the years 1948 to 1952, the essential institutions of the labor force projects were restored (in West Germany) at the national level, including a central Labor Administration in the form of the *Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung*. They proved compatible—at least for several years—with the newly introduced “social market economy” and the Federal Republic’s political constitution. The Labor Administration again also overcame, for the time being, challenges to its goal of total control of the labor market.

The Bizone’s Economic Council and administrative offices, established in June 1947 and significantly reformed in early 1948, were regarded, if still not officially acknowledged, by Germans and the participating Allies as a forerunner of a future German government.³² In its two year existence, the Economic Council laid the groundwork for the economic system of West Germany, often without much fanfare and within the limits set by the Allies and by state prerogatives.³³ The institutions of the human economies also assumed clearer contours, though important decisions were put off until after the founding of the new state.

As had been the case after World War I, support for an organization of the labor market and for systematic vocational counseling (and training) reached across virtually all parties—in sharp contrast with the vitriolic debates about other economic questions. The “basic tendency of the [Economic Council] to reestablish achievements of the Weimar Republic was especially pronounced in the field of Labor Administration.”³⁴ The Germans’ wishes, in fact, outstripped the Allies’ willingness to establish central bureaucracies: throughout early 1948, the Economic Council pleaded for the establishment of a sixth Bizonal office—for “La-

bor and Social Affairs”—only to be rebuffed by the Allies on the grounds of limitations imposed by the Potsdam agreement. When an Administration for Labor finally was created by Allied fiat in August 1948, it bore responsibility, as had the *Reichsanstalt*, for job placement and unemployment payments. However, against German wishes, the Administration for Labor had no jurisdiction over vocational counseling, which remained in the hands of the states.³⁵ Also, the final status of the system of unemployment insurance, which had provided the financial underpinnings of *Reichsanstalt*, remained, like the other kinds of social insurance, to be decided by the parliament of a new German state.³⁶ Finally, the incipient ministries for economics and labor continued their struggle over responsibility for vocational training, a conflict that only would be settled in 1952, when the Economics Ministry reasserted its control. External forces and jurisdictional disputes continued to stymie German wishes for a unified Labor Administration, which would include vocational counseling.

In June 1948, the nearly simultaneous introduction by the Allies of a new currency and the approval by the Economic Council of measures to set free the prices for most goods as well as wages marked a momentous turning point in Germany's postwar economic development. By ending state controls in these areas, which the Nazis had introduced in 1936 and which the Allies had continued since 1945, the liberalization of prices and wages appeared to spell the end to hopes for widespread planning in the economy, which in the first years after the war had been in the ascendance. They represented the triumph of a resurgent, though modified, liberalism—Ordoliberalism.³⁷ However—and this discrepancy has gone unnoticed in the scholarly literature—the liberalizations of mid 1948 left untouched a core area of the German economy: aside from the lifting of wage controls, the labor market remained subject to “administration.” In part, as we shall see, this only partial liberalization derived from the fact that the Allies had insisted that decisions about the future of the German insurance systems, one of which, of course, supported the Labor Administration, be made by a newly constituted German parliament. Yet the Allies' injunction was not sufficient cause to block Erhard's implementation of the liberalization measures even *before* the military authorities had given their approval.³⁸

In part, even among the advocates of liberalization, there were many who believed it could be introduced only in stages. They believed that elements of planning still would be necessary for some time to come. Thus, Erhard's predecessor as director of the Bizonal Economic Administration, Johannes Semmler, had acknowledged that, “we will quite certainly need a planned economy for [another] twenty years—even we who reject the basic premise of a state-run planned economy.”³⁹

The intellectual drafters of blueprints for the social market economy had only marginally and timidly included the labor market in their plans for reform.⁴⁰ The Labor Administration's goal of creating a high-skilled workforce fitted perfectly with two fundamental changes the Ordoliberals made to pure *laissez-faire* policy: the state could intervene in the market if it did so in a “market-conforming” way,

i.e., for the sake of preparing people for the free market, and a successful capitalist system presupposed economically and psychologically independent participants.⁴¹ It is revealing of the special place of the labor market in the emerging economic order that during the very days when the Economic Council passed the measures liberalizing much of the German economy, it also voted to create an Administration for Labor.⁴² The breadth of support for this law—it was sponsored jointly by the Christian Democrats and Christian Social Union, the Social Democrats, the Liberals, and the Catholic Center, which together represented 47 of the 52 delegates to the Economic Council—gave an indication of the German consensus in support of the Labor Administration. Even the proponents of a largely liberalized social market economy still drew the line in front of the labor market.

The promulgation a year later of the Basic Law establishing a Federal German Republic changed little in terms of the Labor Administration and the other workforce optimization projects, at least in the short-term. The Basic Law did not prescribe a particular economic system for the *Bundesrepublik*, in effect leaving in place the decisions already taken by the Economic Council and Allies (*Soziale Marktwirtschaft*, currency reform) and allowing future parliaments to make changes (by a two-thirds majority).⁴³ In accordance with German tradition, it left the determination of the “labor order” to the federal government,⁴⁴ paving the way for the future reestablishment of a national Labor Agency. However, several articles of the Basic Law pertaining to basic individual rights—which the Parliamentary Council had placed at the beginning of the document in response to the Nazi regime’s trampling of those rights—potentially had a bearing on the Labor Administration. The very first words of the Federal Republic’s founding document—“The dignity of man is inviolable”—put down a claim, however abstractly, on the basic orientation of the new state. Unlike in the Nazi period and to some extent even in the Weimar Republic,⁴⁵ in the West German Federal Republic, the state was to serve the individual, and not vice versa. However, the implications for specific realms of life of this general commitment remained as yet undetermined. In regard to the Labor Administration, the Federal Republic’s commitment to the priority of the individual would have an impact only after several years, especially after Germany’s economic conditions had dramatically improved.

The abstract pledge to uphold the dignity of the individual both undergirded and expressed itself in the more specific “basic rights” of the *Grundgesetz*.⁴⁶ One of these—the “freedom of choice of a vocation” contained in Article 12—appeared likely, in conjunction with a change of Allied statute, to have an immediate, significant effect on the Labor Administration. We turn, therefore, to the challenge Article 12 and the ending of a legal basis for compelling school-leavers to report to the labor offices posed to the Labor Administration’s goal of “total control” of the labor market. By overcoming this challenge, at least for the time being, the Labor Administration was able to maintain its original program of *Totalerfassung* well into the 1950s.

By early 1949, several months after Erhard’s liberalizations and as the Parliamentary Council deliberated, the leaders of the Labor Administration recognized

that “the foundations of vocational counseling were buckling.” Some kind of “re-orientation” was necessary.⁴⁷ They were casting an anxious eye on the anticipated end of vocational counseling’s legal mandate compelling school-leavers to report to the labor offices. The mandate had been introduced by the Nazis in 1938. After the defeat of Germany, the Allied Control Commission’s Order Nr. 3, issued on 17 January 1946,⁴⁸ had extended those controls into the postwar period for the simple sake of maintaining order. Faced with the likelihood that the framers of the German constitution would seek to guarantee individual freedoms in the labor sphere as part of the overall commitment of the new Republic to individual rights, the vocational counselor Pardun sketched out vocational counseling’s options and prospects. “The question now is whether the external means (requirement to register, etc.) should be defended or not. The core issue is freedom or compulsion.” Pardun elucidated the two options: “Liberalism offers the free play of forces. It demands therefore only an informational role for vocational counseling. Others start from the idea of government steering [of labor forces], in order to harmonize the interests of the individual with those of the collectivity. For this, purely mechanical means (for example, [new] legal determinations) would be necessary.” In fact, however, Pardun appeared to advocate yet another option: “The third way would be that of individual counseling, personal responsibility [of the counselor], and social welfare. That would be the genuine commitment [of the counselor], that would be trust in one’s own work and the trust of the employers. If vocational counseling must take this path, then it is important that it start off down this road even today.”⁴⁹ With the end of the Labor Administration’s legal mandate—the “external means”—for *Totalerfassung* looming, a leading vocational counselor advocated strengthening what he might have dubbed “internal means”: appealing to school-leavers through a more personalized service.

Four months later, after the Basic Law had, as expected, established freedom of vocational choice, leading vocational counselors from throughout the Federal Republic convened to consider the implications for the Labor Administration. The position they settled on incorporated elements from all three of Pardun’s options. Article 12 of the Basic Law, they acknowledged, “clearly and with direct legal effect” guaranteed the freedom of the worker in his choice of vocation, workplace, and training station. “All administrative limitations of this freedom cease.” However, the obligations imposed by the 1946 Allied Order upon employers to register all openings and obtain permission for new hirings were, for the time being, still in force.

The consequences the counselors drew suggested that, in the view of the Labor Administration, the goal remained largely the same as it always had been—steering as many people as possible into skilled work and control of the labor market. The means and emphases, however, might have to be adapted to the new circumstances. The sole responsibility of the Labor Administration for vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement,⁵⁰ the assembled noted, continued unaffected by Article 12. Above and beyond its monopoly status, the Labor Administration intended to maintain its access to all first time job seekers, though it now

dropped the word *Total*, which aroused unwelcome associations. “The planned *Erfassung* of the advice seekers, especially the school-leavers, remains an important task of vocational counseling, even if the legal means ([the 1938 law and the Allied Control Commission’s Order Nr. 3]) should be abolished.” The main instrument of *Erfassung* would be an institution that even before the introduction of legal compulsion in 1938 had been the lynchpin of the Labor Administration’s efforts to achieve total inclusion: “this task,” the summary of the meeting continued, “will have to be solved above all in closest cooperation with the school.”

In its dealings with the advice-seeker, the counselors agreed, the Labor Administration would have to make some, albeit minor, modifications. They insisted that vocational counseling always, in fact, had respected the freedom of vocational choice. Generally, “for the goals and essential methods of vocational counseling, which in principle already have built on the idea [contained in] Article 12, no fundamental changes result.” However, the counselors did acknowledge the advantages of Pardun’s “third way.” They agreed that:

in carrying out its economic and social tasks, vocational counseling will once again have to place clearly in the foreground the social purpose of care for the vocational fate of the advice and help-seeking people. This effort must be clearly expressed in the methods of vocational counseling as well: they must apply reserve in emphasizing administrative powers and primarily rely on means of pedagogical influencing of the vocation-seekers and of the parents or guardians, as well as on the sincere cooperation with all agencies engaged and interested in the same questions.

The counselors specified what the shift in emphasis from administrative pressure toward “influence” would entail in more practical terms: “Vocational information, individual counseling, suitability-testing, and subsequent vocational care must therefore be constantly deepened and expanded.”⁵¹ By expanding and improving such services, the Labor Administration would tend more—or be seen to tend more—to the individual now placed at the center of the new state’s political order. At the same time, and in fact by precisely these means, vocational counselors hoped still to be able, now by less obviously authoritarian methods, to continue to fulfill the goal of steering all school-leavers into appropriate skilled jobs.

After the Basic Law annulled the previous compulsory powers of the Labor Administration, good relations with the schools and, to a lesser degree, improvements in vocational counseling’s services focusing on the individual became the means of the Labor Administration’s *Totalerfassung*. From the 1920s and especially after the 1930 agreement between the Ministries of Labor and the Interior, the schools had played a critical role in “delivering” students to the labor offices: they had supplied the latter with “student cards” containing personal information and evaluations of every single pupil, teachers had accompanied entire classes to the labor office, or vocational counselors had come to the schools. Now, in the absence of a legal mandate, the Labor Administration would rely even more on such forms of cooperation to reach all school-leavers. Thus, state and local labor offices negotiated with the corresponding school authorities in order to reaffirm

or update the agreements made two decades earlier. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the state labor office and Ministry of Education reached agreement in August 1949, with the latter reminding all school authorities of the validity of the 1930 guidelines and invoking “the importance of cooperation between school and vocational counseling.”⁵² Shortly before this agreement, the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia explained to his counselors the significance of reaffirming the guidelines on cooperation: “The requirement according to the Order of 1 March 1938 for school-leavers to register and to use [vocational counseling] may in future no longer be in effect. Through the guidelines on the cooperation between school and vocational counseling, the *Erfassung* of the school-leavers appears secured.”⁵³

The new circumstances also had inspired vocational counseling to seek new means of addressing the individual counsel-seeker and “influencing” his choices. Over the next two years, a committee of state office representatives, often in consultation with members of the Federal Ministry of Labor,⁵⁴ would prepare the materials of the future psychological service of the *Bundesanstalt*. From early on, it was agreed that the future Federal Labor Agency should have a central psychological unit.⁵⁵ The work in the late 1930s on national standards for psychological testing, culminating in a series of standardized tests, already had established the precedent of concerted action on a national level. After the war, first the Central Office in Lemgo and then the North Rhine-Westphalia state office had resumed this work, in both cases with the aspiration to achieve national standards for vocational psychology. In light of the threat to *Totalerfassung* and the resulting imperative of gaining the cooperation of school-leavers with the help of more individualized counseling (while continuing, of course, to serve employers), the leading vocational counselors could agree on the utility of a central psychological service.

