

Denazification in the American Occupation Zone (1948)

Abstract

This clip is taken from the newsreel series “March of Time,” which was produced in the United States by Time, Inc. These newsreels were shown in movie theaters before a feature film and combined documentary footage with interviews and dramatizations. This clip from 1948 describes the process of denazification in the American occupation zone. It features dramatized scenes portraying hearings before a denazification court and admits to the imperfect nature of the process while expressing the military government's hope in the future generation of Germans for building a new democracy.

Source

/Far more complex and delicate a task than coping with the black market is the job of denazification undertaken by the U.S. military government. On trial or awaiting trial before special German courts are some two million indicted Nazis. Penalties for the guilty range from long terms at hard labor for the worst offenders to fines for those less culpable.

/Though inevitably some have escaped just punishment, the denazification courts have set aside from the German body politic great numbers of Hitler's followers and cleared the way for the democratic experiment the U.S. Army is attempting under the direction of general Lucius D. Clay

/Of adult Germans deeply affected by Nazism little can be expected. Any hope that Germany will ever become a responsible peace-loving nation centers on the very young who have not been corrupted by Hitler's doctrines of treachery and aggression, who may still be taught that Germany can find greatness only through freedom and democracy in peaceful cooperation with the rest of mankind.

Source: “March of Time,” Vol. 13 No. 6, 1948. National Archives and Records Administration. NAID: 23820

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