Teaching Pack



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Introduction

Building a New Germany: Denazification and Political Re-education, 1944–1948, is a collection of documents from the UK Foreign Office records held at The National Archives (UK). It explores the policies adopted by the British authorities towards the end of the Second World War and in the immediate post-war period as they sought to re-educate German soldiers and civilians and create a freer, more democratic, and thoroughly "denazified" society from the ruins of the Third Reich.

The documents included within this teaching pack represent a tiny sample of the material in the collection at large. They touch upon the early decisions to embark on a denazification and re-education programme, some of the resources utilised as part of this process, and the responses of the German people involved. The activities contained within this teaching pack could easily take around **30–40 minutes**, though the exact duration will depend on reading time and the breadth and depth of accompanying discussion.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand British attitudes towards the Third Reich and their policies on how to handle the future of Germany as the war came to an end.

2. Explore the different techniques used in re-education programmes and how these relate to ideas such as indoctrination and "brainwashing".

3. Investigate how German prisoners of war (POWs) and civilians responded to the denazification process and what its longer-term legacies were.



Historical Background and Context

Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in Germany in January 1933. In the years that followed they built a powerful regime, which won over many German people through a mixture of practical successes, political indoctrination, targeted censorship, fear and intimidation, and ideological infiltration throughout the public and private spheres.

In 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, triggering the outbreak of the Second World War. By 1942, they were opposed by a powerful alliance, led by Britain, the Soviet Union, and the USA. Slowly and inexorably, Allied forces rolled back Nazi domination in Europe and Africa, taking large numbers of prisoners of war along the way.

As the end of the war drew near, and Allied victory appeared all but certain, the Allies began to consider what to do with defeated Germany. Haunted by the failures of the peace-making process at the end of the First World War, their top priority was to ensure that a resurgent Germany would not, or could not, threaten peace in Europe again.



SOURCE ONE

Source Intro

This memorandum was prepared by staff in the Political Warfare Executive (overseen by the Foreign Office) and the Ministry of Information. It was submitted to the War Cabinet, the highest policy-making body in Britain at that time, and used to secure their support for a re-education programme. This was forthcoming on 18 September 1944.

Source

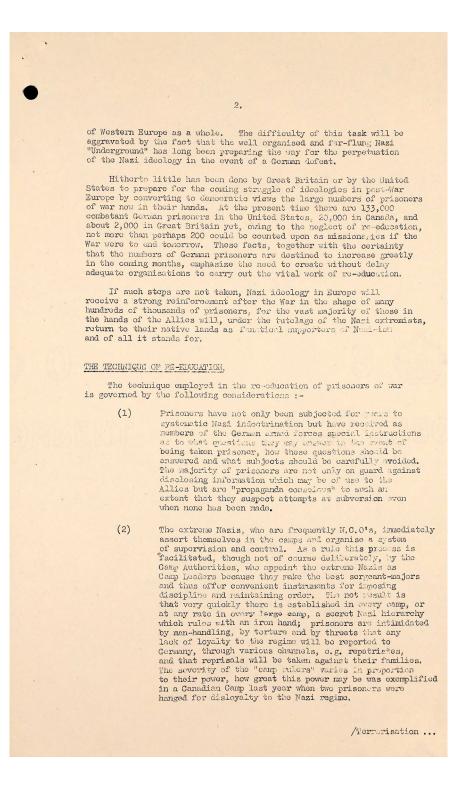
"The Re-education of Prisoners of War", 1944.

FO 9/39/445, images 10-14.