Reestablishing a National Labor Administration

All of these negotiations were predicated on the restoration of a national Labor Administration, which, in one form or another, all political parties in the Economic Council, the Parliamentary Council, and then the first German *Bundestag* favored.⁵⁶ In early 1950, the Free Trade Union (DGB) and the employers’ associations had issued a joint proclamation containing their common vision for the *Bundesanstalt*.⁵⁷ Joint control of the labor market, imposed on the employers by the socialist ascendance in the immediate aftermath of World War I, was something industry’s leaders, who stood to gain from the corporatist arrangement, had in the meantime learned to like.

After wrangling over re-opened issues, such as the balance of power in the *Bundesanstalt* between the two social partners, on the one hand, and the public authorities on the other, which doomed the government’s first bill to create a *Bundesanstalt* in 1951, a compromise was reached the following year.⁵⁸ In March 1952, a *Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung* came

into existence, which, in virtually all respects, resembled the original *Reichsanstalt* (that is, in its incarnation until 1934, when the Nazis ended the self-administration by unions and employers). Like its predecessor, the *Bundesanstalt* would consist of a headquarters, state, and local offices; at each level, representatives of unions, employers, and public authorities would have an equal say on the governing boards. Finally, the federal Labor Ministry would have the right to approve the *Bundesanstalt's* overall budget. *Bundesanstalt* headquarters would be in Nuremberg; its first president would be Julius Scheuble, the former head of the British Zone's Central Labor Office.

In other ways, as well, the *Bundesanstalt* represented continuity. As the 1952 law pertained only to organizational matters, but did not revise the 1927 law on job placement and unemployment insurance, the latter remained, for the time being, in effect. The Ministry of Labor and, later, the *Bundesanstalt* itself began to deliberate over the draft of an update to the 1927 law on job placement and unemployment insurance—at first, in parallel with the negotiations over reestablishing a Labor Agency, and then after the *Bundesanstalt* had come into existence.⁵⁹ Until the 1927 law was updated, its guidelines on vocational counseling still would apply. These accorded as much importance to a macro-economically sound distribution of workers as to the interests of the individual. In any case, as we have seen, legal determinations often were not decisive when it came to the practices of vocational counseling.

An innovation of the 1952 law and the *Bundesanstalt* was the creation of a psychological service within vocational counseling. Its origins lay in the deliberations over the role of the Labor Administration under the changing circumstances of the postwar period that we traced above. While its supporters clearly hoped it would be an effective instrument for coordinating and improving vocational counseling's use of psychology on a national scale, their hopes would be disappointed for nearly a decade. Rather, vocational psychology would continue to be applied in a highly decentralized manner and remain intimately tied to the interests of local employers, as had been the case from the start of the Labor Administration. Before we turn to the state of vocational counseling in the years 1953 to 1955, we must characterize briefly the postwar course of the other side of the workforce projects: the system of vocational training, where the story also largely was one of continuity.

The Institutions of Vocational Training

Perhaps even more than in the case of the Labor Administration, the reconstitution of a nationally standardized system of training high-skilled workers enjoyed virtually unanimous support. In the first years after the war, the administrative division of the country into occupation zones, Allied restrictions on forming business associations, and the general problems of communication and organization limited efforts in this direction. Still, as we have seen, individual companies

responded to the lack of an effective market before the currency reform by investing in worker training in preparation for the future. Helping to coordinate company efforts were the Chambers of Industry and Commerce, which long had played the key role at the local and regional levels of the vocational system, displayed considerable continuity across the divide of 1945, and proved exceptionally effective in the first postwar years.⁶⁰ As restrictions were lifted, employers' associations formed bizonal, and later national, organizations to work on vocational training. In the summer and fall of 1947, various Chambers of Industry and Commerce formed the Office for Industrial Vocational Training (*Arbeitsstelle für gewerbliche Berufserziehung*) and a corresponding Office for Commercial Vocational Training (*Arbeitsstelle für kaufmännische Berufserziehung*). Both continued the work of DATSCH to standardize vocational materials.

In May 1951, at the prodding of the Federal Economics Ministry, all of these groups, as well as the Association of German Industry (BDI), the German Trade Unions Congress (DGB), and several ministries, agreed that “an urgent need exists to establish a central institute for vocational training.”⁶¹ In November, the various institutes merged into the Office for Business Vocational Training (*Arbeitsstelle für betriebliche Berufsausbildung*), which the other major employers' organizations—the *Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie* and the *Bundesvereinigung deutscher Arbeitgeberverbände*—joined in 1953.⁶² They thereby established a unified organization concerned with developing standards and materials for vocational training and certification, similar to the Working Committee on Vocational Training (*Arbeitsausschuss für Berufsausbildung*) in the second half of the 1920s and DATSCH and the *Reichsinstitut für Berufsausbildung* in the 1930s and war years.

German employers' associations not only reestablished a central institute dedicated to the standardized vocational system, but they also urged the retention of a system of *Totalerfassung* of all school-leavers. In mid 1949, the Chambers of Industry and Commerce in all three zones “demanded obligatory use of vocational counseling—[even] with a basic freedom of vocational choice.”⁶³ For their part, the employers' associations reached an agreement with the Federal Ministry of Labor in early 1950 to report all open positions to the labor offices, even after the legal compulsion to do so had lapsed.⁶⁴ As had been the case since the beginning of the Labor Administration, however, the commitments of the central employers' associations would not in practice fully bind local employers—who still had to be wooed by the local labor offices.

The Practice of Vocational Counseling in the *Bundesanstalt*, 1953–1955

The following snapshot of the *practice* of vocational counseling in the first half of the 1950s captures a scene not very different from that in the mid 1930s or even mid 1920s. It shows that, despite the founding of the *Bundesanstalt* and of a psychological service within its vocational counseling wing and despite the several

changes of political system, important aspects of the human economies remained much the same as they had been at their first institutionalization.

Faced with the end of the legal mandate for *Totalerfassung*, as we have seen, leading vocational counselors pinned their hopes for maintaining a nearly “total inclusion” on two other instruments: above all, on the already well-established connections of the labor offices to the schools, but also on a more individualized vocational counseling system, including improved vocational psychology. In fact, cooperation between labor offices and schools worked very well throughout the first half of the 1950s (and later). As they had since the 1920s, the labor offices utilized the schools in a number of ways, varying from place to place, in order “to secure the *Erfassung*” of nearly all school-leavers. For most labor offices, “school cards” sent directly from the schools to the labor offices provided the latter with basic data on every school-leaver. On the basis of these “seamless documents,”⁶⁵ the offices could invite all students for visits. Often, they did not have to rely on such invitations, because schools assured the labor offices a much more systematic kind of access. Classes were sent en masse to vocational counseling, or the counselors came to the schools.⁶⁶ As a result, in the early 1950s, nearly 95 percent of all school-leavers still visited vocational counseling.⁶⁷

As had been the case from the very beginning of the Labor Administration and comprehensive vocational counseling and under every political regime and legal framework, the local labor offices cared intensely about earning the trust—and the apprenticeship openings—of local employers. Hence, regardless of headquarters’ (often halfhearted) injunctions to the contrary, the practice of vocational counseling and psychology at the local level largely was oriented toward the wishes of local employers. In violation of the central office’s policies, local offices often tested directly for an employer, including testing apprenticeship candidates he already had selected. Indicative of the intimate relations between vocational counselors and employers, these exams frequently were conducted on company premises.⁶⁸

The purpose and practices of the Labor Administration in 1955 would have been quite familiar to an observer in 1935: the *Totalerfassung* of nearly all school-leavers, who were to be matched to appropriate skilled jobs, and the local offices’ dependence on close ties to employers. Yet, the parallels also would have been deceiving; for, under the surface, the ground upon which the Labor Administration rested was shifting. The unparalleled economic growth of the 1950s and early 1960s was already undermining the economic, social, and cultural bases of *Totalerfassung*.

A Silent Social Revolution

As people and as Germans, the leaders of the Labor Administration, like millions of their countrymen, no doubt rejoiced in the unparalleled economic growth that began in the early 1950s. Between 1950 and 1960, real GDP grew annually by an astonishing 8.2 percent.⁶⁹ The rate of unemployment fell steadily, with only a

brief setback in the “downturn” of 1957/58,⁷⁰ from 10 percent in 1950 to 1 percent a decade later.⁷¹ After four decades with little economic growth or political calm, the *Bundesrepublik’s* combination of democratic stability and incipient prosperity hardly could fail to impress the men of the Labor Administration. In no small measure, it had been the Labor Administration, along with the Prussian and Reich economics ministries and the employers’ organizations, which had laid the groundwork for the *Wirtschaftswunder*—by helping to create the “German skills machine,” which was based on steering a high proportion of the population into skilled work, in the decades after World War I. The creators and backers of the optimization programs rightly could claim some credit for what they saw unfolding around them in the West Germany of the 1950s.

Yet by the mid 1950s, many in the Labor Administration were worrying that the economic dynamism unleashed in the Economic Miracle could pose a serious challenge to their agency’s role in the labor market. They were concerned about both mounting public criticism of the Labor Administration and employers’ and job seekers’ increasingly independent behavior in the ever-tighter labor market.

By the second half of the 1950s, German attitudes toward authority were beginning to change, if still only slowly.⁷² A “skeptical generation” of youths took the lead, looking askance at their elders’ acceptance of authority figures and the state apparatus.⁷³ The press gave voice to this increasingly assertive German public. As early as 1954, with the unemployment rate dropping steadily, leading figures of the Labor Administration uneasily registered journalistic and other critiques of their work.⁷⁴ A report from a vocational counselor in Munich, which circulated widely within headquarters, argued that even in a vocational counseling office regarded as among the best, “the voices from public and private circles that negatively criticize it—without being especially ill-willed toward vocational counseling—are numerous.” The counselor herself concurred with the critiques, citing the size of the office, its emphasis on quantity over quality, and its bureaucratic sluggishness.⁷⁵ Of course, these were precisely the charges that had been leveled at the labor offices since their inception. But now toleration of this kind of authority was dwindling. “In a changed and changing world,” another counselor acknowledged, vocational counseling “must present another face than it did during its early days.”⁷⁶

There were other signs as well that the Labor Administration cared increasingly about its public “face.” An ongoing discussion between the central office and the largest *Landesarbeitsamt*, in North Rhine-Westphalia, over the proper role of parents in the counseling meetings confirmed the growing weight of public opinion. The representatives from North Rhine-Westphalia reproached headquarters for maintaining “an out-of-date steering standpoint [i.e., in which vocational counseling strongly influenced vocational choices].” Their explication of the charge was revealing of the ultimate source of their worries: “If such comments [i.e., those of headquarters in favor of steering] became known to the public, one could expect the sharpest protests.”⁷⁷ The main concern of the counselors from North Rhine-Westphalia, then, was not about the practice itself, but about the public’s reaction. Out of the same concerns, high officials now vigilantly kept an eye out

for any negative reports in the press.⁷⁸ At the September 1955 meeting of the administrative board, the President of the *Bundesanstalt*, Julius Scheuble, reported his concern that the public had the “false perception” that due to the declining unemployment rate, the importance of the Labor Administration as a whole also was reduced. Given the undiminished and still central functions of vocational counseling and job placement, Scheuble suggested, the *Bundesanstalt* might have to make its case more effectively to the public.⁷⁹

