

# Newsweek

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## Ley: Workers' Friend



Two American paratroopers got the tip-off last week from a couple of German civilians. Entering an Austrian home about 50 miles from Berchtesgaden, they approached a short, sallow-faced German in blue-striped pajamas with pink polka dots. Dr. Ley, they presumed. Certainly not, replied the German, he was just an engineer named Ernst Distelmeyer.

Back at headquarters, the 5-foot-4-inch prisoner removed his green hat while Americans searched him for weapons. When confronted with pictures of Dr. Robert Ley, notorious leader of the Nazi labor front and absolute ruler of some 12,000,000 slave laborers in Germany, he shook his bald, perspiring head and stuck to his story. Finally, when a German official was brought into the room and identified him, he admitted: "I am the Dr. Ley you are seeking."

Then, speaking with a slight stutter, Ley proceeded to answer questions. Yes, he had approved of the "removal" of Jews from Germany. But he had never personally ordered the death of a single Jew. What did he have to say about the brutal treatment of slave laborers? With a few exceptions, they had been well cared for. "I have brought pleasure and contentment to millions of working men," Ley added. Yes, he would always remain loyal to Hitler. Now, he said, "life has no more meaning for me. You can do away with me and shoot me right now. I don't care . . . I did everything I could for Germany."