



The International Military Tribunal was opened on October 18, 1945, in the Supreme Court Building in Berlin, which had become the seat of the Allied Control Council. The first session was presided over by the Soviet judge, **Iola T. Nikitschenko**. The prosecution entered indictments against 24 "major war criminals" and against 6 "criminal organizations": Hitler's Cabinet, the leadership corps of the Nazi party, the SS (party police) and SD (security police), the Gestapo, the SA and the General Staff and High Command of the army.

From November 20, 1945, until August 31, 1946, all sessions of the tribunal were held in Nuremberg under the presidency of Lord Justice Geoffrey



Lawrence. On 218 days of trials, testimony from 360 witnesses was introduced, some verbal, some written, some (236 witnesses) from the court itself, some from judges assigned to take testimony.

Furthermore about 200,000 affidavits were evaluated as evidence. The procedures followed Anglo-American practices. More than 1000 personnel (some taking testimony, text translators, simultaneous translators, secretaries, etc.) were involved.

The verdicts were announced on September 30 and on October 1, 1946: 12 sentences to death by hanging, 7 sentences to life imprisonment or to lesser terms, 3 acquittals.

Of the organizations, the verdicts of guilty were handed down on the leadership corps of the NSDAP, on the SS and SD and on the Gestapo.

Those sentenced to death were executed in the early morning of October 16, 1946, in the old gymnasium of the Nuremberg prison (in 1987 torn down as part of a modernization project). The bodies were subsequently cremated in Munich and the ashes were strewn in an estuary of the Isar River.

Those sentenced to imprisonment were transferred to the prison in Berlin-Spandau, which the Allies had chosen for this purpose. The last of the prisoners, Rudolf Heß, committed suicide there in August, 1987.

Contrary to the original plans, no subsequent international tribunal took place. From 1947 to 1949, twelve U.S. military trials involving politicians, military personnel, businessmen and industrialists, doctors, lawyers, members of the Foreign Office, etc. were held in Nuremberg. Similar trials were conducted in the French, British and Soviet zones of occupation.

The protocols of the International Military Tribunal were published from 1947-1949 in 22 volumes with 14,638 pages (the "Blue Series").

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International Military Tribunal

THE NUREMBERG WAR-CRIMES TRIAL



From November 20, 1945, until October 1, 1946, the International Military Tribunal (IMT) convened in the principal courtroom for criminal cases (room No. 600) in the Nuremberg Palace of Justice. At the conferences in Moscow (1943), Teheran (1943), Jalta (1945) and Potsdam (1945), the Big Three powers (USA, USSR and Great Britain) had agreed to try and to punish those responsible for war-crimes.

Designated by President Harry S. Truman as U.S. representative and chief counsel at the IMT Supreme Court Justice **Robert H. Jackson** planned and organized the trial procedures and served as Chief Prosecutor for the USA. He recommended Nuremberg as site for the trials for several reasons. The Palace of Justice was spacious - it had 22,000 m2 of space with about 530 offices and about 80 courtrooms; war damage to it was minimal; and a large, undestroyed prison was part of the complex.

Since the Soviet Union had wanted the trials to take place in Berlin, the Allies reached a compromise in London on August 8, 1945, which stipulated that Berlin would be the permanent seat of the IMT and that the first trial (several were planned) would take place in Nuremberg. The court itself was to determine the locale for the subsequent trials. Because of the Cold War, however, there were no subsequent International Military Tribunals.

Each of the four Great Powers - France was now included - provided one judge and an alternate; they provided the prosecutors, too.

The 24 Nazi leaders indicted and tried as war criminals

The indictment against them contained four points:

1. Conspiracy to commit crimes against peace
2. Planning, initiating and waging wars of aggression
3. War-Crimes
4. Crimes against humanity

Bormann, Martin, farmer, born in 1900; was since 1933 head of the staff of Rudolf Hess and during World War II chief of the party chancellery and the closest advisor of Hitler at the Führer's head-quarters. His fate at the end of the war is not entirely clear, probably he died in May 1945 in Berlin. Indicted for 1, 3 and 4, he was found guilty of 3 and 4 and sentenced in absentia to death.

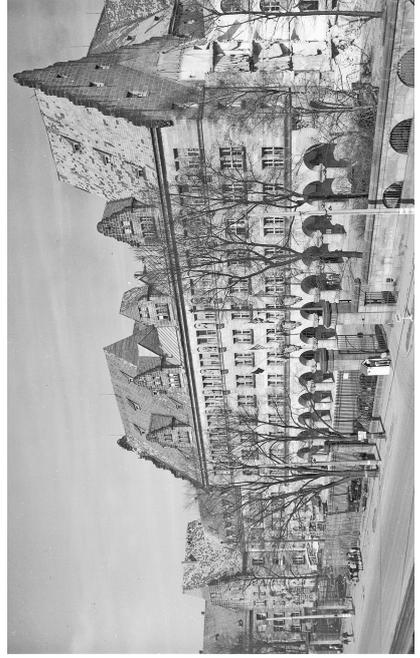
Dönitz, Karl, Admiral of the Fleet, born in 1891. Shortly before Hitler's death on May 2, 1945, he designated Dönitz as his successor. Indicted for 1, 2 and 3, he was found guilty of 2 and 3 and sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment. Released in 1956, he died in 1980.

Frank, Hans, lawyer, born in 1900, was Governor-General of Poland since 1939. Indicted for 1, 3 and 4, he was found guilty of 3 and 4 and sentenced to death.