The Labor Administration’s worries in the mid 1950s were not limited to the growing public perceptions of it as a coercive, bureaucratic, and increasingly superfluous agency. The surfeit of work opportunities was changing the behavior of the *Bundesanstalt’s* main constituencies—job seekers and, above all, employers—as well. Employers were seeking ever more workers; moreover, because of the decline in the birthrate during the war years, the number of youths entering the job-market would decline between 1953 and 1960 by 30 percent.⁸⁰

Table 6.1 The Number of School-Graduates, 1950–1960

1950:		1956:	
Grade School (<i>Volksschule</i>), age 14	638,000	Grade School	620,000
Middle School (<i>Mittelschule</i>), age 16	14,000	Middle School	46,000
High School (<i>Gymnasium</i>), age 18–19	30,000	High School	29,000
Total:	682,000	Total:	695,000
1951:		1957:	
Grade School	672,000	Grade School	541,000
Middle School	16,000	Middle School	49,000
High School	28,000	High School	37,000
Total:	716,000	Total:	627,000
1952:		1958:	
Grade School	635,000	Grade School	507,000
Middle School	20,000	Middle School	51,000
High School	25,000	High School	41,000
Total:	680,000	Total:	599,000
1953:		1959:	
Grade School	700,000	Grade School	444,000
Middle School	28,000	Middle School	57,000
High School	20,000	High School	48,000
Total:	748,000	Total:	549,000
1954:		1960:	
Grade School	773,000	Grade School	390,000
Middle School	32,000	Middle School	57,000
High School	25,000	High School	52,000
Total:	830,000	Total:	499,000
1955:			
Grade School	700,000		
Middle School	32,000		
High School	25,000		
Total:	757,000		

Sources: Statistisches Bundesamt. Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1950–1960 (Stuttgart, 1952–1962).

As a result of the impending *labor* shortages, in 1955, the Federal government concluded an agreement with Italy about importing workers.⁸¹ As the *Landesarbeitsamt* in North Rhine-Westphalia reported in June 1955, there was “no longer any unemployment to speak of ... Combing of the unemployed has already mobilized the usable forces.”⁸²

The combination of a booming economy and declining numbers of school-leavers created a seller’s market for labor. The new conditions galvanized the labor market parties to view their prospects in a different light, a shift that occurred rather suddenly, in 1955, when all sides appear to have realized that they were now operating under changed economic circumstances.⁸³ Workers generally sought new and better positions with increasing frequency. In July, the President of the *Bundesanstalt* reported his concerns that “in recent months turn-over has increased rapidly.”⁸⁴ “As a result of the favorable development of the labor market,” he suggested several months later, “supplying workers [to firms] has become a particular problem of the *Bundesanstalt*.”⁸⁵ Firms complained about “poaching.” The good news reached school students and their parents as well, inspiring in many a widespread exuberance or, in the Labor Administration’s eyes, carelessness. “Among youths and parents,” the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia and soon for all of West Germany, Karl Pardun, warned in early 1956,

there has taken hold a short-circuited acceptance of the offered “position” without deeper, more mature vocational considerations; an unsteady jumping to further job offers; [and, somewhat contradictorily,] a selectively provisional application to several firms. [But one also observes] one-sided vocational wish-formation in the direction of the usual “fashionable vocations;” an even greater striving for the large companies; here and there as well a relaxing of the willingness to study in the final year, due to the generally-known impression that employers need [all of] the school-leavers and will hire them regardless.⁸⁶

The attitudes manifested by the young exemplified the “silent social revolution”⁸⁷ in the wake of the economic miracle. Like many adults around them, the school-leavers were increasingly demonstrating “an enormously increased concentration on personal advancement and material improvements in their living standards.”⁸⁸ Hitherto unknown opportunities for individual choice and self-definition were eroding old habits—of deference to tradition, authority, and family; of acquiescence in one’s place in established social milieus; and of concern for security above all. Germans’ outlooks in 1950 and in 1960 appeared to lie worlds apart.⁸⁹

Of even greater concern to the leadership of vocational counseling than new ambitions of young job seekers, however, was the behavior of the people whom the labor offices had all along spent the most energy wooing—the employers. “Between firms,” the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia reported in early 1956, “a sharp competition for young workers has suddenly arisen, which seems to have abandoned the previously customary forms and considerations ... What is remarkable about it are the ever advancing efforts to preempt

each other in gaining new workers.”⁹⁰ At roughly the same time, the president of the same state office had characterized firms’ behavior in striking, clinical terms: “The shrinking number of school-leavers has led in some economic circles to a certain psychosis, which expresses itself in premature offers of apprenticeships and frenzied advertising measures, particularly in newspaper notices.”⁹¹ Vocational counseling in the spring of 1956 would be “quite burdened,” the president warned, “by the attempts of firms and public employers to gain access to the schools . . . and to select their apprentices quite early.”⁹² In addition to newspaper ads, the desperate firms employed all means of personal contacts to school directors and teachers and even held out additional perquisites to appeal to graduating students.⁹³ In the Labor Administration’s eyes, such activities only produced “unease, uncertainty, disturbances, and disruptions of the work in the final [school] year.”⁹⁴

Above and beyond the effects on the school-leavers, the ever more desperate search by companies for apprentices threatened vocational counseling more existentially. As the head of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia reported, due to companies’ competition over school-leavers, “the vocational counseling centers are being . . . impatiently pressured or bypassed.”⁹⁵ The proportion of each year’s graduates entering skilled or semi-skilled apprenticeships continued to climb, from 46 percent in 1950 to 55 percent a decade later, and 64 percent in 1966,⁹⁶ while the Labor Administration’s numbers moved in the opposite direction. The proportion of school-leavers visiting the vocational counseling offices was dropping, in fact, only slowly: from 95 percent in the early 1950s to 84 percent in 1963.⁹⁷ But the Labor Administration saw the writing on the wall: *Totalerfassung*—the lynchpin of administered vocational counseling—was eroding. It was possible to foresee a day when vocational counseling would be irrelevant. Prompted by such trends and by academic studies such as Helmut Schelsky’s *Working Youth, Yesterday and Today*,⁹⁸ which cast doubt on the effectiveness of the labor offices in influencing vocational choices, a member of the *Bundesanstalt*’s Administrative Board even dared to raise the question of in which form and to what extent the agency in the future would be able to conduct job placements and vocational counseling.⁹⁹

In the face of such challenges to the *Totalerfassung* of all school-leavers—and hence, as many saw it, to the Labor Administration itself, at least in its current incarnation—the *Bundesanstalt* responded defensively at first. Above all, it sought to protect what long had been its prime channel of complete inclusion and, since the end of legal compulsion in 1949/1951, had become absolutely irreplaceable—the labor offices’ connections to the schools. In early 1955, the *Bundesanstalt*’s headquarters inquired of its state offices whether they had agreements with the state ministries of education pertaining to firms’ “recruiting” in schools. When it turned out that only the LAA of Schleswig-Holstein had reached an understanding with the education ministry banning independent activity by employers in the schools, headquarters disseminated the text of that state’s agreement to the other state offices and “recommend[ed]—if it has not occurred already—that a similar agreement be reached” in each state.¹⁰⁰

The Labor Administration's Reluctant Response to a Changing Society

In the face of employers' seemingly insatiable need for workers, the multiple channels for recruiting, and school authorities' different sets of interests, however, such administrative measures as banning company recruiting proved to be difficult to enforce,¹⁰¹ if and when they were enacted at the state level. Efforts to stem the tide would continue for years, but the challenge posed to *Totalerfassung* by the dynamic economy and the ambitions it had awakened also produced a fundamental reassessment of the Labor Administration's role, although only after bitter battles lasting several years. That the unprecedented growth of the German economy after 1950 and its social and psychological concomitants were the ultimate (though not sole) causes of the end of *Totalerfassung* and the transformation of the Labor Administration becomes clearer if we compare a political challenge to *Totalerfassung* in the first half of the 1950s with one in the years after 1955.

We saw earlier how the Labor Administration's legal means to compel individuals and companies to report to the agency disappeared after 1949 and 1951, respectively, and how the *Bundesanstalt* still was able to maintain *Totalerfassung* by other means. Yet the new constitutional freedoms and the emerging democratic culture of the Federal Republic did embolden some, even within the Labor Administration's governing boards, to advocate that the *Bundesanstalt* abandon its comprehensive goals and compulsory practices. An effort to update the original 1927 law on job placement and unemployment insurance, both for the concrete purpose of regularizing the treatment of war-wounded and, more generally, for the sake of making the *Bundesanstalt* more "modern," provided the opportunity to reconsider the ethos and aims of the Labor Administration. Truly committed reformers, however, were hardly numerous or vociferous. The Ministry of Labor's drafts of a new law in 1951/1952 deviated little from the Weimar model: it emphasized the macro-economic role of the *Bundesanstalt*, saying "the vocational choice is, above and beyond the individual's fate, for the economy and society of decisive importance ... Thanks to the provision of suitable and sufficiently numerous young workers, the economy shall be enabled to perform its tasks."¹⁰² In fact, it was the *Bundesanstalt's* governing board, composed equally of union, employer, and government representatives, which appeared to cast doubt on the Labor Administration's larger role and compulsory tactics. The board's review criticized the draft law for "putting the economy before people," for containing phrases, such as "according to plan," which "sounded like a centrally administered economy" and might be the basis for a system of labor deployment.¹⁰³ These critiques, however, must be understood in light of the role they almost certainly were meant to play in another struggle going on at the time over the Labor Administration.¹⁰⁴ The underlying concern of the unions and employers was not the excessive *scope* of the Labor Administration's powers, but who controlled them. Between 1950 and 1952, it will be recalled, the central government, the states, as well as the unions and employers engaged in fierce negotiations over the organization of the *Bundesanstalt*. One of the most contentious issues was the influ-

ence of the federal government over the *Bundesanstalt*, an influence that both the unions and employers feared might grow. When the unionists and employers on the governing board criticized the “labor market political” spirit of the draft law, they did so out of fear that any legal reinforcement of such public functions would strengthen further the government’s role in the Labor Administration to their own detriment. For this reason, the board rejected the draft’s language on “labor market politics.”¹⁰⁵ The Free Trade Union’s Walter Henkelmann drew the connection even more clearly, when he qualified the unions’ support for “a far-reaching role of the Labor Administration in the labor market and a monopoly for it in job placement and vocational counseling.” In connection with the law reestablishing the *Bundesanstalt*, he warned against language under which “the public authorities could possibly derive from [this responsibility] a right of co-administration over the *Bundesanstalt*.”¹⁰⁶ A further piece of evidence that in the early 1950s neither the unions nor the employers objected to *Totalerfassung* and a de facto—though not de jure—role of the *Bundesanstalt* in coordinating the labor market was that, after the revision of the Labor Administration law was shelved for the time being, all sides appeared to be content to work within the original 1927 law. In the early 1950s, a challenge to *Totalerfassung* and the compulsory sides of the Labor Administration—one mounted mainly for tactical reasons—faded after only a brief existence.

By the mid 1950s, on the other hand, the economic and social environment dramatically had begun to change. In the now booming economy, companies’ ever more desperate pursuit of school-leavers was eroding the de facto influence of the labor offices and gradually was altering perceptions about the relationship of the individual to authority. In this new atmosphere, a challenge to the traditional goals and methods of the Labor Administration could have quite different effects.