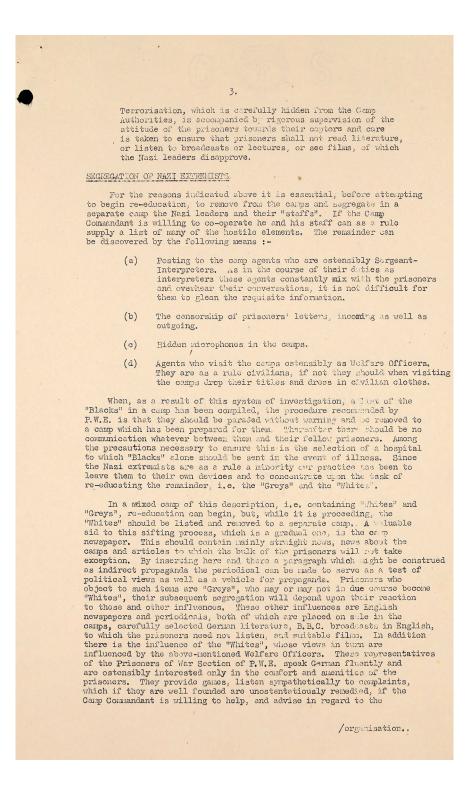


pit -		
•	Ref. P(G)10.	<u>SECRET.</u>
		THE RE-EDUCATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR.
	of German p short-term or partial can be so u aim - is to	are two important aims to be achieved by the re-education risoners of war. The first, which may be described as the aim, is to assist the allied war effort by using converts, converts, as instruments of political warfare; how they sed is explained more fully below. The second - the long-term ensure that as many as possible of the prisoners shall ermany or Austria after the War as pro-Allied advocates of ideals.
-	THE SHORT-T	ERM AIM.
	Experie for the fol: war effort	ence has shown that the re-education of prisoners of war can, lowing reasons, make an important contribution to the Allied :-
-	(1)	By providing the means to spread the belief in enemy countries that our prisoners of war are well treated. This belief not only encourages enemy troops to surronder when they are hard pressed but, because it tends to discount Axis home propaganda which maintains that the only alternative to victory is doom, helps to werken the will to resist of the enemy peoples.
		The belief that we treat our prisoners kindly, with its implication that the allies will not be ruthless in victory, will also be spread by repatriated prisoners (when exchanges take place), provided that those whe aro repatriated have not only been well treated but, because of re-education, are no longer Nazi or Fascist extremists.
	(2)	By providing the means to increase the numbers of listeners to our broadcasts in enemy countries. This is secured by inviting prisoners to broadcast messages to their relatives stating that they are in good health and well treated. The Germans employed such "listeners' bait" with considerable success after Dunkirk.
	(3)	By providing intelligence, particularly the kind of information which is required for the purposes of political warfare.
	(4-)	By subversive broadcasts voluntarily given by prisoners who are opposed to the Nazi or Fascist regimes. In this connection it should be noted that such broadcasts can be very effective even if they are anonymous, since the prisoner can, by referring to details which could not well be known to the Allies, convince his listeners that the speaker is in fact an anti-Nazi or anti-Pascist prisoner of war.
	(5)	By providing personnel who, because they are anti-Nazi or anti-Fascist, volunteer for secret service work with the Allies.
	THE LONG-TER	M AIM.
	a most diffi- long years of	ermany has been defeated the Allies will be confronted with oult problem namely, how to counteract the results of the f intensive Nazi indectrination of the populations not only nd Austria but also, though to a lessor extent, of those
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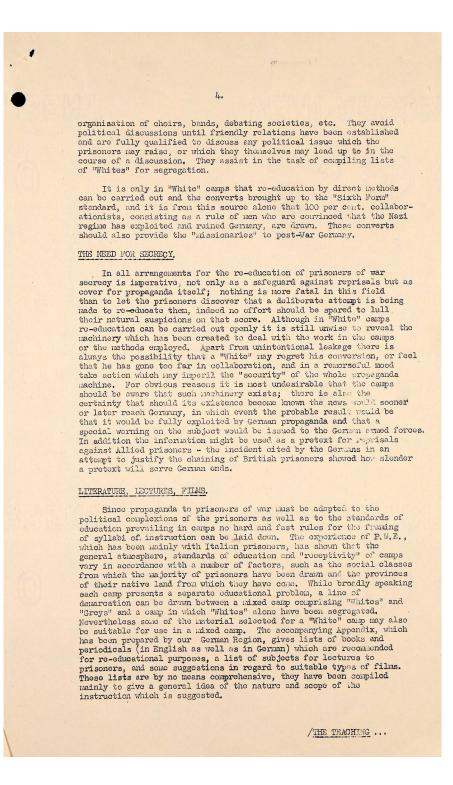




BRITISH ONLINE ARCHIVES



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5. THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH. Experience, particularly with the 90,000 Italian prisoners of Experience, particularly with the 90,000 Italian prisoners of war in India, has proved that instruction in the English language is, as might be expected, a most valuable aid in the task of re-education. Since the quickest method of gaining a working knowledge of the language is to learn "Basic English" P.W.E. concentrated upon instruction in this. The lessons were not given free of charge as it was thought preferable that the prisoners should regard them as a as a privilege, which would be more highly prized if they paid for it themselves. This plan proved to be so successful that progress was soon hampered by a lack of teachers and, at a later stage, it was found necessary to call for the assistance of the more advanced pupils. THE CO-OPERATION OF THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES. While success in the re-education of prisoners of war depends While success in the re-education of prisoners of war depends upon the creation of an organisation comprising an adequate staff of trained agents, whose watchwords should be "secrecy, subilety and segregation", and the continual adaptation of propaganda to the political complexions and standards of education of the prisoners, progress will be very slow unless the full co-operation of the military authorities who are in charge of the prisoners can be secured. Nothing is to be gained by blinking the fact that lack of this co-operation is the greatest handlap to the difficult task of re-education. When it is not forthcoming, and it is solden forthcoming in the necessary degree, the reasons are :-(1) Failure on the part of the military authorities to grasp the vital importance of re-education. (2) That the requirements of re-education are apt to aggravate That the requirements of re-concaron are apt to aggravity the difficulties of camp administration. For exactle, the main task of a Camp Commandant is to onsure thus the prisoners carry out the work - usually agricultural labour -upon which they are employed. For this purpose that prisoners are formed into working parties, each under its own leader, who is responsible for supervision and discipline. From the Camp Commandant's point of view the best leader is obviously a tough Nazi N.C.O.; to dispense with him may entail less discipline and, consequently, less work, and perhaps more trouble in the camp. The segregation of prisoners in accordance with their political views must inevitably interfere, to some extent, with the smooth working of the system; and so also must the continual sifting of prisoners which the propagandist demands. It is difficult to convince the military authorities that in the long run re-education will pay, even in terms of labour, since a friendly worker will not only get through more work than an unfriendly worker but may be trusted not Hole work than an unifically worker but may be writted not to resort to "cai canny" methods or to sabotage. Mor does the argument that a "convert" will carry out skilled labour or war work which a hostile prisoner will refuse to do, carry any weight, although in India P.W.E. was instrumental in raising two battalions of skilled workers from among the Italian prisoners. These converts were released and voluntarily enlisted in a special branch of the British Pioneer Corma. Pioneer Corps. Since the co-operation of the military authorities, and of the Camp Commandants in particular, is indispensable, it is suggested that action should be taken on a high level, preferably on a ministerial level, to explain the political importance of re-education to the authorities concerned. In addition it would seem desirable that their instructions should include directions as to the facilities which should be granted for re-educational work inside the camps. 26th May, 1944.



