

XXVII

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UNITED NATIONS WAR CRIMES COMMISSION.

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WAR CRIMES NEWS DIGEST.

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SUMMARY OF EVENTS.

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## SUMMARY OF EVENTS.

### EUROPE.

#### AUSTRIA.

##### Investigations into suspected cases of war crimes.

Linz radio reported (10.4.47) that under the jurisdiction of the five People's Courts in Upper Austria and Salzburg - the region of the Linz Chief Public Prosecutor's Office - 5,157 preliminary investigations were being made into cases of suspected war crimes and underground membership of the Nazi party. About 500 trials were begun last year; 342 being concluded, two with death sentences and 116 with acquittals.

##### Arrests.

Wiener Zeitung reported (1.4.47) that the Innsbruck police had arrested the former SS Obersturmführer Richard KORNHERR.

#### CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

##### The Tiso Trial. (see No. XXVI, p.2 of this Digest)

The Daily Telegraph reported from Prague (16.4.47) that Josef TISO, former President of Slovakia during the German occupation, had been sentenced by the People's Court in Bratislava to death by hanging. Ferdinand DURCANSKY, his former Foreign Minister, received a similar sentence. During his trial TISO admitted giving military aid to the Germans but denied signing a declaration of war on Britain and the United States.

##### Sentence on a Gestapo Official.

An Agency message reported from Berlin (7.2.47) that Karel DUCHON, described as the most cruel Gestapo man in Olomouc, had been sentenced to death by the Olomouc People's Court. He took part in the killing of 21 people in a May 1945 rising and persecuted Slovak partisans.

##### The Lidice Trial.

This trial opened before the Prague People's Court on March 27th 1947 according to an Agency message from Prague. Harold WIESMANN, the former Gestapo chief in the mining town of Kladno, and fifteen of his henchmen were charged with responsibility for the Nazi destruction of Lidice in 1942.

### GERMANY.

#### TRIALS BY GERMAN COURTS.

##### The Trial of Dr. Schacht.

The Daily Telegraph reported from Munich (10.4.47) that Dr. Hjalmar SCHACHT, former German Finance Minister and President of the Reichsbank, appeared before the de-nazification court at Stuttgart on the previous day following his acquittal as a major war criminal at Nuremberg last year. The trial, before German judges, began with a three hour indictment which accused him of furthering Nazism through political, economic and propaganda channels. SCHACHT made a counter accusation against some of the chief figures in the present German government.

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GERMANY.

TRIALS BY GERMAN COURTS (Cont)

Trial of Dr. Schacht (cont)

He declared that they were equally guilty with him, yet they had been appointed to rebuild a democracy. He repeated his Nuremberg defence that he had been thrown into prison for suspected participation in the bomb plot against HITLER whom he called a "rat catcher".

"When HITLER invited me to become Minister of Economics" he said, "I accepted because I was convinced that the only possibility was to try to influence the Hitler cabinet from within. I wanted to establish a resistance centre against Hitler's criminal tyranny."

Ex-Nazi Treasurer to be tried.

News of Germany reported from Munich (24.3.47) that the de-nazification trial of the former Nazi Party treasurer, Hans SCHWARZ, would take place within a few weeks at the Regensburg civilian internment camp.

[NOTE: SCHWARZ was an Obergrupperfuhrer SS and is referred to in the deposition of BLEICH on the Beelitz mercy killing institution.]

AMERICAN ZONE.

THE SECOND NUREMBERG TRIALS.

The Industrialists Trial.

A U.S. Press release No. 116 of 10.3.47 stated that Odile BURKART, former associate of Friedrich FLICK, would be named co-defendant in the FLICK case in an amended indictment to be filed by the prosecution with the Secretary General. BURKART, who had been sought for some months, was apprehended at Riedlingen in the French zone and brought to Nuremberg. He was to be charged under Count One (Slave Labour) and Count Two (Spoliation in Occupied Territories) of the indictment. As the opening of Case V had been tentatively set for April 8th, amending the indictment would delay the proceedings only a little more than a week under the 30-day-after-indictment provision. BURKART had been a member of the FLICK concern since 1936, and was, with KALETSCH and WEISS, one of the three men under Flick in the Berlin main office. He was FLICK's chief assistant in running the iron and steel smelting rolling plants, and handled contracts with the Heeres Waffenamt (army ordinance). He was a member of the Stahlhelm, and so was taken into the S.A. when it absorbed the former organisation, but he claims never to have been a member of the NSDAP.