The challenge came in January 1956, when the so-called Federal Deputy for Economic Efficiency in the Bureaucracy presented his report on the *Bundesanstalt*. The latter’s own administrative board had requested the evaluation of the *Anstalt*’s efficiency two years earlier, almost certainly without any idea of what the eventual repercussions would be. The Deputy’s report found the Labor Administration wanting in several ways and made corresponding recommendations without drawing any sweeping conclusions: overall, it found that the *Bundesanstalt* had too many employees, especially too many who were not on the “front lines.” As a result, he recommended a 25 percent cut in their number. Furthermore, its employees were not well enough educated or trained and they were too specialized; in numerous respects, the *Bundesanstalt* was overly centralized. The Deputy recommended, among other things, that non-profit placement agencies be given more responsibilities.¹⁰⁷

If one were to judge simply on the basis of these admittedly painful, but by no means fatal, suggestions for reform, the response from within the *Bundesanstalt* might have seemed hard to explain. Among vocational counselors in Schleswig-Holstein, the head of the *Bundesanstalt*’s psychological service reported, rumors

about the still restricted report “cast an atmosphere of depression” over a training session. The counselors “feared for the fate of vocational counseling and hence for the future of their own careers.”¹⁰⁸ In a similar vein, the presidents of the state offices reported that the Deputy’s analysis had “spread considerable unease among the employees of the *Bundesanstalt*.” Many, they feared, might migrate to other bureaucracies.¹⁰⁹ The import of the Deputy’s critiques disrupted relations at even higher levels: President Scheuble’s reaction at a meeting of the administrative board was so ferocious that it touched off a “crisis of trust,” from which Scheuble never fully would recover.¹¹⁰ None of these responses would seem proportionate to the suggestions in the Deputy’s report, if one did not know of the pessimism already gathering within the Labor Administration by the mid 1950s.

The *Bundesanstalt*’s governing boards¹¹¹ appeared to recognize that the Deputy’s report provided the occasion for a more fundamental reassessment of their agency’s mission and practices, and they took the initiative in expanding the re-evaluation beyond the report’s scope. According to the consensus in the executive board, the Deputy’s report “created a whole new situation.”¹¹² In addition to “administrative-technical” reforms—the board regretted that President Scheuble’s first response had not proposed even any of these—“more fundamental considerations” would be necessary. The response to the Deputy’s report by no means could be limited simply to administrative-technical and administrative-organizational measures; “rather, the *Bundesanstalt* faces significant administrative-political decisions.”¹¹³ As the presidents of the *Landesarbeitsämter* correctly perceived, “the main question that is principally being discussed is the total cost of the *Bundesanstalt* today.” This they linked, however skeptically, to the new conditions in the economy: “The argument that each can find his own job is partly correct.”¹¹⁴

The nature of the transformative “administrative-political decisions” the governing boards envisaged became clear as early as the first meeting of a joint reform commission of the two bodies, established to formulate the *Bundesanstalt*’s response to the Deputy’s report, which convened on 26 July 1956. The commission members unanimously condemned the aim and methods of *Totalerfassung*:

The procedure so far of schematically registering all school-leavers through the school-cards was unanimously rejected by the commission members. The filling out of the school cards in school without knowledge of the parents, the teacher evaluation [of the pupil], and the evaluation of the school-doctor as part of this *Erfassung* were judged to be unacceptable, especially as the so-called evaluations for inexplicable reasons are kept secret from the school-leavers and their parents or guardians. The use of the discipline of the school for the *Erfassung* of the school-leavers is not the right way to arrive at a vocational counseling based on trust.

In consequence, at its first meeting, the commission was able to agree on a radical revision of vocational counseling’s mission: “The individual counseling of the school-leavers must occur on a voluntary basis with the participation of the parents. The practice until now of the schematic *Erfassung* of all school-leavers through the use of the school-card must be immediately ended.” Instead, the *Bun-*

desanstalt's vocational counseling should “in future concentrate more on its core task[:] the best possible counseling of the individual youth and of the firms.”¹¹⁵

Before we examine the contentious and drawn-out battle that ensued over the reform commission's radical proposal to end *Totalerfassung*—which by no means occurred “immediately”—we briefly turn to the positions and motivations of the four relevant groups with a say in shaping *Bundesanstalt* policy: the employers, the unions, the *Bundesanstalt* leadership itself, and the federal government. Why did these interests now support a radical revision of a policy that they long had supported, or at least tolerated—if, in fact, they now did support the revision?

The unions were the most decisive advocates of a new ethos of vocational counseling. Yet, even among them, the end of *Totalerfassung* was not a universal goal. The unions had supported the Labor Administration's policies into the early 1950s. Even in 1956, in the deliberations of the Free Trade Union (DGB) in preparation for the reform commission meetings, some members had expressed support for maintaining *Totalerfassung*. Yet they represented by now only a minority.¹¹⁶ It would be wrong to succumb to the temptation to characterize the majority who were in favor of reforming the *Bundesanstalt* as the long-term supporters of the rights of individual job seekers. In the annual reports and at the Congresses of the DGB and such powerful unions as IG Metall from the late 1940s and early 1950s, such concerns were largely absent.¹¹⁷ Rather, one should view the unions' new commitment to the individual worker in light of the unions' own anxieties and reform efforts. By the mid 1950s, the more affluent lifestyles and the opportunities for individual advancement provided by the *Wirtschaftswunder* seemed likely to undermine former class solidarity and eventually to “deproletarianize” the German working class.¹¹⁸ Across the decade, the unionized share of the workforce declined significantly.¹¹⁹ A path-breaking study of the “worker's picture of society” by the sociologists Heinrich Popitz and Hans Paul Bahrndt revealed a working class that felt as distant from its union bosses as from the capitalists.¹²⁰ Beginning in the second half of the 1950s, such potential threats to the unions' strength inspired a host of measures designed to gauge workers' attitudes and to win their hearts for the unions.¹²¹ The union support for an end to *Totalerfassung* and for a more individual-centered vocational counseling itself resulted, then, from the societal changes unleashed in Germany's unprecedented economic growth in the 1950s.

The employers' position was even more complicated. Since the mid 1920s, the employers' *organizations* had been staunch backers of the Labor Administration's *Totalerfassung*, which they saw as a necessary complement to the vocational training system they were supporting; if the latter offered a mechanism of providing a collective good (a skilled workforce), *Totalerfassung* promised to be a neutral, non-competitive means of distributing those talents. After World War II, the employers' organizations had insisted on the restoration of comprehensive vocational counseling. As late as December 1955, seemingly with at least some advance knowledge of what the next month would bring, the German Industry and Trade Federation (DIHT) had implored the President of the *Bundesanstalt* to

maintain, and even expand, comprehensive vocational counseling, despite the actions of the DIHT's individual members. "It would be fateful," according to the DIHT, "if, in a time in which the shortage of youths increasingly endangers clear thinking in the companies, the objective instrument of vocational counseling no longer fully came to bear, because the vocational counselors suffered in their effectiveness due to [personnel] cutbacks."¹²² Even this comment, however, acknowledged a problem for the employers' organizations in their defense of comprehensive vocational counseling: in the overheating economy of the mid 1950s, individual employers, by their scramble to find workers by whatever means necessary, were undermining the collective agreement.

After January 1956, the employers' organizations had to acknowledge the new circumstances, at least partially. In the face of mounting public critiques of the Labor Administration, which drew attention to the conflict between such methods as *Totalerfassung* and the liberal rights and spirit of the new state, the employers' representatives to the *Bundesanstalt's* reform commission joined the unanimous call for truly voluntary use of vocational counseling. In May 1956, as the discussion within the *Bundesanstalt* about its future policy was just commencing, the DIHT representative urged vocational counseling to consider a reorientation of its efforts that would allow it still to play a macro-economic role while acknowledging the dynamism of the economy and the new individualist ethos.

Generally, vocational counseling would have to become more aware of its counseling function—alongside that of placement—not only vis-à-vis the youth but also the firm. In the coming years, the apprenticeship placement will inevitably recede, since the contractual partners [i.e., worker and employer] will to some extent find each other without the help of apprenticeship placement. The job of vocational counseling will then in many cases be restricted to counseling the contractual partners. This counseling function is the primary and main task of vocational counseling—in other countries, usually the only role. The labor offices see their role often too one-sidedly in terms of placement.

The DIHT representative added a veiled threat: one "would have to seek another solution, if the public vocational counseling did not fulfill its function as a counseling institution."¹²³

But the DIHT position advocating a simultaneous intensification of counseling and relaxation of the *Bundesanstalt's* administrative hold over young job-seekers was apparently not the only view among the employers' groups. Though none of the employer representatives to the reform commission explicitly advocated the retention of *Totalerfassung*—a position that by this point was politically untenable—the drawn-out debates over the details of a reformed vocational counseling suggested that at least one camp among the employers believed it could delay change, perhaps indefinitely. After the seemingly smooth and decisive discussion at the first meeting of the reform commission, subsequent negotiations over the details of a new vocational counseling policy bogged down. As the unions saw it, the employers were split over the advisability or necessity of truly far-reaching reforms. Those opposed, the union negotiators feared, hoped to use

delaying tactics in order to save the school-card, and hence *Totalerfassung*.¹²⁴ The divisions among the employers were reflected in an impassioned, but also somewhat ambiguous, public appeal issued in September 1956:

[The employers' Working Committee on Vocational Training] pointed out with great emphasis that attempts that aim to reduce the effectiveness of the German vocational counseling are at present especially disadvantageous for the young workers as well as for the employers. Therefore they must be countered with all strength. The increasing scarcity of youths makes a careful *counseling* of the youths more necessary than ever.¹²⁵

After looking at the unions and the employers, we come to the third interest group. The leadership of the Labor Administration and its vocational counselors, who would be affected most immediately and personally by a transformation of the *Bundesanstalt*, approached the issue initially with a mixture of subtle resistance, innovative speculation, and resignation. The first meeting of the leading vocational counselors called to discuss the Deputy's report reflected these ambivalent reactions, suffused by a general consternation. The head of vocational counseling in the *Bundesanstalt*, Valentin Siebrecht, established a framework for the discussion by acknowledging what no one any longer dared deny: that on the basis of the Deputy's report, a "new orientation was appropriate" and that freedom of vocational choice was a fundamentally guaranteed right.¹²⁶ Despite these avowals, Siebrecht's and others' comments suggested the limits to vocational counselors' readiness at this time to abandon the role they had played (or aspired to play) for more than three decades. "Fundamental considerations of the limits of the tasks of vocational counseling," Siebrecht argued, "must start [from the postulate] that the vocational integration of youths is a social-political task. Both the youths and the economy are dependent on vocational counseling; therefore it must be suggested to them that they should use [vocational counseling]."

The means of such "suggestion" was not an explicit topic at this first meeting of leading vocational counselors. For the Governing Boards' reform commission only would make *Erfassung* through the schools *the* central issue a month later. But the counselors did acknowledge that persuasion and appeal through the quality of their own work now would play much greater roles,¹²⁷ thus returning to ideas prominent in vocational counseling circles shortly before the founding of the *Bundesanstalt*, when *Totalerfassung* had seemed to be in imminent jeopardy. Still, over the course of the following years, the Labor Administration itself would prove to be a persistent brake on rapid reform, even as it accepted certain realities of the democratic and increasingly affluent state—and developed a new *raison d'être* for itself.

The fourth group, the federal ministries whose representatives sat on the *Bundesanstalt's* governing boards, remained largely in the background during the debates of these years. As occasional interventions suggested—such as when the Ministry of Labor in 1959 fought to maintain the confidentiality of the teacher evaluations, which by this point had become the final sticking point of reform¹²⁸—the government tended to favor retaining aspects of the *Bundesanstalt's* macro-economic

steering role. In a time of growing public criticism of the Labor Administration's bureaucratic nature, compulsory methods, and apparent superfluity,¹²⁹ however, the government hardly dared to advocate openly for its traditional role.¹³⁰

Indeed, it seems clear that all of the parties, no matter how much some of them may have hoped to preserve *Totalerfassung*, recognized that by the late 1950s, West German society—West Germans—were in the midst of rapid economic and social change, which made a simple perpetuation of the old Labor Administration impossible. Otherwise, it would be hard to explain why the *Bundesanstalt's* governing boards took the occasion of the Deputy's report in 1956 to initiate their own reform process, which went well beyond the administrative reforms suggested by the Deputy. It would be preferable, they may have thought, to be at the forefront of changes that would come one way or another. It was, then, not the Deputy's report alone, but the combination of its critiques with the changes in German society brought about by the *Wirtschaftswunder* that had “created a whole new situation” for the Labor Administration. This perception also would explain why the resistance to change had to take more subtle forms. Despite the resounding call “immediately” to end *Totalerfassung*, which the first meeting of the commission of the governing boards had sounded, its official dismantling took several years and occurred in stages.