Questions for Discussion

- 1. Why did the British authorities seek to launch a re-education programme for German prisoners of war?
- 2. How necessary was this objective? How realistic was it?
- 3. What can this document tell us about British concerns and priorities as they looked ahead to the end of the war and the period to follow?



SOURCE TWO

Source Intro

The headquarters of the British re-education programme was at Wilton Park, a country house in Buckinghamshire, which had been an interrogation centre for captured senior Nazis during the war. In January 1945, the first re-education course was launched there, delivered to a handpicked cohort of German prisoners of war. The document below contains the opening address, given by Major-General Kenneth Strong, Director-General of the Political Intelligence Department (successor to the Political Warfare Executive), the agency responsible for the programme.

The address was originally written and given in German, which Major-General Strong spoke well. The document below is a translation.

Source

Opening Address Delivered by Major-General Kenneth Strong, 19 January 1945.

FO 939/214, images 37-44.



Franslation of the address given in German by Major-General Strong, C.B., O.B.E Director General of the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office to the Ps/W assembled for the first course at the P.I.D. German P/W Training Centre - Wilton Park. - 17 M. January 19×5^{-1}

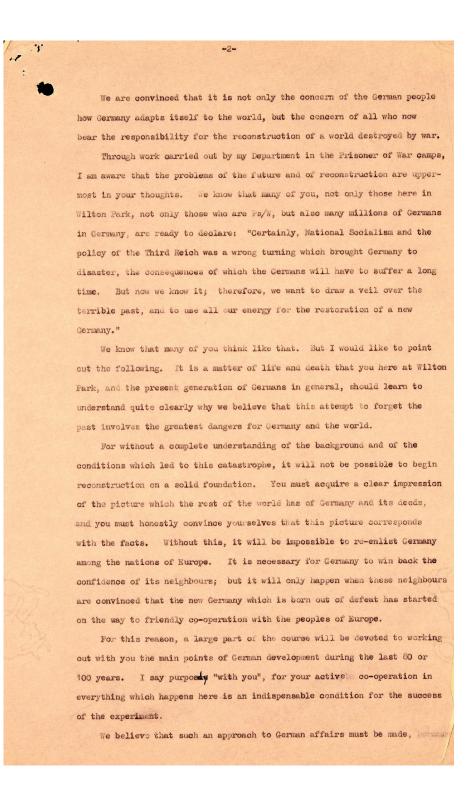
As Director General and Head of a Department of the Foreign Office dealing with prisoners of war, I declare Wilton Park to be open and bid you all welcome.

The work is to be undertaken in Wilton Park is an experiment that has no precedent in previous war or post-war periods. It is now recognised by mankind that the internal structure of a country and its spiritual and political constitution is of direct interest to other countries, and that it is no longer possible for nations to live beside each other if their ideologies and conceptions of history are fundamentally irreconcilable, without such a state of affairs leading to friction and ultimately to war with its terrible consequences.

