

The Nuremberg Interviews - Conversations with the Defendants and Witnesses conducted by Leon Goldensohn. Edited and Introduced by Robert Gellately. Pimlico 2006.

In spite of the enormity of the crimes they have considered, the Bosnian and Rwandan war crime courts have never captured the popular imagination, or carried the international impact of the Nuremberg tribunal established after the Second World War by the victorious allies.

At Nuremberg a host of major Nazis, and lesser but no less murderous acolytes, were tried by a Russian, English, French and American bench, and many were sentenced to death and later hanged. Although there has been extensive coverage of the court itself, there has been less about the actual defendants at what was for most of them the premature end of their lives.

The Nuremberg Interviews contains a digest of interviews carried out by Dr Leon Goldensohn, an American army psychiatrist, with the major defendants, as well as with the lesser officials who played such a vital role in the machinery of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich. Here are interviews with, inter alia, Goering, Ribbentrop, Rosenberg and Streicher as well as Generals such as Jodl, Keitel and Kesselring.

Most of the interviews contain the predictable denials, self-delusion, and almost - were they not so serious - risible claims of ignorance of the Holocaust, but occasionally there is material that surprises and chills, as with the notes on Goldensohn's meetings with Julius Streicher and Oswald Pohl, a generally little known SS man who was a very senior Nazi official.

This collection of notes, expertly edited by Professor Gellately, is not only a fascinating testimony to the skill and work of Leo Goldensohn, who died in 1961, but a vital addition to the corpus of material on the Second World War shedding fresh light on the thoughts and actions of some of its most notorious protagonists.

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