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UWRT 1102 -016

10/27/2015

Weekly Writing #7

International Military Tribunal (IMT) in the Nuremberg Trials

For this week’s writing I selected an article about how the Nuremberg Trials where held by the International Military Tribunal. I liked this article because I think it gives a good explanation of all the aspects related to the IMT during the trials, like who were the leaders, what charges did they use against the defendants and how the verdicts worked out. One thing that got my attention while I was reading this source was that I had a background section for the IMT, which I hadn’t really read a lot about before. In general, this article gives a pretty good idea of how did the trials worked from the legal aspect, which I think is important to consider.

By the time that the Allies decided that the IMT had to take place, there were a lot of opinions expressing that the Nazi criminals should just be executed without going to a trial. As the article read, “…Though some political leaders advocated summary executions instead of trials, eventually the Allies decided to hold an International Military Tribunal. In the words of Cordell Hull, “a condemnation after such a proceeding will meet the judgment of history, so that the Germans will not be able to claim that an admission of war guilt was extracted from them under duress.” …” I think that this is an important point because if we are judging something that is unfair, we must present proof that the defendants should pay for whatever crime they have committed. No one should have the power to punish someone else without a veridical reason. In this manner, this information relates to my inquiry because is the starting point of the trials and I think it gives me a lot of perspective as an inquirer.

To make the IMT trials possible, 24 defendants (major Nazi war criminals) were selected to be judged in the first round. For them, three charges were initially designated. However, they were finally judged on four charges because, as the article claims, “…A fourth charge of conspiracy was added (1) to cover crimes committed under domestic Nazi law before the start of World War II and (2) so that subsequent tribunals would have jurisdiction to prosecute any individual belonging to a proven criminal organization.” This is an important thing because it meant the creation of the four major crimes that are used since the trials until nowadays to charge war criminals in the international law. This relates to my inquiry because it is one of the biggest consequences of the trials and it is important for me as inquirer because I can see every day how these trials affected the world that I live in.

Seeing over the procedures of the Nuremberg trials, and knowing that there were many more trials than only the ones done by the IMT, it is very interesting to realize that justice not always takes place fully. As we know, and as I was reminded while reading my source, “Many war criminals, however, were never brought to trial or punished.” I have read a lot of different stories about where did they go and how they either escaped alive or committed suicide. I think this is important because it reminds us that justice is not always enforced and it relates to my inquiry because is something that greatly affected the society since 1945. Since that time, there have been people trying to hunt down Nazis that might still be around, and I think that this is an important aspect of what not only the trials, but the holocaust itself left us. As an inquirer, this interests me because it gives me new points to where I can extend my research.

Works Cited

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. “International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg.” *Holocaust Encyclopedia, ushmm.com.* n.d. Web. Oct 26th, 2015.