Frick, Wilhelm, born in 1877, was Minister for Internal Affairs. Indicted for 1, 2, 3 and 4, he was found guilty of 2, 3 and 4 and sentenced to death.

Fritzsche, Hans, journalist, born in 1900, was head of the news service section in the Press Division of the Ministry for Propaganda since May, 1933. At the trial he was in a way a substitute for Goebbels, who had committed suicide. Indicted for 1, 3 and 4, he was acquitted. In the subsequent denazification procedures, he was sentenced to 9 years of imprisonment. Released in the fall of 1950, he died in 1953.

Funk, Walther, economic journalist, born in 1890, was Minister for Economic Affairs and since 1939 President of the German Central Bank. Indicted on all four counts, he was found guilty of 2, 3 and 4 and sentenced to life imprisonment. Released in 1957 because of sickness, he died in 1960.



Göring, Hermann, born in 1893. As Prussian Minister for Internal Affairs he created the Secret Police, which later developed into the Gestapo. He was responsible for the mobilization of the economic resources of the Reich for rearmament. Indicted and found guilty on all four counts, he was sentenced to death. On the night before his execution, he committed suicide by taking cyanide of potassium. The source of the poison is not entirely clear.

Heß, Rudolf, born in 1894. Führer's deputy in the NSDAP since 1933. On May 10, 1941, he flew on a not yet fully understood mission to Scotland, where he was captured and interred. Indicted on all four counts, found guilty of 1 and 2. Sentenced to life imprisonment. He committed suicide in 1987 in the allies' prison for war criminals in Berlin-Spandau.

Jodl, Alfred, general, born in 1890. Head of the military command and advisor of Hitler in strategic and operative matters. Indicted and found guilty on all four counts, he was sentenced to death.

Kaltenbrunner, Ernst, lawyer, born in 1903. Head of the Security Police (SD). Indicted for 1, 3 and 4, he was found guilty of 3 and 4 and sentenced to death.

Keitel, Wilhelm, general, born in 1882. Field-marshal of the army. Indicted and found guilty on all four counts, he was sentenced to death.

Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, Gustav, industrialist, born in 1870, was indicted on all four counts as representative of German heavy industry and for armament production. He was physically unable to appear in court and the charges against him were dropped. He died in 1950. What is known as the "Krupp Trial" took place before a US military court in Nuremberg in 1948. Krupp's son Alfred was sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment and to forfeiture of his private property.

Ley, Robert, chemist, born in 1890, eliminated the free labor unions in 1933 and established the rigidly ideological Labor Front. Indicted on all four counts, he committed suicide in the Nuremberg jail on October 26, 1945.

Neurath, Konstantin von, born in 1873 and a diplomat since 1908 was the Protector of Bohemia and Moravia 1939 - 1943 (in 1941, he was removed from service). Convicted on all four counts, he was sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment. Released in 1954 due to illness, he died in 1956.

Papen, Franz von, born in 1879. Vice-chancellor in Hitler's first cabinet 1933, later ambassador in Vienna and Ankara. Indicted on 1 and 2, he was acquitted. In the subsequent denazification procedures, he was sentenced to eight years of imprisonment. Released in 1949, he died in 1969.

Raeder, Erich, admiral, born in 1876. Until 1943 Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. Indicted on 1, 2 and 3, he was sentenced to life imprisonment. Due to illness, he was released in 1955 and died in 1960.

Ribbentrop, Joachim von, businessman, born in 1893. Foreign Minister 1938 - 1945. Indicted and convicted on all four counts, he was sentenced to death.

Rosenberg, Alfred, born in 1893. Minister for the Occupied Territories in the East since 1941. Indicted and found guilty on all four counts, he was sentenced to death.

Sauckel, Fritz, born in 1894, was Hitler's plenipotentiary for the mobilization of labor since 1942 and as such responsible for the more than 5 million men and women from the occupied territories, who did forced labor in Germany. Indicted on all four counts, he was found guilty of 3 and 4 and sentenced to death.

Schacht, Horace Greely Hjalmar, banker, born in 1877, was President of the Reichsbank and Minister of Economics. Since 1944 he had been imprisoned in the concentration camp at Flossenbürg. Indicted on 1 and 2, he was acquitted. German officials imprisoned him until 1948. He died in 1970.

Schirach, Baldur von, born in 1907 was the head of the Ministry for Youth and since 1940 Gauleiter of Vienna. Indicted on 1 and 4, he was found guilty and sentenced to from four to twenty years of imprisonment. Released in 1966, he died in 1974.

Seyß-Inquart, Arthur, lawyer, born in 1892. Commissioner for the Occupied Netherlands 1940-1945. Indicted on all four counts, he was found guilty of 2, 3 and 4 and sentenced to death.

Speer, Albert, architect, born in 1905. General Inspector for Buildings and Construction for Berlin since 1937; 1942-1945 Minister for Weapons and Munitions. Indicted on all four counts, he was found guilty of 3 and 4 and sentenced to from four to twenty years of imprisonment. Released in 1966, he died in 1981.

Streicher, Julius, born in 1885, elementary school teacher, founded in 1923 the virulently anti-Semitic weekly newspaper "Der Stürmer". Even after his removal from the office of Gauleiter in Franconia in 1940, he remained owner and publisher of this paper. Indicted on 1 and 4, he was sentenced to death.