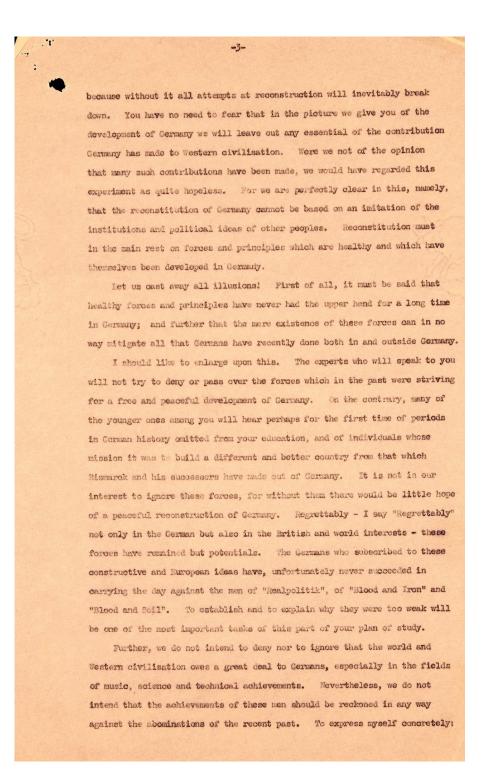
We believe that an attempt must be made to bridge the gap that exists in the trends of thought between victor and wanquished. We believe that this can be a most important contribution towards future good relations between Germany and those countries which were compelled to oppose the policy of the Third Reich with force, and to overthrow it. We hope that this attempt to bridge the gap will assist to build up, within a well-ordered social and economic framework, a peaceful and co-operative Europe.

Here is the answer to the question which so many of you will have asked on arrival at Wilton Park. Why is Britain concerning herself at all about us and the way we think? What are British intentions? My introductory words have already given you the reasons why we are undertaking this experiment. Let us be clear about this from the start: in all its essentials it is an experiment.

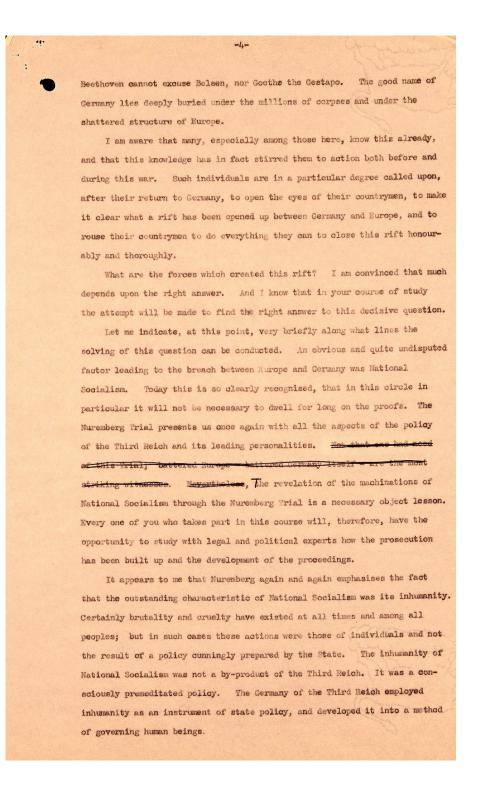














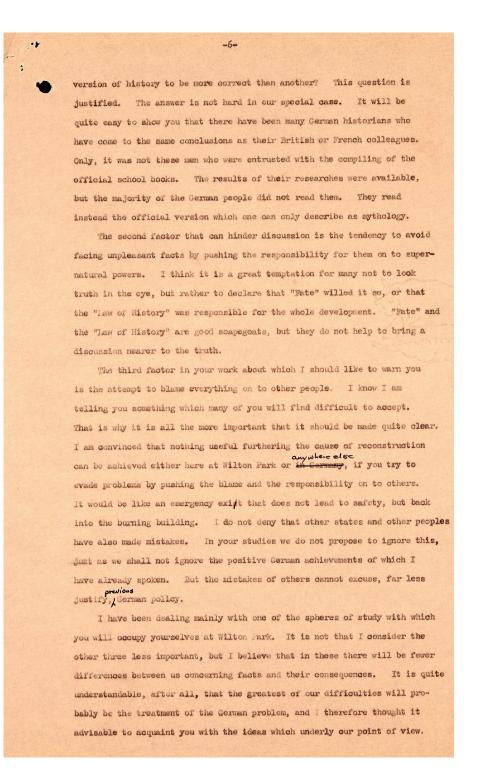
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I think it is important to have this out: for the full significance of this policy and in particular its relation to the future of Germany may perhaps otherwise never be fully appreciated, even by those who are ready to agree in the main that this was part of National Socialism. But it would be completely erroneous to think that the reason for the separating of Cermany from Europe is to be found in National Socialism. This is a problem with which English public opinion was very concerned during the war, and in your course of study an attempt will be made to deal with it. We are convinced that it is not National Socialism alone that is responsible for the catastrophe, but also those German circles which helped National Socialism to power; namely, the supporters of that devilish type of policy which, since Bismarck, has borne the name of Realpolitik. It was this policy which tried, internally as well as externally, to keep in power a form of society which had become obsolete and impossible, using all and every means to do so, including war and dictatorship. Here in my opinion lies a very important field of activity for Wilton Park. Today I will not say anything more detailed on the subject, but to put it in a nutshell I would remind those of you who know Berlin what struck me during my tour of duty there. It seemed to me to be not without symbolical meaning that the Bismarck-Strasse led, via the Kaiserdamm, to the Adolf Hitler Platz.