The Diplomats case.

A U.S. Press release No. 115 of March 14th stated that Dr. Friedrich GAUS, a former under-secretary and Ambassador, who is held in Nuremberg in connection with the forthcoming trial against Foreign Office officials and diplomats, had submitted a statement to the American prosecution, and had expressed the hope that his ideas would be made known to all German civil servants. He appealed to all German officials, who by their silence throughout twelve years had supported the Nazi regime, to help to bring the obvious criminals to punishment and to expose all actions which are criminal in a wider sense.

Dr. GAUS is one of a group of diplomats who may be charged as war crimes accomplices of the former German Foreign Minister Joachim von RIBBENTROP. Other

/ diplomats...

G E R M A N Y.

AMERICAN ZONE.

THE SECOND NUREMBERG TRIALS.

(Cont.)

The Diplomats case (Cont)

diplomats belonging to this group are RIBBENTROP's under secretary, Moyland von STEENGRACHT; Karl RITTER, former German Ambassador to Rio de Janeiro; under secretary Ernst Wilhelm BOHLE, the head of the so-called foreign organisation of the NSDAP and under secretary Wilhelm KEPPLER, who may be charged with illegal actions connected with the annexation of Austria and the creation of the Slovak state. The annihilation of minorities is another of the war crimes with which these men may be charged.

The I.G. Farben Trial.

A U.S. Press release No. 112 of February 2nd 1947 mentioned that Otto AMEROS, former director of I.G. Farben had been surrendered by the French to the American authorities, and was being held in connection with the forthcoming I.G. Farben trial. AMEROS became a director of I.G. Farben in 1938. During the war years he specialized on questions connected with the production of poison gas and was an adviser on chemical warfare to the German armed forces. AMEROS joined the party in May 1937; in 1941 he received the title of "Armament Economy Leader" (Wehrwirtschaftsfuehrer).

Death of Herbert Backe.

The Times reported (7.4.47) that Herbert BACKE, former German Minister of Food and Agriculture, committed suicide by hanging on the 6.7.47 in Nuremberg gaol where he was awaiting trial for war crimes.

Trial of ex-Marshall Milch. The Daily Telegraph reported from Munich (18.4.47) that ex Marshal MILCH had been sentenced to life imprisonment the previous day.

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War Crimes Trials statistics.

According to figures released on March 31st at Dachau approximately 1,000 cases have been tried and 250 death sentences passed by the American war crimes court there since its opening in October 1945. Of those indicted about 800 were convicted and 550 sentenced to imprisonment.

About 7,700 are still interned at Dachau and approximately 4,000 have been released. Most of the present internees are former concentration camp guards and persons connected with the murders of shot down allied airmen. Almost half are former Mauthausen concentration camp personnel awaiting trial for the murder or ill-treatment of the inmates.

Trial of former S.A. Officers.

News of Germany reported from Munich (10.4.47) that the trial of former Major General Wilhelm DITTLER, Brig. General Albert WICZONKA, Sr. Colonel Albert SCHIEFFNER and Colonel Ewald BARTEL opened before a U.S. Military court on the previous day. The defendants were charged with attempting to organise a Nazi underground movement. They were also charged with obtaining false documents. All were members of the SA Division which guarded the Nazi Party Headquarters in Munich and it was under the personal command of HITLER.

The aims of the subversive group, according to its constitution, included restoration of all the territories taken away from Germany. The constitution also condemned the Military Government, analysed the mistakes of the Nazis and condemned the social behaviour of BORMANN, HIMMLER and LEY. The movement was called the "German Liberty and Peace Movement."

GERMANY.

