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OMGUS Survey of German Opinions on the Socialization of Industry (November 1947)

The most important Allied agreements on postwar Germany called for the nationalization of the economy, especially heavy industry, in order to prevent the concentration of economic power and the rearmament of Germany. At first, all of the large German political parties founded in the summer of 1945 agreed with this position and advocated the socialization of industry as well. But a poll conducted in the American zone in November 1947 showed that the German population was skeptical of such plans. Only around half of those surveyed believed that German industry bore a substantial share of the blame for World War II.

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### German Opinions on Socialization of Industry

*Sample:* unspecified number of respondents in the American Zone and West Berlin.  
*Interviewing dates:* November 1947. (8 pp.)

The survey attempted to get at attitudes toward the socialization or nationalization (*Verstaatlichung*) of industry.

Four in ten AMZON respondents (41%) and 50 per cent of the West Berliners felt that the workers would not be better off if industry were socialized; only 30 per cent in AMZON and 36 per cent in West Berlin said that they would be better off. There was more support for the socialization of heavy industry (49 per cent in AMZON and 57 per cent in West Berlin).

When asked whether the responsibility of German industrialists for World War II was very great, great, or slight, 51 per cent of the people in AMZON said that it was very great or great. Two-thirds of those people who thought workers would be better off under socialization as well as two-thirds of those who favored socialization in part or in total also placed heavy blame on the industrialists.

No population or geographical groups favored total socialization of industry in significant numbers. Tending to approve the socialization of heavy industry only were adherents of the SPD, independent businessmen, officials, skilled laborers, and the middle classes. Opponents of any socialization at all were found in largest numbers among LDP/DVP sympathizers, people from upper socioeconomic levels, and the highly educated.

Source: A. J. and R. L. Merritt, *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany. The OMGUS Surveys*. Urbana, IL, 1970, p. 197.