

Nuremberg Trials

Major trials of leading Nazis accused of war crimes. The first Nuremberg Trial was conducted by the International Military Tribunal (IMT), a court made up of eight judges, two from each of the four powers occupying postwar Germany (the United States, Soviet Union, France, and Great Britain). The trial took place in Nuremberg; it lasted from October 18, 1945 until October 1, 1946.

Twenty-two of Nazi Germany's political, military, and economic leaders were put on trial. These included Hitler's deputies Rudolf Hess and Martin Bormann *in absentia*; German air force commander Hermann Goering; army chief Wilhelm Keitel; army chief of operations Alfred Jodl; naval commander Erich Raeder; commander of the navy and Hitler's appointed successor Karl Doenitz; chief of the Security Police Ernst Kaltenbrunner; Minister of the Eastern Occupied Territories Alfred Rosenberg; governor-general of Poland Hans Frank; governor of the Netherlands Arthur Seyss-Inquart; governor of Bohemia and Moravia Konstantin Freiherr von Neurath; Armaments Minister Albert Speer; Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop; Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick; Minister of Economics Hjalmar Schacht; Bank of Germany president Walther Funk; ambassador to Austria and Turkey Franz von Papen; plenipotentiary-general for labor mobilization Fritz Sauckel; *Hitlerjugend* leader Baldur von Schirach; broadcasting head Hans Fritzsche; and Nazi newspaper editor Julius Streicher. These defendants were accused of crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. In addition, the tribunal found that participating in a criminal organization, such as the Gestapo or the SS, was a crime against humanity, and thus declared the Nazi Party leadership, the SS, the SA, and the Gestapo to be criminal organizations.

The IMT found three of the defendants "not guilty," sentenced 12 to death, and the rest to jail. In its verdict, the IMT stressed the persecution of the Jews as a reflection of the Nazis' grave inhumanity.

Twelve subsequent trials were also included under the "Nuremberg Trials" heading. Notable among them were the *Einsatzgruppen* Case (which dealt

with the *Einsatzgruppe* mobile killing units), and the Medical Case (which addressed the brutal medical experiments carried out by the Nazis.) These trials ended in 1949, with the conviction of 177 Nazi criminals. (see also Trials of War Criminals.)