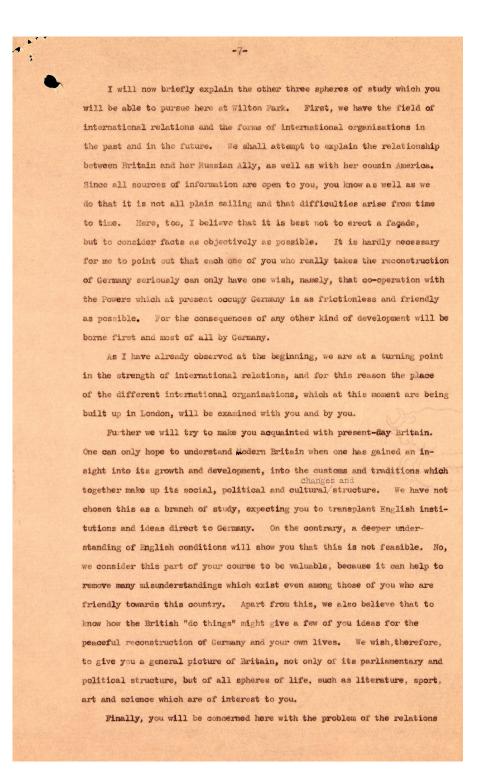
You have already been told the sphere in which the work here will be conducted. You will not only listen to lectures, but after every lecture you will have the opportunity of asking questions and of taking part in the subsequent discussion. It seems important to me - especially in connection with the problems which I have just mentioned - to refer to three matters which could be extremely obstructive in your discussions, and even rob them completely of their value.

The first is what I would call the distortion of history and the creation of myths. The majority of you, not only those who have grown up since 1933, but also those who were at school before or after the first World War, have imbibed an official version of history which has very little to do with reality and truth. I appreciate, of course, that it is impossible to measure historical truth objectively, as one can measure reactions in chemistry or physics. How then is it possible to declare a certain

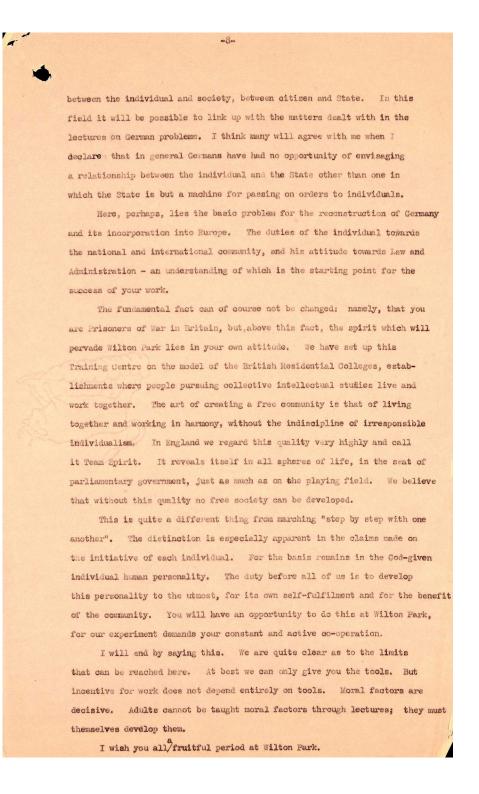














Questions for Discussion

- 1. What is the tone of the address? What does it suggest about the spirit and character of the re-education programme?
- 2. How do you think this address would have been received by an audience of German prisoners of war?
- 3. What does the source tell us about British attitudes to the Third Reich and Nazi ideology more widely?



SOURCE THREE

Source Intro

As Allied troops moved through Germany in 1945, they discovered evidence of Nazi atrocities, most notably the concentration and extermination camps. A British film crew was dispatched to make a documentary about these camps which did not shy away from showing the horrors, including piles of corpses and footage of emaciated and tortured survivors. This film was used in a number of re-education contexts: it was shown in German cinemas (with local people marched in at gunpoint to watch) and it was also screened in prisoner of war camps. The document below details the responses from prisoners of war in a camp in Egypt, after seeing the film, in July 1945.

Source

"Excerpts from [POWs'] letters showing the reaction to the German Concentration Camp Atrocities Film during the 1st week of showing", 1945.

FO 939/72, images 26-31.



