



DAISMUN XV

International Military Tribunal: The Nuremberg Trials

*Accusation of 4 German political, military and economic
leaders of conspiracy, crimes against peace, war crimes
and crimes against humanity.*

Chair Report



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FORUM: International Military Tribunal: The Nuremberg Trials

ISSUE OF: Accusation of 4 German political, military and economic leaders of conspiracy, crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

STUDENT OFFICER: Julius Chen and Dennis Luo

POSITION: Judges

Topic Background:

The catastrophic events of World War II had just come to an end, and the question of how to punish the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany arose between the Allied governments. On August 8th, 1945, four of the allied powers, the French Republic, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland signed the Nuremberg Charter in London, which created an International Military Tribunal to try German leaders who participated in the war. Between November 20th, 1945 to October 1st, 1946, the International Military Tribunal convened in the German city of Nuremberg, and indicted in total of 24 significant figures of the Third Reich (Nazi Germany) on four charges according to the Nuremberg Charter, 4 among which shall be entertained into trial for this conference.

Key Events:

World War II — The Second World War, lasting from 1939 to 1945, is by far the largest and most devastating conflict in human history. During this period, Nazi Germany, under the rule of Adolf Hitler, annexed neighboring nations through military aggression and committed numerous atrocities. The war witnessed ethnic cleansings, forced displacement of ethnic minorities, and establishment of concentration camps. The Holocaust exterminated approximately six million Jews along with millions of others.

The London Conference — After the collapse of the Third Reich (Nazi Germany), the allied powers – representatives from the American, British, French, and Soviet government – reached an agreement in London. Their conference resulted in the establishment of the London Charter (also known as the Nuremberg Charter), which created the International Military Tribunal (IMT) that aims to bring Nazi officials responsible for the crimes to justice. The charter categorized and defined three acts of crime that serves as the legal basis during the trials:

1. Crimes against peace – planning, preparation, initiation, or waging of wars of aggression, or wars in violation of international treaties.



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2. War crimes – violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations include but are not limited to murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave labor, and plunder of public or private property.
3. Crimes against humanity – murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population.

Convention of the International Military Tribunal — Following the London Charter, the establishment of the International Military Tribunal marked the first time in history that an international tribunal was established to hold individuals accountable for crimes of atrocity. Nuremberg, the German city that served as the base of Nazi ideology and propaganda, was chosen as the location of the trials. This deliberate choice of location symbolized the collapse of the Nazi regime.

The First Nuremberg Trial — The first and most prominent trial took place between November 20th, 1945, to October 1st, 1946, in Nuremberg's Palace of Justice. This trial indicted in total of 24 high-ranking Nazi officials, including Hermann Wilhelm Göring, Albert Speer, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, and Baldur Benedikt von Schirach. The defendants faced four major charges based on the three crimes defined in the London Charter, which are:

1. Crimes against peace.
2. War crimes.
3. Crimes against humanity.
4. Conspiracy to commit any of the above crimes.

The First Nuremberg Trial was led by chief prosecutors from all four of the Allied nations. The prosecution relied on an overwhelming amount of evidence – 4,600 German documents, 30 kilograms of film, and over 25,000 photographs. The recorded films and photographs presented the concentration camps, ethnic cleansings, and piles of bodies which served as concrete evidence proving that atrocities were committed by Nazi Germany.

The defense consists of the 24 Nazi officials and attorneys from Germany. The defendants employed various strategies to deny their participation and knowledge of the crimes; claiming that they were only following orders directed by higher authorities in the Nazi regime. Some also presented the argument that they were not aware that their actions can be held accountable for



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crimes, and that no one had ever been tried for the crimes described in the London Charter. However, these defenses were largely dismissed.

Of the 24 defendants put on trial, 12 were sentenced to death by hanging (Göring, Ribbentrop, Keitel, Kaltenbrunner, Rosenberg, Frank, Frick, Streicher, Sauckel, Jodl, Seyss-Inquart, and Bormann). Before the execution, Göring committed suicide and ten were hanged on the 16th of October. 7 received life-long sentences or prison sentences of varying length (Hess, Funk, Raeder, Dönitz, Schirach, Speer, and Neurath). 3 were acquitted and later tried at other courts (Papen, Schacht, and Fritzsche).

Note from chair: Due to the peculiar nature of historical committees, please ignore this final verdict of the first Nuremberg Trials – since the International Military Tribunal of DAISMUN XV takes place in 1945. Please do not refer to any of the verdicts given to the 24 defendants in reality as part of your evidence.

