

Denazification in the British Occupation Zone (1946)

Abstract

This short clip is taken from a British documentary titled *A Defeated People*, which was shot in the British occupation zone in 1945/1946. It was produced by an organization within the British Ministry of Information that was tasked with making short information films and documentaries for the general public in Britain and other English-speaking countries. Depicting the state of Germany and its people after its defeat in the Second World War, the film documents the measures taken by the occupation forces to rebuild the country and outlines the work that lies ahead for the German population if it is to rejoin the international community.

This clip documents the demobilization of German soldiers and the denazification process in the British occupation zone.

Source

/What about the ideas in their heads? They have to be demobilized and got back to work. But let one man or woman who still believes in the Nazi regime or the destiny of the German people to rule the world take office and you have the beginnings of another war. So they are put through a screen. To begin with, selected Germans interrogate them and fill in their demobilization papers.

/Note this meek little man who looks like a clerk or a grocer. Here is his portrait in Luftwaffe uniform. Then all their thumbprints are taken for record, and they are stripped and examined for the SS mark tattooed under the left armpit. Then their past history and character is examined by our intelligence officers, German speaking ex-commandos, and parachutists.

/The majority of Germans get through this close examination and are demobilized. But every so often there appears one who is suspect, or who is wanted, whose papers are too good, or whose answers are not good enough.

/Rejected. Back to the cage.

Source: *A Defeated People*, Orientation film no. 28, United Kingdom, 1946. NARA. NAID: 36087

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