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The Federal Republic Halts Foreign Recruitment in the Wake of the Oil Crisis (June 13, 1974)

In response to OPEC's decision to drastically increase oil prices, the federal government halted guest worker recruitment in order to prevent foreign worker unemployment, which threatened to burden the welfare system.

The Ban on Recruitment Remains in Place

Measures to Combat Illegal Foreign Employment Intensified

In its answer to a Minor Interpellation [*Kleine Anfrage*] by a member of the Bundestag, the Labor Ministry explained that, in view of the situation on the labor market, the federal government cannot justify lifting the ban on the recruitment of foreign workers. The ban should help make jobs more secure.

According to the ministry, without this ban, the labor market would have developed in an even more unfavorable direction. Additionally, a particular problem would have arisen: higher unemployment among foreigners in the Federal Republic. The ban on recruitment should also help keep the employment of foreigners within a socially justifiable framework. These efforts, the ministry said, should not be endangered by an uncontrolled increase in the employment of foreigners.

The government acknowledges that individual companies and economic sectors are facing difficulties as a result of the ban on recruitment. Initially, however, an attempt must be made to fill available positions with unemployed Germans. On the other hand, the government also states clearly that no legally employed foreign worker would be forced to return to his country of origin.

Measures against the illegal employment of foreigners have intensified. Anyone placing or employing foreign workers without a work permit is now subject to a prison sentence of up to three years, instead of the previous one-year sentence, and a fine of DM 50,000, instead of the previous DM 10,000.

"As a rule," after the first year, residence permits are extended twice for a period of two years each. After five years, an unlimited residence permit should be issued. "As a rule," after eight

years of residency, people in this group should receive an “especially secure legal residence status.” The interior ministers of the federal states [*Länder*] will address this issue at their next conference.

Source: Kurt Steves, “Anwerbstopf bleibt bestehen” [“The Ban on Recruitment Remains in Place”], *Die Welt*, June 13, 1974.

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