Subsequent Nuremberg Trials — Following the initial Nuremberg Trial, twelve additional trials were conducted by the United States between 1946 to 1949 under the International Military Tribunal. These subsequent trials primarily focused on prosecuting those responsible for inhumane biological experiments, members of death squads responsible for massacres in Eastern Europe, and corporate executives accountable for forced labor.

Key Figures and Groups:

The French Republic

More commonly known as France, [The French Republic](#) is one of the key Allied powers at the outbreak of World War II in 1939. However, it fell to German forces in 1940, leading to the establishment of the [Vichy regime](#), a German puppet state. Meanwhile, Charles de Gaulle led the Free French Forces in resistance. The capital of The French Republic Paris was [liberated](#) by the French 2nd Armored Division and the U.S. 4th Infantry Division in 1944 during the Allied push into Europe. Postwar, France was one of the four occupying powers in Germany and a prosecuting nation in the Nuremberg Trials. French prosecutors focused particularly on crimes committed on French territory, including the exploitation of forced labor and atrocities against French citizens.

The United States of America (USA)



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Initially neutral, [The United States of America](#) joined World War II after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The U.S. became a central figure in the [Allied coalition](#), providing significant military and industrial support. After the war, the U.S. spearheaded the establishment of the Nuremberg Trials, with Supreme Court Justice [Robert H. Jackson](#) serving as Chief U.S. Prosecutor. The U.S. emphasized the legal principle of accountability for leaders who initiated aggressive wars, committed war crimes, and orchestrated crimes against humanity, laying the foundation for international law.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

The USSR, commonly referred to as the Soviet Union, suffered catastrophic losses and claimed decisive victories during World War II, estimating over 27 million fatalities accounted for WW2. The Soviet Union played a decisive role in the Allied victory, particularly in the [Battle of Stalingrad](#) and the [Battle of Berlin](#). After the war, the USSR became one of the four main powers administering occupied Germany, controlling the entire region referred to as [East Germany](#). At Nuremberg, [Soviet prosecutors](#) presented evidence of German atrocities on the Eastern Front, including mass killings, destruction of villages, and the systematic extermination of Jews and Slavs. The [USSR's participation](#) in the IMT and Nuremberg trials was driven by a desire to expose the full scope of Nazi crimes against its people.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK)

The UK stood as a bastion of resistance against Nazi Germany during the early years of the war, enduring the Blitz and contributing significantly to the Allied war effort. Postwar, the UK was heavily involved in prosecuting Nazi leaders at Nuremberg, focusing on crimes that violated international law and the treatment of prisoners of war. The UK's legal team worked to establish the concept of crimes against peace, emphasizing the illegality of aggressive war under the Kellogg-Briand Pact and other treaties.

The German Reich (Nazi Germany/Third Reich)

More commonly known as Nazi Germany (or the Third Reich), the [German Reich](#) refers to the state of Germany between 1933 and 1945. Controlled by Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party, the state claimed that it was the successor of the [Holy Roman Empire](#). During this period of 12 years, the German Reich became synonymous with totalitarianism. Under this regime, the state of Germany annexed neighboring nations through means of military aggression. The German Reich



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officially started World War II on the on 1 September 1939 as it invaded Poland and divided it with the Soviet Union under the [Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact](#). Throughout the war, the regime repeatedly committed systematic massacre and forced displacement of ethnic minority groups – the most infamous being the [Holocaust](#). The German Reich justifies its military invasions through ideologies such as irredentism and [Lebensraum](#). In May 1945, the Allied forces defeated German forces and entered its capital, Berlin, ending the regime and World War II in Europe (while the [Asia-Pacific War](#) lasted for some more time). The creation of the International Military Tribunal and the Nuremberg Trials during the post-war period was designated to reveal to true extent of German atrocities and hold prominent figures of the Nazi Regime accountable for their crimes.

Hermann Wilhelm Göring (Jan 12, 1893 – Oct 15, 1946)

Hermann Göring was a leader of the Nazi Party and one of the primary architects of the Nazi Police state, being closely associated with Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime. Göring played a significant role in the rise of the Third Reich, holding key positions such as the commander of the [Luftwaffe](#) and commissioner of Hitler’s Four-Year Plan for the war economy. Göring was also responsible for the economic despoliation of Jews in Germany and other occupied territories. After the fall of the regime, Göring was tried at the Nuremberg Trials before the International Military Tribunal, in which he was held accountable for all four charges based on the London Charter and was sentenced to death by hang. However, before the night of his execution, Göring committed suicide in his cell.

