

# GDR Radio Broadcast about the Eichmann Trial (April 11, 1961)

## Abstract

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The journalist Kurt Goldstein, himself a Holocaust survivor, reports on the start of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem for GDR radio in April 1961. This clip features some excerpts from his report. After reading out the charges in detail, he comments on them with references to the numerous other Nazi perpetrators who were not in the dock and many of whom now held high-ranking positions in West German politics, bureaucracy, justice and business. In particular, he mentions Hans Globke, the head of the Chancellery under Adenauer, against whom the GDR judiciary was to conduct a show trial in absentia two years later, in which the FRG was equated with the Nazi regime.

## Source

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/Goldstein: Those were the first minutes of the trial against Adolf Eichmann, which began at 9 o'clock this morning here in Jerusalem. Finally, at 9 o'clock, Adolf Eichmann was led into the courtroom, and after he had taken his seat in his glass box, accompanied by three policemen guarding him, the High Court entered. At its head was Moshe Landau, judge of the Supreme Court. A man who was born in Gdansk in 1912, studied at London University, moved to Israel in 1933 and made his way as a judge here. At his side as a judge is Dr. Benjamin Halevi, born in Weißenfels an der Saale on May 6, 1910, who graduated magna cum laude from Berlin University in 1933, has lived here in Israel since November 1933 and has also worked here as a judge. And finally, the third judge is Mr. Yitzhak Raveh, born in Aurich in East Frisia in 1906, who also studied at the University of Berlin and Halle. The Attorney General is Mr. Gideon Hausner, who was born in Poland in 1915, came to Israel in 1927 and began his development as a lawyer here in Israel at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and at the Law School in Jerusalem.

After Adolf Eichmann had been questioned about his personal details, the reading of the indictment began. And I must tell you, my listeners, that all journalists, without exception, were deeply moved when listening to the indictment, and I myself was so moved that I had to relive everything I had experienced in Auschwitz and Buchenwald in the years 1941 to 45.

Here are the points of the indictment. In the first point it says: In the period from 1939 to 1944, the accused caused the killing of millions of Jews in his capacity at that time as commissioner for the execution of the Nazi plan for the physical extermination of the Jews, known as the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question". Immediately after the outbreak of the Second World War, the defendant was appointed head of a Gestapo department in Berlin, which was tasked with registering, deporting and exterminating the Jews of Germany and the other Axis countries and their occupied territories.

It then goes on to say that in the Axis countries and their occupied territories the accused made use of the German foreign representations in the individual places, in constant consultation with the special departments of the German Foreign Office in Berlin.

This already raises the first question that is posed in the entire indictment: Where are Eichmann's accomplices in the dock? Eichmann sits here alone. But he sits here as a representative of all those who are meant, who are addressed, who are accused, when the indictment repeatedly states at each point of the indictment: "Crimes committed by Eichmann and others". This clearly refers to those diplomats of the Foreign Office, those ambassadors, envoys and legation secretaries who served Hitler yesterday and today hold high positions in the Bonn Foreign Office.

The first point of the indictment culminates in the statement that all these crimes could only have been committed on the basis of the Nuremberg Laws. These laws were made to deprive millions of Jews of

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their human rights and to murder them. I have said before, my listeners and friends, that Adolf Eichmann is in the dock, Eichmann and others are on trial. Who helped write the Nuremberg Laws, who commented on them? There is one empty seat in the dock. It belongs to Dr. Hans Joseph Maria Globke, who provided the basis for the crimes of Eichmann and all the others through his collaboration on the Nuremberg Race Laws, through his commentary on the Race Laws. He is missing from the dock, and this is also openly stated here in the courtroom by numerous journalists from Israel, abroad and also by West German journalists.

Now, finally, the indictment points to such atrocities as were made possible precisely on the basis of the decrees drawn up by Globke. The indictment states, for example: "Since 1942, the accused, together with others" - Globke's name is missing from the indictment, but I will mention it here - "ordered measures whose purpose was to prevent births among the Jews in Germany and in the territories occupied by him. The defendant's instructions to the head of the Jewish Council of Elders in the Theresienstadt concentration camp from 1943 to 44 were concerning the prohibition of births in the camp and the interruption of pregnancy by artificial abortion in all cases and at all stages of pregnancy".

After the indictment had been read, Dr. Servatius rose to challenge the judges as biased. He explained that the disqualification of a judge could arise if a judge himself or a member of his family was injured by the acts alleged in the indictment. Such a presumption is obvious, he said. It arises from the fact that the entire Jewish people were involved in the catastrophe of the extermination. And he demanded that either a German or a neutral court be formed. The simple question arises: who should sit in judgment of Eichmann? Were not the entire German people, were not all the peoples of Europe affected by the crimes of Hitler, Himmler and Göring, Speidel and Heusinger, the "Panzer Meyer" [Kurt Meyer] and Kesselring, Ramcke and what they were all called, were not all peoples affected by their crimes?

Certainly, there was a small circle that was not affected. These were the war criminals themselves, whether they had military ranks or served Hitler in the judiciary, whether their names were Lautz or Schlegelberger. It may be Dr. Dallinger, who yesterday worked in the Nazi Reich Ministry of Justice and today has transferred to the Federal Ministry of Justice in Bonn as a Ministerialrat. It may be a senior public prosecutor Berner from Karlsruhe, a Dr. Stumpf from the Federal Labour Court in Kassel or a Senate Councillor Krefeld from the Senate Administration for Justice in West Berlin, all of whom were in the Nazi Reich Ministry of Justice yesterday and today hold responsible posts in the Bonn judiciary.

Source: SWR2 Archivradio

<https://www.ardaudiothek.de/episode/archivradio-geschichte-im-original/der-eichmann-prozess-beginnt-in-jerusalem/swr2/88002720/>

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