	- 1 - A. Fix 5 at 12 count
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	EXCERPTS FROM PS/W LETTERS SHOWING THE REACTION TO THE GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMP ATROCITIES FILM DURING THE 1ST WEEK OF SHOWING
elicite	Im was shown to 379 F/W Camp from July 9th to July 16th. and it d 190 letters in reaction to it. Herwith excerpts from about
CAMP 379	hem, which are typical of the rest.
Cage 5.	
(SGD) KLAAPA	As good soldiers we do not wish to have anything to do with men who ordered or committed such cruelties.
Cage 13	
KRAUSE Hugo (184395)	I knew KZs existed but after having seen the film I feel deeply ashamed to have fought for such a regime.
MINNER W. (184396)	I have but one wish: the guilty must be duly punished.
WIRZ P. (184660)	I could never think such things were possible but I believe the film to be true.
KRAUSE H.(184395) (185729), MEYER (/PAUSE F.(188556), , SCHNARRE Julius (185521), HEAPT (184986), FARPEN 181398), HAAK 185728) - they all expressed: "we deeply regret to have fought for such ideas.
DREYER (182958)	I am very young - 19 years old - I cannot understand things shown on the film.
NEDLETZ	I know it is true, I have seen men who have lived inside KZ
MUELT IN	I know it is true because men I know were there - never returned.
STRAHL (181921)	We never thought such things could happen in Germany.
DORRER (185731)	It is good for every German to see the film
GABRIEL J. (186275)	It is only now since Germany is brought down to a deep misery that her people begin to see the truth.
Cage 16.	
TENT 32	We, Fs/W out in the desert hope that a new Germany will arise from the ruins in which fate has justly thrown her to-day.
TENT 33.	We are filled with shame to see what we have fought for and to which end our comrades have sacrificed their lives.
TENT 34	"down with Nazism - long live democracies".
"E. SCH."	I am glad the KZ no longer exist. When I go back I shall work for a new Germany in which there will never be another KZ.
ZACHEND Heinz	Now that I have seen the film I denounce the Nazi Regime for ever.
(Unsigned)	The film has torn to shreds the veil of Goebbels propaganda.
REMYCH (?)	We, Germans, hope that the mighty allies will restore our Fatherland and help her to recover from the present desolation.
SUESSMUTE F. (182136)	We feel we cannot agree that there existed such a large number of KZs. We also feel that the film is showing rather exceptional cases. Thus, I am afraid this film will give the world a wrong picture of what was really going on inside Germany. This point of view is shared by practically all of us.
TENT 36. (SGD) WILHELM Lois	We are deeply moved by what we have just seen. We dare not say more because of the "youth" in our tent.



	-2-	Sec. P
CAGE 28.		
WAGNER 0. (226929)	The film is a faithful picture of the natural consequences of the Nazi Regime.	
VIEHBOE CK J. (28622)	The leaders of the political parties and not the German people should be made responsible for the crimes shown in the film.	
MILLER A. (227154)	The world will never forget the immeasurable guilt of the German people.	
NEWMANN P. (187120)	The part of the film that impressed me most was the map showing a large number of spots - centres of crucities and murders - and these in a country considered highly cultured and civilized.	
NELLESSER H. (156657)	I cannot accept that every one of us Germans should feel guilty for what was going on in KZs. Many of us thought and believed that immates of these camps deserved punishment because they were politically dangerous Those who came out alive did not speak for fear of the death penalty. We must remember there were similar camps in Cayenne, Siberia, and during the Boer War At any rate 1 maintain that the German nation as a whole should not be made responsible.	
CACE 29.		
BURNHARD Valentir (227159)	1 The film shows the true face of the Nazi regime. Such a disgrace should not be attributed to the entire German nation. Let us hope that these pictures will serve to convert the very last believer in Nazism.	
EGGERT R. (109533)	Men who underwent such unspeakable tortures because they have believed in personal freedom, these men we should consider our true forefathers.	
GRDA1 (190533)	We must all strive to prevent such happenings taking place in our country again.	
HUBUSCH P.	as a soldier I am profoundly shocked by the knowledge of such atrocities We must all curse men responsible for such acts.	
MAISER G. (189070)	We all remember how shocked we were at the cruelties committed in the forests of Matyn, but a few years later we have to look at pictures which by far surpass everything henctofore seen or heard, anywhere in the world. To atone, in a certain measure at least, we must plodge ourselves that the martyrdom of so many shall not be in vain.	
KAPIE F. (222612)	We thank the Allies for incarcerating and punishing the oriminals responsible for the existence of the Kzs.	
KOECHE G. (185786)	Pictures of utter horror and bestiality - and to think that it took place in a country of the highest culture! Such is the consequence of Nationalsozialismus Each one who took an active part in that regime must be duly punished. The majority of Ps/W in fact the majority of Germans who see this film must be convinced new that the last dictatorship was a great curse At last the German people are free from Goebbel's propaganda, free to think for theaselves.	
KOTTIAS (183674)	Not one man in our tent (Zelt 33) could have thought it possible for such horrors ever to take place.	
NOGIA P. (189759)	Not a processing film but the bare truth Everyone of us who gave his vote to these murderers bears full responsibility for such bestialities.	
MONNERES H. (189279)	. I an only 25 years old and during this war I have seen many ugly things but no horrors to compare with those that provailed in these unfortunate camps and which were performed by German men and women: Words fail me to express fully my feelings of utter disgust. I was ence proud to be a German, but since I have seen the film I feel I must lower my eyes in deepest shame before God and Mankind.	