Albert Speer (Mar 19, 1905 – Sep 1, 1981)

Known as “The Architect of the Third Reich”, Speer was Adolf Hitler’s chief architect and minister of armaments and war production. He enthusiastically joined the Nazi Party in 1931 after hearing Hitler’s speech at a Berlin rally. Appointed as the minister of armaments and munitions in 1942, Speer constructed and expanded a system of conscript and slavery in the concentration camps to maintain production of war materials for Nazi Germany during the war. At the Nuremberg Trials, Speer firmly denied participation and firsthand knowledge of the extermination of Jews. Ultimately convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity, Speer served a 20-year sentence in prison.

Ernst Kaltenbrunner (Oct 4, 1903 – Oct 16, 1946)



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Kaltenbrunner was the leader of the [SS](#) in Austria and a member of the Austrian Nazi Party. Appointed as the head of Germany's Reich Security Central office, Kaltenbrunner controlled the [Gestapo](#) (Nazi Political Police) and established the system of Nazi concentration camps throughout Europe. According to many sources, he had agreed at a conference upon using gas chamber as a form of execution used to slaughter Jews. Captured by the US troops and tried at the Nuremberg Trials, Kaltenbrunner was held accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity. He was sentenced to death and hanged on October 16, 1946.

Baldur Benedikt von Schirach (May 9, 1907 – Aug 8, 1974)

Schirach was a German politician and head of the Nazi youth movement. He was elected to the [Reichstag](#) in 1932 and later entered Adolf Hitler's inner circle as the Reichsleiter (Reich leader). In 1933, Schirach was made the "youth leader of the German Reich", directing all Nazi youth organizations. He was also appointed as "Gauleiter" (district leader) of Vienna. During the Nuremberg Trials, Schirach confessed that Hitler appointed him as the Gauleiter for the sole purpose of initiating forced displacement and deportation of Vienna's Jewish population. He was held accountable for crimes against humanity and sentenced to 20 years in prison. Schirach was released in 1966.

Accounts of Provided Witnesses:

Note from chair: links to video clips of the Nuremberg Trials posted by Robert H. Jackson Center on YouTube is provided within this section for delegates to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the accounts of provided witnesses as well as the procedure.

Erwin Lahousen

Lahousen was a former German General who plotted an unsuccessful assassination of Adolf Hitler with several other opposers of Hitler's regime. On November 30, 1945, Lahousen voluntarily testified as the first live witness during the Nuremberg Trial against Hermann Göring and 21 other defendants. His [testimony](#) gave evidence about the murder of hundreds of thousands of Soviet war prisoners and millions of Jews in the seized territories of the Soviet Union and Poland.

Karl Bodenschatz



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General of the Air Force and military adjutant to Hermann Göring, Bodenschatz was cross examined by Robert H. Jackson. He testified during the Nuremberg Trials that he had helped ten to twenty arrested or threatened Jews under Göring's instruction. Although not directly involved in atrocities committed by the Nazi regime, Bodenschatz's [testimony](#) helped establish a broader understanding of the dynamics within Nazi leadership during the war.

Walter Schellenberg

Schellenberg was chief of the [SD](#) and the political intelligence branch of SS during World War II. He testified during the Nuremberg Trials regarding the powers of Ernest Kaltenbrunner with regards to the concentration camps. Schellenberg's [testimony](#) was significant in providing valuable evidence of the SD's involvement in war crimes, though he had sought to portray himself as a reluctant participant.

Paul Körner

Körner was a German Nazi functionary who served as State Secretary of the Prussian State Ministry and the Four-Year Plan. Being a close associate of Hermann Göring, Körner served as the fourth witness for Göring's defense during the Nuremberg Trials. Körner's [testimony](#) illustrated the economic aspects of the regime's crimes, highlighting its reliance on forced labor and systematic exploitation of occupied territories.

Rudolf Hess

A German National Socialist, Hess was Adolf Hitler's deputy party leader. In 1939, Hitler declared him second to Hermann Göring in the line of succession. During the Nuremberg Trial, his [testimony](#) provided evidence to the murder of 2.5 million Jews under his command. Hess was later tried, convicted, and given a life sentence.

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