

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

SECRET

Washington, D. C.

MEMORANDUM

30 April 1945

TO: Special List
FROM: General Counsel
SUBJECT: War Crimes Information Memorandum #2

There appears in this memorandum a list of the subjects in which the War Crimes Office of the War Department is interested. In general, all information of this nature should be forwarded to General Counsel for transmission to the War Crimes Office, and specific arrangements have been made with the branches to that effect. Instructions are now being prepared for the acquisition of such information in the field.

The following categories are the most obvious examples of the type of information the War Crimes Office wants to receive:

1. Atrocities: Killing; torture; rape; physical violence; confinement; mistreatment; deliberate or wanton neglect; and similar acts against the person, whether done as isolated cases or as part of an economic or political plan.

2. Interference with the economic and social life of occupied territory: All repressive measures, as, for example, execution of hostages; collective penalties; deportation; forced labor; compulsory enlistment in armed services; compulsory prostitution; denationalization; subversion of allegiance; interference with currency; excessive requisitions; and destruction, removal, or confiscation of public or private property, whether done directly or through ostensibly legal methods.

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3. Violations of Geneva Convention:
Mistreatment of prisoners of war; abuse of Red Cross emblems or flags of truce; misuse of civilian clothes or Allied uniforms; combatant actions by medical personnel or other non-combatants.
4. Persecution of minority groups
(racial, religious or political) within enemy states.
5. Trials of war criminals: Trials by foreign governments or military authorities of collaborationists or persons charged with war crimes, including all available information regarding the circumstances of the trial; the charges brought against the accused; the procedure and law applied; the requirements and character of evidence; the persons involved (accused, judges, witnesses, counsel); the penalty imposed; political implications; official attitudes; public reactions.
6. The connection of a military unit, or the unit of a police or other organization, with the commission of a war crime, particularly if the individual criminals are not known.
7. The plans of any suspected war criminal for going underground or escaping to neutral territory.
8. All information concerning enemy records or the keeping of such records, which would aid in the identification of persons suspected of war crimes, or in the location of property suspected of having been illegally appropriated.
9. The plans and policies of authorities in Allied or liberated countries for the arrest and detention of war criminals.
10. Attitude of neutral countries towards granting asylum for war criminals.
11. Legislation and public discussion regarding the legal and political questions involved in the handling of war crimes and cases of treason.

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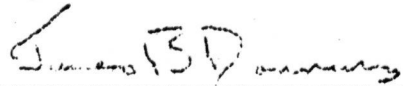
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Cases involving individuals of any country are of interest, but the fullest details are especially desired when United States nationals are concerned.

Information should be as precise as possible, and should include all available details concerning the identity of accused and victims, and the location, time and nature of the acts done. Witnesses also should be identified as fully as possible, either by name or status or other description, and any leads to additional information should be given.

All cases should be examined for evidence of a general policy or of systematic terror. The War Crimes Office wants especially to have documents such as military or political orders, instructions, or declarations of policy which may serve to connect high personalities with the actual commission of crimes. Original or certified copies of such documents are needed, together with a full account of their acquisition, location, custody and reproduction.


James B. Donovan

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