

diese unerbittliche Logik des Lebens in publizistischer Form wiedergeben. Alle wichtigen Auftritte der Ankläger, der Verteidiger und der Angeklagten wurden gefilmt und der Ton synchron aufgenommen. Die Leinwand sollte nicht nur ihre Gesichter und ihre Mimik, sondern auch die lebendige Intonation ihrer Rede bewahren. Das gestattete es, die komplizierte Atmosphäre der Auseinandersetzung wiederzugeben, die während des Nürnberger Prozesses sowohl zwischen den Angeklagten und Anklägern herrschte, als auch zwischen denen, die von Anfang an davon überzeugt waren, dass es für den Faschismus keine Entschuldigung gibt und geben kann und jenen, die einen Weg suchten, um mit ihm auf friedlichem Wege ins Reine zu kommen.

Als ich an dem Film *Das Gericht der Völker* arbeitete, wandte ich mich erstmalig nach dem Kriege den erbeuteten faschistischen Filmdokumenten zu und suchte das notwendige Bildmaterial heraus, das die Verbrechen der Hitlerfaschisten bestätigte. Ich fand Episoden, in denen jene im Glanze vergangener Größe erschienen, die jetzt hinter der eichenen Barriere der Anklagebank saßen. Tausende Meter Filmmaterial habe ich damals durchgesehen, als ich gemeinsam mit der Regisseurin J. Swilowa den Film montierte. Wir folgten dem Gedankengang der Anklage und entwickelten ihn in bildhafter Form. Deshalb flossen in den Film sowohl Aufnahmen ein, die im Gerichtssaal gemacht wurden, als auch Beweise der Verbrechen – Aufnahmen der Kameraleute von der Front.

Nürnberg. Symbol des Völkerrechts gegen internationale Gesetzlosigkeit

by Stuart Schulberg, Chief, Documentary Film Unit Information Services Division, OMGUS

Dieser Text über die Produktionsgeschichte des amerikanischen Dokumentarfilms *Nürnberg und seine Lehre* erschien in der Zeitschrift „Information Bulletin“ Nr. 164 vom 28. Juni 1949 (S. 9-12). „The Information Bulletin is the biweekly magazine of the Office of Military Government for Germany (US) for dissemination of authoritative information concerning the policies, regulations, instructions, operations and activities of Military Government and affiliated organizations.“ Die in Berlin erscheinende Zeitschrift kann somit als offizielles Verlautbarungsblatt der amerikanischen Militärregierung angesehen werden. (jpG)

In Stuttgart, the former Nazi labor-front leader ran a handkerchief over his forehead and said, „You won't believe it, but I was a convinced Nazi until I walked into that theater two hours ago.“

In Karlsruhe, the German general-turned-bookkeeper said, „I used to fool myself into thinking that we army men had kept our hands clean. Now I know we have blood up to our elbows just like the rest of them.“

On a US Army train between Frankfurt and Munich the Bavarian porter said: „It's a good idea to see those Nazi idiots in action again. Maybe next time we'll know better.“

In Berlin, the young daughter of an intellectual said, „I am ashamed to be a German.“

These statements, made to MG¹ officials or German investigators, were prompted by an 80-minute documentary film entitled *Nuremberg – Its Lesson for Today*.²

This motion picture, through original documents and authentic film, shows how the Nazis rose to power and how they wielded that power for 10 mad years. It was produced by the Documentary Film Unit of Motion Picture Branch, Information Services Division, OMGUS,³ a small organization based in a German film studio on the edge of Berlin's Tempelhof airfield.

Organized late in 1947, this Unit is charged with the job of flashing OMGUS reorientation and information policy onto the screens of US Zone and Berlin motion-picture houses. But of all the documentaries so far produced – now totaling 13 – *Nuremberg* is probably the most interesting and certainly the most effective.

