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The Nuremberg Trials - III

Lead: As the world looked on, the victorious Allies brought to trial Germany's experiment with barbarism. Twenty-two Nazi's were tried for crimes against humanity at Nuremberg.

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

Content: The trials began on October 18, 1945. The United States, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union supplied judges for the International Military Tribunal and they heard indictments and testimony

in four areas. The defendants were accused of: 1) crimes against peace, in other words they committed aggressive war, 2) crimes against humanity: exterminations, deportations and genocide, 3) war crimes, and 4) that they engaged in a long-term conspiracy to commit the first three.

Month after month, using captured documents, testimony and films of atrocities, the sordid and sometimes tedious history of Nazism was exposed in all its horror. Each of the defendants tried to save himself by accusing the others, and so gradually the prosecutors' conspiracy theory fell apart. In the end, the great Nazi conspiracy was judged to be less collusion than confused bondage to a

megalomaniac. There was still plenty of evidence to convict most of the original defendants. They were held morally accountable for their acts, thus enshrining the principle of individual responsibility. From that time on, war crimes may not be excused because they were committed on the orders of superiors, in the interest of national security or because of military necessity.

Of the twenty-two original defendants who went to trial three were acquitted, seven were sentenced to terms ranging from 10 years to life, and twelve sentenced to be hanged. Martin Borman, convicted in absentia, escaped the noose, as did the most important of the criminals. Arthur

Gaeth filed this report on October 16, 1946.

And in Nuremburg, Germany, humanity prepared its case against those who had so nearly destroyed it:

This is Arthur Gaeth reporting from Nuremburg for the Combined Network. I was a live witness to the execution of the wilted, spoiled flower of Nazidom, but I only saw ten Nazis die. Wilhelm Herman Goering, guilty on all four counts, the man whom Justice Jackson described as half militarist and half gangster, escaped his fate of hanging by committing suicide at 10:45 last night, less than three hours before he would have been executed.

*Thirty-nine second report from "I Can Hear it Now,"
Edward R. Murrow, 1945-1949, Columbia Masterworks,
ML 4261, Side One, Band Three:*

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

Resources

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