

**Volume 3**

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**The Nuremberg Trials - II**

**Lead: Faced with undeniable proof of Nazi atrocities, in 1946 the Allies brought twenty-one German leaders to trial for war crimes in the ancient Bavarian city of Nuremberg.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: “The wrongs which we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored because it cannot survive their being repeated,” thus the words of United States**

**Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson on leave to serve as Chief U.S. Prosecutor in the Nuremberg Trials. With horror stories beginning to emerge as to the extent of Nazi depravity, the Allies were faced with the larger question of what to do with Germany which had twice in thirty years dragged the world to war. Clearly, war crimes and genocide on an unprecedented scale had been committed.**

**People at every level of German society had either participated in or looked the other way while horrific offenses had been perpetrated. Beyond the death camps, the political crimes, and the invasion of neighboring countries, some of the most prominent**

**industrial concerns in Germany, old names such as I.G. Farben, Siemens, and Krupp, had run slave-labor camps in clear violation of international law. Some American leaders and Allies wanted to crush Germany completely in a kind of national execution. Others believed that this would be a form of vengeance and a rejection of the rule of law. Germany had to be punished, but despite its own departure from civilized custom and behavior, its penalty should be meted out with enlightened severity.**

**The solution was a kind of punishment by proxy. The nation itself would not be put on trial. Instead, a group of representative Nazi leaders, the top of the heap, so to speak, would**

**be brought before an International Military Tribunal and forced to answer for their crimes. They were tried as individuals though they committed most acts in the name of the government of Germany. They could not avoid conviction because they were simply following orders or engaged in acts of military necessity. The result, it was hoped, in the words of essayist Robert Shnayerson, would be few trials, many convictions, and a devastating expose of Nazi crimes. Next time: Judgment at Nuremberg.**

**At the University of Richmond,  
this is Dan Roberts.**

## Resources

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