Since its opening last November in Stuttgart,⁴ the film has played hundreds of „dates“ up and down the American Zone. Its release in Berlin, where it opened appropriately at the refurbished Sportpalast, scene of many rallies of Nazidom, was postponed until May 31, in the suspicion that 2,200,000 blockaded Berliners already had enough on their minds. However, it proved as big an attraction in Berlin as in the US Zone.

The film has been a resounding success, whether it played a big city, five-show-a-day movie palace or a camp-chair country theater. In Stuttgart opening broke the theater's post-currency-reform attendance record. In Munich, where 50,000 people ultimately saw it, the picture's first run did 90 percent capacity business when the local average for German and foreign entertainment films was about 62 percent.

Only in the cities and towns of northern Bavaria, including Nuremberg itself, was the picture a box office failure; attendance here was about 50 percent lower than in all other areas.

All in all, however, *Nuremberg's* box office record managed to astound old-time German film distributors who, in concert with many MG experts, had predicted empty theaters for what they termed „an atrocity film.“

Critically too, its reception was unexpectedly good. Newspapers everywhere, including northern Bavaria, urged their readers to hurry to the next performance. Radio stations supported the picture just as actively. Nevertheless, it's an old movie axiom that neither ballyhoo nor extravagant reviews will fill the theaters if the word of mouth advertising is negative.

Hardest to measure is the educational success of the film which, of course, is of most interest to Military Government. Individual reactions to the film ranged from titters to emotional collapse. Mainly, however, audiences sat through the picture in stunned silence and then filed out, wordless and disturbed. The statements recorded above indicate the impact the film had on a variety of individuals.

Even the skeptics and the would-be hecklers and the kids caught by the Nazi lure sobered swiftly as the film unwound. And even though a die-hard 20 percent later attacked the film, largely because of Soviet participation in the trial, there is little question that *Nuremberg* accomplished its reorientation mission. According to one ISD⁵ official in Wuerttemberg-Baden, „This film tells the Germans more about Nazism in 80 minutes than we’ve been able to tell them in three years.“

To understand and appreciate German reaction to *Nuremberg*, it is necessary to know something about the contents of the film and the way it was constructed.

The original decision to produce a documentary film on the first Nuremberg war crimes trial was made by ISD (then Information Control Division) officials almost before the verdict was handed down. Although the film was originally envisaged as a four-power production under the auspices of Allied Control Authority, the United States took the initiative very early and eventually the film became an exclusively American project. In January 1947, OMGUS was assisted by the Reorientation Branch, Civil Affairs Division of the Department of the Army in Washington, in securing film technicians and the many films used as source material in the making of *Nuremberg*.

Two experts installed in a special projection room at the Signal Corps Photographic Center at Astoria, Long Island, viewed nearly a million feet of German newsreels, captured German Army and Nazi material, film shot by underground cameramen from Norway to Greece, hundreds of American and foreign documentaries and newsreels dealing with Nazi criminality, and the Signal Corps coverage of the trial itself.

Meanwhile, a film script was being prepared under the guidance of an expert who had been on the US judge’s staff at the Nuremberg trial. The framework for the script was based on the final judgment of the International Military Tribunal. It was found that the original wording of appropriate pleadings and testimonies was too long, complex or technical to be used in its original form. So the script therefore took shape as a straightforward summary of the millions of words spoken at Nuremberg. Final selection of material, however, was limited by the availability of authentic footage screened at Astoria. For example, there seemed no point in including much testimony on SS concentration camp tortures when no authentic film of such crimes could be found to illustrate those charges.

On the other hand, many impressive shots were located and then rejected because they had no bearing on the final verdict. Thus, dramatic footage proving the paramilitary nature of the Hitler Youth was shelved because the prosecution's arguments failed to impress the judges with the relevance of that particular charge. Justice Robert Jackson, who had headed the US prosecution staff, contributed many valuable suggestions to the script's development.

