

“Model Factory” with the German Labor Front Slogan on the Facade (1937/38)

Abstract

To compensate workers for low salaries and long work-weeks, the “Beauty of Labor” office launched a campaign in November 1933 to improve conditions in the German workplace. Slogans such as “Cleaning up the factory,” or “Good light, good work,” were supposed to encourage employers to provide better hygienic and safety conditions for their employees, as well as various leisure activities. The idea, of course, was that clean, healthy, and happy workers would work harder and be more productive. Various incentives were used to encourage employer participation: these included tax breaks, as well as competitions and prizes. For instance, on May 1st of each year, Hitler honored outstanding factories as “National Socialist Model Factories.” According to official figures, by 1938 about 34,000 firms had responded to the call for improvements. In actuality, the costs associated with many of those measures were borne by the workers, since they were often responsible for making the improvements themselves, without pay and on their own time. The photograph below features one of Hitler’s “model factories.” A swastika embedded in a cogged wheel decorates its facade, as does the slogan of the German Labor Front: “We’re marching with you.”

Source



© Bildagentur Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Berlin. Foto: Heinrich Hoffmann. Fabrik mit Markenzeichen der Deutschen Arbeitsfront in Sprenkelbach, Dorsdorf, Kreis Sankt Marien (1938).

Source: Ebersberg plywood plant, Kurt Rode Ebersberg/Obb. Factory yard with wall slogan of the German Labor Front “We’re marching with you.” Photo: Heinrich Hoffmann.

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