AMERICAN ZONE (CONT)

The Buchenwald - Nordhausen Trial. (see XXVI, p.5 of this Digest )

An Agency message reported 11.4.47 that the Buchenwald trial had opened at Dachau on that day. All the thirty one defendants had pleaded "not guilty." The death sentence was demanded by the prosecution for all the defendants. Mr. W. Denson, United States Counsel, stated that the camp's existence was a "chapter of infamy and sadism unparalleled in the history of the world." The counsel for the defence challenged the jurisdiction of the court, composed of six American colonels and a general. He stated that it had no authority to judge on crimes committed outside the United States occupation zone, against other than United States citizens and during a time when America was still a neutral power. The petition was rejected. Among the defendants were Prince Josias of Waldeck-Pyrmont, a pioneer member of the Nazi Party; Frau Ilse Koch, widow of Buchenwald's former commandant and Edwin Katzenellenbogen, former camp doctor.

The Trial of Kurt Otto.

An Agency message reported from Dachau that Kurt OTTO, former SS guard at a Nazi concentration camp, had been sentenced, by an American war crimes court, to be hanged for the murders of at least six prisoners,

Trial of SS. General Jurgen Stroop. (see Nos XXIII, p.6 & XXVI, p.9 of this Digest)

The Daily Telegraph correspondent writing from Frankfurt on 22.3.47 stated: " Sentence of death by hanging was passed by the United States Higher Court at Dachau to day on Lieutenant General Juergen STROOP and 12 other Germans, former SS and police officers, found guilty of murdering Allied airmen. Altogether 21 were on trial. Three were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment and four to terms varying between three and five years. One was acquitted."

Punishment of Murderers of Airmen.

The Times reported (3.4.47) that Karl Friedrich HILDEBRANDT, former Gauleiter of Mecklenburg and a friend of HITLER, had been sentenced to death, with five other Nazi officials, by an American military court at Dachau for being concerned in the killing of 15 unarmed American airmen during the war. A seventh prisoner was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.

Request for extradition of Admiral Horthy.

An agency message stated (17.5.47) that Rumania had asked the United States authorities in Germany for the extradition of the former Hungarian Regent, Admiral Horthy. He is on the Rumanian list of war criminals.

BRITISH ZONE.

War Crimes Inquiries.

In reply to a question in the House of Commons, Mr. HYND, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, said: " 18,900 persons are awaiting trial as members of criminal organisations following the investigations at Nuremberg. The trials could not begin until the verdict at Nuremberg was known. It is hoped that they would be completed by the end of 1947. In addition about 1,500 persons are held in civilian internment camps, whose cases are being investigated on suspicion of individual war crimes against ourselves or our allies. Their cases are being dealt with. It is anticipated that 100 tribunals would be sufficient to complete all the work."

/Forthcoming .....

GERMANY.

BRITISH ZONE (Cont)

Forthcoming trials in the British Zone.

The Commission was informed of the following:

The Hannover Gestapo Case.

This trial was to open on April 9th at Brunswick. The accused Reinhold FLUENNECKE, Kurt RASCHE, Adolf METHFESSEL, Felix ZIESE, Karl WOLTERS, Alfred PEEK are charged with committing a war crime in that they at Seelhorst, Hannover/Dpehren in April 1945, when members of the Hannover Gestapo, were together with Wilhelm HEIDORN, Heinrich JOOST, NONNE, WALTKE and STRIEBING concerned in the killing of allied nationals, internees and prisoners of war.

Rothenburgsort Case.

Jochim STRUCK, Paul WILHELMSSEN and Stanislaus PUSTKOWSKI were to be tried on April 10th 1947 at Hamburg, for being concerned in the ill-treatment of an unknown Allied airman at Hamburg Rothenburgsort on or about June 20th 1944.

Schnabelhuck Case.

Josef GOEDDE was to be tried at Hamburg on April 10th 1947 for being concerned in the ill-treatment of an Allied airman in the vicinity of Sahnabelhuck on November 2nd 1944.

Hannover Ahlem Case.

Kurt KLEBECK, Otto HARDER, Hans HARDEN, Wilhelm DAMMANN and Stephan STREIT were to be tried on April 16th, 1947 at Hamburg on the charge of being concerned in the ill-treatment of Allied national internees of the Concentration Camp at Hannover Ahlem, between November 1944 and April 1945.

Roeschen Case.