Relinquishing *Totalerfassung*

Negotiations over the details of new binding guidelines for vocational counseling gave the opponents of reform an opportunity to regroup and challenge the initial apparent consensus in favor of immediate, sweeping change. Below the seemingly glacial pace they were able to impose on the reform process, however, the key issue of the Labor Administration's relations to the schools proved amenable to quicker change. It finally resolved itself into separate questions, making piecemeal reform easier. And generally, the drift was away from *Totalerfassung* and toward greater concentration on the individual counsel-seeker.

Despite fierce rear-guard resistance from within vocational counseling and the governing boards, in February 1958, more than two years after the *Bundesanstalt* had begun its reform deliberations, Nuremberg ordered an important innovation in the relations between the labor office, the school, and the school-leaver. All labor offices were now to send the families of school-leavers a “parental letter,” which would explain the importance of the choice of vocation, the voluntary nature of vocational counseling, the help that the labor office could offer, and, finally, the procedures for gathering information about the student.¹³¹ Furthermore, the schools were to send the school-card to the parents, who could decide whether to fill it out so that the school could pass it on to the labor office.¹³² With these steps, which the *Bundesanstalt* acknowledged were necessary “to win the parents for the use of vocational counseling and apprenticeship placement,” the Labor Administration significantly loosened its grip on its means of *Totalerfassung*.

The *Bundesanstalt's* “positive experiences”¹³³ after the promulgation of the policy of more fully including parents no doubt eased the transition and relieved some of the *Bundesanstalt's* worries. Even when a third party—parents—had to be included in the channel from the schools to the labor offices, the latter’s access to the students did not suffer and may even have improved thanks to the parents’ interest. In the short-run, the apparent success of this transition to a more open style encouraged the *Bundesanstalt* to imagine that the change in policy might be less painful than expected. By early 1959, even some members of the governing boards were coming to think that the Labor Administration could at the same time be more modern, democratic, and responsive to the wishes of its clients and still maintain a de facto comprehensive role in the labor market. They hoped that “*in practice*, to the greatest possible extent, individual counseling should be utilized, the school involved, and the individual expressive value of [the school’s] comments upheld [i.e., their confidentiality maintained].” Such practical success, it was thought, would be compatible with the voluntary nature of visits to vocational counseling and the parents’ right to decide, which would be “secured in principle.”¹³⁴

After the *Bundesanstalt* had compromised on the routing of the school-card, seemingly without detrimental effect on its practical success, the debate focused increasingly on the second aspect of the schools’ role in “delivering” their students, the confidentiality of teachers’ evaluations. Though state ministries of education blocked new guidelines, the leadership of the *Bundesanstalt*, which originally had been most committed to the old model, by now recognized that the survival of vocational counseling depended on gaining the public’s, and especially parents’ and school-leavers’, trust. To this end, it no longer sought unhindered access to the school-leavers through the schools. By 1960, under the impression of a series of legal rulings establishing the individual’s rights vis-à-vis the *Bundesanstalt*, it even had accepted that “ultimately the right of guardians to see [the school evaluations] cannot be denied.”¹³⁵ Finally, in August 1961, the new guidelines on individual vocational counseling, which emphasized the voluntary nature of the service, the participation of parents, and the non-confidentiality of the teacher evaluations, were promulgated.¹³⁶ By its own channels, West Germany’s increasingly democratic and litigious culture was making bureaucratic control on the scale of the Labor Administration’s *Totalerfassung* ever less viable.

Weaning itself from the program of *Totalerfassung* had not come easily to the *Bundesanstalt*. The dynamic times of 1950s West Germany—both economically and socially/politically—however, made some transition unavoidable, a need that the leaders of the Labor Administration grudgingly recognized. A number of factors eased the transition considerably, including prominently the belief that the *Bundesanstalt* simply might modify its means of interacting with its clients, while still maintaining—“in practice”—a comprehensive, or nearly comprehensive, role in the labor market. Over time, however, this hope would prove evanescent. From the late 1950s, the proportion of school-leavers who visited the labor offices would drop, even if only slowly. While in 1952 the labor offices had

attracted nearly 95 percent of all school-leavers¹³⁷—as high a percentage as in the late 1930s, when such visits were compulsory—by 1963, the figure had sunk to 84 percent.¹³⁸

The slow decline of the degree of *Erfassung* was not the only measure of the *Bundesanstalt*'s loosening hold on the German school-leavers. The widening gap between counseling and apprenticeship placement revealed another aspect of the fading of *Totalerfassung*: the percentage of youths obtaining their apprenticeships through the labor offices dropped even faster than the proportion seeking advice. As we shall see in the next section, youths increasingly consulted with the labor office, but no longer relied on it for a position.¹³⁹ Slowly, but inevitably, the Labor Administration was losing its grip on the young job seekers. As we show in the following section, however, the administrative end and then slow fading out of *Totalerfassung* by no means meant that the Labor Administration now lacked a role in the still vibrant economy and democratic polity of the 1960s.

The Labor Administration Transformed: the New Clients

The emergence of a new role and style for the Labor Administration, like the ending of *Totalerfassung*, took time. For more than a decade, the two processes overlapped and conditioned each other. As with the passing of the Labor Administration's traditional methods, the birth of a new purpose and ethos occurred at first not as systematic reform, but almost unnoticed, in response to social shifts; only later did the renewal of the Labor Administration become a conscious program. The underlying condition that eroded *Totalerfassung*, the unprecedented wealth of Germany in the 1950s and 1960s, also greatly smoothed the transition of the Labor Administration to new tasks, for the *Bundesanstalt*'s own overflowing coffers¹⁴⁰ in these years allowed it the freedom to develop new roles and capabilities.

A major trend, from the early 1950s on, was the growing importance for the *Bundesanstalt*'s vocational counseling of so-called "difficult cases." These included adults who had lost their jobs in declining industries and needed retraining, war-wounded, other rehabilitation cases, and the physically or psychologically handicapped. As a proxy of the development in vocational counseling as a whole, one may look at the figures of the psychological service, where the proportion of handicapped clients alone rose from a mere 2 percent of all cases in 1950 to nearly 20 percent by the mid 1960s (and would continue to rise thereafter).¹⁴¹ Several factors, whose significance shifted over time, contributed to the rising number of "difficult cases." The human costs of the last war continued to burden West Germany well into peacetime, as often physically and otherwise crippled POWs returned from the Soviet Union throughout the early 1950s. The 1953 Law on the Severely War Damaged made their reintegration into the workforce, if at all possible, a central goal; the vocational counseling of the *Bundesanstalt*, which had fought other welfare providers for a stake in such reintegration efforts,¹⁴² would play a role in deciding whether, and how, the person could be (re)trained.

Other laws of the now rapidly expanding German welfare state also channeled ever-greater numbers of “difficult cases” to the vocational counseling offices. In 1956, the revised Law on Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance expressly aimed to help handicapped people more generally assume jobs—which the *Bundesanstalt* executive board correctly perceived would “bring the *Bundesanstalt* a considerable additional burden.”¹⁴³ Subsequently, the 1961 Federal Welfare Law expanded the range of handicaps qualifying for support and established a legal right to support. On top of the workers in need of rehabilitation and a subsequent change of vocations,¹⁴⁴ whose number had “increased rapidly in the previous year,” the *Bundesanstalt* expected the new Welfare law to “expand the task area of caring for physically handicapped youths.”¹⁴⁵

The expansion of welfare programs for the handicapped and for rehabilitating workers resulted in part simply from the generous humanitarian impulses of a public and political parties in whose eyes the booming economy and overflowing public treasury made financial restraint seem less compelling.¹⁴⁶ Especially in the second half of the 1950s, however, when the shortage of workers was becoming most acute, the efforts to integrate the handicapped and others also, and perhaps more importantly, followed from economic considerations. Firms desperate for workers now were willing to hire people they might have rejected earlier. As early as December 1954, the *Bundesanstalt* had initiated nationwide “inspection measures” for the purpose of uncovering any usable workers among the small numbers of long-term unemployed. In his instructions, which focused exclusively on the value of these workers to employers and the economy generally, the *Bundesanstalt* President had instructed his offices “actively and generously” to use all available means in the fields of vocational educational and retraining measures.¹⁴⁷ In a sign of the shifting priorities, the pacesetter state of North Rhine-Westphalia, in 1958, instructed its psychological service to give priority to evaluating the handicapped.¹⁴⁸ During the second half of the 1950s,¹⁴⁹ until the more rapid influx of foreign workers began slightly to alleviate the worker shortage around 1960, the *Bundesanstalt’s* efforts to place the “difficult cases” in work had macro-economic, as well as welfare humanitarian, roots. In this period of transition in the *Bundesanstalt*, the congruence of traditional economic and new humanitarian purposes—and, in this case, the reliance of both upon individualized counseling¹⁵⁰—may well have facilitated the broader shift in the Labor Administration’s approach, from *Totalerfassung* and steering to selective counseling and helping.

As early as 1956, even as many still defended the traditional encompassing role of the Labor Administration, others had a better sense of where the institution’s future might lie. At the first meeting of LAA presidents called to discuss the Deputy’s critiques of the *Bundesanstalt*, the main office’s comments, though still only about job placement, and not yet about vocational counseling, suggested a possible new role in a dynamic economy: actively helping those who, for whatever reason, could not succeed in the affluent society. The idea that each now could find his own work was “in part correct,” the official acknowledged. However, “there are many who are simply not capable of this, as they cannot connect to the

labor market ... The initiating and active task of job placement is not recognized in the [Deputy's] report."¹⁵¹ In the future, the official's comments suggested, the *Bundesanstalt* increasingly would find its purpose in helping these less-capable individuals, which almost certainly would require long-term contact and care.

The steadily growing importance throughout the 1950s and early 1960s of helping those the Economic Miracle left behind was not the only source of a new role for vocational counseling (and the Labor Administration more generally). The emerging demands of the more successful themselves would provide, especially after about 1960, abundant new tasks as well. As we have seen, the *Bundesanstalt* was pleasantly surprised that rerouting the school-card and including parents more did not reduce participation levels. The prospects for individuals opened up by the booming economy—something that neither this generation's parents or grandparents had known—did in fact increase the desire for personalized advice. As scholars have noted, the nascent optimism of Germans in the mid and late 1950s was mixed with lingering insecurity born of decades of turmoil.¹⁵² School-leavers' attitudes evolved, as they increasingly believed in the permanence of the good economic times. If an early reaction still had been the hasty scramble for the first best position, by the beginning of the second half of the decade, students and their parents were taking the trouble to examine their options more closely. "The tensions between supply and demand for young workers," the *Bundesanstalt* reported in 1956, "strengthened in the youths, who have become more reflective, their parents, and guardians the demand for comprehensive, objective information on the individual vocations, their work conditions, suitability demands, and the developmental possibilities."¹⁵³ The following year's report noted that the youths and parents' demand for "objective instruction and thorough personal consultation through the public vocational counseling has risen."¹⁵⁴

By the late 1950s and especially in the 1960s, after a decade or more of growth largely had erased doubts about its permanence, the burning issue on many people's minds was *Aufstieg*—getting ahead. As early as 1958/59, the *Bundesanstalt* reported that "the incredibly large supply of apprenticeships has aroused ... many unrealizable wishes and hopes and has led to an even stronger shifting of vocational-wishes ... As a result of the favorable economic development and the efforts surrounding the alternative educational path,¹⁵⁵ interest in information about possibilities of vocational advancement has grown even more."¹⁵⁶ By the early 1960s, the desire for *Aufstieg* had become an omnipresent theme of reports from local, state, and federal vocational counseling.¹⁵⁷ The *Bundesanstalt* no longer regarded the phenomenon as a disturbance of its proper tasks—as it still had in the late 1950s—but as a welcome new field of activity. For this interest in personal advancement, which the dynamic economy of the 1950s and 1960s had engendered, and the accompanying thirst for guidance largely were responsible for the fact that the proportion of school-leavers visiting the labor offices declined only slowly after the end of *Totalerfassung*. Perhaps of still greater importance by now, the Labor Administration perceived a close connection between helping individuals and its own image among a mobilized, increasingly demanding public,

which, by the early 1960s, the *Bundesanstalt* was very eager to please. This new dependence emerged, for example, at a November 1961 meeting of leading vocational counselors, where the leadership described criticisms made by the public and the *Bundesanstalt's* response. Among other steps, "a significant task in this connection is the job- and vocational promotion of both those limited to vocational rehabilitation and those willing to advance.... It belongs to the tasks of a modern job placement to inform the public systematically about such facts and connections—managing *public relations*."¹⁵⁸

As with the significant expansion of programs for the disabled, the *Bundesanstalt's* cultivation of its new role in addressing individuals' interest in upward-mobility benefited from the ample resources now at its own and the government's disposal. Individual *Aufstieg* was becoming a public concern. In his 1957 proclamation inaugurating the new government, Chancellor Adenauer for the first time had emphasized the necessity for the economy of promoting the vocational supplementary training of adults, especially for small and mid-sized firms, as well as the social-political significance of the vocational advancement of the individual adult worker.¹⁵⁹ The funding for the government's Program for the Advancement of the Dependent Middle Classes not only grew rapidly, but also mirrored the ever-more prominent role of the individual: at its inception in 1959, the program channeled its funds to training centers; in 1962, the grants and loans began to be given directly to individuals. As the *Bundesanstalt* explained it, "the guiding thought of the advancement program is, from now on, to place every ambitious worker in a position to achieve the vocational supplemental training that matches his abilities."¹⁶⁰ In 1965, the Federal Government enshrined in law the individual's right to counsel and aid in his efforts at vocational advancement, for which the *Bundesanstalt* was to be responsible.

