

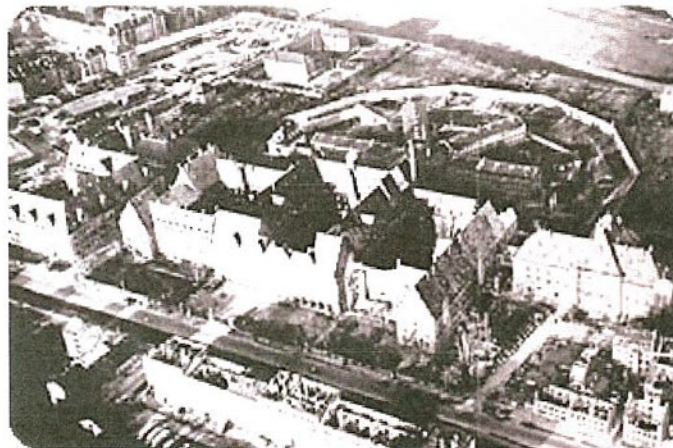
The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials



The following photographs show the court house and room where the war crimes trials were held in Nuremberg following the Second World War.



The first photograph shows the court house. The court room used for the trial is on the top floor, central section with large windows.



A widely held belief is that Nuremberg was chosen as the venue for the trials because it had been the venue for the Nazi party rallies in the 1930s. Staff at the court house advance a different thesis: they contend it was the only court house of sufficient size to host such a trial that was intact at the end of the war. The two theories are not inconsistent. Support for the thesis advanced by the staff at the court house appears in the second photograph. This is a photograph of a photograph displayed within the court house that shows the

court and adjacent prison complex at the end of the war. One can see that it is unscathed. (Nuremberg itself had been destroyed so extensively that there was debate as to whether it was better to rebuild the town on another site, rather than try to rebuild on the original site. The latter option was chosen and the reconstruction of the town has followed closely the pre-war design.)

The third photograph shows the actual court room as it is now. It was remodelled partially for the war crimes trials and has been remodelled again since then. The crucifix is a feature found in other Bavarian court rooms. Obviously, the doctrine of the separation of Church and State is not entrenched in Bavaria in the way that it is here.



Readers may have noticed that images of the trials show defendants seated in the dock wearing sunglasses. This was not some trendy fashion statement! They did this because of the extremely strong fluorescent lighting installed for the hearing. Artificial lighting was required because the windows had been sealed for security reasons. That lighting was strong because the proceedings were filmed.



The fourth photograph is of a photograph displayed within the present Court complex amongst a series of photographs related to the trials and the destruction wrought on Nuremberg by the Allied bombing. Plainly, filing was not a strong point! To the orderly Germans, such an image must reflect poorly on the Allies.

Understandably, that series of photographs did not include a photograph of the dead bodies of the defendants sentenced to death. The matter is mentioned because readers may recall the controversy about Iraqi state television broadcasting images of the moments leading up to the execution of Saddam Hussein at the end of 2006 and, after his execution, of his shroud wrapped body. Rightly or wrongly, there was precedent for publication of the image of his dead body. Following the trials in this Court room, photographs of the dead bodies of the executed defendants appeared in the print media. A sample of the publication is on public display in a museum in Nuremberg.

Andrew Lyons