On the basis of a rough draft script, 58,000 feet of film were selected and shipped to Berlin, where the two-man unit, supplemented by German technicians, set up shop at the old UFA film studio in Tempelhof. The search for film was continued from Berlin although, strangely enough, only one strip suitable for inclusion - a 16-mm record of a mobile gas chamber - was uncovered here. A long series of script conferences also began with OMGUS officials since this film involved policy considerations of virtually every division of Military Government.

Policy problems were minor compared to the technical misfortunes. Titles, for example, had to be re-made five times, before the proper materials were found and the special camera was working. The greatest technical difficulty involved the use of original recorded testimony from the trial itself. It was important, if the film's authenticity was to be convincing, that Goering and his colleagues speak their lame lines of defense in their own, well-known voices. Yet the cameramen assigned to photograph the trial had unfortunately failed to catch any parts of the examination or cross-examination included in the final script.

It became necessary to secure the wax recording of the proceedings stored in Nuremberg, to re-record the pertinent words on film and then to synchronize that sound recording with the lip movements of the respective defendants, photographed, as likely as not, as they were uttering some platitudes about their early home life.

ACA⁶ approval was necessary to obtain the records since all archives of the International Military Tribunal had been entrusted to that four-power body after the trial had closed. This approval turned out to be an elusive thing. The Soviets agreed to consider the matter if a complete transcript of the required recordings was delivered to them for study. Many weeks after the original request, the records arrived from Nuremberg. The discs were re-recorded on film in half of one day, and about a month later the meticulous job of „dubbing“ the original voices of the defendants was completed. By early 1948 the last policy and filmic problems were solved and the entire picture finished.

Its structure was simple and consistent with the chronology of the trial: it opened with Justice Jackson's address, followed by Count 1 - Conspiracy to Wage Aggressive Warfare (US count); Count 2 - Crimes Against Peace (British

count); Count 3 & 4 – War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity (Soviet & French counts); examination and cross-examination; final defense statements and prosecution summations, and finally the verdict. Continuity-wise, it ran from the brawling streets of Munich in 1922 to the slaughterhouse of Belsen 1945.

Then production work was followed by a long series of special private screenings before German groups in Berlin and the US Zone. The purpose was to determine the proper approach for distributing and exhibiting the film. At the same time, an English version of *Nuremberg* was circulated to interested agencies of Military Government.

Finally, in November 1948, the film received its premiere in Stuttgart under the supervision of OMG⁷ Wuerttemberg-Baden.

Meanwhile, the Nuremberg film unit was turned into the Documentary Film Unit to remain in Berlin as part of ISD. Other pictures were immediately put into production and slowly the organization grew to include in addition to the two Americans, about 12 permanent German cutters, cameramen and production men.

To date the Unit, in addition to *Nuremberg*, has produced information and reorientation films ranging in subject matter from malaria to militarism. Latest productions include *The Bridge*⁸, a personalized story of the airlift; *Between East and West*⁹, the political saga of Berlin since 1945, and *Made in Germany*¹⁰, a review of Trizone's economic program.

During the blockade of Berlin the unit also turned out a regular special Berlin newsreel, in conjunction with its sister organization, the Munich-based Anglo-American newsreel, „Welt im Film“ (World in Film). This newsreel was produced in German for all the theaters of the American and British Sectors and in English for the British and American Special Service circuit.

¹ Military Government.

² Deutscher Titel: *Nürnberg und seine Lehre*.

³ Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.).

⁴ UA: 21.11.1948, Stuttgart.

⁵ Information Service Division.

⁶ Allied Control Authority.

⁷ Office of Military Government.

⁸ *Die Brücke* (D 1949, R: Stuart Schulberg, 35mm, 478 m).

⁹ *Zwischen Ost und West* (D 1949, R: Stuart Schulberg, 35mm, 592 m).

¹⁰ *Made in Germany* (D 1947, R: L. P. Bachmann, 376 m).