The care of those left behind by the economic miracle and services for the great numbers of individuals made ambitious by the same growth helped to compensate for the loss of the Labor Administration's program of *Totalerfassung* and distribution. Even before the *Bundesanstalt* consciously identified and cultivated the new tasks as the core of its new *raison d'être* (from around 1960), they had begun to reshape vocational counseling. In addition to developing such concrete new fields of operation (which could counter the claims that the Labor Administration was authoritarian or superfluous), the *Bundesanstalt* also responded to the public criticisms of it as an ineffective bureaucracy.

The Labor Administration Transformed: Efficiency and Scientificness

Like its services for new clients, the *Bundesanstalt's* efforts to become and to seem more efficient and more "scientific" emerged first somewhat haphazardly and only after around 1960 as a conscious program of reform. It was certainly no accident that in the late 1950s, just as the *Bundesanstalt* was subjected to persistent critiques from the public and press for being too concerned with quantitative

criteria, it launched several ambitious projects designed to improve the quality of its counseling, as the vocational counselors in the late 1940s had recommended.

In 1957, the *Bundesanstalt* commissioned the University of Würzburg's psychological institute to evaluate its psychological tests.¹⁶¹ Two years later, it began a massive and ultimately unsuccessful project to assess scientifically the psychological requirements of a single, model vocation: the typesetter.¹⁶²

Up to the end of the decade, the projects to improve vocational counseling's methods had been isolated endeavors, and they had lacked the full backing of the governing boards.¹⁶³ Between 1959 and 1964, finally, efforts to put vocational counseling's methods on a more scientific basis, to make counseling—and the *Bundesanstalt* generally—more efficient and effective, gradually coalesced into a program of reform meant to adapt the Labor Administration to a newly dynamic society.

By 1959, at the latest, the leadership of the *Bundesanstalt* recognized the seriousness of their predicament, as well as what they perceived to be the only potentially suitable response. At a meeting on the “psychological training of job placement personnel,” the vice-president of the *Bundesanstalt* and head of job placement and vocational counseling described the situation in dire terms.

It is to be feared that the personnel of the *Bundesanstalt* are not fully aware of the situation [i.e., the implications of full-employment]. Job seekers must come to the labor office and leave it with the impression that they are being treated well and correctly. For that, trust is necessary. There is the danger of a “bureaucratic relation” of the unemployed or job seeker to the *Bundesanstalt*.... To the extent that unemployment declines, it will become an existential matter for job placement that we achieve a better relationship of trust with the public.

The psychological training of personnel, which was intended both to give them a greater knowledge of vocations and jobs and to improve their interactions with the clients, should contribute to such trust. In April 1961, vocational counseling implemented “Guidelines for the Selection, Acceptance, and Training of Vocational Counselors,” both raising the entry-level requirements and improving and standardizing training.¹⁶⁴ The governing boards also were coming to see the potential importance for the *Bundesanstalt*'s relations to the public, and hence for its future, of improved, more scientific methods and organization.¹⁶⁵ In February 1961, the Administrative Board's Committee on Youth Questions had decided to “discuss fundamental questions pertaining to vocational counseling on a continual basis.” In October, the Committee endorsed the ongoing research in Tübingen into “psychological vocational knowledge” and even took the unusual step of encouraging the *Bundesanstalt* leadership to increase its request for funding.¹⁶⁶ In November, vocational counseling presented the Committee with a detailed and ambitious plan of current efforts to improve the quality of its work.¹⁶⁷

In the following years, headquarters and the governing boards approved further measures to improve and even expand vocational counseling. By 1963, the central administration and the governing boards, the head of vocational coun-

seling could report with satisfaction, were “considering a gradual expansion of vocational counseling.”¹⁶⁸

The chief beneficiary of the effort to improve vocational counseling was its psychological service. In 1962, the executive committee began to consider a long-term expansion of the service.¹⁶⁹ Members of vocational counseling and the psychological service cultivated ties to the unions and employers’ organizations for the purpose of gaining approval for an effort to put psychological testing on a more “scientific” basis and to expand the service.¹⁷⁰ Already in 1961 and 1962, the psychological service had established two working groups to consider “general and fundamental questions” and diagnostic procedures of the psychological service.¹⁷¹ In July 1966, the working groups were put on a more permanent footing, when the governing boards approved the establishment of the psychological service’s own unit for “developmental and fundamental work.”¹⁷² For the first time, its headquarters achieved centralized control of its field offices.¹⁷³ And the psychological service grew prodigiously. If the number of psychologists already had grown from 85 in 1957 to 106 in 1963,¹⁷⁴ a decade later the number had almost tripled to nearly 300.¹⁷⁵ The *Bundesanstalt’s* psychological service was now, after that of the US armed forces, the second largest in the world.

Germany’s strategic security and, especially, its spectacular economic growth in the 1950s and into the 1960s had undermined fundamental preconditions of one half of the German human economies, as they had arisen after World War I. While the vocational training system continued more or less as before, the dynamic conditions of the *Wirtschaftswunder* eroded the Labor Administration’s system of complete inclusion, which seemed to an increasingly assertive public and press inappropriate for a free society and superfluous as well. All the same, as the traditional role of the Labor Administration became ever less tenable, new tasks presented themselves. Over time, the *Bundesanstalt* learned to accept its role as a service agency for the less fortunate of the economic miracle, as well as for the many individuals newly interested in personal advancement. An important part of the *Bundesanstalt’s* makeover was its effort to improve its effectiveness and to become—or at least to cultivate an image of being—more scientific, which it hoped would enhance its credibility among what was now its most important audience—the German people.

Notes

1. The remainder of the account of the German vocational program traces only what occurred in the western zones, which became the Federal Republic of Germany. In East Germany, the Labor Administration and its offices were not resurrected after 1945/1949, but rather absorbed into the general command economy. See Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik*, 383–99.
2. Since David Schoenbaum’s *Hitler’s Social Revolution: Class and Status in Nazi Germany* (Garden City, 1966), the historical literature that rejects the thesis of a total break in 1945 and

- instead traces continuities either with the Nazi period itself, or with longer-term traditions and institutions, has grown considerably. See, for example, Martin Broszat et al., eds., *Von Stalin-grad zur Währungsreform: zur Sozialgeschichte des Umbruchs in Deutschland* (München, 1988); Werner Conze and Rainer M. Lepsius, eds., *Sozialgeschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Beiträge zum Kontinuitätsproblem* (Stuttgart, 1985); Simon Reich, *The Fruits of Fascism: Post-war Prosperity in Historical Perspective* (Ithaca, 1990).
3. See Eberhard Jäckel, "Geschichtliche Grundlagen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland," in *Jahre der Besatzung, 1945–1949*, ed. Theodor Eschenburg (Stuttgart, 1983), 9–280, 228, for the role of local administrations in ensuring considerable continuity.
 4. In September 1945, total industrial production in the British and US zones stood at 15 and 13 percent, respectively, of the figures for 1936. In 1946, the corresponding figure for the Bizone was 34; in 1947, it was 40 percent. See Jäckel, "Geschichtliche Grundlagen," 265.
 5. Staatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen: Detmold, D 52 Bielefeld 119, Labor Office Bielefeld to the *Landesarbeitsamt* for Westfalen-Lippe, 8 August 1945. The Bielefeld Labor Office is one of just a handful of local offices for which records from the years 1945–1948—however incomplete—exist.
 6. The number of prisoners of war, expellees, war-wounded, etc., who visited the North Rhine-Westphalia Labor Offices was 216,000; that for school-leavers, in comparison, was 153,000. See the Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, BR 1134/1416, "Bericht über die bisherige Tätigkeit des Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen," 25 November 1952.
 7. *Ibid.* These aggregate figures, which include the surplus of women over positions for females, actually disguise the shortage of male apprentices.
 8. See Christoph Buchheim, "Die Notwendigkeit einer durchgreifenden Wirtschaftsreform zur Ankurbelung des westdeutschen Wirtschaftswachstums in den 1940er Jahren," in Werner Abelschauser et al., *Ordnungspolitische Weichenstellungen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. Dietmar Petzina (Berlin, 1991), 55–66, but especially 62.
 9. Axel Schildt, *Ankunft im Westen: ein Essay zur Erfolgsgeschichte der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt, 1999), 94.
 10. Manfred Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: von der Gründung bis zur Gegenwart* (München, 1999), 30–31.
 11. On the lively debates in the magazines and on the importance of a turn to the churches as a source of meaning, see *ibid.*, 225–29 and 203–5. On vocation and work as an alternative, though possibly related, source of meaning, see *ibid.*, 183.
 12. See *ibid.*, 231–33; Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 427.
 13. For the background of Ordoliberal thought on labor market interventions, see David Meskill, "Conditions of Liberty: The Ordoliberals and the Labor Market in the Third Reich," paper delivered at 2004 German Studies Association conference.
 14. Görtemaker, *Geschichte*, 205.
 15. See, for example, the concerns of vocational counselors in 1948 that their offices might fall victim to the "public's frenzy" to "eliminate bureaucracies," in Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 113, II, AA Siegburg, 7 October 1948.
 16. See Georg Müller, *Die Grundlegung der westdeutschen Wirtschaftsordnung im Frankfurter Wirtschaftsrat, 1947–1949* (Frankfurt, 1982), 27.
 17. See, for example: BAK, Z 40/321, 1 April 1947; *ibid.*, 20 May 1947.
 18. *Ibid.*, 7 October 1946.
 19. *Ibid.*, 28 March 1947.
 20. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1946. But also see *ibid.*, 28 October, 1946, where, in response to a query from London about the representation of union figures, the head of the Central Office for Labor in the British Zone, Julius Scheuble, appeared to be more insistent that only "ability and achievement" shall determine appointments.
 21. In the Weimar period, the corporatist governance structures of the labor offices had ensured a remarkably low level of political conflict over the control and personnel of the offices.