Wilhelm SCHOENSTEIN and Wilhelm OPRETZKA are to be tried at Duisberg on or about April 25th. They are charged with being concerned in the killing of a member of the R.A.F. at or near Roeschen, Germany, on November 8th, 1944.

Results of completed trials.

The Commission was informed of the following trial results:

The Blechammer Case. (see No. XXVI, page 7 of this Digest.)

This trial was concluded at Brunswick on March 25th 1947. Former Major General Kurt WOLF was found guilty and sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

The Poitiers Case. (see No. XXVI, page 14 of this Digest)

This trial was concluded at Wuppertal on March 25th 1947. GALLENKAMP and HESTERBERG were sentenced to death by hanging; KOESTEIN to life imprisonment; SCHOENIG to five years imprisonment and BLUMENTRIIT, DETER, TONSHOFF and WEBER were acquitted.

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The Ravensbruck Trial. (see Nos XXIV p.7 and XXV, p.7 of this Digest)

The Manchester Guardian reported from Hamburg (10.4.47) that Carmen MORY, who had been sentenced to death for atrocities at the Ravensbruck women's concentration camp, had committed suicide during the previous day in Hamburg prison by cutting her wrists and bleeding to death. Dr Percy TREITE, chief doctor of the same camp, who had also been sentenced to death, killed himself on 8.4.47.

/RUSSIAN ZONE.....

GERMANY.

RUSSIAN ZONE.

Arrest of former Medical Officer.

Telegraf reported (20.2.47) that Dr. KONITZER, President of the Central Administration in the Soviet zone, was arrested on 19.2.47. It is believed that he is to be held responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Allied prisoners of war. He was a senior medical officer in Dresden during the war and in this capacity was in charge of prisoner of war camps.

I T A L Y.

BRITISH TROOPS IN ITALY.

Trial of Graziani.

The Daily Telegraph reported (29.5.47) that the trial of Marshal GRAZIANI, formerly Mussolini's Chief of Staff, would begin in Rome on June 23rd, 1947.

The Trial of ex-Marshal Kesselring. (see No. XXVI, p.8 of this Digest)

The Times correspondent in a despatch from Rome on the 14th March 1947 stated: "Colonel Halse, the British prosecutor, concluded his five-day cross-examination of KESSELRING this morning by sternly accusing him of having intentionally issued his orders of June, July and August 1944, in such a form as to encourage the German troops to act with the maximum harshness and brutality towards the partisans. KESSELRING replied: "I cannot find the exact expression to define my opinion about that. It is any case completely opposed to the view just expressed by the prosecutor. This accusation has not been proved. I am here before the court like a defenceless man."

"The defending counsel, Dr. LATERNSENER, then questioned KESSELRING on the chief accusations brought by the prosecution. At one point he exhibited his evidence, 'the commandants,' printed in every German soldier's pocket-book, summarizing the 1939 orders of the German Supreme Command. These specified that captured spies and partisans should be brought before courts-martial and not executed."

P O L A N D.

The Trial of Rudolf Hoess. (see No. XXVI, p.10 of this Digest)  
(23.3.47)

The Observer in a report on the trial of Rudolf HOESS then taking place in Warsaw wrote: "The defendant gave his evidence quietly and without apparent strain. He has stated that EICHMANN, a member of HIMMLER's staff, told him that between 6,000,000 and 7,000,000 Jews were to be killed in the camp. Owing to 'shortage of manpower' and equipment HOESS was unable to carry out this gigantic programme. At first he killed all Jews as they arrived, gassing from 10,000 to 20,000 daily. Later some of the able-bodied were spared and made to work."

"The new Premier of Poland, Mr. CYRANKIEWICZ, one of the thousands of the non-Jewish prisoners in Auschwitz has been among the witnesses. "

The Daily Telegraph in a report from Warsaw on 3.4.47 stated that sentence of death was passed on Rudolf HOESS during the previous day by the Polish Supreme

/National .....

P O L A N D.

The Trial of Rudolf Hoess (cont)

National Tribunal. "It was not 4,000,000, only 2,000,000," HOESS claimed before sentence was passed. HOESS was hanged on the 16th April 1947.

Former SS Man Arrested.

