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Editors Viewing Atrocities Urge Full Punishment

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PARIS, May 5.—(INS)—Eighteen editors who visited German prison camps at the request of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower Saturday night unanimously stated that the evidence of nazi war cruelty is overwhelming.

They declared that the entire German nation must share in the responsibility for the host of crimes, and that nazi party leaders, the members of the German general staff, all party office holders, members of the gestapo and the special SS corps must be indicted as war criminals and punished.

Following is the editors' announcement:

"This statement is issued by the editors who came to the European theater of operations through the personal invitations of Gen. Eisenhower to see for themselves conditions in German prison camps over-run by the allies.

"This delegation of newspaper and magazine editors was brought to Europe at the suggestion of Gen. Eisenhower to investigate reports of German atrocities.

"We have visited and spent considerable time investigating prison camps at Buchenwald and Dachau. We have interviewed recently-freed political prisoners, slave laborers and civilians of many nationalities. We have studied a great mass of documents covering the German occupation of France which contained photographic evidence and testimony taken in many places and painstakingly authenticated with the sworn statements of witnesses and victims.

"The conclusion is inescapable that the nazis had a master plan for their political prison camps. That plan was based upon a policy of calculated and organized brutality. The evidence we have seen is not a mere assembling of local or unassociated incidents. It is convincing proof that brutality was the basic nazi system and method.

"This brutality took different forms in different places and with different groups. The basic pattern varied little.

"Actual nazi methods ran the gamut from deliberate starvation and routine beatings to sadistic tortures too horrible and too perverted to be publicly described. Murder was a commonplace.

"Prisoners whose only crime was that they disagreed or were suspected of disagreeing with the nazi philosophy were treated with uniform cruelty. When death came, as to multiplied thousands of them it did, it must have been a relief from worse than death.

"By these tortures most of the Jews in prison camps had already been destroyed. After the Jews, the most cruelly treated victims were the Russians and the Poles.

"To the basic policy of brutality toward political prisoners there were, however, no significant exceptions.

"This we believe is the inexorable consequence of the whole nazi-German philosophy. By this philosophy and the cunning and persistence with which it was propagated the German mind became contaminated and diseased.

"For these crimes the German people cannot be allowed to escape their share of the responsibility. Just punishment must be meted out to the outstanding party leaders, and the German general staff, to party office-holders, to all members of the gestapo, all members of the SS. Simple justice and the future peace of the world require that all these, by virtue of their position, be indicted as war criminals.

"In punishing these crimes the historic principle of individual and personal responsibility must be preserved and all those responsible for these atrocities must be punished in accord with the accepted laws of civilized nations.

"We strongly urge that United Nations policy in regard to war criminals be speedily agreed to and the war crimes commission speedily empowered to put those policies into action.

"As we witness the collapse of the nazis' experiment in ruthlessness and totalitarianism, we are more than ever convinced that there can be no peace on earth until the right of the earth's peoples to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is recognized and protected under law.

"Signed by:

"Julius Ochs Adler, New York Times; Malcolm Bingay, Detroit Free Press; Amon Carter, Fort Worth Star - Telegram; Norman Chandler, Los Angeles Times; William L. Chenery, Collier's; E. Z. Dimitman, Chicago Sun; John Randolph Hearst, Hearst newspapers; Ben Hibbs, Saturday Evening Post; Stanley High, Reader's Digest; Ben McKelway, Washington Star; William I. Nichols, This Week magazine; L. K. Nicholson, New Orleans Times - Picayune; Joseph Pulitzer, St. Louis Post-Dispatch; Gideon Seymour, Minneapolis Star-Journal; Duke Shoop, Kansas City Star; Beverly W. Smith, American magazine; Walker Stone, Scripps-Howard newspaper alliance; M. E. Walter, Houston Chronicle."