22. After having suffered a debilitating stroke in 1941, which had diminished his role in the *Reichsanstalt*, the first (and only) President of the *Reichsanstalt*, Friedrich Syrup, had died in Allied internment in 1945. The head of British Central Office, Julius Scheuble, had been director of *Landesarbeitsamt* Rheinland until 1933, when he had been removed from office by the Nazis. Working closely with him in the Central Office was Herr Stothfang, who had been Syrup's influential personal assistant since the mid 1930s. Other crucial figures of the vocational counseling movement continued to exert their influence, even if they no longer operated in the foreground. The central figure of the efforts to standardize and improve vocational counseling in the 1930s, Walther Stets, held positions in the *Landesarbeitsamt* Rheinland-Pfalz, and later in the Labor Ministry, and was prominent in internal debates about the Labor Administration and vocational counseling. Even Ernst Schindler—one of the most powerful advocates of comprehensive vocational counseling in the Prussian Trade Ministry—intervened occasionally in the discussions.
23. For such perceptions within the Central Office, see for example: BAK, Z 40/321, 29 July 1946; and in particular, *ibid.*, 12 November 1946.
24. The records of these meetings, on February 14 and March 14, could not be found. References to them, however, are made in the file Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 123 I.
25. BAK, Z 40/319, 16 June 1947.
26. In this case, the Bizonal Office reflected the US preference for less centralization.
27. See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 123 I, 20 January 1947, and 113 I, 2 Mai 1947.
28. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, Nr. 123 I, 10–14 February 1947.
29. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 123 II, Transcript of Staff Meeting of Vocational Counselors for North Rhineland, 16 December 1947.
30. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 113 I, Protocol of Meeting of the “Cologne Circle,” 20 April 1948.
31. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen, 113 II, Protocol of Meeting of the “Berg Circle” and “Lower Rhine Circle,” 10 December 1948.
32. Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 387.
33. *Ibid.*, 420; Georg Müller, *Die Grundlegung*.
34. Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 414.
35. *Ibid.*, 413–14.
36. Hans Günter Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische Entscheidungen im Nachkriegsdeutschland: Alliierte und deutsche Sozialversicherungspolitik 1945 bis 1957* (Stuttgart, 1980), 85–91.
37. Müller, *Die Grundlegung*, 363–64; Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 430–39; Görtemaker, *Die Geschichte*, 146–52.
38. Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 434, who apostrophizes Erhard's action as a “sleight of hand” and “likely the most severe violation of a statute of occupation by a high German official.” Several days later, the Allies gave their imprimatur post hoc.
39. Quoted in Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 404.
40. In his 1946 book *Wirtschaftslenkung und Marktwirtschaft* (München, 1990), for example, Alfred Müller-Armack, who coined the phrase *Soziale Marktwirtschaft*, had criticized only certain aspects of the Labor Administration and those only in passing. Thus, he lamented that the labor offices had come to serve the Nazi *Arbeitseinsatz* and even after the war had resorted increasingly to compulsory measures to steer people to jobs (Müller-Armack, 7, 69). Significantly, however, he made no suggestion that either the labor offices or their vocational counseling wings should be abolished.
41. See Meskill, “Conditions,” for the background to these ideas, and for the likelihood that leading Ordoliberals, including Erhard, understood the Labor Administration's “market conforming” support for skilled—and hence economically independent—workers by the late 1930s.

42. Christoph Weisz and Hans Woller, eds., *Wörtliche Berichte und Drucksachen des Wirtschaftsrates des Vereinigten Wirtschaftsgebietes 1947–1949* (München, 1977), vol. I: 607. The fact that the US and British military governors vetoed this bill (Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 413), only to establish a more limited Labor Administration by fiat two months later, does not change the fact that the German politicians from all of the major parties voted for it.
43. Eschenburg, *Jahre*, 504.
44. *Ibid.*, 496.
45. The Weimar constitution, for example, had obliged every citizen to use his powers for the ultimate good of the community (Article 163).
46. Eschenburg, “Elemente des Grundgesetzes,” in Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Ära Adenauer: Gründerjahre der Republik, 1949–1957* (Stuttgart, 1981), 14ff.
47. Thus argued Dr. Pardun, the leading figure of vocational counseling in North Rhine-Westphalia and hence practically for the Bizone, at a meeting on 7 February 1949. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 120 I, 19 February 1949.
48. See Control Commission Order Nr. 3 of 17 January 1946, in R. Hemken, ed., *Sammlung der vom Alliierten Kontrollrat und der amerikanischen Militärregierung erlassenen Proklamationen, Gesetze, Verordnungen, Befehle, Direktiven* (Stuttgart, 1946).
49. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 120 I, 19 February 1949.
50. This was based legally on the exclusion of other organizations (employers’ associations, unions, crafts organizations), which had been enacted in 1935. The 1922 *Arbeitsnachweisgesetz* already had ordered the elimination of commercial job placement agencies by 1931.
51. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Transcript of Meeting in Kaub am Rhein on 16 and 17 June 1949.
52. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 180 II, Letter from the *Landesarbeitsamt* Nordrhein-Westfalen to the Landesarbeitsamt Rheinland-Hessen-Nassau, 19 January 1954.
53. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 115 I, Transcript of the Meeting of Chairmen of Vocational Counseling on 19 July 1949, 1 August 1949. At their meeting on 16/17 June 1949, leading vocational counselors from all of the West Zones had agreed on the importance of precisely such agreements. (See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Transcript of the Meeting on 16/17 June 1949). For evidence of the negotiations in the early 1950s between the *Landesarbeitsämter* and the state Education Ministries on these agreements, see the numerous files in BAK, B119/3097.
54. See, for example, the meeting on 3/4 October 1950, in Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 115 I.
55. In October 1949, the talk was of a “central station at the Federal Ministry of Labor or at the Bundesanstalt.” See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Protocol of Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 4–6 October 1949. By April 1950, the committee—at North Rhine-Westphalia’s request—was urging the (informally elected) president of the conference of *Landesarbeitsämter* to promote the idea of a central psychological office for the coming *Bundesanstalt*. See Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117, Notice on a Meeting of Vocational Counselors on 24/25 April 1950.
56. For the following, see Schmuhl, *Arbeitsmarktpolitik*, 412–18.
57. Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische*, 156.
58. *Ibid.*, 155–60.
59. Two of the more influential figures in this discussion, operating largely in the background, were Ernst Schindler and Walther Stets.
60. Harald Winkel, “Industrie- und Handelskammern in der Bewährung 1945–1956,” in Abelshäuser et al., *Ordnungspolitische Weichenstellungen*.

61. BAK, B 149/1276, Transcript of the meeting on 28 May 1951, 31 May 1951.
62. Greinert, *Berufsausbildung*, 74–75.
63. Quoted in the transcript of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors in North Rhine-Westphalia, on 16/17 June 1949, in Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 117.
64. See the reference to these agreements of March and April 1950, in BAK, B119/3086, 5 December 1952.
65. BAK, B119/1526, letter from *Bundesanstalt*, IVb, to I, 20 July 1954. The term appears in a letter, which IVb was forwarding for commentary, from a vocational counselor in Munich who expressed criticism of vocational counseling's focus on quantitative indicators of success, a critique that at the time was still quite rare, but that would grow more common in the following years.
66. See, for example, the report of a vocational counselor from Geldern, North Rhine-Westphalia, who commented, "Officially, the obligation to register has lapsed. In practice, it remains in effect—if only unofficially—wherever the youths are taken in the schools as a class for the first consultation." BAK, B119/1526, 29 May 1954. The interviews conducted by the author with the former labor office psychologists also confirmed the Labor Offices' reliance on the schools for achieving *Totalerfassung*. The tapes of these interviews are in the author's possession.
67. Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung, *Ein Jahrzehnt Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung, 1952–1962* (1959), 43.
68. As examples of vocational counseling and psychology's dependence on local employers, see the following. On 11 May 1954, the *Landesarbeitsamt* Baden-Württemberg requested funding for seven more psychologists, explaining that "the allocation of the requested positions is urgent, since the danger exists that due to suitability tests of the firms themselves, of independent psychologists or psychological institutes, the influence of vocational counseling upon apprenticeship placement will be considerably weakened." BAK, B119/1999, 26 October 1954. The *Land* Office in Bremen reported to headquarters that its vocational counseling's "success until now has been due basically to the good cooperation between vocational counseling and suitability testing." If the number of psychologists in Bremen were to be reduced—as headquarters had suggested in the interest of achieving a more equitable distribution across the country—the effects for vocational counseling's relations with local employers would be most deleterious. The author commented: "One cannot, I think, attract the firms by emphasizing the special quality of vocational counseling thanks to suitability tests, only to drop this instrument at a later time," BAK, B119/1999, 18 June 1955. The head of the psychological service himself expressly greeted an example of the closest possible cooperation. In his report on a trip to Munich, Wilhelm Arnold commented on three vocational counselors who worked "in" the facilities of the Wacker company. "Vocational counseling close to the firm is welcomed to a great degree by the company," he noted. BAK, B119/1998, 18 April 1956. The author's interviews with the former Labor Office psychologists also confirm the close relations between the offices and local employers.
69. Herbert Giersch et al., *The Fading Miracle: Four Decades of Market Economy in Germany* (New York, 1993), 2.
70. In 1957/58, GDP growth fell to just under 5 percent p.a. and the unemployment rate—now at about 3.5 percent—briefly ticked upward.
71. Giersch, *Fading*, 10.
72. Schildt, *Moderne Zeiten*, 323. However, Schildt characterizes Ralf Dahrendorf's claim of a "radical shift" in values as exaggerated.
73. Görtemaker, *Die Geschichte*, 183–85. The sociologist Helmut Schelsky coined the phrase "skeptical generation."
74. See the still only mildly skeptical tone in "Jagd auf Lehrlinge," *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 16, 18 April 1956, 22–23; much harsher is that in "Manager vom Arbeitsamt," *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 8, 18 February 1959, 28, and especially in the letters to the editor in the 25 April edition (Nr. 13, 6–9).

75. BAK, B119/1526, report forwarded within headquarters from section IVb to I, 20 July 1954.
76. BAK, B119/1999, Essay by Herbert Becker, unspecified date, 1955.
77. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for General Questions of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt's* Administrative Board, 5 December 1955.
78. Thus, when *Die Zeit* reported in November 1955 that a worker in a youth center in Rhineland-Palatinate, who allegedly had been recommended by a vocational counseling office, had abused and killed a 16-year old, the head of vocational counseling at headquarters quickly instructed the local office to investigate and, when no record of the killer was found, wrote a letter to the newspaper. In BAK, B119/1998, 17 November 1955.
79. BAK, B119/2574, Protocol of the *Verwaltungsrat* meeting, September 1955.
80. Rolf Hansen, *Quantitative Entwicklungen und strukturelle Veränderung der Schulen in der BRD* (Dortmund, 1993), 15. Between 1952/53 and 1959/1960, the number of seventh graders in West Germany would fall from 914,000 to 680,000.
81. See Ulrich Herbert and Karin Hunn, "Gastarbeiter und Gastarbeiterpolitik in der Bundesrepublik. Vom Beginn der offiziellen Anwerbung bis zum Anwerbestopp (1955–1973)," in *Moderne Zeiten: Freizeit, Massenmedien und "Zeitgeist" in der Bundesrepublik der 50er Jahre*, ed. Axel Schildt (Hamburg, 1995), 273–310. However, until 1960, fewer than 100,000 "guest workers" actually were employed in Germany. Compiled from Giersch, *Fading*, 127. As the foreign workers overwhelmingly found work as un- or low-skilled laborers, they passed through neither vocational counseling nor the vocational training system. Their role in the German labor force projects was only the indirect, though quite important, one of allowing Germans mainly to enter skilled positions.
82. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt's* Administrative Board meeting, 30 June 1955.
83. As we shall see, all of the reports concur on this *Gestalt*-like shift in perceptions—which resembled the equally sudden transition in employers thinking about the skilled worker in the mid 1920s as well as the sudden recognition in 1937 that skilled labor was scarce.
84. BAK, B119/2656, 21 July 1955.
85. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt's* Administrative Board, 1 September 1955.
86. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt's* Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
87. Schildt, *Ankunft*, subtitle of chapter 2. Schildt draws his term from Ronald Inglehardt's seminal study of the sea change of values across the western world after the 1950s, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Peoples* (Princeton, 1986).
88. Schildt, *Ankunft*, 64.
89. *Ibid.*, 50.
90. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt's* Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
91. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the North-Rhine Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt* Administrative Board, 22 November 1955.
92. *Ibid.*, 18 October 1955.
93. In Rheinland-Hessen-Nassau, for example, mining companies were inviting "influential men," such as school directors and county doctors, to participate in hunting excursions, in order to gain their favor when it came time to recruit young workers. BAK, B119/3086, Report on the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Vocational Counselors, 2–4 October 1958.
94. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee on Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt's* Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
95. BAK, B119/1697, Protocol of the Committee for Youth Matters of the North Rhine-Westphalia *Landesarbeitsamt's* Administrative Board, 13 January 1956.
96. Axel Schildt, *Moderne Zeiten. Freizeit, Massenmedien und "Zeitgeist" in der Bundesrepublik der 50er Jahre* (Hamburg, 1995), 62.

