



FIG. 5.6. "Apothecaries help you with their healing plants!" Support for natural herbs and medicines was strong in the Nazi era; the Dachau concentration camp became one of the world's leading producers of natural botanicals and spices. Source: *Der Stürmer* 14 (1936): Sondernummer 4.



Ein. Heilkräutersammlung der RDT, Berlin. Heil- und Teekräutersammlung, ein Kriegseinsatz der Jugend im Dienste der Volksgesundheit.

FIG. 5.7. Children were encouraged to gather wild plants for "German teas"; health was part of the interest, but military planners also encouraged the practice as a way to cut down on medical costs. Source: Reiter and Breger, *Deutsches Gold*, p. 282.

differed on both the taste and the digestibility of the resulting substance.¹²⁴ Experiments were also performed to compare the food value of soybean oil, olive oil, coconut fat, and whale oil. (Germany in the 1930s had the world's largest commercial whaling fleet.) Investigators knew from nineteenth-century studies that about a third of the average German's caloric intake derived from fat; experiments were undertaken to determine how well the human body could tolerate higher or lower fractions. A series of unpublished studies conducted during the war found that 50–60 percent of one's calories could come from fat with "no reduction in bodily performance."¹²⁵

Some of the proposals put forward to salvage the last gram of edible fat or protein from livestock were rather gruesome. In 1940,