Warsaw radio reported (19.3.47) that according to Press reports in Lodz an SS man, a member of the Lodz Philharmonic Orchestra, known by the pseudonym of JAZGUT, had been employed by the orchestra for the last two years. When JAZGUT fainted at a rehearsal and was taken to hospital the doctor found a skull tattooed in his armpit with his number and blood group. JAZGUT was immediately arrested. During the investigations he gave three names, each of which was found to be false. It has now been established that he was one of the spies trained by the Gestapo during the war, who were ordered to remain behind.

S W I T Z E R L A N D.

German expelled from Switzerland.

The Daily Telegraph reported (28.3.47) that the Swiss authorities had expelled Wilhelm von der BEY, former director of I.G. Farben-industrie, as an undesirable alien.

Y U G O S L A V I A.

The Trial of General Oberkamp and other officials.

Belgrade radio reported (27.3.47) that the trial of nine German war criminals, headed by Reichsritter Karl von OBERKAMP, former German Major General and commander of the "Prinz Eugen" division had opened on that day before the Belgrade Military Tribunal. The other defendants also held high positions in the former German Wehrmacht and police. The indictment against General OBERKAMP stated that military units under his command carried out between July 1943 and January 1944 a series of heavy crimes against the civilian population in Serbia and Dalmatia shot a large number of captured members of the National Liberation Party, and plundered entire regions through which they passed. Units of the "Prinz Eugen" division on 11th July 1943 shot 68 persons in the village of Kozutice in Serbia, and 57 persons in the village of Orasje, simultaneously razing this village to the ground. On the occasion of the attack on liberated Trieste units under OBERKAMP's command killed men, women and children. Large numbers of civilians were burned, slaughtered and tortured. The other defendants were accused of committing cruel crimes with their units also. Particularly in Serbia, Lika and Dalmatia. Among the accused were Fritz KIEFER, commander of a camp for Yugoslav internees in Rognan in Norway; Johannes WALTZER, commandant of a Yugoslav prisoner of war camp in Allendorf; and Willy FRIEDRICH, Gestapo man and commandant of the Banjica concentration camp near Belgrade.

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/FAR EAST .....



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THE FAR EAST.

JAPAN.

War Crimes Trials Statistics.

The Times correspondent reported from Tokyo (24.3.47): Up to the end of January, 1,901 Class B. Japanese war criminals suspects had been tried in various Pacific areas, by Allied occupation authorities. The following figures of sentences and acquittals have been officially released:

AUSTRALIA. Tried, 788; sentenced to death, 157; acquitted, 223; imprisoned 408.

BRITAIN. Tried, 701; sentenced to death, 181; acquitted, 70; imprisoned 450.

NETHERLANDS. Tried 91; sentenced to death, 45; acquitted, 7; imprisoned, 39.

FRANCE: Tried, 45; sentenced to death, 12; acquitted, 4; imprisoned, 29.

UNITED STATES: Tried, 276; sentenced to death, 86; acquitted, 10; imprisoned 180.

Members of the International Military Tribunal who are trying 26 Class A Japanese war criminal suspects are concerned at the length of the trials, due to 'long-winded' defences. Expectations that the trials would be over this month have not been fulfilled.

The Trial of Japanese war Criminals.

An Agency message (9.4.47) reported that Shumei IKAWA would not be charged. The Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal decided to drop the indictment after having received medical reports that he had not yet recovered his intelligence and judgment.

SINGAPORE & PACIFIC.

Japanese Generals on Trial. (see No. XXVI, p.12 of this Digest)

The Times correspondent in Singapore cabled (3.4.47): Two Japanese officers, Lieutenant General KAWAMURA and Lieutenant General OISHI, were today sentenced to death by hanging by the Singapore War Crimes court for complicity in the massacres of more than 5,000 Chinese at Singapore in February, 1942. Five other Japanese officers, including Lt. Gen. NISHIMURA, commander of the Imperial Guards Division, were sentenced to penal servitude for life.

The Times correspondent in Rabaul cabled (5.4.47): A military court at Rabaul found Major General HIROTA guilty of war crimes and sentenced him to seven years imprisonment. He was charged with having disregarded his duty as commander to control the men of his command whereby they committed brutal atrocities.