CAGE 29 (cont).
"F.R."(OFZ)	during the last six years the German soldier has seen ever possible kind of death but what this film unrolled before our of was too much for the hardest among us.
RODLE. (190246)	for the sake of our future we must endeavour to prevent a repetition of such doeds through a better political education.
SIEG H.E. IFZ (28541)	I have seen men who had marks of this inhuman treatment on the bodies. They are dumb witnesses of these unforgettable crimes should be known to all those who still maintain the atrocities film is but propagandaWe should consider the Allico Nation not as oppressors but as true liberators we must abandon a hatred and all war thoughts and give our full co-operation towards the world's peace.
VIRF H.(?)	In spite of prevailing difficulties at the present moment or ought to consider ourselves as most fortunate to be free at lay from this clique which stood lower than the wild beast.
METTE S.(UFZ)	there should never be another Hitler in the history of Germ
SCHWANDA K. (aus Wien)	the film held nothing for me as I lived inside KZ and my be is covered with marks of the crueltics. I could write a book about it.
CACE 32.	
Amin.	In our group there are men who have never heard of KZs befor The showing of the film is sure to be of a very great education value for such specific cases in particular. Now they ask questions and learn.
KALUSA K. (107135)	We shall never forget what Mazis looked like. There is a great deal of suffering awaiting us but let us face it and accept it an incentive in our fight against fascism.
ELMUT P. (180300)	to us anti-fascists this film will give strength to fight Nazism until our last breath.
N.PAUSENWAG.	men, women and children have suffered because they believed in a different, a better idea.
MENT 13.	the film left us speechless for a long while. Later in the night we all had the same thought: to de all in our power in o to repair the evil committed by these murderers in charge of K
WENZEL K. (186935)	I have lived in the horror camps, therefore the film broug nothing new to me. One thing should be borne in mind however: it was just a handful of criminals and not the German people an whole who should be held responsible.
LORENZv.der ring.	it would be wrong to condemn the whole of the German nation as among us there are many who fought against Nazism and have experienced themselves the horrors shown on the film.
FUHRMANN K. (125194)	It is not true that we Germans did not know of KZs existence only the Gestape was far too dangerous in these days. It is up every German to help the Allies in their search of the really responsible ones who must not escape the due punishment.

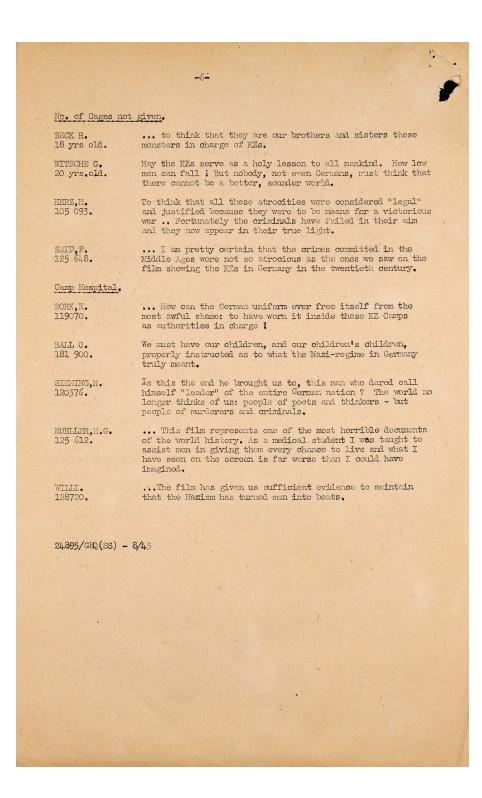


-4-CAGE 34. ... Should one in the course of rebuilding of Germany come across Nazi-minded people, these should be handed over immediately to the FUSS B (054804) Control Commissioners. KIRSCHNER K. ... Before condemning the entire German nation one should remember German anti-fascists who fought in Spain and who were later delivered to the Nazis by Hitler's France. These were great men and martyrs and one must remember them and their exploits before condemning the whole of the German nation. DREWS K(UFZ) Very few Germans knew what was going on in KZs therefore it is difficult to accept the statement that every one of them should be made responsible. RETZ F. ... one question: How is it that these KZ criminals are still alive and living under better conditions, while we, their bitterest enemies, are still kept as Ps/W? Have we not given sufficient proof of our anti-fascist ideas? Why cant we be free and help clean (068829)up Germany to the last Nazi? RMBRUSTER A.... I believe the film should be shown over and over again in the . (188986) cages where the opinion is divided. ... If I am to say anything I would like to express the wish that the guilty ones should be punished by being sent to the desert to build and mend roads - with very little water, very little bread. HERMANN B. a soldier. KLAUSNER B. ... whether we know about KZ or not must we, and only we Germans (123025) be made responsible? What about the rest of the world. Just because Napoleon behaved very much in the same way as Hitler did has anybody ever considered condemning the entire French nation? ... We all knew the two letters: KZ but could never imagine what they truly stood for ! not until we had seen the film. BORDTKE E. (175313) ... things we have seen on the film may fill us with shame; we behind the barbed wire can judge the difference of our guards and these in charge of KZs. BUTTMER W. FLACH W. The film explained the real meaning of the Mational-Socialism (126736) better than any words ever could. HADMELRATH H.... I must repudiate the statement: every German is responsible (104259) for the existenc of the Kzs. I belonged to the Boys Scouts' organisation until 1933. After it ceased to exist I became an active anti-nazi. I knew of the KZ but its whole truth I saw only on the film. HUTTERER X. ... I belong to a catholic family and as such I have experimed (186299). great hardships ... Hitler's youth laughed at and mocked everything Christian. CAGE 35. SCHIDDER W..... About 90% of people in cage 35 are just as ignorant about (185033) politics as an ordinary schoolchild. They have no notions whatsoever about the rights or duties of a citizen. Should England cannestly desire peace and safety, we, the Anti-Nazis should be allowed to deal with the Mazis until the last of them disappears from this world. Also I propose to send Nazi girls to wait on the black soldiers or work on farms in Egypt, all over Africa and India. No less than 10,000 of these proud maids should be put to work for ton whole years and without pay.
N.B. (the rest of the letter is a petition for the release from the camp). camp).



