

Name: HAVEMANN, Ingeborg geb. v. Harnack	ZS Nr. 2065	Bd I	Vermerk:
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		

SUBJECT: MILDRED VON HARNACK

SOURCE: INGEBORG HAVEMANN, nee VON HARNACK

Institut für Zeitgeschichte ARCHIV	
Akt. 4637/71	Best. 25 2065
Rep. /	Kat.

Mildred von Harnack was born in the United States, in Madison, Wisconsin on 16 September 1902. Her maiden name was Fish. She married Dr. Arvid von Harnack of the well-known Harnack family, and lived in Berlin with her husband who was an Oberregierungsrat in the Reichswirtschaftsministerium.

Dr. Arvid von Harnack was fervently opposed to the Hitler regime, and was active in the attempt to overthrow it. During the war he apparently tried to get in contact with Axis foreign powers in order to work out a plan to end the war and eliminate the Nazi system. He seems to have worked with a great number of prominent people. Among them were military leaders, men of the press, and diplomats.

The plot was discovered in September 1942, and Dr. Arvid von Harnack and his wife Mildred were arrested in the first days of September while they were spending their vacation at the Baltic Sea. The charge promoted against them was treason and the attempt of weakening the military forces of Germany.

They were both held in the prison of the Gestapo in Berlin, Prinz Albrecht Strasse.

The treatment in prison was along the usual lines of Gestapo interrogation; Mildred von Harnack was treated especially badly as she was forbidden to see anybody during the entire time of the investigation, and could not receive any packages or food from her friends and relations.

The case was tried before a military court, although none of the defendants of the von Harnack group were men of any military status. The trial was held on 19 December 1942; 11 persons were

tried in that one session. The public prosecutor in this trial was Dr. ROEDLER who was a Krieggerichtsrat der Luftwaffe, but was in several cases of treason especially entrusted by Hitler with the prosecution of the criminals. He had "distinguished" himself before in a trial against a number of generals who were accused of treason. The attorney for the defense of the group von Harnack - Schulze Boysen was Dr. Leonhard Schwarz whose home was until recently in Berlin Grunewald, Legerstrasse 10. The trial against von Harnacks, as well as all other trials connected with this case - the total number was said to be about 800 persons - was kept top secret (Kommandogeheim). Von Harnack openly admitted his guilt and tried to convince the court of the righteousness of his actions. The court apparently was impressed with his attitude. It became quite apparent during this one session that his wife was completely ignorant of her husband's plans, but since it was ~~xxx~~ expected by Hitler that everyone of the accused was sentenced, Mildred von Harnack was sentenced to 6 months of hard labor (Zuchthaus). Arvid von Harnack was sentenced to death. Only one person of the accused, Frau Dr. Adam Kuckhoff, was sentenced to a prison term, and was not subsequently executed.

Arvid von Harnack was executed on 22 December 1942 in Plötzensee. He and the group with him were the first Germans to be executed by hanging; the most dishonorable punishment was demanded by Hitler for these traitors. Mildred was brought back to prison, and was even more secluded from the outside world; she was, for instance, not permitted to leave her cell for a walk in the prison yard. Hitler ~~himself~~ himself refused to recognize the sentence against Mildred von Harnack, and demanded that

she also be sentenced to death. Therefore, a sham trial was arranged on 16 January 1943 in which Mildred von Harnack was sentenced to death. The sentence was executed on 16 February either by hanging or beheading. The autopsy of her body revealed a case of advanced tuberculosis which she had contracted during her stay in prison. Before her death she wrote a long letter to the lawyer which he kept in his safe; he might still be able to produce it.

No notice of the execution of either Arvid or Mildred von Harnack was served to the family. They found out about the deaths through other parties, especially the minister of Arvid, Pfarrer Dr. POELCHAU whose address is (or was) Berlin-Reinickendorf, Afrikanische Strasse 140b.

The belongings of the executed persons were not given to their relatives; the family was able to buy some of the former belongings of Arvid von Harnack from the Reichsfinanzhof. Frau Dr. Adam Kuekhoff who was sentenced to 12 years of hard labor, may still be alive, and would be a valuable witness for the case. Her address may be known to Frau Hartenstein, whose address is Berlin-Nikolassee, Gerkrathstrasse 9.

As Mildred von Harnack was an American citizen, the case deserves the attention of the American authorities.

The address of the source of this report Frau Ingeborg Havemann is Berlin-Zehlendorf, Am Hegewinkel 20.

180