97. For the former figure, see Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt*, 43; for the latter, BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1963. In light of the revelations in 2002 about the *Bundesanstalt's* falsified data (hiding its poor record in job placements), however, we may have reason to be skeptical about these earlier figures as well.
98. Helmut Schelsky, ed., *Arbeiterjugend, gestern und heute: sozialwissenschaftliche Untersuchungen* (Heidelberg, 1955).
99. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 16 August 1956. According to the protocol, the central administration was “able to disprove” the board member’s claims.
100. BAK, B119/3097, 31 August 1955.
101. There are numerous reports from the late 1950s documenting the persistence, and even intensification, of “recruiting.” As just one example, the report from October 1958 by the heads of vocational counseling from all of the *Landesarbeitsämter* summarized the situation in the following fashion: “The competition for young workers has in part become even more intense. Time and again attempts are made to draw the schools into worker-recruitment.” BAK, B119/3086, Report on the Meeting of Heads of Vocational Counseling in the *Landesarbeitsämter*, 2–4 October 1958.
102. BAK, B149/836, 15 March 1952.
103. BAK, B149/836, Summary Report, 25 July 1952.
104. Both the employers and the unions, in fact, still supported *Totalerfassung* and a role for the Labor Administration in distributing workers to various industries, as they had demonstrated in 1950 in their agreements with the Ministry of Labor.
105. BAK, B149/836, Summary Report, 25 July 1952.
106. AdsD, DGB 24/3412, DGB, Bundesvorstand, Hauptabteilung Sozialpolitik, 15 March 1951.
107. See the summary in BAK, B119/2574, Protocol of the meeting of the Administrative Board, 23 February 1956. A copy of the report could not be found.
108. BAK, B119/1998, report by Wilhelm Arnold, 15 March 1956.
109. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Presidents’ meeting, 15 March 1956.
110. See the long report on the mounting “*Vertrauenskrise*” in BAK, B119/2574, Protocol of the meeting of the Administrative Board, 23 February 1956. A year later, after only five years on the job, Scheuble resigned.
111. These were the *Vorstand* (Executive Board) and the *Verwaltungsrat* (Administrative Board).
112. BAK, B119/2657, Protocol of the Executive Board Meeting, 12 March 1956.
113. BAK, B119/2657, Protocol of the Executive Board Meeting, 24 April 1956.
114. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Presidents’ Meeting, 27 June 1956.
115. BAK, B119/ 2679, Protocol of the Commission’s Meeting, 26 July 1956.
116. AdsD, DGB 24/3394, Protocol of Meeting, 6 July 1956.
117. See the DGB- and IG Metall- *Geschäftsberichte* for these years.
118. Mooser, *Arbeiterleben in Deutschland*, 224–36.
119. The proportion declined from 38 percent in 1951 to 31 percent in 1960. Frank Deppe et al., eds., *Geschichte der deutschen Gewerkschaftsbewegung* (Köln, 1977), 384.
120. Heinrich Popitz and Hans Paul Bahrdt, *Das Gesellschaftsbild des Arbeiters: soziologische Untersuchungen in der Hüttenindustrie* (Tübingen, 1957). See the analysis of the impact of the book in Schildt, *Moderne Zeiten*, 312–13.
121. See Klaus Peter Wittemann, *Ford-Aktion: zum Verhältnis von Industrie- und IG Metall in den sechziger Jahren* (Marburg, 1994), on the unions’ emerging worries in the 1950s, as well as the subsequent response by IG Metall at the Ford factory in Cologne.
122. BAK, B119/1999, Excerpted letter from the DIHT to the *Bundesanstalt*, 23 December 1955.
123. BAK, B119/3086, Document from Meeting of Vocational Counselors of the *Landesarbeitsämter* from 5/6 June 1956, 18 May 1956.
124. AdsD, DGB, 24/3394, letter from Henkelmann to Richter, 7 August 1956. Unfortunately, the employers’ organizations—the DIHT, BDA, BDI—do not maintain publicly accessible

- archives. Hence, their internal decision-making only can be reconstructed in a roundabout, less than satisfactory, way.
125. BAK, B119/1526, copy of the press announcement of the *Deutsche Arbeitgeberverbände*, 25 September 1956.
 126. BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 5–6 June 1956. On the acceptance of individuals' freedoms, see the comment in the talk by the head of job-placement, Söllner: "In a democracy, measures for the steering of young workers and for achieving a healthy vocational balance can be based only on the principle of the freedom of vocational choice and the freedom of choice of firms."
 127. Ibid.
 128. BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 17–19 February 1959.
 129. For an example of the extreme concern of the *Bundesanstalt's* leadership for its image in the public, see BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 9 April 1957, where President Scheuble appealed to the heads of the state offices to participate in upcoming exhibitions concerning vocational counseling. "The *Bundesanstalt* should not fail to participate in these things. Above all, it is necessary to take advantage of all possibilities to inform the public about the work of vocational counseling."
 130. On the government's sensitivity to public opinion at this time in regard to another social-political theme, see Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische*, 414–15.
 131. BAK, B119/3084, letter of the *Hauptstelle*, Ib2, to the presidents of the state offices, 28 February 1958.
 132. See the reference to this change, in BAK, B119/1750, Protocol of the Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 26 November 1958.
 133. Ibid.
 134. BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 17-19 February 1959 [emphasis added, DM].
 135. BAK, B119/3087, Protocol of Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 9 February 1960. On the *Bundesanstalt's* growing sensitivity to a series of legal decisions handed down from 1959 on, see the Executive Board Meeting of 17/18 March 1960, in BAK, B119/2660, Protocol. Some of the more important cases revolved around the *Bundesanstalt's* responsibility for its recommendations; the right of individuals to see vocational counseling's recommendations; and whether certain kinds of personality tests violated a person's privacy.
 136. BAK, B119/1528, 30 November 1961.
 137. BAK, B119/2679, 26 July 1956 .
 138. Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt*, 43. The proportion would decline more quickly only after the late 1960s when, among other things, ever more secondary school students began to attend university.
 139. See, for example, BAK, B119/3090, Annual Report, *Landesarbeitsamt* Rheinland-Pfalz-Saarland, 29 October 1963.
 140. While the contributions to unemployment insurance steadily were reduced in the booming 1950s and early 1960s, the decline in unemployment payments that the *Bundesanstalt* had to make occurred even more rapidly. As a result, by the early 1960s, the *Bundesanstalt* had a surplus of more than five billion marks. See Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt*, 63.
 141. Bundesanstalt Altaktei 6605.1/B. See the "Gesamtübersicht" in the preparatory materials for a meeting of *Landesarbeitsamt* psychologists from 10–13 December 1974. By 1973, the figure had risen to nearly 28 percent of all psychological examinations.
 142. See the documents in BAK, B149/1246, pertaining to the battles in 1952 between the Ministry of Labor and *Bundesanstalt*, on the one hand, and the Interior Ministry, on the other.
 143. BAK, B119/2619, Protocol of the Executive Board Committee for the Revision of the Law on Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance, 22/23 November 1956.
 144. In 1957, the *Bundesanstalt* had developed its own guidelines for "rehab cases"—workers who, for whatever reason, needed physical or psychological rehabilitation measures before reenter-

- ing the workforce. See, for example, BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 26 June 1957, which suggested an eagerness on the part of vocational counseling, now facing sustained criticism of its traditional role, for such expanded tasks.
145. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report Vocational Counseling, 1961. The almost immediate impact of the law can be seen in the jump in the share of handicapped cases in the psychological service's entire workload—from 6.8 percent in 1960/61 to 12.3 percent a year later.
 146. Competition in electoral politics also contributed to the burgeoning welfare expenditures. See Hockerts, *Sozialpolitische Entscheidungen*. On the claim that West Germany boosted its social programs in order to compete with its East German rival, see, somewhat skeptically, Hans Günter Hockerts, ed., *Drei Wege deutscher Sozialstaatlichkeit: NS-Diktatur, Bundesrepublik und DDR im Vergleich* (München, 1998), 23–24.
 147. BAK, B149/851, President's Order, 29 December 1954.
 148. Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Landesarbeitsamt Nordrhein-Westfalen 188, Letter of the *Landesarbeitsamt* to the Directors of the *Arbeitsämter*, 23 March 1961 (originally 7 March 1958).
 149. At the start of another “inspection measure” in late 1957, the main reason given was “to provide the economy with [laborers].” BAK, B119/3143, Protocol of Meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 17 December 1957.
 150. It generally was recognized that “the individual counseling conversation” and personal attention were important elements of any effort to get the long-term unemployed back into work. See *ibid.*
 151. BAK, B119/1749, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 27 June 1956.
 152. Schildt, *Ankunft*, 88–90.
 153. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1956.
 154. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1957.
 155. These measures permitted older students to rejoin more demanding educational “tracks” even after several years.
 156. BAK, B119/2344, Annual Report 1958/59.
 157. For a small sample of a large collection, see from the BAK: B119/1751, Protocol of the meeting of the *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 18/19 February 1960; B119/1700, Protocol of the North Rhine-Westphalia Administrative Board Meeting, 28 June 1960; B119/3087, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Vocational Counselors, 16/17 November 1961; B119/3143, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 24 July 1962; B119/2345, Annual Report 1963/64.
 158. BAK, B119/3087, Protocol of Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Vocational Counselors, 16/17 November 1961. “Public relations” in English in the original document.
 159. *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, 3. Wahlperiode, Stenographische Berichte, vol. 39 (Bonn, 1958), 19.
 160. BAK, B119/3143, Protocol of the Meeting of *Landesarbeitsämter* Presidents, 24 July 1962.
 161. Wilhelm Arnold, the head of the *Bundesanstalt's* psychological service, was, by this point, also in charge of the Würzburg institute.
 162. See the extensive documentation of the negotiations over this research contract and of the Tübingen investigation itself in the Psychological Institute of the University of Passau, Wilhelm Witte Nachlass.
 163. See the records in the Witte Nachlass documenting the delays in a receiving final approval from the governing boards.
 164. Bundesanstalt, *Ein Jahrzehnt*, 47.
 165. BAK, B119/2688, Protocol of the Meeting of the Ausschuss für Rechts- und Verwaltungsangelegenheiten, 4 March 1959; BAK, B119/3086, Protocol of Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 9/10 June 1959.
 166. BAK, B119/2628, Protocols of the Committee for Youth Affairs, 7 February, 1961; 5 October 1961.

167. BAK, B119/3087, Addendum to Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 16/17 November 1961.
168. BAK, B119/3087, Protocol of the Meeting of Vocational Counselors, 4 April 1963.
169. BAK, Protocol of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee, 5 July 1962.
170. AdsD, DGB, 24/8797, Records of Meetings between representatives of the *Bundesanstalt* and of the DGB, 24 April 1963; for the contacts with the employers, see the Derow Collection, Protocol of Meeting, 12 June 1963.
171. BAK, B119/1999, memo of the head of the psychological service to Ib, 7 October 1963.
172. BAK, B119/2663, 28 July 1966.
173. A survey in October 1962 had revealed that “in the different districts quite heterogeneous examination methods are used.” In response, headquarters in November 1963 imposed binding uniform regulations regarding permissible psychological tests and procedures. BAK, B119/3361, 27 November 1963.
174. BAK, B119/1999, memo of the head of the psychological service to section Ib, 7 October 1963.
175. In 1973, 295 psychologists were employed in the *Bundesanstalt*’s Labor Offices. *Bundesanstalt*, Altaktei 6672.1A/1, Protocol of the Meeting of Chief Psychologists of the *Landesarbeitsämter*, 4–6 December 1973.