Suppressed NUREMBERG to Have Long-Overdue U.K. Premiere; Newly-Restored Film Unveils Wednesday, February 22, 2012, in House of Parliament


NUREMBERG documents the 1945-1946 trial of twenty-two of the top Nazi leaders, one of the greatest courtroom dramas of all time. The London Agreement and Charter, signed in August 1945 by the Allies — Great Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and France -- established the juridical blueprint for the trial (formally, the International Military Tribunal), and meshed their various legal codes so that the cases could be prosecuted jointly. The British team was led by Attorneys General Hartley Shawcross and David Maxwell-Fyfe. Lord Geoffrey Lawrence served as president of the Tribunal. He and alternate judge Norman Birkett played key roles in the conduct of the trial and in the deliberations that resulted in verdicts of guilt against nineteen of those indicted. Hermann Goering, along with eleven others, was sentenced to hang, but managed to commit suicide a few hours before his execution. Three men – Franz von Papen, Hjalmar Schacht and Hans Fritsche – were acquitted, but were later tried and found guilty in German courts.

The trial established the “Nuremberg principles” — the foundation for all subsequent trials for crimes against the peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Sir Hartley Shawcross, in his concluding statement to the Tribunal, described the Nuremberg trial as a “landmark in the history of civilization.”

The Attorney General, Dominic Grieve QC MP, comments:

"The Nuremberg Trial was a defining moment in the history of international justice, establishing principles which are still in use today. British prosecutors took a leading role and I am especially proud of the work of two of my predecessors as Attorney General, Sir Hartley Shawcross and Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe. NUREMBERG: ITS LESSON FOR TODAY provides a unique opportunity to hear and see the events of sixty-six years ago as they happened and I am delighted to be able to host its first UK showing."

NUREMBERG shows how the international prosecutors built their cases using the Nazis’ own films and records. A special OSS (Office of Strategic Services) film unit, under the command of movie director John Ford, located and assembled Nazi motion pictures that were shown in the Nuremberg courtroom as evidence. Signal Corps camera teams filmed the courtroom proceedings. U.S. Marine Corps sergeant Stuart Schulberg, a member of that unit and NUREMBERG’s writer/director, combined these elements in his documentary, which was completed for the U.S. Department of War in 1948. It captures the defendants in their own words, admitting only to “certain excesses” and “abuses.”

Although NUREMBERG was intended for an international audience, U.S. Secretary of the Army Kenneth Royall decided, for political reasons, to quash its theatrical release everywhere except in Germany, where it became part of the Allied denazification campaign. Royall’s decision has come to light through the recent discovery of a letter from him to chief U.S. prosecutor Robert
Over the years, the original 35mm negative and underlying soundtracks were lost or destroyed, though a few prints survived. The complete 78-minute film, restored by the filmmaker’s daughter, Sandra Schulberg, with the aid of Josh Waletzky, is now in American movie theaters for the first time. The U.K. premiere is facilitated by U.S. Ambassador-at-Large Stephen J. Rapp, who directs the State Department’s Office of Global Criminal Justice. Ambassador Rapp served as Chief of Prosecution at the Rwanda Tribunal and as the Prosecutor of the Sierra Leone Special Court.

Two symposia are scheduled in connection with the U.K. premiere of NUREMBERG:

-- “London and the Nuremberg Trial,” February 22, 12:00 – 2:00 pm, presented by Middlesex University School of Law at Hendon Town Hall. Speakers include U.S. Ambassador Stephen J. Rapp; University of North Dakota Professor Gregory S. Gordon, a member of the prosecution team at the Rwanda Tribunal; Middlesex University Professor of International Law William Schabas; and Don Ferencz, founder of the Global Institute for the Prevention of Aggression. Open to the public.

-- “Nuremberg: Its Lesson for Today Screening & Roundtable,” Monday, February 27, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, hosted by distinguished human rights barrister Geoffrey Robertson QC at Doughty Street Chambers, and co-sponsored by Middlesex University School of Law. Speakers include Lord Greville Janner, who investigated crimes against humanity and war crimes at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and at Stalag Luft III; Prof. Rob Cryer, University of Birmingham; Dan Plesch, Director of the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy and member of the UN War Crimes Commission; Tom Blackmore, grandson of Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe; and two members of Doughty Street Chambers’ International Criminal Law team: Andrew Cayley, Chief International Co-Prosecutor of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in Cambodia, and Dr Guénaël Mettraux, currently appearing at the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and ICTY, and author of Perspectives on the Nuremberg trial. By invitation only.

CONTACT: Russell Hayes, Senior Press Officer, Office of the Attorney General, +44 (0)20 7371 2484, russell.hayes@attorneygeneral.gsi.gov.uk

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS: Contact Mr. Hayes to schedule interviews with Attorney General Dominic Grieve; U.S. Ambassador Stephen J. Rapp; Nuremberg prosecutor Benjamin Ferencz; Restoration producer Sandra Schulberg (daughter of filmmaker Stuart Schulberg).

PRESS SCREENERS: DVD preview copies for members of the press may be obtained from the office of Russell Hayes.

DOWNLOADABLE PHOTOS AND PRESS NOTES: www.nurembergfilm.org

FILM CREDITS: NUREMBERG: ITS LESSON FOR TODAY [The Schulberg/Waletzky Restoration]


Technical Specs B&W, 35mm, 78 minutes