.11 -5-... In my opinion the film does not give a complete picture of what was really going on inside KZs. It ought to have shown not only the instruments of tortures but also how the immates endured them, NNS 0. The Instruments of cortures out also how the immates endured them, phase by phase... Anti-fascists all believed the film but there were many in our midst who openly said: "why dont they give a real film instead of such awful rubbish!" Also: "why did these wretched men misbehave? - otherwise they would never gotten themselves inside those camps!" Two young ones (cage 27) openly declared "it is nothing but an English propaganda film". There is a large field for re-education and this is one of the main reasons why the anti-fascists should be given greater gonorthurities. should be given greater opportunities. ... the film shows the dead piled in a heap but it does not show the suffering of these people before their death. KLAZNER A. ... I feel that every German who has not lived inside KZ should be shown the film at least once every six months. Should he refuse, he ought to be forced to see it through... we are most impationt to hear that the responsible ones are duly punished for their orimes. We rather fear that many of them will escape ... while men, who for the last 12 years fought against such horrors, are sitting here in the desert ... You can easily judge how hard it is for us to hear round us creatures who still maintain that the film is but English propaganda. Mon like these must be closely watched out here and at home as well. Also this film should be shown over and over again in Germany. (181591) Germany. CAGE 36. WEITSCHIESS,0. ... Comrade, you have seen the film about Hitler's Germany. As I (108767) watched it, I had a vision and, beyond the screen I saw Krupp, Thyssen, Roechling, Bosch and a few more of these industrialists -Hitler's gang. ... Comrade, we are in the hards of the Allies, with their help we can start a new life. Let us hope that it will not be long before we, the anti-fascists, will be set free and allowed to return home ... what about you, Comrade? Are you ready to co-operate.? THIELMAUN, H.... It is only thanks to the film on atrocities in Cermany and which (050622) we saw yesterday, that we have discovered what sort of people we have in our midst! AREDROTH. ... The KZ film ought to have shown the daily suffering of the Dr.W. unfortunate inmates. Another shortcoming of the film: the number of (088 833) Germans who have lost their lives in KZs should have been more emphasised instead of merely mentioning the fact of their presence. HANSEN, D. (186 789) ... KZ held a number of German highly cultured men with high lacais. They could not accept Hitler's dictatorship nor Mazis' terror, they spoke and this they paid with their lives... Very few people dare speak the truth. To-dayin this Cage 36, we are placed together but how very different we all are from each other ! People remain quiet. .. KZ held a number of German highly cultured men with high ideals. Everyone alone with his thoughts. ... Personally I have witnessed something of the sort in my home town in Hamburg. It never will occur to me to blame the Allies for it because I knew that it was Hitler who started this total warfare. W.FLESCH. (068 717) RABBENKAMP,H.....As the film was about to be shown in our camp I heard people expressing pleasure to see it but there were many who openly protested why are they not loft in peace as if they did not know enough of misery as it is. I think the latter ones are wrong and I told them that it is up to us young ones to be interested in things of that sort. Some went on saying "After all, it was quite good for us in Germany under the Jrd Reich !"... Some maintain polities should nover be discussed in Ps/W Camps. Not to speak of it means "forget it"; forget it means "forgive". And what about the tyrant who has done so much destruction?







Questions for discussion

- 1. What are the different sentiments expressed by German prisoners of war in response to this film?
- 2. How can we explain the range and diversity of responses? Should we take them all at face value?
- 3. What can this tell us more generally about German attitudes towards the crimes of the Nazi regime in the period immediately following the end of the war?



Questions for General Discussion

The following questions are designed to prompt a wider discussion on the events, issues, and themes highlighted in the sources.

- 1. What were the top priorities for the British (and the other Allies) as the war came to an end and they became responsible for the occupation of Germany?
- 2. Alongside re-education programmes such as those detailed above, what other strategies would you consider essential in order to "denazify" Germany?
- 3. How successful do you think initiatives such as these would have been? What potential challenges would they have likely faced?
- 4. Do you think it is possible to politically re-educate the population of an entire country?





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